

Ohio State Cornerback Denzel Burke Frustrated by Targeting Call



Ohio State senior cornerback Denzel Burke had a much more abbreviated appearance in the team's week two matchup against Western Michigan than he would have liked after being disqualified in the second quarter of the game for what was a slightly questionable targeting call.

Targeting, which prohibits players from leading with the crown of their helmet in a tackle, automatically disqualifies a player who commits the penalty and suspends them from the first half of the next game if the foul is committed during the second half.

During the play that ultimately had Burke disqualified, he lowered his helmet to tackle Western Michigan running back Jaden Nixon, but Burke seemed to hit Nixon with the side of his helmet rather than the crown of his helmet.

Despite the appeals from the Ohio State coaching staff and a replay review of the penalty, Burke's penalty was confirmed, and he was ruled out of the game.

During a media availability on Wednesday, Burke expressed his frustration with the call.

"It was a bullcrap call; I really didn't understand it," Burke said. "It's kind of been going around the country, really. I saw one; I think it was Florida and (Texas A+M), and that was a bad call too. It's kind of just getting out of hand, and then the fact that you're out the whole game and the player's not even hurt or anything like that."

As a senior, Burke only has so many more opportunities to shine in front of his home fans, which is why the disqualification was especially maddening for him.

"It's never a good feeling, especially because it's my last year," Burke said. "I'm trying to take advantage of every opportunity I have, and just being out the first half kind of sucked, but it's part of the game."

Burke's frustration didn't prevent him from being a good teammate, and with a rule change from 2020, he was able to stay on the sidelines to cheer on his teammates.

"Really just being the leader, supporting my teammates, making sure they're taking advantage of their play opportunities, and just being that vocal leader on the sidelines and lifting their energy up," Burke said when asked about how he remained calm after being disqualified.

The good news for Burke and the Buckeyes is that the foul occurred during the first half, meaning he won't have to serve an additional first-half suspension and instead can play in the entirety of the Marshall game on Saturday.

"I'm definitely excited for (the Marshall game)," Burke said. "I'm excited for them to throw the ball and be able to put myself in position to make a play and hopefully turn the ball over."