

# Tim Walton Relishes Return To Ohio State In Coaching Role



In 1993, Tim Walton played a role in Ohio State's return to the Big Ten mountaintop — aiding the Buckeyes to their first conference title in seven years — as a cornerback.

Now, 29 years later, Walton is in a similar position. The Buckeyes are seeking a return to the Big Ten Championship in 2022 after being held out of last year's game for the first time in five seasons. As he returns to Ohio State's sideline, this time as the team's secondary and cornerbacks coach, Walton relished the opportunity to coach at his alma mater at his introductory press conference.

"It hit at the right time, to get a chance to come back here. When you spend your college years here and have an extremely exciting career here, I met a lot of great people. It's a lifetime journey when you're here, you're family for life here," Walton said in the spring. "It's been exciting to get a chance to come back and it's been a dream come true to come back to a place where you basically grew up as a young man."

Following his playing career, Walton entered coaching — getting his start as a graduate assistant at Bowling Green in 1995. At the collegiate level, Walton spent time at Bowling Green, Memphis, Syracuse, LSU and Miami (FL) before making the jump to the NFL in 2009. While at the professional ranks, Walton coached for the Detroit Lions, then-St. Louis Rams, New York Giants and Jacksonville Jaguars.

Although Walton's coaching career took him to several corners of the country, he said he always made time to return to Ohio State.

"I always came back and was around the program," Walton said on Tuesday. "When I was in the league, I would always come back for the pro days."

As Walton has experienced Ohio State as a player and coach, second-year cornerback JK Johnson said he's shared stories of his time on the Buckeyes' roster.

As this offseason served as Walton's first at the college level in 13 years, he said he did not have to reacclimate to college football after his time in the more polished NFL game.

While Walton is tasked with having his unit ready by the season-opener against Notre Dame on Sept. 3,

his players are already buying into his coaching. Sophomore cornerback Denzel Burke praised Walton's holistic approach to coaching.

"I just feel like he helped us a lot off the field, mainly, and that just translates to the field," Burke said. "He teaches us a lot of things, taking care of things off of the field. He's a great mentor, coach and person to be around."