

Hayden Getting His Fill Of Reps During Spring Camp



The 2022 season did not go according to plan for the Ohio State running backs room.

Ohio State dealt with injuries to lead running backs TreVeyon Henderson and Miyan Williams, and saw depth piece Evan Pryor miss the entirety of the season with a torn ACL, causing Arizona State transfer linebacker Chip Trayanum to return to his natural position at running back and true freshman Dallan Hayden to serve in an increased role. While Henderson, Williams and Pryor continue to work their way back to full strength, Hayden and Trayanum have carried the load at running back during spring camp.

While Hayden has benefitted from increased opportunities this spring, Ohio State running backs coach Tony Alford said that Hayden's growth has been evident in his performance in camp.

"Dallan has grown and is maturing," Ohio State running backs coach Tony Alford said. "This is still his first spring, he's never been through this. He played some in the fall but he's still maturing, changing his body and is finally learning the game."

As Alford alluded to, Hayden is enduring his first spring camp with Ohio State after arriving on campus in the summer of last year. Although he went without the valuable experience of going through spring camp as a true freshman, Hayden largely produced at a high level in his first season by registering 553 rushing yards and five touchdowns — including a 146-yard, three-score outing to carry Ohio State past Maryland 43-30 on Nov. 19, 2022.

Following his first season with the Buckeyes, Hayden rebuilt his body by gaining 15 pounds through weight training in order to add more power to his running style — which has caught the eyes of Alford.

"That's what you would want and you're hoping for," Alford said. "I still think it can be better and he knows that. This goes with leg strength and full-body strength and when it comes to running through contact and running through tackles, but it's gotten better. It's not where it needs to be yet, but we're also not playing yet so that will continue to grow."

As Hayden gained increased opportunities last season and this spring, he noted that the added reps on his plate have been important for his development.

"I feel like the reps have gone pretty well," Hayden said. "Everybody is getting reps and I just live by the motto that you've got to make every rep count. All the coaches have emphasized that this spring,

saying, 'Every rep matters.' So that's been my mentality this whole spring."

While Hayden was able to flash his abilities on the grand stage last season, he's said his focus this spring has been on using the lessons from his solid freshman campaign and applying them to his development with the increased opportunities he's received.

"I'm just trying to build on that," Hayden said. "I felt like I did some good things last year, but nowhere near where I need to be. So, I just try to use all the positives I did last year and then build on them."