

Ohio State True Freshman Wide Receiver Jeremiah Smith To Start For Buckeyes In Season Opener Against Akron



Ohio State freshman wide receiver Jeremiah Smith has wowed many this summer with his unique abilities and professionalism, and the first-year sensation will now have a chance to put those skills to the test in a starting capacity.

When asked by the media if the former five-star wideout and No. 1 overall recruit in the nation will be among the three wide receivers who start for the Buckeyes, Ohio State head coach Ryan Day replied with a simple “yes.”

This comes of no surprise for those familiar with or inside the program, as Smith has repeatedly shown he is capable of producing against top talent on defense, making several eye-popping plays during fall camp against some of Ohio State’s most talented players in the secondary.

This, along with the raw skills he showed in spring camp as an early enrollee, has allowed Smith to make some history during his first few months with the program. He became the quickest freshman ever to lose his black stripe and become an “official” member of the team when he received the distinction on March 21, as well as the first ever true freshman to earn “Iron Buckeye” honors — given to those who excel in the weight room — since former head coach Urban Meyer and strength coach Mickey Marotti began both traditions in 2012.

“He takes his game very, very seriously,” Day said earlier this month. “He puts that work in off the field, and if he doesn’t make the play, he’s hard on himself. (It’s) rare that you find somebody who’s as talented, but has really good discipline and skill at that age. We haven’t played a game yet, but he’s building a lot of respect amongst his teammates for sure.”

Now, Smith will look to make more history with the Buckeyes as he looks to solidify himself as one of quarterback Will Howard’s top receiving targets this season alongside projected starters Emeka Egbuka (slot) and Carnell Tate (outside).

As a full-time starter, Smith could challenge Ohio State’s freshman wide receiver records, each of which are set by Pro Football Hall of Famer Chris Carter, who totaled 648 receiving yards, 41 receptions and

eight touchdowns as a first-year Buckeye in 1984.

While the freshman sensation Smith will earn the starting nod this Saturday at receiver, Day said there are some other wideouts who are still vying for considerable playing time, most notably slot receiver Brandon Inniss along with reserves Kojo Antwi, Jayden Ballard and Bryson Rodgers.

"You'll see all these guys play," Day said. "I'm excited to see them play. They put in a good preseason. They have a couple more days of prepping for this first week. But they're excited to get there just like everybody else."