



CORNERBACK JIMMY SMITH EAGER TO GET BACK ON FIELD

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The second-year cornerback has missed the last five games with a sports hernia injury.



For more than a month, Ravens cornerback **Jimmy Smith** 🏈 has spent the bulk of his time in the team's training room. The second-year cornerback has been relegated to the sidelines because of a sports hernia injury that has kept him out of the last five games.

But now he's close to getting back on the field.

Smith returned to practice last week and has been a full participant this week. He could potentially make his return Sunday against the Denver Broncos.

"Absolutely," Smith responded when asked if he's eager to return. "I've missed 10 games in my first two years. Anything I need to get on the field is what I want to do. For some reason my path has just led me to the training room."

Smith had a sports hernia operation following the Week 10 victory over the Raiders, which he sat out because of the injury. He also missed five games during his rookie season after suffering an ankle injury on the opening kickoff of the season.

Since returning to practice last week, Smith has responded well to the running and contact.

"I feel really good," he said. "No setbacks since the surgery. I've been out there running pretty fast and moving like I

should, so I feel pretty good.”

The Ravens have pushed Smith in practice, as Defensive Coordinator Dean Pees said he’s not looking to ease his players back into action. He wants to give Smith a full workload in practice to see what he can handle, and then determine whether he’s ready to return for game action.

“I think you have to go out there and see what he can do,” Pees said. “If they can’t, then OK, I know they can’t. To sit there and try to piecemeal everything in there, it just curtails you so much and it hurts the rest of the defense. I think you just put the stuff in, you go out there, you practice it and then you make the determination as a coach if this guy can get it done with what we want to do. If he can’t, then you curtail it for Sunday, but not during the week. You have to find out.”

The injuries have made for a frustrating start to Smith’s career. The first-round pick came in with big expectations last season, but he has started only five games in his young career.

Despite the injuries, Smith isn’t discouraged.

“I’m not going to sit here and say, ‘Woe is me,’” Smith said. “I’m definitely sick of sitting in the training room. I don’t like the injuries part. But I just want to get out there and do what I can do. Everybody has a different road.”

Whenever the Ravens are able to get Smith back on the field, it will be a boost for a defense that has **been hit hard with injuries**. **Corey Graham** 🏈, who was the No. 4 corner to open the season, has been starting since Smith and **Lardarius Webb** 🏈 both went down with injuries.

Recently-acquired defensive back **Chris Johnson** 🏈 has also been working as the nickel cornerback after the Ravens signed him to add some depth in the secondary.

With games against Pro Bowlers Peyton Manning, Eli Manning and Andy Dalton to finish the regular season, the Ravens need all the help they can get in the secondary and putting Smith back in the lineup could enhance that unit.

“Obviously it helps having five instead of four,” Smith said. “The depth, the talent level. I think that me coming back and being able to perform at a high level will definitely help our team for our playoff push, especially with all the injuries.”

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