

Ohio State Quarterback Devin Brown Impressing In Practice Ahead Of Cotton Bowl



The stage could not be bigger for the first career start of Ohio State redshirt freshman quarterback Devin Brown, but if the past couple of weeks have been any indication, the signal caller is fully prepared for the task at hand when the Cotton Bowl kicks off on Friday.

"I'm just so pumped to get out there and play," he said on Wednesday. "Even my family has asked me, 'Why are you not nervous?' I (told) my family when I was in Arizona, I really don't feel anything. I've been playing tackle football since I was seven years old. It's just a bigger stage. Same game."

It's been a rapid development for Brown, who was named the starter for the Buckeyes after former starting quarterback Kyle McCord entered the transfer portal on Dec. 4 and later committed to Syracuse, leaving Brown as the next man up for Ohio State. And the focus for him over these past few weeks and practices as he takes the reins has been utilizing the first-team snaps to find a rhythm.

"When you're not getting all the reps and trying to go in there and impress because you only have a certain amount of plays and you're stressing about that, (now) having a month of no stress," he said, "and knowing I can go out and play free and try to build with all these guys individually, I think I've just stepped up my game and it's gotten a lot better."

That shift for Brown has been evident for his teammates and coaches. Offensive coordinator/wide receivers coach Brian Hartline said that Brown has done a "great job" in the lead to the Cotton Bowl, and has utilized momentum he built during the season to continue his development.

"He's having a great bowl prep," 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."

That carefree and energetic attitude has been noticed by his teammates, with wide receiver Emeka

Egbuka calling Brown a “super positive player” that has brought something different to the team.

“Devin Brown is a super positive player,” Egbuka said. “Not the innate traits that he was gifted by God – you know, his arm, his legs, all that type of stuff. It’s the personality he’s accumulated over the field. Just being immersed in the culture of Ohio State. Something that really sticks out with Devin, he’s the first one to greet you after he makes a good pass. He’s dapping up all the linemen after great blocking. He’s just a positive energy to be around.”

And beyond providing a positive atmosphere in practice, Brown has also taken the next step when it comes to leadership on the team. Fifth-year tight end and team captain Cade Stover said as much, and believes Brown will be able to lead the Buckeyes to success.

“Once you figure out it is your spot, you take it,” Stover said. “Your attitude changes. Your demeanor changes. He’s has done a really good job of changing us.”