

Will Howard Officially Named Starting Quarterback For Season Opener Against Akron



On Thursday, Ohio State head coach Ryan Day officially named Will Howard the starting quarterback for the Buckeyes for the season opener against Akron on Aug. 31.

“Will Howard will start the first game against Akron. He is our starting quarterback,” Day said.

“Chip (Kelly) has done a great job of rolling the quarterbacks from the first day of spring, all the way to now,” Day added. “When you take the aggregate of all the numbers, Will graded out significantly ahead of the other guys in team work.”

Howard came to Ohio State as a transfer from Kansas State over the offseason, where he started for two years and finished his four-year Wildcats career with 5,786 yards passing, 48 touchdowns and 25 interceptions while adding 921 yards and 19 touchdowns on the ground.

Devin Brown will be the backup to Howard with the battle for the starting spot going the same as it did last season for him when current Syracuse quarterback Kyle McCord won the job over Brown and held it for the season.

Howard said on Aug. 6 that he has felt much more comfortable in the fall now that spring ball is under his belt and he has had more time to learn the offense and get into shape.

“I feel like in the spring I was at the beginning drinking from a fire hose, especially with the way the offense was installed,” Howard said. “But I think that was good for me... Now I’m starting to get my stride, and now coming into fall camp it’s been completely different. You can’t replicate actually doing it. The only way to do it is to do it and go out there and get reps.”

The move to name Howard the starter was expected for multiple reasons, one being that he was taking the majority of the first-team reps when Ohio State’s first few fall practices were open to the media. It’s also not a big surprise that it came earlier than it did last year. Day said he wanted to make sure it didn’t last into the season like it did last year when he didn’t officially name McCord the starter until before the Week 3 game.

“I think the way things turned out last year, it kind of went into the first couple games of the season, that’s not ideal,” Day said in May during an appearance on 97.1 The Fan’s Bishop and Friends. “I

wouldn't like to do that again this year. But it's going to come down to playing the best players."

But it wasn't only because Day felt rushed to name a starter that he named Howard as the No. 1 on Thursday. He feels Howard has stood out above the other quarterbacks on the roster.

"We're excited about Will being the starter," Day said. "Will has taken a command of the offense, I believe. You feel him in the huddle. You feel his experience. He did a really good job of changing his body in the offseason. He's become a threat both with his legs and with his arm. The more he understands what he's doing out there and what he does, he really executing very well."