



OSU CB Sevyn Banks ‘Very Confident’ Entering Sophomore Year In 2019

Since he signed his letter of intent from Orlando (Fla.) Jones in December 2017, Sevyn Banks envisioned early success at Ohio State.

As a four-star recruit — the 247Sports composite’s No. 221 overall prospect, No. 23 cornerback and No. 41 player from Florida — in the Buckeyes’ 2018 class, Banks came to Columbus last January and eyed an immediate impact for spring camp.

Behind incumbent junior starters Damon Arnette and Kendall Sheffield, in addition to second-year players Jeffrey Okudah and Shaun Wade, Banks and fellow freshman Tyreke Johnson soaked in all that they could as their first campaign at OSU approached.

Banks in particular made strides over summer workouts and into fall camp, coming on late with pivotal plays as a member of Ohio State’s special teams — particularly punt return, where he returned his first career touchdown 33 yards off wide receiver Chris Olave’s block Nov. 24 when the Buckeyes beat Michigan 62-39 — but the late-season surge came after a long road back.

The week of practice prior to OSU’s 77-31 win over Oregon State in the 2018 opener Sept. 1, Banks went down and missed the team’s first eight games.

“I tore a ligament in my finger in practice,” Banks told BSB. “I didn’t even know it happened. I just one day couldn’t feel my finger and went, ‘What’s wrong?’ I thought I jammed it. ... I had to sit out for a couple weeks — actually, almost months.”

With a cast wrapped into a ball around his hand, Banks worked back each week at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center as he stayed ready. After two months, Banks debuted Nov. 3 in Ohio State’s 36-31 victory against Nebraska and started the following week on kickoff Nov. 10 when the Buckeyes beat Michigan State 26-6.

“I was expecting to come in here, learn and play, but it kind of humbled me and I had to settle down and know what my role was — be a part of this team and understand what my job is to do as the season got on,” Banks said. “Before the season started, before the first game, I got hurt and that’s what changed

my whole mindset when I missed most of the season. I came back and gradually got the hang of things. But as it came on, I knew my role. I knew what I had to do for the team and to contribute. It got better and better as it went on.”

He recorded his first career tackle Nov. 17 in OSU’s 52-51 overtime triumph at Maryland, which led to more momentum in The Game. In the right place at the right time, Banks housed Olave’s blocked punt for the 34-19 lead before OSU ultimately pulled away from the Wolverines by 23 points.

“It was a dream come true,” Banks said. “I don’t know how or what I was thinking. Everyone came up to me, saying, ‘What are you thinking?’ When I got it, I don’t even know what I was thinking. It was just a dream come true.”

Culminated by his big play against U-M, Banks became a freshman contributor as Ohio State capped the campaign with Big Ten and Rose Bowl titles. Snowballing into 2019, he looks to take the next step with an eye on the Buckeyes’ rotation of cornerbacks.

“I feel very confident going into next year,” said Banks, who added that he put on 20 pounds of muscle to his 6-0 stature and weighs 200 entering OSU’s spring camp March 4. “I feel very confident. Damon Arnette, Kendall Sheffield and all the old heads in front of me, I learned from them. I know what to do and 2019’s going to be a great year.

“I just need to actually sit down and learn the game more, get in the film room and studying — really studying — who we’re playing, our opponents and techniques and all types of stuff like that. I’ll be good.”

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