

Emeka Egbuka Confident That Kyle McCord Can Shine As QB1



Ohio State junior wide receiver Emeka Egbuka may not have as long-lasting of a relationship with quarterback Kyle McCord as his fellow wideout Marvin Harrison Jr. does, but that has not stopped him from extending significant praise towards the newly-appointed Buckeyes starting signal caller.

Egbuka, who hauled in five receptions from his freshman year roommate for 94 yards and a touchdown in the Buckeyes home opener against Youngstown State last Saturday, indicated that McCord has earned the starting nod this season due to his relentless work ethic and strong knowledge of the game. These are traits that the third-year wideout has noticed in his quarterback since they both arrived on campus in 2021.

“He cares more than just about anybody on the team,” Egbuka said. “He’s the last person to leave this facility every single day. So he puts in the hours. And he does a lot of hours on film, he’s a student of the game. I mean, he’s really smart. So that’s one of the most impressive things about him. Because he’s not necessarily a scrambler or anything like that. He just throws a really pretty ball, he’s a master of his craft, and he’s going to continue to get better day in and day out.”

The Steilacoom, Wash. native added that McCord developed this unique football IQ by leaning on the tutelage of head coach Ryan Day, his staff and his former teammates while he stood from the sidelines and awaited his chance in the 2021 and 2022 seasons. According to Egbuka, these efforts to learn have better prepared him to thrive on the field this season no matter what obstacles are thrown his way.

“When you get to the game on Saturday, you often get a look that you don’t really expect for a certain play call that you might have thought would work,” Egbuka said. “But Kyle is prepared for a lot of situations that face him. He’s really taken the coaching from Coach Day and Coach Dennis, and even C.J. throughout the years, just learning from him so when a play breaks down, you don’t really see get flustered too much. He’s able to make something out of nothing, get the ball to his playmakers and go from there.”

Whether it is in practice or on game days, Egbuka noted that McCord's poise and preparedness have spread throughout the team, elevating the play of those around him on a daily basis. One way the St. Joseph's Prep product achieves this is by holding his offensive teammates accountable with their film study during each game week.

"Kyle sends me clips all the time," McCord said. Saying like, 'Hey, if they're playing you like this, then you got this, or something like that.' So you definitely have to be on the same page. Because it takes one dude out of 11 players like on defense, and one dude misses his coverage, but the ball doesn't go that way, it doesn't really matter. On offense. If someone misses their block, the whole place kind of screwed. So we really have to be on your P's and Q's when it comes to offense. And you have to be on the same page with your quarterback when you're running routes."

While McCord faces the difficult task of replicating the success and efficiency that preceded him at the position from Stroud (2021-22), Justin Fields (2019-2020) and Dwayne Haskins (2018), Egbuka said his starting quarterback will have no problem living up to this high standard, as his work ethic and strong set of skills have put him in prime position to succeed in 2023.

"I don't really want to speak on it, but I have an idea of how good I think he can be in my mind," Egbuka said. "The work that Kyle has put in, I wouldn't be surprised if he had some pretty impressive accolades over the season. So we're just going to keep stacking days as a team, he's gonna keep playing great football like he's been doing. And at the end of the season, you guys will see where he's at."