

Al Washington Talks Linebackers, Spring Ball



Ohio State linebackers coach Al Washington spoke to media on March 25 for the first time since his offseason flirtation with Tennessee's vacant defensive coordinator position. He spoke at length about Ohio State's linebacker room and what he's seen from his players early in spring football.

- Washington said that the linebackers are "looking very strong." He praised the attitude of the room and said that the competition level is very high. He said that the youth of the room has been a good thing for development.
- Washington said that the four seniors that departed from Ohio State set a great example for the younger players in the room.
- Washington praised Tommy Eichenberg, and said that he's trending towards being "an elite player" because of his work ethic and drive.
- Washington said that having a full spring camp this season is going to be huge for young players that didn't have the opportunity to pick up reps last season with COVID pauses.
- Washington praised the coaches around him and credited them as the thing that make Ohio State special to him. "The people here make you better. Everything at Ohio State is expected to be excellent." He went on to call Ohio State his home.
- Washington said that he wasn't happy about his private dealings with Tennessee being made public but mentioned that he's "moved on."
- Ohio State's linebackers "have work to do" but have impressed Washington so far.
- When asked about his professional aspirations and how staying at Ohio State helps them, Washington said that staying at a place like Ohio State will put him in a position to actualize his goals. He said that he does want to be a coordinator and a head coach, but that timing is important and that Ohio State is where he should be right now.
- "I just felt for me, personally, that it was the best place for me to be right now."
- Washington said that Dallas Gant has been "one of the leaders in the room" this winter and spring.
- He declined to declare Ohio State's depth chart but said that Gant would "definitely be in the mix."
- When asked about the SAM position, Washington said that Ohio State is going to play to whatever skillset the player filling the spot has, and that it doesn't have any specific requirements.
- Washington said that everyone, even the "best of the best" needs reps and that Gant, who is injured, would have benefitted from having more reps this spring.