

My Thoughts: It Might Be Time To Target The Transfer Portal For A Quarterback



Leading up to the Cotton Bowl, there was no clarity about what to expect out of Devin Brown as the starting quarterback other than the fact that he had lost the battle to Kyle McCord at the beginning of the season and that his teammates and coaches were saying good things about him in the weeks he had to practice with the first team.

“He’s having a great bowl prep,” offensive coordinator Brian Hartline said. “We’re excited that he’s out there. He brings a lot of good energy to practice. The guys are excited to have him running the show. But Devin has done a great job preparing for this game. He knows the importance, and his work has resembled that.”

The Cotton Bowl was supposed to be a showcase for Brown to fully take the reins of the offense and show off what he could do as a highly rated dual threat out of high school, but in his short time on the field before suffering an injury he wasn’t convincing enough to be the No. 1 guy going into a full season of football in 2024.

He completed four passes on six attempts for 20 yards but seemed at least a little overwhelmed when Missouri was sending pressure at him, which he didn’t do well with, getting sacked multiple times. A lot of that falls on the offensive line and the change that was made for this game, but Brown wasn’t able to read the defense well enough to know anything was coming at him, something McCord was much better at.

It might be wrong to judge Brown off less than one half of football against a very good team, but the goals Ohio State sets for itself are to beat Michigan, win a Big Ten championship and win a national championship. Winning the conference will be much tougher with expansion next season, and with the playoff bracket expanding as well, any team that makes it in will have to survive at least one extra game against a top-12 team.

I believe it’s completely fair after the game Ohio State’s offense had against Missouri to say that Ryan Day needs to at least consider the transfer portal. Maybe there truly aren’t better options out there than Brown, Lincoln Kienholz and Air Noland, who currently make up the quarterback room next year. However, after the game Day left the door wide open to exploring the portal.

“I’m just fresh off the game, so it’s hard for me to process it all right now,” Day said about looking for

quarterbacks in the portal. "But we have to figure out what's best for the team moving forward, and that's in a lot of areas. We've got to take a hard look at that and get that figured out."

There are still multiple quarterbacks in the portal who haven't found new homes yet, like Cam Ward from Washington State who has been floated as a potential Buckeye since McCord entered the portal himself, and Ohio State has reportedly been in contact with former Kansas State quarterback Will Howard.

If Day decides to stick with the guys he has now, it's still reasonable to trust the guy who coached Dwayne Haskins, Justin Fields and C.J. Stroud. It is entirely possible that Brown, Kienholz and Noland are the best options for Ohio State in 2024, but after the loss to Missouri, it's much less convincing than it was before the game. Neither Brown nor Kienholz proved the Buckeyes shouldn't look elsewhere to fill that spot.