

Ohio State's Offense Expected To Remain On Track Across Next Three Seasons



For the entirety of Ryan Day's four-year run as Ohio State's head coach, the Buckeyes have boasted a top-tier offense.

Possessing a pair of NFL-caliber quarterbacks in Justin Fields and C.J. Stroud — both of whom were taken in the first round of their respective NFL drafts — as well as several high-quality skill players, most notably at wide receiver, and solid offensive lines, Day has crafted a top-10 offense in each of his four seasons as head coach.

ESPN's Adam Ritterberg expects Day's success on the offensive side of the ball to continue, at least for the next three seasons. In his College Football Futures Power Rankings, Rittenberg ranked what he believed would be the Top 25 offenses across the next three seasons, slotting Ohio State at No. 2, behind only USC.

Ohio State dropped one spot after holding the top ranking prior to last season, but with questions along the offensive line, as well as the starting quarterback being up in the air, Rittenberg had some pause in the decision to leave the Buckeyes at the top.

"The team loses C.J. Stroud, its third consecutive quarterback selected in the first round of the NFL draft, but likely won't take a significant step backward with Kyle McCord and/or Devin Brown," Rittenberg wrote. "Competition at the tackle spots will continue with senior Josh Fryar, sophomore Tegra Tshabola, junior Zen Michalski and others, such as San Diego State transfer tackle Josh Simmons. The interior line has fewer questions with guards Matt Jones and Donovan Jackson both back and sophomore Carson Hinzman poised to step in for Luke Wypler at center."

Rittenberg also praised Ohio State wide receivers coach Brian Hartline, who was elevated to offensive coordinator in January, both for his recruiting prowess and ability to develop NFL-level receiver talent at a high rate of success.

"Day's impact on the quarterback position is matched or even exceeded by what coach Brian Hartline is doing in the wide receiver room," he wrote. "Despite losing three first-round picks in the past two drafts, Ohio State remains loaded at receiver. Marvin Harrison Jr. is the overwhelming favorite to win the Biletnikoff Award and become the first non-quarterback drafted in 2024, following a 77-catch, 1,263-yard season. Harrison leads a group also featuring Emeka Ekwuba, who broke out for 1,151 yards and 10 touchdowns last season, and Julian Fleming, ESPN's No. 1 overall recruit in 2020.

"Although all three are likely gone after 2023, Ohio State is stocked with younger players such as junior Jayden Ballard and incoming freshmen Brandon Inniss, Noah Rogers and Carnell Tate. The team also has 2024 commitments from two of ESPN's top 10 receiver recruits (Jeremiah Smith and Mylan Graham)."

Outside of Ohio State, the Big Ten was also represented by No. 5 Michigan and No. 12 Penn State.