

Observations From Ohio State's Sixth Spring Practice



Ohio State returned to the indoor practice field at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center on Tuesday for its sixth practice session of spring camp.

With time dwindling until the April 15 spring game, Ohio State opened a 30-minute viewing window for media members Tuesday. Here are some observations from both sides of the ball.

Offense

The quarterback battle continues to be the talk of spring and the top focus on most peoples' minds. As has been the case through many practices, Kyle McCord was the first quarterback up in each quarterback drill, followed by Devin Brown. Media got to watch some throws against air or a quarterback standing where a defender might be, and both delivered some nice deep balls. McCord had a bit more pop behind some of his, though one was underthrown.

Corner routes are where McCord had the best throws of anyone in that early stretch of practice. He layered one nicely over the outstretched arms of a quality control coach into Carnell Tate's breadbasket. Periods of practice where McCord and Brown were throwing against a live defense were not open to the media, however.

Speaking of Tate, he was third in line for most wide receiver drills behind Marvin Harrison Jr. and Jayden Ballard. Players were working on their releases off the line with coach Brian Hartline, and the cornerbacks came over to drill press coverage later on in the individual session.

At running back, Miyan Williams, Chip Trayanum and Dallan Hayden maintained a steady rotation, with Williams usually up first. Walk-on Will Hartson also got some work with the main group.

Rounding things out with the offensive line, Zen Michalski was once again out with the first unit at right tackle, while Carson Hinzman and Vic Cutler each took one center spot in the half-line drills media got to view. During sled work, Tegra Tshabola received some one-on-one technique corrections from graduate assistant Mike Sollenne. While still injured, Jakob James donned a full set of pads Tuesday and did non-contact drills off to the side.

Defense

Starting on the defensive line, defensive end Jack Sawyer continued to operate with a hand in the dirt on Tuesday, further solidifying defensive line coach Larry Johnson's declaration that Sawyer will be utilized at defensive end this season.

At the Jack, Sawyer's former position, Mitchell Melton again received reps there, while working with the defensive line in individual drills. During an interception return drill, Melton worked in with the third team, while the defensive line on the top unit utilized Sawyer and J.T. Tuimoloau, both of which operated with a hand in the dirt. The lack of Melton's usage in drills could be seen as another indication that the Jack has been put on the back burner, as defensive coordinator Jim Knowles alluded to during the first week of camp.

Sticking with that interception drill, the first team defensive line consisted of Tyleik Williams and Ty Hamilton on the interior while Steele Chambers and Cody Simon — replacing the injured Tommy Eichenberg — manned the linebacker spots. In the secondary, Denzel Burke and Jordan Hancock manned the cornerback spots while Cameron Martinez, Lathan Ransom and Josh Proctor spent time at the safety spots. Transfers Ja'Had Carter and Davison Igbinosun worked with the second team primarily in the drill.

Igbinosun stood out at cornerback in the few drills viewed by the media. During a hand-fighting drill against the wide receivers, Igbinosun drew matchups with Jayden Ballard and Marvin Harrison Jr. and performed admirably keeping Ballard in front of him while slowing Harrison's release. Freshman Jermaine Mathews shook off a poor rep during the interception coverage drill, by hauling in the pick his next time out.

Andy Anders Contributed Reporting.