

Chip Trayanum Trying Hand At Returning Kickoffs Against Toledo



It was an unexpected sight to many to see Ohio State linebacker Chip Trayanum back on kick returns against Arkansas State, but it could be here to stay.

Head coach Ryan Day said Thursday that the Buckeyes are continuing to keep Trayanum on kickoff returns, at least against Toledo, and see how it goes for him in relief of Emeka Egbuka, who had handled kickoff return duties up to this point.

“We think that he’s shown us enough that he’s earned the right to take it back,” Day said. “And I think the guys believe in him. So like anything else, we’ll put him back there and then evaluate after the game and kind of see where to go next.”

Day said that the team believes in Trayanum as Ohio State’s kick returner, and though he did not have the chance to bring one out against the Red Wolves, they’re hoping he gets the opportunity against Toledo.

“He’s carried the ball in college games. When you look at his numbers on the GPS, he’s really fast,” Day said. “Then also he’s got some strength to him, and I think when you’re looking for somebody to return in the kickoff game, you’ve got to have somebody that’s got some strength to them. Because that can be a situation where you’ve got to be strong.

“You’ve got to be built sort of like a running back or a bigger wide receiver, in my opinion, to do it all the time,” he continued. “Now you can try to hit a home run once in a while with maybe a slighter guy, but you run the risk of them getting whacked. So we think that he really has an opportunity to be a good returner for us.”

Trayanum taking over on kick returns is not an indictment of Egbuka, though, who was fully supportive of his teammate taking over. Egbuka - on 21 returns - has averaged 28.8 yards per return, but he

believes Trayanum could take Ohio State's special teams to the next level.

"Chip Trayanum might even be better than me," Egbuka said. "He hasn't gotten the chance to return any yet but you guys are going to see Saturday, he's a very special talent. One of the most, if not the most athletic guy on the team. I'm excited to see him return some stuff."