

Texans Name C.J. Stroud Week 1 Starter



Former Ohio State quarterback and current Houston Texans rookie C.J. Stroud has been tabbed as the franchise's starting quarterback for their Week 1 matchup against the Baltimore Ravens, head coach DeMeco Ryans announced after the team's 17-13 win over the New Orleans Saints Sunday night. Stroud, who Houston selected with the No. 2 overall pick in the 2023 NFL Draft, beat out second-year quarterback and last season's starting signal caller Davis Mills for the position.

CJ7. QB1. pic.twitter.com/K600mHOFQT

— Houston Texans (@HoustonTexans) August 28, 2023

"C.J. will be our Week 1 starter in Baltimore," Ryans said. "It's been, over the course of the entire process of OTAs, training camp, preseason games, just seeing the complete product and knowing C.J.'s desire to continue to get better."

Stroud, a two-time Heisman Trophy finalist who amassed 8,123 passing yards and 85 touchdowns across two seasons under center at Ohio State, started each of the Texans' three preseason games in August, completing 11 of his 20 passes for 89 yards, one touchdown and an interception. The Inland Empire, Calif. native got off to a slow start to his Texans' career, tossing an interception in just his second NFL passing attempt on Aug. 10 against the New England Patriots. But he finished his three-game campaign strong, completing seven of his 12 pass attempts for 60 yards in Houston's second preseason game against the Miami Dolphins on Aug. 19, then converting on two of his four attempts along with his first-career NFL touchdown pass in the preseason finale Sunday.

With Ryans' announcement, Stroud will now become the second Buckeye quarterback to lead an NFL franchise under center in 2023, joining former teammate Justin Fields, who will start for the Chicago Bears after doing so for 25 games across his first two seasons with the franchise. Stroud looks to lead a Texans team that has amassed just a 11-38-1 record and failed to reach the postseason in the past three seasons — an opportunity that he says he is prepared to assume.

"It was definitely a blessing," Stroud said. "Something that I think I worked for and definitely earned."

But at the same time, nothing else really changes. I'm still going to work like the way I'm working even more now. I'm blessed enough to be able to be a starter so young in this league, which isn't the easiest thing to do. But I know my coaches have trust and faith in me, and I'm going to go out there and try to do my best."