

Former Ohio State Quarterback C.J. Stroud Returns For Buckeyes' Pro Day



Ohio State quarterbacks Will Howard and Devin Brown threw during the Buckeyes' Pro Day on Wednesday, and another former signal caller graced the sidelines at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center as C.J. Stroud returned to support his teammates.

Stroud, who is coming off a standout rookie season in the NFL where he led the Houston Texans to a playoff berth and was named NFL Rookie of the Year, said it was "tremendously special" to return to Ohio State.

"I've built a lot of great relationships here that I'll cherish for the rest of my life," he said. "I remember coming here, someone told me, 'It's not a four-year decision. It's a 40-year decision.' For the next however long God allows me to be on Earth, I know that this is a second home to me and proud to be able to come back and still get love. I really do appreciate everyone for watching me now that I'm in the NFL."

Stroud played alongside nearly every Pro Day participant at one point or another during his three years at Ohio State, and chief among them is wide receiver Marvin Harrison Jr. While Harrison did not do on-field drills on Wednesday - nor did he at the NFL Scouting Combine - it appears most already view Harrison as ready to go at the next level, where he is expected to be the first quarterback off the board in April.

"Marvin - I was telling someone earlier - he's NFL ready," Stroud said. "If you were building a prototype guy, a lot of prototype guys don't have the work ethic that he does, so it will take him as far as he wants to go."

"I'm just excited to see him blossom as a man. He's always been a sheltered person, but his personality has kind of picked up. He's a great talent, but he's an even better person, so I'm excited for him and his family. He has a lot of great football to be played. I'm really just proud of him, and all the work I've seen him put in has been inspiring."

The Pro Day experience is one Stroud went through himself last season, impressing NFL general managers and head coaches in attendance before eventually being taken second overall by the Texans. While neither Howard nor Brown were participating in their formal Pro Day - that will come next season for Howard - the opportunity to throw in front of NFL evaluators was an opportunity for both to build momentum for a potential quarterback battle going into next season.

Stroud himself went through one in 2021 alongside Quinn Ewers, Kyle McCord and Jack Miller, and when it comes to advice for Howard and Brown as they approach the rest of the spring and the upcoming season, he said they key will be doing it to improve the team and each other.

“Do it for everybody in the room,” Stroud said. “Me, Jack, Quinn and Kyle, we all had really good relationships off the field. We all really wanted to see each other do well. Of course, everybody wanted to play and everybody wanted to start, but it wasn’t out of ill will. It wasn’t like we were trying to cut each other in line or just be weird. Really, everything was natural, and I think that that’s the reason why we’ve all had some successes.

“I think for those guys, just doing it for the right reasons and just listening to coaching. It’s not going to be easy. At one point in your career at Ohio State, people are going to hate you and they’re going to talk crazy. But it’s all to prepare you for what’s to come next.”