

Ohio State Running Backs Coach Tony Alford Talks About State Of Running Back Room In Tuesday Media Call



Ohio State running backs coach Tony Alford spoke to the media Tuesday over a Zoom call to discuss what he has seen from the running back room throughout practice, as well as how graduate transfer Trey Sermon and junior Master Teague have been doing and what each of their roles are heading into this season.

- Alford said Teague never wavered in his attitude or his ability to get back and recover from his injury.
- Alford on Teague: “Whatever he could do plus some was his attitude.”
- Said that Sermon and Teague may be able to hold up more as blockers than J.K. Dobbins just on pure size.
- On Sermon, Alford said he is deceptive with how much speed he has. Is also a lot longer in his stature than someone like Dobbins, Mike Weber or Ezekiel Elliott.
- Called Sermon “extremely mature” with how he handles his business. Also said he’s been working with Sermon on dropping his pad level.
- Alford said Steele Chambers is maturing as a running back, and called him a perfectionist who has done well.
- Also on Chambers, Alford said he feels comfortable being able to put him in the game.
- Alford said Marcus Crowley has had a minor setback, but he’s doing better now. He did not give a timetable for when Crowley will be able to return.
- Alford on Teague’s health for Ohio State: “If we played tomorrow, he would play.”
- On deciding who plays for Ohio State at running back, Alford said that consistency is the biggest factor, as well as making a play when something isn’t there.
- Alford said Sermon would come to his house this offseason and they would go over the playbook while socially distanced.
- On Sermon: “I knew him because I recruited him, but we talked to a lot of the guys from Oklahoma, and they had nothing about rave reviews.”
- Alford joked that freshman Miyan Williams is “about 2 1/2 feet tall,” but then praised his toughness and his strength. Also said he has made a lot of progress in the past few weeks.
- Alford said Teague is probably the leader in the running back room other than him, but also said Xavier Johnson is pretty vocal.

- On leaders of the room, he also mentioned Sermon, and emphasized that he has played more football than anyone in the room.
- In recruiting, Alford said being forthright and honest with running back prospects in looking for two backs in a class makes it something that is attainable. "Is it hard? Depends who you talk to, to me I don't think it's hard" as long as you find running backs willing to be a part of it.
- When looking for two running backs in the class, you don't want to find two with the same skillset, but they do need to be strong in some of the same areas to go along with their different abilities.
- Alford is one of the coaches that opted in for a 5 percent voluntary pay cut. He joins, among others, Ryan Day, Chris Holtmann and Kevin McGuff.
- Alford said the offense has dynamic playmakers all around the field. Said that if Ohio State takes care of the little things, they'll be fine, but that the team still needs to focus on getting better every day.
- On quarterback Justin Fields, Alford said he has been most impressed with his leadership this offseason. "Really, really proud of the young man that Justin's developed into in his time here."
- Alford said it is not uncommon for him to maintain relationships with recruits who ultimately do not decide to commit to Ohio State, one of which being Sermon, who decided to commit to Oklahoma in 2017.

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