

Jaxon Smith-Njigba, Cameron Brown Remain Inactive Against Rutgers



For the second consecutive week, third-ranked Ohio State will be without the services of star wideout Jaxon Smith-Njigba and starting cornerback Cameron Brown when it takes the field against Rutgers on Saturday.

Smith-Njigba has appeared in just two games this season after sustaining a lower-body injury against Notre Dame in the season opener on Sept. 3 and has not played since the first half of Ohio State's 77-21 win over Toledo. Brown missed his first game against Wisconsin on Sept. 24 after tallying five tackles and a pass breakup across Ohio State's first three games.

Brown headlines a banged-up secondary unit, which will also be without cornerbacks Jordan Hancock and Lloyd McFarquhar and safeties Jantzen Dunn and Cameron Martinez. Martinez is a new addition to the status report this week and is another significant hit to the secondary's depth. Martinez has collected nine tackles across the Buckeyes' first four games.

Ohio State's defensive front will also be missing a key rotational piece in fifth-year defensive end Tyler Friday. Freshman Omari Abor also remains unavailable while appearing on the status report for the third straight week. The Buckeyes will also be without linebackers Palaie Gaoteote IV, Teradja Mitchell and Mitchell Melton — who is nursing a season-ending injury.

Offensively, Kamryn Babb joins Smith-Njigba as the only unavailable receivers against the Scarlet Knights. Running back Evan Pryor remains on the injury report as he continues to rehab a season-ending knee injury. Tight end Joe Royer is also unavailable for the Buckeyes.