

WATCH: Video, Transcript Of Urban Meyer's Monday Presser Previewing Ohio State-Indiana



With the win over Penn State in the past, head coach Urban Meyer moved on Monday when he turned his focus to Saturday vs. Indiana. Ahead of the 4 p.m. kickoff on FOX, Meyer shared his final thoughts from the comeback against the Nittany Lions (4-1, 1-1) as he looked forward to the next Big Ten task for the No. 3 Buckeyes (5-0, 2-0) in the Hoosiers (4-1, 1-1).

Urban Meyer

COACH MEYER: A couple of comments first, as I try to do every time. Sincerely on behalf of our players and staff, Buckeye Nation was awesome. They are up in that right-hand corner up there. But thanks for following us.

Also great respect for our opponent, that was a real one, that was a very talented team. And that quarterback, I just always try to do that, because Otis is always — when I talked to Coach Schiano today, that's a competitive guy. And like I said, I don't know him personally, competed against him for several years. So very competitive player, great player.

With that said, review champions with you. On defense, Jonathan Cooper, played very well. Davon Hamilton, Malik Harrison, Pete Warner, Tuf Borland, Kendall Sheffield, Jeffrey Okudah, Jordan Fuller. Defensive player of the game was Chase Young. And three tackles, three assists, three tackles for loss, two sacks, two QB hurries, and two QB knock downs.

Ohio State offense champions, JK Dobbins, 20 touches for almost 220 yards, two touchdowns; Weber played well, still battling through that foot, but getting closer to a hundred percent this week.

Receivers, Ben Victor, I've been telling you about him the last couple of weeks. His 47 yard reception was a game changer for us. Johnnie Dixon, KJ Hill, and Austin Mack. Those guys are playing with selflessness and blocking. You remember in 2014 I made comments about that group, and this is still too early, but there's a lot of similarities between that group. And obviously Spencer was a lead guy back then and I'm looking at these guys, some of the things they're doing A to Z, with the receiver play on special teams is phenomenal.

Offensive linemen, Isaiah Pryor, Michael Jordan. And the player of the game which is incredible, did have one catch, but Terry McLaurin was offensive player of the game. And what's the culture, what what's the expectation level of the play here, he's the epitome right now. Once again I use the word Evan Spencer around here, I've been told I get carried away at times, I do, I get carried away with guys like Terry McLaurin, him and Harris and those guys just go so hard.

Leads me into this. Player of the game on special teams, we have four of them; Jeffrey Okudah, he had three tackles on punt, and he was the first out on kickoff. He was performing at an elite, elite level. And we've punted far too many times, nine punts, 50 yard, that just do the math on that, but that's a lot of yards. Throughout the course of the game against a very good team, an excellent returner, and also playing all those plays on defense.

Justin Hilliard is also co-player of the game. Kickoff was phenomenal. And punt was phenomenal. And he's on all four units. Elite player for us.

Terry McLaurin, he had three tackles on punt, he dialed the punt on the two yard line. And just once again those guys on the sideline, him and Okudah were just blown out to the point where the most average human beings would pull themselves out of the game, especially when Damon Arnette went down in the fourth quarter, more stress on Jeffrey Okudah.

Our punter, I can't imagine one better, I haven't studied the country, he had nine punts, which is far too many, 47 yard net. I want to say two return yards on three attempts, I think that's what it was.

So that's where we're at. I could go on for the next hour and a half and talk about special teams because that was significant as anything, especially the punt — our punt coverage. That's elite right now, and it's driven by two guys that are also starters on offensive defense. We still need to get more production out of some people that have been with the program for a year or two or it freshmen, and are talented, but they've got to play.

Game 6 coming up, and we are banged up, like every team in the country. So our guys have to contribute in some way or the other. That was the meeting yesterday and that will be the continuation as we continue going forward.

Q. Last year you with huge comebacks, and high stakes, what's the message to the team this week to make sure their level remains what it needs to be?

COACH MEYER: We haven't had that conversation yet. We will. That's real. That's — especially in places like Ohio State where it will be a really good team, and now prepare for another really good team. That will be the message.

Q. When you look back at that game, do you think —

COACH MEYER: I only look forward at all.

Q. What specifically look do you need to shore up, fix, whatever, to be effective down the stretch?

COACH MEYER: That's a great question. You just have to evaluate the plays. And on punt, punt was really good, other than two plays. That's not acceptable. We gave up 90 plus yard reception in man coverage, we had the quarterback that was performing one of his best games in his career, some was scramble, some was direct run. When you have that kind of player, that's a hard thing to defend. We also threw on point. So the answer is you have to play better. I think that's the same conversation we've

had. Now we have some new players, but it's week six.

Q. Defensive coaches have been saying the guys they're still growing, maybe more than usual. And you've got an experienced quarterback. I'm wondering if this team is farther from its ceiling than most teams usually would be at this point?

COACH MEYER: I think that's a great question, because you're 5-0. And we haven't played close to our best game. It's all relative. Where were you? We're a great environment, but we made that with the players we had.

So that was two sledgehammers going against each other, two very talented teams. So I think you watch the film and at times awesome. The fourth quarter on offense was perfect. Not perfect, but well done. The first two quarters, you have you can't say you've got to do this, you've got to do this. Look at who you're playing against. They did a very good job with what they were doing which was basically pressuring us 80 percent of the time, and we didn't handle it well. We ended handling it well the second half.

This team, to answer your question, there is a tremendous ceiling on this, and we haven't got close to it.

Q. You mentioned Damon Arnette. And Dre'Mont Jones, how were they —

COACH MEYER: It was a tough game. Dre'Mont is probable. He has a strain, but he's very probable. Damon Arnette is probable. And Landers play himself and Mike Weber didn't play himself. They're closer, but better than last week.

Q. I'm wondering from Dwayne struggling, and then comes up big, what did you learn about him, what did you learn about your team?

COACH MEYER: Yeah, those are usually conversations after the season. Because we're right in it, and our focus is, with all due respect, everybody here starts reflecting, from a really good Indiana team, at times we'll have that chat.

Q. Why not mix in some quarterback sneaks for certain situations?

COACH MEYER: A lot of different reasons. You see teams a lot, that's operating 99.999 out of the shotgun, and they go to center and they drop the ball, just because you don't do it. We've had those conversations over and over again. Jones, 14, I think, those are questions — I'm just answering your question.

Q. Why not just practice it more? Seems like such an effective play?

COACH MEYER: Duly noted (laughter.) Thank you.

Q. (Inaudible.)

COACH MEYER: Elite blocking. Great is probably not a strong enough adjective for what's going on out there. Ben Victor, I'm saying this, because I love him, darn near refused to block, didn't play him a lot. He has one of the biggest blocks in the game Saturday. On left sideline. I can't remember who caught the ball, I don't care who caught the ball, I care about the blocking. It was elite. We had a little moment together with the other receivers and Ben Victor and he's become one of us. That's a pretty cool thing.

Q. We haven't seen a lot of quarterback sneaks. We saw a lot of that on Saturday. How much of that is Ryan Day's influence?

COACH MEYER: A lot. We're a different team. The drop back pass, we're a drop back line. So what's the natural progression, it's tailback's slow screen. That was one of the big plays, the slow screen was

big.

Q. You talked about Terry McLaurin, what he's done, how important is it for you to recognize someone like him as the offensive player of the game and make that example, it's not just about catching passes?

COACH MEYER: Petit-Frere has always been an unselfish player. It's the same thing when you — people — with a short touchdown, you go hug the lineman. If not, you're not going to score anymore. That's — it's the selfless, it's the fellowship of a team. That's what it's all about. So we spent — usually it's a 30 minute team meeting, probably 45 minutes yesterday, and every player on the team watched the play. Every player on the team. And there's two reasons you do that, No. 1 is to show and reward the efforts of a player, but I'm also talking to that player, that it's four star guy that makes it real good, but why are you not running down on punts, explain that to the team right now. Those are hard conversations to have, especially when you see Okudah and Terry.

We do that, and what I do with you and minimal compared to what I do with the team, because that's a belief of our program.

Q. KJ Hill had a knack for big plays in big games, what is it about him —

COACH MEYER: Just what you said, he's a tough dude, man, he's a really good football player on the bubble screen, and he's a great blocker. He can do it all.

Q. Whenever you talk about having the drop back pass this year, you saw Trace running out there, we know how successful you've been with that. Is there a part of you that just still is not a hundred percent comfortable with the idea of you just don't have a quarterback, he's great, but he's not going to run 20 times. Does that still bother you at all?

COACH MEYER: That's a good question (laughter.)

Q. My guess would be it is.

COACH MEYER: Okay. (Laughter.) We're 5-0. I have two very good coaches, more than that, I have a very good offensive staff. It's comfort zone like that short yardage that I've been used to. People say are you going to run the quarterback again, but usually we see the official do this (indicating.)

Those are great questions. So that's our philosophy, who's the best quarterback, Dwayne Haskins is playing his you know what off. Keep doing it. One thing, I'm also comfortable seeing the screens come out of his hands so fast. Seeing him with pinpoint accuracy. There's certain times of the game I'm used to having something in my pocket that it's not there. We had two situations Saturday that we haven't figured that out. One we didn't make it, one we made it by that (indicating.) So those are all questions that we have.

Q. You maybe have a philosophy as a coach, but you do what is best. This is that action, right?

COACH MEYER: Sure. This is exactly that. We're throwing from 340 a game, something like that, and we're winning games. We're taking care of the football, and throwing the ball and utilizing some very good players. And he's a very good player.

Q. I'm sure times in your career you've had teams midway through the season they're playing really well, but maybe you have an idea and then you have times maybe we're making some mistakes, but there's a lot more there.

COACH MEYER: With all due respect, we went on the road twice, against TCU, a top ten team on the road and Penn State on the road. I don't know any school in the country that did that this year. We

walked away with wins. Also we lost one of the top football players in America on defense. We're just coaching our tails off to make the guys better. Young players have to contribute. The ceiling here is — we don't have time. We are just working on what we have to worry about.

Q. Do you know how good this team is already, but —

COACH MEYER: Not even close to where we are.

Q. We've all seen Chase Young, the game he had on Saturday, how much of a breakthrough is that and what is his ceiling?

COACH MEYER: He's had a little bit of an ankle, but he's been playing through it. You saw glimpses. He played outstanding Saturday. And that ceiling word again, he's just a second year player that's playing very well. And he has unlimited potential.

Q. I guess it's the same situation, a huge win, against a team that can be dangerous.

COACH MEYER: Very dangerous.

Q. What is your message?

COACH MEYER: Work really hard Tuesday and we'll have that chat.

Q. You probably know this, but have you had any interaction with (Inaudible.)

COACH MEYER: I did text him.

Q. (Inaudible.)

COACH MEYER: Really happy for him. Those are two guys in my coaching career who are my favorite people for coaches.

Q. Last week you talked about the linebackers, performing at their best, was there a message this week to them or about them?

COACH MEYER: Play better and let's get them in position to be successful.

Q. Also, when you're playing a game on the road against Penn State or an opponent that you recruit against, how aware are you of players that are visiting that weekend?

A. Mark Antonio director of recruiting is really — it's all about punting and third downs and all that.

Q. (No microphone.) Does that continue being a concern for you?

COACH MEYER: Yes, it is, we haven't made a final decision. We have three capables. This is going to be a big week in practice to determine what happens.

Q. Will you have conversations with Greg, how often does that spot come up, are there common issues that you guys have seen?

COACH MEYER: Yes, when one breaks you've got to get him down. We've had a history of getting guys down. It's not been perfect all the time. We're a very aggressive coverage team. And there's been examples, those are things we're working on.

Q. When you approach wide receivers about what it takes to play, and you broach the idea of blocking, what is the conversation? What is it that you express to them? When do they usually get it?

COACH MEYER: Well, depends on the individual. Usually Mike Thomas it took a while. There's a right

of passage, and usually four months special teams before you catch a pass.

Ben Victor is starting on kickoff return now. He never did that before. He's playing — it was brought to my attention, I shared that with our team yesterday, this all triggered when he started four months on special teams, he had a sense of value, a sense of respect. That whole thing about respect. You've got to earn it. You're going to go block, and be on special teams, and then good things happen.

Q. When in your background, did you come to that conclusion, that you're going to be a wide receiver, you're going to play for me. What was it that spurred that kind of thinking?

COACH MEYER: I think Ohio roots. The toughness, the part that's never been changed when you run a screen, by the way, on the last touchdown you block three people. KJ did a really good job. He handled the ball and high stepped it into the end zone, with all due respect to KJ, that's fine, but that's just about part of the DNA.

Q. When you look at Indiana, what jumped out at you from a defensive standpoint?

COACH MEYER: They played very well. Their scheme is outstanding, I think they're very well coached. And they have answers for everything. That's — we're just knee deep in it now, that's fine, initial reaction.

Q. Do you expect teams to attack your defense on the edge? They came out last year. Do you expect that to continue?

COACH MEYER: Depends on the quarterback. They have a guy that's a dual in Ramsey, he's a gutsy player, man, and he's one of those guys that creates something out of nothing. Depends on what you're facing. Last year's quarterback that they started, he was dropping seeds on people. This has the other element.

Q. Did you review the targeting calls on Isaiah, and what is your take away?

COACH MEYER: We turned it in, and came back and first of all, you can't appeal it. I didn't know that. You can't appeal it. I watched — someone showed me on the phone. I understand it. Do I agree with it? I don't have time to argue with it. The call was made. Once again you talk about safety in players. We're all in here. There's no intent. There is no targeting, and we had a couple of those around here where the guys going to try to wipe them out, if you watch him he's going for the ball and contact was made. No time to argue.

Q. As a coach in a moment when you guys do a go ahead touchdown, how hard is it to get the two point conversion in general in college football. Seems like that play is tough. Do you discuss having a specific play that you can have —

COACH MEYER: Every week, usually have two or three in your pocket. We got moved back on a delay game. That's another issue. All that chaos going on during the game and we've got to practice that. And that was the game winning touchdown. We have to get organized, get them on the field and go. I don't know the percentage. It used to be about 50 percent. That you've got to make a two point play. But we have to work on that.

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