

Evan Pryor “In A Good Place” As He Continues Recovery From Torn ACL



With all of the talented running backs on the roster at Ohio State, it was easy to forget last season about Evan Pryor, who was lost just before the campaign began due to a torn ACL in fall camp.

Heading into the season, Pryor - who had an impressive fall camp ahead of his injury - was undoubtedly third on Ohio State's depth chart behind TreVeyon Henderson and Miyan Williams, and given how the season played out with the duo both missing several games due to various injuries, Pryor's availability would have been a significant advantage for the Buckeyes.

Even as Ohio State's running backs experienced struggles, Pryor was not on the mind of most while off the field. That was not true, though, for running backs coach Tony Alford and the rest of the players and coaches in the Woody Hayes Athletic Center.

"He's been out, so obviously when someone's out, it's kind of like out of sight, out of mind for some people. Not for me and this building," Alford said in May. "His demeanor has been fantastic from all indicators. He's done everything he's supposed to do to get himself back in order to play and I'm so excited about where he's going."

The injury took away what should have been an impactful season for the former four-star prospect out of North Carolina. In addition to assisted the depleted group of running backs, Pryor would have been a candidate to work in the return game, and Alford said that will be in the cards again once Pryor returns to the field.

"He'll obviously get some shots at that," Alford said. "That was something that he was going to do before the injury happened and was sustained. We'll hopefully be able to get him back into that fold as well."

While Pryor has been working to return from his injury, Alford said that he and Pryor's fellow running backs have all been supportive during Pryor's recovery, and that offering that type of support is one of the key aspects of being a coach.

"That's part of being a coach, right? And part of being a parent. You have to know your players and you have to know your kids and what buttons to push, and kind of when you've got to push them along, or

when you've got to hug them up, or when you have to encourage them, when you have to scold them," Alford said. "All those different things that come about."

Alford said that Pryor - who he described as a "very prideful guy" - has had some tough days during his recovery, but as he gets closer to a return to the field, Pryor is trending up as fall camp approaches.

"He's highly motivated and a confident person in his own skill set," Alford said. "There were some rough days for him, as there would be for anybody. That's where we talk about the brotherhood, that's where we talk about the family atmosphere, that we've all got to lift one another up. It's not just player to coach. (A) lot of time the players have got to lift the coaches, and vice versa. That's being part of a team and part of a family and I think Evan's in a good place right now."