

Ohio State's Offensive Line Looking To Be More "Violent" As Season Progresses



The offensive line came into the 2023 season with three new starters: junior and San Diego State transfer Josh Simmons, senior Josh Fryar, and redshirt freshman Carson Hinzman. Donovan Jackson and Matt Jones returned on the inside at guard but haven't been able to spend much time with the incoming starters, leading to clear issues early on even though the Buckeyes have started 2-0.

Offensive line coach Justin Frye doesn't believe the mistakes the line have been making are mental, he thinks they need to be playing more aggressively.

"We've been saying violent," he said. "If you want to really be a tough guy, then be a tough guy all the time. We've got to play more violent. We can't be lines on a page. We're not making too many mental mistakes, which is a positive, but we have too many point of attack mistakes that we have to go with, and you can solve that through aggression and violence."

In the 35-7 win over Youngstown State, Simmons and Hinzman each picked up a holding penalty in the first quarter, and Simmons also committed a hands to the face penalty that negated what would have been a 17-yard touchdown run from TreVeyon Henderson. Simmons was the most flagged player at the offensive tackle position last season with the Aztecs.

Ryan Day knows the group needs to be better against Western Kentucky, and he said on his radio show that Tuesday and Wednesday were very physical practices for them to see how the run game works.

"Whether it's the double teams when they're playing their gap defense or the movement - we're going to see a ton of movement this week - and being able to handle that... You have to be able to have a good plan to know what you're doing, but at the same time you can't be thinking a whole lot."

"You have to put them in situations where there's less thinking," Frye said. "When all five dudes know what's going on, it just looks like a wall... The more you put on their plate or the more you put in their backpack, they're carrying more and they can't play as fast. So, that's our job as coaches saying, 'How do we schematically put them in the right situations to go give them those reps?' And then how do you intensify those reps."

The Hilltoppers run defense has not been strong this season, giving up 529 rushing yards in their two wins. 374 of those were in their Week 1 win over South Florida, but they were able to make up for that with turnovers. The Buckeyes haven't had a running back over 60 yards in a game yet this season, but it will be a good week for the line to work out blocking for the run.

"We've seen now what hurts us and we've seen now what we do really well," Frye said. "So, I think that just learning and growing from those is what we have to take into this week"