

Tuimoloau Talks Traits Of Defensive Linemen



There's a certain mentality required to play on either line as a football player.

Every play, you are going to collide with somebody. Sometimes multiple people. It's a grueling position that sets the foundation for everyone else on whichever side of the ball you play, whether that's offensive or defensive line.

"It's a decision you have to make on whether the trenches are for you," Ohio State defensive end J.T. Tuimoloau said at Big Ten Media Days July 26.

Amidst all the discussion of the Buckeyes' upcoming season and a changing college football landscape, Tuimoloau got a chance to field some questions about the very essence of what it takes to play his position.

For him, it starts with physical preparation, not just in the training and weight rooms but everywhere else.

"As much wear as you put on your body, you have to care for your body even more. Be in the training room, resting (properly), all of the above."

Of course, there's more than just ensuring you're body is in the proper shape to take the field and make an impact. Offensive and defensive lines place a paramount importance on the mental side of game as well.

A large part of that is chemistry. When lines are functioning as a unit is when they yield their best results.

"It's both. More physically, but you have to be mentally prepared," Tuimoloau said. "You've got to be willing to get tossed around, but you've also got to have a lot of knowledge of the game. Defensive line, a lot of people say it's just taking hits and giving hits. But you've got to know what the defensive end is doing, the nose tackle for everybody to flow. You've got to realize, 'Okay, he has to do this, so I have to do this.'"

It's also a matter of playing within oneself, though, Tuimoloau added. Sometimes attacking too hard can leave a player out of position or overthinking things.

“When you’re in the game, you’re like, ‘I want to get everything,’” Tuimoloau said. “Sometimes you’ve just got to play your technique, play your job, play your role and everything will fall right into place.”

Overall, Tuimoloau is narrowing his focus on maximizing his own play as a defensive lineman entering 2023. “This offseason has been about getting everything physically ready, mentally ready, and just controlling what I can control,” Tuimoloau said.