

Offensive Line Still Looking For Improvements Against Maryland



Other than a 61-yard touchdown run by TreVeyon Henderson, the run game was largely not a factor in the 17-14 win over Notre Dame. Chip Trayanum got the most important 1 yard of the game on his touchdown run, but even with only 10 men on the field for the Fighting Irish, and the run going right where the absent defensive end was supposed to be, he still only made it inches into the end zone.

The offensive line that brought three new starters into the season has been a large topic of conversation with Ryan Day acknowledging week after week they still need to see improvement from the group. The struggles have been most apparent in third-and-short and fourth-and-short situations in which the Buckeyes haven't been able to push through the middle for a single yard many times and have resorted to passing, or end arounds that also mostly aren't working.

In the game against Notre Dame, including Trayanum's run, the Buckeyes converted on only two short yardage, late down plays. The other was a 6-yard catch by tight end Cade Stover.

"We just have to get better. The running game will come," senior right tackle Josh Fryar said. "We've just got to get better. We've got to work our fit and then fall back on our technique. Mainly those are the two key things that'll improve the running game."

Fryar said there has been an emphasis on short yardage situations in practice recently but said they haven't stopped focusing on other situations as well, saying they need to be better in all aspects of the game.

In a top-10 matchup game, there are going to be times when teams might struggle more than usual to get a yard, like Fryar says was the case against the Fighting Irish. Day said the Buckeyes won in short yardage in that game on the offensive and defensive side of the ball.

"The whole offseason has been about competing. Competing to win those situations, and being the tougher team," Day said. "So, we'll keep striving towards that, and we know if we win in those areas, we're going to win the game."

When the Buckeyes need two yards for the first down, Day said he ideally wants to be successful 100

percent of the time, but realistically wants to convert more than 80 percent of the time. 33 percent against the Fighting Irish was good enough to win the game, but it won't always be if their defense allows more than 14 points.

He said with Kyle McCord at 6-3, 215 pounds, he has considered quarterback sneaks when they get there, and they have been practicing, but they haven't seen the chance to do it yet.

"If we think it gives us a chance we'll do it," Day said. "But as you can imagine, we're really working hard on short yardage."