

Cody Simon Chosen As Recipient Of Block “O” Jersey



Ohio State fifth-year linebacker Cody Simon was chosen after the Buckeyes' 14th practice of fall camp on Saturday as the recipient of the Block "O" jersey for the 2024 season, a prestigious honor given to the player who displays "toughness, accountability and the highest of character" both on and off the field.

Simon will shed his No. 30 jersey to become the fifth player in program history to wear the honorary No. 0, joining Jonathon Cooper in 2020, Thayer Munford in 2021, Kamryn Babb in 2022 and Xavier Johnson in 2023. He is just the second non-Ohioan to wear the Block O.

"I love this program so much," Simon said. "I had goals when I got here and even though everything always hasn't gone the way I've envisioned, I couldn't have asked for better teammates."

The Block O is named after legendary Buckeye defensive end Bill Willis (1942-44), an All-American and national champion with Ohio State who later went on to break the NFL's color barrier for the Cleveland Browns in 1946 on his way to both the Pro Football and College Football Hall of Fames.

Simon, a former four-star prospect out of Jersey City (N.J.) St. Peters Prep, has exemplified the traits needed to earn the prestigious Block O jersey throughout his four years with the Buckeyes.

After appearing in just six games as a freshman in 2020, Simon earned a spot as a starting linebacker on Ohio State's defense in 2021, recording 54 tackles (2 ½ for loss), one sack, one interception, one pass breakup and three quarterback hurries. Simon later revealed that he was playing most of that season with a torn labrum on his right shoulder, a painful injury that he said forced him to sit out Ohio State's Rose Bowl Game against Utah and miss a considerable portion of 2022 spring camp.

Simon's injury played a large factor in his role diminishing in 2022, where he served as a backup to both starters and future NFLers Steele Chambers and Tommy Eichenberg. That didn't deter Simon from

producing as a senior in 2023, however, where — now fully healthy — he earned his way to a larger role and five starts, finishing the season with 57 tackles (three for loss).

Simon's resurgent senior season propelled him to return to the Buckeyes for a fifth and final year in 2024, becoming the first of the veteran starters to announce he was coming back to the team on Dec. 12.

"There are so many team goals that I want to still complete, and we haven't done a great job of completing them these past couple of years," Simon said that day. "I want to be able to go and accomplish those goals, and win a Big Ten Championship again, and beat The Team Up North. I think we have a lot of unfinished business, and it's something I want to complete."

Now, Simon serves as the longest-tenured Buckeye on a loaded and veteran-laden Ohio State defense that is expected to be among the better in the country, entering the season having played 44 games with 15 starts. His status as a leader is now further cemented with his Block O honor.