

Head Coach Ryan Day Previews Ohio State's Big Ten Championship Matchup With Wisconsin



Ohio State head coach Ryan Day and Wisconsin head coach Paul Chryst met with the media for an hour on Friday afternoon to preview their matchup in the Big Ten Championship Game on Saturday (8 p.m. on FOX).

Here's a brief recap of what Day had to say:

- Day said he thinks Wisconsin head coach Paul Chryst is one of the best coaches in the Big Ten and in the country.
- Day said quarterback Justin Fields has had "a good, strong week of practice." Added the training staff has done a good job getting him ready throughout the week.
- Day on chance to become the first program in conference history to win three outright Big Ten titles in a row. "It would certainly mean a lot."
- Day said defensive end Jonathon Cooper will travel with the team but will not dress after he decided to redshirt this season. "We don't want to risk putting him on the field." Added again that he deserves to have a full senior year.
- Day said they're going to stick with freshman wide receiver Garrett Wilson as kick returner. "We believe in him. We trust in him. We believe he has the ability to be an elite returner."
- Day said Fields will be 100 percent ready to roll against Wisconsin. "If there was any question on that, we would certainly take precautions." Said there's no comparison between Fields and J.T. Barrett's knee injuries ahead of the 2017 Big Ten championship because the latter had a procedure done.
- Day said stopping Wisconsin running back Jonathan Cooper will be a team effort. "We've got to do a good job of being physical."
- Of all the credit Fields and defensive end Chase Young have received for Ohio State's undefeated start this season, Day said the thing he's most proud of is their leadership.
- Day on Ohio State's defensive coaching staff: "The whole staff and the way they've built chemistry has been really good."
- On getting cornerback Shaun Wade back this week after missing the win over Michigan on Nov. 30: "He brings a certain level of calmness to our defense."
- Given the in-season rematch against Wisconsin, Day said you can't change up too much and you

can't stay the same.

- Day said the blocking along the offensive line has been excellent, but adds that running back J.K. Dobbins has run with an edge and chip on his shoulder this season.
- Day reiterates the March Madness-type feel of the last few weeks leading into the Big Ten championship and potential playoff run.
- On center Josh Myers' impact on the offensive line. "I can't really put it into words. He's as good as I've been around at that age."
- Day said he's bothered by the national lack of respect for Dobbins' game. "I know if it was me, I'd ask what else I needed to do."
- Day said a great team accelerates through the finish line. "We don't talk about what's next, we stay in the moment."
- Day said the team hasn't put together a dominant performance in all three phases (offense, defense and special teams) in the same game. "I still don't think we've played our best football yet."
- Day on Fields: "His family has done a tremendous job of grounding him. He has a tremendous approach, and he's humble. But deep inside of him, there's a fire in there. He's very, very competitive."