

Practice Report: New Numbers, New Positions



Ohio State opened its doors to the media for about 30 minutes of practice on March 8, and though a decent portion of that time was spent stretching, the eagle-eyed crew at Buckeye Sports Bulletin was able to glean enough to piece together a quick practice report, organized by position.

- Devin Brown, Kyle McCord and C.J. Stroud and an unlisted walk-on were the four quarterbacks taking snaps for the Buckeyes, in the expected order of Stroud, McCord and Brown. They practiced taking some under-center snaps but we only got to see about 30 seconds of passing. Brown, donning No. 15, stood out as looking like he's been in a college weight program for some time already - he's only listed as 6-3, 205 but he looked quite a bit more filled out than the traditional freshman quarterback.
- We didn't spot Marcus Crowley, but the rest of the usual suspects were there. TreVeyon Henderson led the way, trailed by Miyan Williams - now sporting No. 3 - and Evan Pryor. Walk-on Cayden Saunders was around in drills as well.
- Not a whole lot of note at wide receiver, though there are a few more number shifts. Kamryn Babb is rocking No. 1 now after wearing No. 8 a season ago, Emeka Egbuka has moved from No. 12 into No. 2, and Jayden Ballard is now No. 9. Early enrollees Caleb Burton and Kyion Grayes picked up their new numbers as well. Burton is wearing Egbuka's old No. 12, while Grayes is leaning into the Chris Olave comparisons and taking No. 17.
- Gee Scott Jr. is wearing No. 88 now and continues to fill out his frame at tight end. Early enrollee Bennett Christian is wearing No. 85.
- On the offensive line, Harry Miller was nowhere to be seen, but the rest of their work under new coach Justin Frye was all but cordoned off from where media was. Donovan Jackson has, it bears mentioning, changed from No. 74 to No. 72. Early enrollee George Fitzpatrick was wearing No. 68.
- Defensively, there are a few things to note. On the line, we didn't get to see a full rotation of four players but could see pods of two guys going through drills. Those pods were ordered as follows: Jerron Cage with Taron Vincent, Jack Sawyer with Tyleik Williams, Ty Hamilton with Mike Hall, J.T. Tuimoloau with Jaden McKenzie, Zach Prater with Zach Cicero and Bryce Prater. In the early stages of practice, Jacolbe Cowan, Tyler Friday, Zach Harrison, Javontae Jean-Baptiste and Noah Potter were running off to the side.
- Later on, in defensive end-specific drills, Mitchell Melton joined the fold. He missed all of last season with an injury but looked to be moving around well in what appears to be his new position. There was no obvious grouping for the new Leo position but Melton has figured to factor in that competition. Lastly on the line, Sawyer has noticeably bulked up, while Williams has gone in the

other direction. The latter looked smooth in what we saw, the former spent some time being taped up by trainers but participated fully afterwards. Early enrollee Caden Curry was wearing No. 92.

- The two linebackers who stood out were donning No. 11 and No. 16, for wildly different reasons. The former, C.J. Hicks, looks as athletically gifted as anyone on the team. He's ever bit of 6-3, 220 pounds and may even be an inch or two taller than that. The latter, meanwhile, seemed to be Cade Stover, who made the switch from tight end to linebacker at the end of last season. He's listed as having changed back to No. 8, but there was no second No. 8 at this practice, and no one else is listed as wearing No. 16. Cody Simon was working in with the group as well after undergoing season-ending surgery a few months ago.
- Of the newcomers there, Arizona State transfer Chip Trayanum is wearing No. 19, while early enrollee Gabe Powers is wearing No. 36.
- Lastly, in the secondary, there are a few things to note. Firstly, there was no sign of Cameron Brown, and while safety Josh Proctor warmed up, he was not a participant in the drills we saw. Of the players who did participate, Ohio State showcased a very, very loose secondary rotation group in one set of four-man drills. That rotation was as follows: Lejond Cavazos and Denzel Burke at cornerback, with Ronnie Hickman and Kourt Williams at safety. Jordan Hancock and Jakailin Johnson at cornerback, Bryson Shaw and Oklahoma State transfer Tanner McCalister at safety. Kye Stokes and Ryan Turner at cornerback, Cameron Martinez and Marcus Hooker at safety. Jyaire Brown and Lloyd McFarquhar at cornerback, Andrew Moore and Andre Turrentine at safety. We didn't spot Jantzen Dunn, who is rehabbing from an injury.
- New assistants Perry Eliano and Tim Walton seemed to work interchangeably with the secondary, as head coach Ryan Day said they would.
- In the new number world, we have quite a few here. Burke and Williams swapped numbers briefly, but Ohio State said that is not a permanent change, and that the two had already swapped back. McCalister is wearing No. 15, Brown is in No. 18, Turner has No. 24 and Stokes is in No. 37.

Postscript: An Ohio State spokesman has confirmed that Cowan, Crowley Dunn, Friday, offensive lineman Josh Fryar, Miller, safety Lathan Ransom and fullback Mitch Rossi - along with a few walk-ons - are unavailable this spring.