

Ohio State's J.K. Dobbins Ready For More Carries After Down Season



J.K. Dobbins was Ohio State's leading rusher in 2018. He topped the 1,000-yard mark for the second year in a row while scoring 10 touchdowns on the ground.

It wasn't good enough for the La Grange, Texas, native.

"I'm not going to make any excuses - it was me. I regressed last year," Dobbins said. "I didn't have the year that I needed to have and so I put that on myself and I'll get back to that this upcoming year."

The problem, at least partially, was that Dobbins spent too much time looking for the home run. Because of that, he often got 3 or 4 yards when 7 or 8 might have been possible.

Then again, Dobbins still ran for 1,053 yards, averaging 4.6 yards on 230 carries. That was on the heels of his freshman season when he rushed 194 times for a whopping 1,403 yards - a 7.2-yard-per-carry clip.

The biggest difference in 2018 was that the Buckeyes employed a two-back system - Dobbins would have one series, then Mike Weber would get a series. Weber finished with 954 yards on 172 attempts (5.5) with five touchdowns. Neither back had the production they were hoping for overall, though.

Dobbins noted that the rotation kept his legs fresh, but he wasn't always in the flow of the game.

"Of course I loved having Mike here, it kept me fresher, but I think playing more, being on the field more, you get a groove so it'll be great," he said.

In 2019, the rotation won't be an issue. Head coach Ryan Day has already said that Dobbins will be the guy at running back - he'll get a healthy share of carries as the only back on the roster with significant experience.

This spring, Dobbins is working on getting himself ready for a heavier load. His body fat percentage is down and he said he's never been in better shape.

"This is where I go even harder," Dobbins said when asked if he can take it easy this spring, "so I can get ready and build my body for the season."

A full story on Dobbins' preparations for his junior season will appear in the March 23 edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin.

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