

Ryan Day Says Buckeyes Will Move Forward With Running Back Rotation



Ohio State had a distinct strategy when it came to its running game against Notre Dame on Saturday: spread the wealth.

Second-year running back TreVeyon Henderson — who was expected to carry the load for the Buckeyes this season — and third-year back Miyan Williams carried the rock 15 and 14 times, respectively. Head coach Ryan Day was pleased with the results of the running game and said Ohio State intends to continue to utilize the skillsets of both running backs as the season continues.

“We’ll move forward the same way,” Day said on Tuesday. “I thought they really complemented each other well. They both really ran hard in the fourth quarter, after looking at the film. I felt it when we were on the field, but after watching the film, boy, it was pretty impressive to watch those guys run that way. And they took care of the football, and that was a huge challenge for them, it’s their No. 1 job in this offense.”

Both running backs took care of business on Saturday, playing a key role in Ohio State’s 21-10 season-opening win over Notre Dame. The pair of backs helped the Buckeyes churn out 172 yards and 11 first downs on the ground.

Henderson started the evening for Ohio State, amassing 91 yards on 15 carries for an average of 6.1 yards per attempt. While Henderson took the first snaps at running back, Williams undoubtedly had the largest impact on the game from the running backs’ standpoint.

Williams rushed for 84 yards and a touchdown on 14 carries, for an average of six yards per attempt. But he saved much of his production for arguably Ohio State’s largest drive of the evening. With a 14-10 lead with 11:57 remaining in the fourth quarter, the Buckeyes embarked on a drive with the goal to burn the clock and push the lead to double-digits. Williams was the primary factor on the drive, carrying the ball seven times while racking up 49 yards and the game-sealing two-yard plunge into the end zone.

While Williams battled for every yard on that final drive, he also made an impact play with his hands. As

the Buckeyes faced a 3rd-and-3 from their own 24-yard line, quarterback C.J. Stroud was flushed out of the pocket to his left and uncorked the ball while on the run, looking for Williams. Stroud met his target, who secured the ball before tapping both his feet in-bounds for the drive-saving reception.

“I tried to put it in the best spot to where he could get it where the defense couldn’t. Miyan did a great job getting his toes in so it was a great play,” Stroud said. “I definitely feel like it changed the game and put it more in our control.”

As Ohio State’s passing attack was expected to take center-stage against the Fighting Irish, coming off last season in which they averaged a Big Ten-best 380.9 yards per game, it was the Buckeye running game that showed its merit.

With attention to Ohio State’s prowess in the running game on Saturday, Stroud said it showed the Buckeyes’ increased attention on toughness this offseason.

“Even when stuff wasn’t there, they were running through people,” Stroud said. “We definitely changed the narrative in this one game, we have to keep doing it though.”