

Johnson Says There's Still "A Lot On The Table" For 'Jack' Position



Dating back to the first defensive series of the season for Ohio State, it became clear that defensive end Jack Sawyer would be a problem for opposing offenses.

He showed versatility not seen on Ohio State's defense as of late, lining up at several spots across the field as part of the 'Jack' and generally causing confusion as to where he may attack from. That's led to some success early in the season for Sawyer, who has two sacks and four tackles for loss through six games.

"I'm just trying to wreak havoc," he said earlier this season. "Depending on what the play call is, I'm trying to fly around and disrupt stuff in the backfield."

Six games is just a sample size, though, of what Ohio State is expecting from the position. Knowles previously 'Jack' starters saw impressive sack and tackle for loss totals at Oklahoma State while accounting for the majority of the statistics on the defensive line.

That's not been the case so far for Ohio State, with the linebackers as well as defensive tackle Mike Hall Jr. dominating, but it's a work in progress as the 'Jack' contributors get accustomed to the position.

Defensive line coach Larry Johnson - who coaches defensive ends, while defensive coordinator Jim Knowles handles the 'Jack' position, as well as the linebackers - said that Sawyer and Javontate Jean-Baptiste, who have received the majority of snaps at the 'Jack,' are still learning.

"There's still a lot on the table there that we still haven't done yet in the 'Jack' package, so we have to teach (Jack)," Johnson said. "Him and Javontae's been our two guys that we've been training for the 'Jack,' but they also have to learn how to play defensive end, and so it's kind of like double duty."

Johnson said that he and his fellow coaches have to be careful to not overload them since they're

playing at both defensive end and the 'Jack.'

"Even though they are similar, but they have different techniques to go over," he said. "Progressively, we're move forward in it, but we still have some things that we can do in the Jack package."