

Practice Report: Jeremiah Smith Impresses At Student Appreciation Day



Ohio State held the team's annual Student Appreciation Day on Saturday at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, offering a chance for students — as well as media — to take in the eighth of 15 spring practices for the Buckeyes.

The star during the nearly 90-minute practice was freshman wide receiver Jeremiah Smith, who made several impressive catches deep and on the sideline. One play in particular drew a rave reaction from those in attendance, as quarterback Devin Brown found Smith deep for a completion despite coverage from cornerback Denzel Burke and safety Caleb Downs.

"Jeremiah has really stepped in," head coach Ryan Day said. "Got his black stripe off real quick. He's got a great approach. I'm going to be careful what I say, but he's been certainly a pleasure to watch, and we're all very excited for his future. ... If he continues on the path he's on, he's going to play a lot of football and will certainly have a chance to start as well."

Brown had arguably the most consistent outing among the quarterbacks, with transfer Will Howard, redshirt freshman Lincoln Kienholz and freshmen Julian Sayin and Air Noland also throwing in a variety of seven-on-seven and 11-on-11 drills. In addition to his pass to Smith, Brown also had deep connections with senior wideout Emeka Egbuka and redshirt freshman Bryson Rodgers, who stood out among the Buckeyes' pass catchers.

It was not a perfect day for the offense, however, as the defensive line routinely got past the offensive line which ran - from left to right - with Josh Simmons, Donovan Jackson, Seth McLaughlin, Luke Montgomery and Josh Fryar. In a drill where Ohio State's offense was backed up near the goal line, the defense ripped off three consecutive safeties, one each with Brown, Howard and Kienholz — all of whom threw in that order during practice — under center.

"They were in the backfield a bunch," Day said. "Too loose on offense. We've got to tighten that up, but you can see the quickness with some of those interior guys. ... We're looking for three guys at each position because all those guys are going to play."

As for the rest of the defense, linebackers Sonny Styles and C.J. Hicks split first-team reps alongside Cody Simon, while Ohio State's depth was on full display with several rotating in at cornerback and on

the defensive line as the defense largely won the day.

Day also offered a brief injury update after practice. Safety Lathan Ransom is continuing to work back after last year's season-ending knee injury, with redshirt freshman Jayden Bonsu filling in, while sophomore wide receiver Brandon Inniss is dealing with a "temporary issue" but should be back soon.