



K.J. Hill Holds Off NFL Draft, Announces Return To Ohio State

K.J. Hill is coming back to Ohio State for one more year. The junior H-back announced Tuesday on Twitter that he would bypass the NFL draft and return to the Buckeyes for the 2019 season. Giving thanks to former head football coach and current assistant athletics director Urban Meyer, and citing advice from former OSU wide receiver Cris Carter (1984-86), Hill looked forward to “one last ride” in Columbus under head coach Ryan Day and wide receivers coach Brian Hartline.

“First I would like to thank Coach Urban Meyer for giving me a chance to be a Buckeye,” Hill’s tweet read. “It was by far some of the best moments of my life. With that being said, and with the guidance and mentorship of Cris Carter, and my family, I have decided to take one last ride with my brothers, my coaches, and you, Buckeye Nation!

“I’m ready to help lead us to another National Championship.

“I will be returning for my senior year.”

pic.twitter.com/5HDljsvqZb

— KMFJ (@KayJayHill) January 8, 2019

As a fourth-year junior in 2018, Hill took another step among a crowded and talented group of receivers. The 6-0, 198-pounder recorded 70 receptions for 885 yards (12.64 average) and six touchdowns in 14 games. Hill was also Ohio State’s sure-handed punt returner with 14 attempts for 76 yards (5.4 average) and a long of 23.

The Buckeyes lose fifth-year seniors Parris Campbell, Johnnie Dixon and Terry McLaurin to graduation. To keep Hill, however, OSU maintains its top H-back and returns its second-leading receiver. Ohio State has Austin Mack, Binjimen Victor, Chris Olave, C.J. Saunders, Demario McCall, Jaylen Harris, Garyn Prater and Jaelen Gill among its receivers to have recorded more than one catch over the past season.

The position group includes loads of young talent as well. L'Christian "Blue" Smith and Kamryn Babb will be redshirt freshmen with Gill, while Austin (Texas) Lake Travis five-star Garrett Wilson (spring enrollee) and St. Louis Cardinal Ritter College Prep four-star Jameson Williams (summer enrollee) — two receivers ranked among the top 140 overall prospects, according to the 247Sports composite — enter the mix as signees from the Buckeyes' 2019 recruiting class.

Hill becomes the latest draft-eligible player from OSU to announce a decision. Sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins declared Monday for the NFL after junior center Michael Jordan, junior running back Mike Weber and junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones previously did so.

As for returners, Hill follows linebacker Malik Harrison and safety Jordan Fuller among the three juniors set for one more year. Ahead of the Jan. 14 deadline for underclassmen to make an NFL decision, junior cornerbacks Kendall Sheffield and Damon Arnette have yet to announce either way.

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