

Former Ohio State Wide Receiver Parris Campbell Eager To Compete In Super Bowl, Represent Buckeyes After Injury-Riddled Start To NFL Career



Unlike in previous seasons, Ohio State is minimally represented in this year's Super Bowl between the Kansas City Chiefs and Philadelphia Eagles, with only wide receiver Parris Campbell taking football's biggest stage just years after donning the Scarlet and Gray in Columbus

This year's Super Bowl will be a special moment for Campbell — who ranks 10th all-time in OSU history with 143 catches for 1,768 yards and 15 touchdowns while with the Buckeyes from 2014-18 — as he was nearly out of the league earlier this offseason when the Eagles waived him in August with an immediate offer to join their practice squad.

Campbell told the Akron Beacon Journal on Tuesday that he seriously contemplated retirement when he received the news, which would have concluded a six-year NFL career with three teams that was limited by injuries.

"If this is the only opportunity that I have, to go be on a practice squad, I'm done with ball, and we'll figure out what's next," Campbell remembers telling those close to him around that time.

Instead of focusing on his next chapter in life, however, Campbell stuck with it and decided to return to the squad after a phone conversation with Eagles head coach Nick Sirianni, his former offensive coordinator with the Indianapolis Colts, who — in addition to some prayers — convinced him to stick around.

"He's like, 'Are you sure you want football to be done? Is this what you want? We want you here on the team, on the practice squad. Obviously, it's not what you want, but we want you here, and we have a plan for you,'" Campbell said of his phone call with Sirianni.

"I was just so in a moment with God because I had just talked to him, and, obviously, to me, that was his sign of showing me, 'No, this door isn't closed in your life.' "

Fast forward ½ year later, and the Akron native is not only back on the 53-man roster but at the

pinnacle of his professional football career, just one win away from his first Super Bowl championship and immortality in the city of Philadelphia.

"I've seen it all the way through, and now we're here in the Super Bowl," he said.

Campbell has had little impact on the Eagles' Super Bowl run, as he has only logged eight snaps these playoffs and recorded just six receptions for 30 yards all season. But whether he gets into the game or not, he is excited to represent the city of Akron, state of Ohio and the Buckeyes on the big stage.

"Representing the city of Akron, representing my family, representing Ohio State. ... it's all just come kind of full circle," Campbell said.

Campbell's NFL career has been an arduous journey. Since being drafted by the Colts with the No. 59 overall pick in the 2019 NFL draft, he has dealt with a litany of injuries, limiting him to just one full season of play in the league and 123 career catches for 1,117 yards and six touchdowns for three different NFL teams, the Colts (2019-22) the New York Giants (2023) and now the Eagles.

But through it all, Campbell has battled back and now finds himself on the world's biggest stage at the Super Bowl Sunday night, an opportunity that he is certainly excited for considering the difficult path he took to get there.

"From the last season in Indy to now, there's been a lot of ups and downs, bumps and bruises, good times, bad times," Campbell said. "But it's a blessing. I'm just excited for the opportunity that we have as a team."