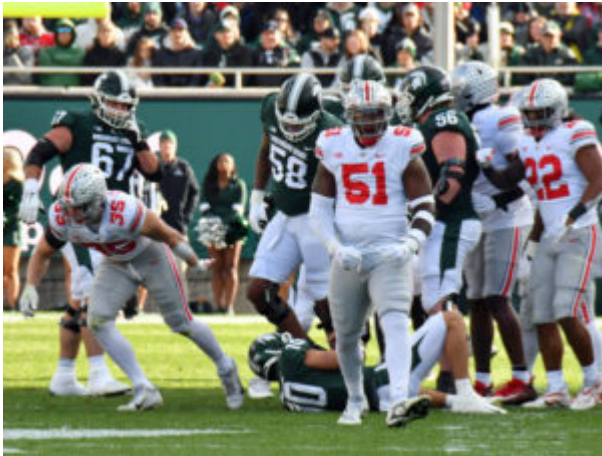


Ohio State Seeking Health During Off Week



Ohio State head coach Ryan Day met with the media Tuesday in advance of the Buckeyes' off week, and he said the break is coming at a good time as Ohio State tries to return several injured Buckeyes to the field.

"I think it does come at a good time," Day said. "There's times where you start to get into a rhythm and you don't want that bye week - I don't know if that's the case here. We're going to practice today, tomorrow and Thursday, put three days of practice in and keep grinding on this thing. It does allow us to get a few guys healthy going into the Iowa game."

Ohio State has suffered brief injuries to several contributors this season, including wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba and running back Miyan Williams, as well as cornerback Jordan Hancock, who all were out in the win over Michigan State.

Smith-Njigba has played in just two games this season while Williams missed his first game against the Spartans, and Hancock has yet to appear this season for the Buckeyes. The hope, though, is that they will be back in addition to several other hampered Buckeyes against Iowa coming off the off week.

"Going into today's meet and going through the injury report, for a bunch of those guy, the expectation is that they're going to play for the Iowa game," Day said. "They still have to come along and have a good week and all that, but that's the goal right now is to get them healthy this week and have a full week of practice next week, and those guys are ready to roll for Iowa."

In regards to Hancock, Day said Ohio State is looking forward to having him back not only as a depth piece, but as someone that could content for a starting job.

"We were hoping going into the season that he would be battling for a starting position," Day said. "I guess that wouldn't really change coming off of an injury, but he's got to get back on the field and he's just got to start off by getting some games under his belt and we'll go from there. We'll be better if he's in the lineup, and he'll start off by providing some depth and then go from there."

Along with Hancock's injury and Cameron Brown and Denzel Burke both missing games, Ohio State saw cornerbacks JK Johnson and Jyaire Brown step up this season, and that's just one group where Day has seen the Buckeyes' depth shine.

“It does challenge your depth when your in those types of situations, and I’m proud of the guys who had to step up, whether it’s been special teams or some different positions,” he said. “Going into a game with two corners who had never really had any experience before, or the running back position, we’ve had some stress at a couple of positions that we’ve had to go play some depth.”