

Carnell Tate Continuing To Turn Heads Entering Freshman Season At Ohio State



For as good as Ohio State wide receiver Marvin Harrison Jr. was for the Buckeyes last season, turning in one of the most impressive receiving seasons in school history, he doesn't believe he was even at the level that incoming freshman wide receiver Carnell Tate is at now.

"Carnell is going to be special, man," Harrison said Tuesday. "I think Carnell is probably at a better point right now that I was going into my sophomore year last year. He's amazing."

Those are high marks from Harrison, who had 77 receptions for 1,263 yards and 14 touchdowns last season. But if Ohio State's players and coaches are to be believed, Tate - who enrolled early at Ohio State as a four-star receiver out of Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy - should be an important contributor for the Buckeyes this season.

"Carnell Tate continues to impress," head coach Ryan Day said. "To go through what he's been through this month, and then just to continue to show up every day and play the way he's playing, you're talking about someone who not only has talent but has maturity at a high level."

While Tate has impressed on the field, he has experienced tragedy off the field in recent months, with his mother, Ashley Griggs, killed in a drive-by shooting in Chicago in July. But that has not stopped Tate from throwing himself into his work ahead of his freshman season, and offensive coordinator Brian Hartline said that he's shown immense maturity since arriving on campus.

"As a football player, he is very mature," Hartline said. "When you give that mature tag to a football player, it says a lot. His ability to take meetings to the field, his ability to correct mistakes in one try, his ability to hold himself accountable for mistakes, for me to ask him questions about why he did something and for him to give me the answers back shows a lot of intentional work, which is very, very important.

"That's usually an older-guy thing," he continued. "He's had a lot of adversity, and that's well-documented. To see all the things (he's) gone through and done. ... I'm very proud of him."

Ohio State has no shortage of talented receivers that will take the field this season, with veterans Harrison, Emeka Egbuka, Julian Fleming and Xavier Johnson all returning in addition to third- and

second-year players like Jayden Ballard, Kojo Antwi and Kyion Grayes.

But it's hard to imagine that Tate - in addition to the rest of the impressive incoming receiver class, including Brandon Inniss, Bryson Rodgers and Noah Rogers - will not get their chance to shine in their first seasons at Ohio State.

"He has definitely put himself in position to play very, very meaningful reps," Hartline said. "That's not just me. That's the room (in) agreement. That wasn't my choice."