

My Thoughts: Even With Generational Talent, Don't Overwhelm Jeremiah Smith In First Season



Among the standouts in Ohio State's spring game on Saturday - the likes of Calvin Simpson-Hunt, Jaylen McClain and James Peoples, among others - there was one notable omission, that of spring practice star and freshman wide receiver Jeremiah Smith.

Smith had just two catches for 12 yards, with several other targets headed his way also falling incomplete. But the crowd was obviously aware of the hype that had been built up over the preceding 14 spring practices, as each of the 80,012 in attendance at Ohio Stadium rose to their feet each time the ball headed toward Smith. But, it wasn't the otherworldly outing that some had hoped for after coaches and teammates praised Smith all spring. And that's just fine.

Ohio State's talented receivers over the years have included the likes of Marvin Harrison Jr., Jaxon Smith-Njigba, Garrett Wilson and Chris Olave, among many, many others since Brian Hartline took over as wide receivers coach. But arguably the most impressive freshman season among them was Wilson, who had 30 catches for 432 yards and five touchdowns.

Some have already placed expectations on Smith - who has only been on campus for three months - that he will be a leading receiver for the Buckeyes, breaking every freshman receiving record in the book. And it's entirely possible that he will, entering Ohio State as the undisputed top recruiting in 2024.

But if he doesn't, that's still alright for Smith. Expectations are the thief of joy, and we would all be better served just watching Smith play and being impressed with his athletic ability rather than focusing on what his trajectory is with the Buckeyes. Greatness doesn't come along often - time will tell whether that's the case for Smith - but in the mean time, just sit back and enjoy, and let the five-star who should still be a senior in high school take care of business.