

Ryan Day Says Emeka Egbuka Was Kept Out Of Wisconsin Game As Precaution



Ohio State wide receiver Emeka Egbuka was held out for the third straight game against Wisconsin on Saturday with a lower-body injury, but head coach Ryan Day said it was simply precautionary. Speaking with the media at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center on Tuesday, the Coach said that Egbuka could have entered the game against the Badgers, but they opted to keep him on the sidelines so he can continue his recovery and remain on track to return this Saturday in Piscataway, N.J.

“We’re expecting him to practice this week,” Day said. “He was available for the game on Saturday, we just didn’t feel like he was quite where he needed to be. And we had a bunch of guys step up for him. But we’re looking for a full day of work here today and then a full week. And then going into (this weekend), we want him to be full-go. But he was ready, and he’s working hard.”

Egbuka has been sidelined since the fourth quarter of the Buckeyes’ 30-17 win over Maryland on Oct. 7, where he appeared to get rolled up on a Terrapins defender after an 8-yard reception. While many players may grow frustrated during their injury recoveries, Day said his wideout has handled himself well since going down, while also showing a burning desire to return to the field that is indicative of his competitive character.

“He’s a tremendous young man,” Day said. “I mean, just the attitude he’s had that he wants to get on the field. And he’s forced others to pull him back. And that’s the attitude you want to have. And it’s a great sign for your team when guys are just fighting to get back on the field. And he’s one of them.”

With Egbuka’s status against the Scarlet Knights seemingly trending upwards — but still carrying some looming question marks — Day said potentially getting Egbuka back into the lineup can improve the balance and productivity of a Buckeyes offense that put forth arguably their worst showing of the season last Saturday. This key addition to the unit, according to the Coach, could help open up the field for pass catchers Marvin Harrison Jr., Julian Fleming, Cade Stover and others, a change that could allow the Buckeyes to reclaim their identity as one of the top offenses in the country.

"Emeka is a warrior," Day said. "He's productive. He's tough. He's a great leader. He does a lot of things for us. That being said, I think Xavier Johnson has done a really nice job stepping in, I feel like Julian has stepped up in other ways, not just in the passing game. And, certainly Marvin has done a great job, Cade too. The guys have stepped up when he hasn't been out there.

"But having him back does open up a lot of different things for us," he continued. "It's well documented, his production, since he's been here. And again, when we have all of our guys out there, we're full of capacity, then, we're the most dangerous."