

B1G Coaches Teleconference: Ohio State's Urban Meyer, Purdue's Jeff Brohm Preview Prime-Time Matchup Saturday



Before both teams returned to practice Tuesday, Ohio State's Urban Meyer and Purdue's Jeff Brohm appeared on the Big Ten coaches teleconference. From a season-ending loss for the Buckeyes (7-0, 4-0) to an opportunity for the Boilermakers (3-3, 2-1), the two coaches shared updates and more highlights ahead of Saturday's 7:30 p.m. ET kickoff on ABC at Ross-Ade Stadium.

Urban Meyer

- Without junior defensive end Nick Bosa, Meyer looked to everyone else in the rotation to step up down the stretch of the season. He mentioned "the guys that have" been at the forefront of the reps through seven games.
 - "(Freshman) Tyreke Smith, who is a very talented guy, is a little more established and experienced but is getting better every week," Meyer said. "Obviously, you have (junior) Jonathon Cooper and (sophomore) Chase Young, (junior) Jashon Cornell and (freshman) Tyler Friday are the guys right now."
- In light of Bosa's decision to withdraw from the university and focus on rehabilitation and recovery for the 2019 NFL draft, Meyer was unsure of whether or not the same might occur for future college football players.
 - "I don't know," Meyer said. "I can understand, but I haven't really thought about it. I think every person, every individual is different. But I don't know."
- When he met with the Bosa family and learned of the decision, Meyer called the conversation "very emotional." Meyer said he has not addressed his players about the team captain's season-ending absence yet and remains unsure of how often — if at all — Bosa will be back around the program going forward.
 - "We love Nick," Meyer said. "The Bosa family has been, obviously, awesome for Ohio State and the program. Nick is a first-class guy. He's very strong in his fate. He's very strong in academically. So it was very emotional. I was hopeful, like all of us were, but I can't say I was that surprised."
- Elsewhere on defense, Damon Arnette is questionable with an undisclosed injury after the junior cornerback started Oct. 13 vs. Minnesota and left the game. While Arnette's status remains

unknown four days from kickoff, Meyer was unsure of which player — likely between sophomore Jeffrey Okudah and redshirt freshman Shaun Wade — might fill in as a starter.

- “He’s a good player,” Meyer said of Arnette. “Obviously, when you’re facing a team that throws it as well as Purdue, that’s a key guy.”
- Along the defensive line, sophomore defensive tackle Haskell Garrett kicked out to defensive end and received snaps at the position against Minnesota. Meyer, however, said Garrett’s appearance on the edge was to fill a void in the rotation with Cooper out due to injury.
 - “That was really primarily because Cooper was out for the game,” Meyer said. “So we’ll need (Garrett) inside as well.” Meyer added that the defensive line as a whole in Bosa’s absence the past four games has “played pretty good.”

Jeff Brohm

- In his opening statement, Brohm said Purdue is “excited about this upcoming weekend” with Ohio State as “a great opportunity to play a tremendous football team that is outstanding.” Brohm added that the Buckeyes have “great talent, they play hard, extremely well-coached, a lot of great players and the great thing is they know how to win” and that “they do it every week.”
 - “We’ve got our hands full, but I know this is a great opportunity for our players to play a team of this caliber,” Brohm said. “Great opportunity for our fans to show up and have a great time. Hopefully, we can go out on the field and play hard and keep it close and get this thing to the second half and see where it goes from there.”
- The Boilermakers’ offense has taken off with David Blough back as the full-time quarterback over junior Elijah Sindelar. The fifth-year senior is 128 for 187 (68.4 percent) with 1,695 yards (282.5 yards per game) — third in the Big Ten behind Northwestern’s Clayton Thorson and Ohio State sophomore Dwayne Haskins — and 10 touchdowns to two interceptions across six games.
 - “The first thing is I’ve done a better job,” Brohm said. “I probably wasn’t as aggressive with him at the beginning and didn’t give him as many opportunities to throw the ball vertical up the field. We went into the Missouri game knowing we had to throw the ball a lot, make some big plays. Otherwise, it’d be a long day. So we kind of opened up the playbook there and he responded. He did a great job, made some plays, put up some big numbers and then we’ve just kind of taken it off from there. He’s a great young man, does everything as hard as he can, gives great effort, a great teammate, great leader and he’s played tougher. He’s hung in the pocket a little bit more. He hasn’t just gone to his check down right away, but definitely he’s been in a groove lately and he feels more confident and we’re happy for him that he has been playing well.”
- With 330.8 yards per game, Purdue boasts the country’s seventh-best passing offense. The Buckeyes, on the other hand, rank 59th nationally with 221.6 yards allowed per game through the air and 13.61 yards per completion. Brohm brought up an interesting point on how the Boilermakers approach attacking Ohio State for big plays.
 - “I think Ohio State’s a great football team,” Brohm said. “You know what they do sometimes is they try to take away some of your easy throws and make it throw it over their head, which I don’t blame them because the chances of completing those are a lot less. But with that, every once in a while, you’re going to hit some of those and that’s what happened to them a few times. So we’re going to have to kind of have the same approach. If we’re not getting our quick throws because they’re up there tight on us, then we hit them up the field.”

I think that they're 7-0, so they're doing a great job with what they're doing. But because of their aggressive style on defense and their ability to take away the quick throws, you are going to be susceptible to a little more deep shots if the team can complete them and get open. That's kind of been the issue — are we going to be good enough to get open? Are we going to be good enough to make those throws? Are we going to be good enough to block long enough to throw it vertically up the field? That's a concern. So all of those things come into play, but without question, we have to find ways to create some big plays."

- Purdue has hosted two prime-time games — Aug. 30 vs. Northwestern and Sept. 15 vs. Missouri — but its third against the Buckeyes is building a unique buzz in West Lafayette, Ind., according to Brohm.
 - "Without question, there's a lot of buzz around town," Brohm said. "There's a lot of buzz around the community and on campus, and yes, we're looking forward to it. I think it'll be a great atmosphere. I think our fans will be into the game. I think they're eager to continue to, hopefully, see Purdue continue to improve and work our way up the ladder. They understand this is a huge test and a great opportunity to play a very traditional powerhouse that's 7-0 right now and the No. 2 team in the country and rightfully so, so I think they're excited to not only see us play but to see Ohio State play and see the matchup and just see where we stack up and have a lot of fun on a prime-time game, which we don't get here as much as some of the other schools. So it is a great opportunity for all of our fans to come out and have a great time and hopefully watch a great football game and hopefully we can keep it close and hang in there as long as we can."
- Brohm broke down Ohio State's firepower on offense, starting with Haskins and spreading out to other weapons at the quarterback's disposal, which creates Purdue's biggest obstacle yet against the pass. Between close losses to Northwestern (31-27) and Missouri (40-37), the Boilermakers faced two of college football's better aerial attacks with Thorson taking charge for the Wildcats and Drew Lock leading the Tigers.
 - "They've done a great job," Brohm said. "They've got a great quarterback, who — even though he's a great athlete, he can throw the football and he likes to throw the football. That's kind of what he wants to do. They've got good receivers, have a ton of experience and they've become a pass-first team that sets up the run by throwing the ball. But if you're going to try to just take away the run, they're going to throw the ball every play. They've done it successfully and they've put up a lot of yards. Their quarterback, that's what he likes to do — throw the ball. So this is a challenge for us. This will be the first, really, team that we've faced that I think is this prolific in the passing game, has been this productive. We had some struggles earlier in the season, giving up a lot of passing yards, so it is a concern. We're going to have to find ways to put a little pressure on the quarterback, try to make him feel uncomfortable and give him some different looks. If we don't, it's going to be a long day for us. But I think their offense has played outstanding, they've got great talent and their quarterback is definitely taking charge and ran with it."

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