

Stroud Continues To Impress Texans With Leadership, Poise Ahead Of Training Camp



It has been just 75 days since the Houston Texans selected former Ohio State quarterback C.J. Stroud with the No. 2 Overall Pick in the 2023 NFL Draft.

While the two-time Heisman Trophy finalist has yet to take an NFL snap, his leadership and maturity has already permeated through a Texans' organization starving for success in 2023.

"He came into the building with these unbelievable leadership skills, and he's killing it, man," Texans veteran left tackle Laremy Tunsil told the Pat McAfee Show on July 7. "How I describe C.J. (he is a) dog. He's a straight dog. He comes in there ready to work. He handles the huddle perfectly. And he goes out there and balls. And you have to appreciate that, especially (with) a young quarterback like C.J."

"CJ Stroud came in here with unbelievable leadership skills and he's a straight dawg"@KingTunsil78 #PMSLive pic.twitter.com/xzBsive1DG

— Pat McAfee (@PatMcAfeeShow) July 7, 2023

Stroud, who began his Texans' career at rookie minicamp on May 12, said he has made a concerted effort throughout the offseason to not only acclimate himself to life as an NFL quarterback, but embrace a leadership role in the locker room.

"I feel like I've done well," Stroud told Houston's KPRC-TV on Sunday during an autograph signing in Katy, Texas. "(Organized team activities and minicamp) was something I wanted to just put my best in and just be a great leader as well as a great player, soak in the playbook, soak in coaching and be as best I can. I think that was a good start, a good routine to get into training camp and do better there."

Stroud, who will compete with second-year quarterback Davis Mills for the starting job this summer, said he has an obligation to develop chemistry with his teammates before taking the field for the team's first training camp practice on July 26.

The 21-year-old has looked to accomplish this by organizing multiple workouts outside of the practice facility during the offseason. Earlier this summer, Stroud arranged a throwing session at the University of Houston with Mills and wide receivers Robert Woods and Tank Dell.

“For me, it’s not only getting myself better, but getting everybody around me better,” Stroud said. “So I’ve been throwing with my guys. I have a couple of events that I’m going to go to with them, and be able to have some chemistry, some team bonding events with them. I’m excited to do that, because at the end of the day, that’s what it’s all about. The closest teams are the best teams.”

“That’s how you win,” Stroud continued. “So just trying to build a really tight knit team. And I want to be on the forefront of that, of course, along with my other teammates.”

Stroud’s commitment to taking on the responsibilities of a potential franchise quarterback during his first three months in Houston has impressed many around the Texans’ organization. This includes first-year head coach DeMeco Ryans, who was particularly wowed by the poise the No. 2 overall pick displayed throughout the offseason programs while navigating through struggles.

The former Ohio State signal caller’s perseverance was on full display during the final mandatory minicamp practice on June 14, where he quickly rebounded from a series of rookie mistakes.

“For a quarterback, you have to have a short memory,” Ryans told the media after the practice. “You can’t let one bad play become three bad plays, right? Put that behind you. You’re going to make some bad plays, but as long as it doesn’t matriculate into other bad plays, then I’m fine with that.”

“To see him and see his resolve, the way he was able to come back, compete, drive the offense down for a touchdown there at the end of practice, that was pretty cool to see,” Ryans continued.

Although Stroud appreciates the public praise he is receiving from teammates and coaches alike, he knows he must continue to showcase his skills as both a thrower and leader throughout training camp if he wishes to emerge as Houston’s starting quarterback in 2023.

“It means a lot,” Stroud said. “Just (for) me, I just came in and tried to be the best version of myself and just push people. I think that’s my job, to make everybody better, and just push people to the limits to where we’re going to win games. I think I come from a winning place, and I’m going to bring that attitude and that swag. So I definitely think that they’ve appreciated that and I’m going to just keep doing it, and do it better and better.”