

Ronnie Hickman Signs With Cleveland Browns As Undrafted Free Agent



After not hearing his name called in the 2023 NFL Draft, former Ohio State safety Ronnie Hickman was signed by the Cleveland Browns as an undrafted free agent Saturday.

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— Ohio State Football (@OhioStateFB) April 29, 2023

Hickman joined Ohio State in the 2019 recruiting class as a top-150 prospect and early enrollee out of South Orange (N.J.) DePaul Catholic, redshirting his first season with the program before playing in five games during his redshirt freshman season before being sidelined due to injury.

He then played in and started every game for Ohio State over the last two seasons, totaling 153 tackles, seven pass breakups and three interceptions across 26 games. Hickman's 100-tackle outing in his redshirt sophomore season marked the first 100-tackle season for an Ohio State defender since Raekwon McMillan in 2016. Also during that season, Hickman had a 46-yard pick-six against Akron.

This past season, Hickman recorded 53 tackles with seven pass breakups, an interception and a forced fumble. He announced prior to Ohio State's loss to Michigan that he would forgo his final two seasons of eligibility and depart for the NFL Draft.

"That's going to be my last game in the Shoe, so I'm going to cherish and enjoy it the best I can," he said. "Everyone's clock starts ticking at a certain point. At some point, it's going to be time for everyone to take that next step, and I think that's now."

The Draft Network's Joe Marino wrote that while Hickman has gotten his hands on the ball some over the last few seasons, he ideally would have made more plays on the football.

"The ball found him for both of his 2021 interceptions while his 2022 pick against Toledo was a good break on the football," Marino wrote. "In addition, he was more disruptive at the catch point in 2022 when challenged. The Buckeyes played him frequently in the box and in split zone looks, making it unclear what type of potential he has as a single-high defender.

"While I like his physicality and aggressiveness as a tackler, he isn't immune to misses where he falls off the ball carrier. He has some room to fill out his frame and get stronger."