

Gebbia Carving Out Role As Leader In Young Quarterback Room



With seven collegiate seasons, three Power Five programs and a season-ending hamstring injury under his belt, Ohio State quarterback Tristan Gebbia has accumulated an abundance of football experience and wisdom that has helped him understand how to excel under center at the Division-I level.

As he embarks on his final year in college football — and first season with the Buckeyes — Gebbia is primed to use his unique football journey as a learning tool to guide a young Ohio State quarterback room through the 2023 season.

“Obviously I’m a little older than some of those guys and played in some games,” Gebbia told the media at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center on Wednesday. “So any time I can give them any wisdom, I’d like to do that. I don’t want to overpush it on them, or anything like that, or preach at them. But if they have stuff that they want to talk to me about, they know that I’m a resource for them. And hopefully I can help them through that.”

Gebbia, who began his career in 2017 at Nebraska before starting five games across five seasons at Oregon State, will serve as the bonafide veteran in an inexperienced quarterback room that consists of freshman Lincoln Kienholz, sophomore Devin Brown and junior Kyle McCord. With head coach Ryan Day and his staff still holding an open competition for the starting job between Brown and McCord, the first-year Buckeye has vowed to make the most of any role he is required to assume.

“Every quarterback room I’ve been in over my years, you’re always trying to either make yourself as good as you can or (make better) whoever is playing,” Gebbia said. “To me, it’s always been like that. In a team environment, you want to have the most successful team possible. And playing quarterback is a good part of that. (I’m just trying to help out in any way that I can, because who knows what’s going to happen.”

The Calabasas, Calif. native said one of the roles he has tried to carve out for himself is to teach the young Buckeye signal callers exactly what is required from them to compete at a high level. Gebbia said he has especially tried to emphasize the poise and level-headedness a signal caller must possess on a day-to-day basis — both in good times and bad.

“(You need to have) perseverance,” Gebbia said. Being able to roll with whatever is going towards you. We talk about steadying the boat. When things are going wrong, being able to be the guy that’s going to take hold of the ship and get it back on track to where it has to go. You’re an extension of the coach on the field, so (when) things are going well, you have to be able to deal with that. (When) things are going bad, you have to be able to deal with that. It comes with a lot of challenges, and being able to do that is a skill you develop over time. But these guys, for how young they are, I think they do a great job so far.”

Aside from teaching the quarterback intangibles, Gebbia has also committed time to helping Kienholz, Brown and McCord cultivate a higher level of preparation. According to Brown, the seventh-year signal caller accomplishes this by spending considerable time with each other analyzing film from prior years.

“We’ve been able to meet with him every day,” Brown said on Wednesday. “I know I have this offseason. I’ve just grabbed Tristan every day and gone into the quarterback room and just watch tape. We even watched tape of him at Oregon State. It doesn’t matter what we’re watching, he’s just always giving insight to different things that he did and different ways he performed. He’s given us a lot of tips that have been really helpful to me.”

Brown, who is vying for his first opportunity to earn the starting role this season, said the time they have spent together watching film, as well as the lessons he has delivered to the team, has allowed Gebbia to serve as an important outlet and for him and his teammates to seek.

“Tristan has been an extremely incredible resource for us,” Brown said. “I mean, he’s done it for seven years in college, so he’s had ups and downs through his career. He’s had moments that a lot of us won’t be able to go through. He’s had moments that he wishes he wouldn’t have been able to go through. But he’s had them, and he’s able to have learned from them and give us lessons on them.”

No matter what role he will take on in the scarlet and gray this season, Gebbia is posed to spend his final collegiate campaign in Columbus and make a considerable impact on what he views as a storied and tough-nosed program.

“I said this recently to someone, this is a blue chip program, but the guys in here are blue-collar guys,” Gebbia said. “That’s one thing that I was surprised at when I got here, was how amazing the guys were off the field and how cool they were. Because on the outside looking in, you’re like ‘Ohio State, how nice are these guys going to be?’. But I’m very blessed to be a part of this team.”