

Ohio State Announces 2 Injuries, Indefinite Absences Out Of Spring Camp



Bad news for a pair of players came down Tuesday from Ohio State, which announced indefinite absences for two Buckeyes due to injuries sustained in recent practices.

In addition to redshirt freshman wide receiver Kamryn Babb, who reportedly suffered a third knee injury in as many years after a non-contact drill, fifth-year senior linebacker Justin Hilliard is also out indefinitely after he underwent surgery for ailment of his own.

OSU did not disclose either injury, but Lettermen Row reported Tuesday that Hilliard had a procedure done after an Achilles injury last week. Ohio State held its third, fourth and fifth practices of spring camp last Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

While word of Hilliard's injury leads to a long-term recovery process, the report further added that the senior linebacker could target a return to the field by the middle of the Buckeyes' 2019 campaign.

Hilliard would not be the first linebacker to make a return for the fall after an Achilles injury in the spring. Then a sophomore, team captain Tuf Borland ruptured his Achilles last March before he came back for the past fall's season opener Sept. 1 against Oregon State and played all 14 games.

Hilliard's junior year in 2018 was his most productive. After a promising career started off slow due to separate biceps injuries in 2015 and 2016, limiting him to three appearances through his redshirt freshman campaign, he played 28 straight games across 2017 and 2018.

"It means so much, just because I know what I've been through," Hilliard said last April after he put together his first full season in 2017. "Just kind of pushing through that and some of the difficulties — not only physically, but mentally — it means a lot to just be out here in the spring."

With 20 tackles over the latter season as he forged his way into the linebackers rotation, Hilliard made an impact on defense and special teams. The 6-1, 235-pounder showed signs of his promise for the first time since he signed with OSU's 2015 class out of high school as a five-star recruit — the 247Sports composite's No. 35 overall prospect, No. 3 outside linebacker and No. 1 player in Ohio — from Cincinnati St. Xavier.

“I feel like I’m so much further than I was in high school, as far as some of the different things, mentally,” Hilliard said last April. “Physically, I feel like I’m further along than I was, too, I think. All of my injuries had nothing to do with my legs — most of them were arms. So as far as speed and things like that, I feel like I haven’t slowed down a bit.”

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