

2023 NFL Draft: Zach Harrison Selected No. 75 Overall By The Atlanta Falcons



Former Ohio State defensive end Zach Harrison was selected by the Atlanta Falcons in the third round of the 2023 NFL Draft on Friday, going as the No. 75 overall pick.

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— Ohio State Football (@OhioStateFB) April 29, 2023

Harrison is Ohio State's first defensive player off of the board in the 2023 draft and is the fourth overall Buckeye taken in the draft.

Joining the Buckeyes as a consensus five-star prospect and the top-rated defensive end in the 2018 recruiting class, expectations were high for Harrison — who touted the necessary size and athleticism to be an impact player at the position for Ohio State.

Harrison was immediately utilized by Ohio State upon his arrival to campus, appearing in 14 games as a freshman while racking up 24 tackles — five for loss — and 3 1/2 sacks during his inaugural season with the Buckeyes.

During the COVID-shortened 2020 campaign, Harrison appeared in seven games of eight games and collected 14 tackles — 4 1/2 for loss — and two sacks. He flashed his ability to knock down pass attempts at the line of scrimmage during this season, tallying the first pair of pass breakups of his career. That skill would become a staple of his game moving forward, as Harrison batted down four passes as a junior and five during his senior season.

As a team captain in 2021, Harrison started all 12 games for the Buckeyes, registering 34 tackles — including a career-best 23 solos — to go along with eight tackles for loss and four sacks. In his final season with Ohio State, Harrison matched his tackle and TFL total from his junior season while adding 3 1/2 sacks and a trio of forced fumbles. Harrison was tabbed a first-team All-Big Ten selection as a senior by the conference's media.

While Harrison never quite fit the mold of the dominant defensive end for the Buckeyes — a mold left by the Bosa Brothers and Chase Young — his athleticism and potential standout to The Draft Network's Joe Marino.

"Harrison offers an impressive blend of size, length, and explosiveness," Marino wrote. "His length is a notable asset to his game as he does well to play with extension to deploy his rush plan. That separation enables him to keep his hands active, creating soft angles for him to power through. Harrison has developed the ability to string together rush moves and execute counters. Even when Harrison is unable to get home, he affects the quarterback with his ability to get his hands into throwing lanes. He offers an immense tackle radius and effectively used his length to strip the football away from the quarterback.

"Harrison is a physical specimen with incredible length, heavy hands, developing technique, and linear explosiveness—he promises to be a "bet on traits" guy," he continued. "At a minimum, Harrison should be a featured piece of a quality NFL defensive line rotation with an exciting ceiling to develop into with the makeup of an impact starter if everything comes together."