



## Head Coach Ryan Day Previews Ohio State's Offseason

In his first appearance since the night Ohio State lost to Alabama in the national championship, head coach Ryan Day met with the media on Friday morning to discuss the Buckeyes' offseason plans, co-defensive coordinator Greg Mattison's retirement, the looming quarterback competition and more.

Here's a bullet-point recap of what Day had to say:

- Day thanked everybody in the Woody Hayes Athletic Center for making last season happen. "From our medical personnel, sports medicine, strength and conditioning, everybody in the building. You can't just point one person out because you'd be slighting somebody. Without all of those people, none of this happens."
- Day announced Mattison's retirement, noting that they don't have a plan in place just yet for replacing him. "I can't thank him enough for what he's done."
- Asked about looking to the transfer portal, but that any potential additions have to be a good culture fit. "We're always going to be looking to see if we can upgrade in different areas," but also noted he doesn't see any significant holes.
- Day feels it's important for the Buckeyes to get away from the facility and see other people. "Guys are still recharging."
- Day said the early enrollees who are arriving this weekend must quarantine for a week before they can do anything with the program. "Once Feb. 1 hits, that's when we start to get back to work."
- Day said he's proud of everyone in the program for following proper health protocols this season. "We did not cut any corners. We can't just buzz by that because so much was done to make that happen."
- Day on the players who are holding off on the NFL and returning to school for one more year, including wide receiver Chris Olave, tight end Jeremy Ruckert, offensive tackle Thayer Munford and defensive tackle Haskell Garrett, among others: "It gives us a huge boost as we head into the spring."

- Day on Garrett specifically: "I still think Haskell has a lot of area to grow." Noted he had COVID early in the summer and then got shot, so he didn't have a normal offseason by any means.
- Day on the gap between the Buckeyes and Crimson Tide: "The gap is a lot closer now than if we had not played a season. If Alabama had gone through this season and we had not played a season, the gap would have been really hard to catch."
- Day said he wishes freshman quarterbacks Jack Miller and C.J. Stroud were further along. "I wish we were further along. I wish they got more game reps." Noted spring practice will be important as they determine next year's starter and that neither is farther along than the other.
- Day said Ohio State has been in contact with the NFL about setting up a pro day.
- Day on Mattison: "He was a steady force. Just a calming force. Somebody that I leaned on. Just an unbelievable person."
- Day on the 15 early enrollees: "I think all these guys want to come in here and compete."
- Day said he does not know when recruits will be allowed on campus next, as the recruiting dead period runs through April 15 and he has not heard any updates.
- Day said they don't have much room left in the 2021 class. "We're pretty full right now. Pretty healthy roster. That can always change. We might have one spot available. We would probably have a spot for one guy."
- Day said Ruckert coming back is really important. "I think his best football is ahead of him."
- Day said Olave's return is also important because of his attention to detail. "He saw Terry McLaurin, he saw Parris Campbell blocking on the perimeter and doing the little things." Expects him to have more of a voice next season.
- Day said he spent a few extra days in Florida after the title game, then went to New Hampshire to see family before returning to Ohio to get the kids back to school and for himself to get back to work.
- Day said he's expected to see the quarterback competition unfold and that it should take care of itself as practice goes along. "Those guys are going to roll and they'll get as many reps as they can."
- Day on athletic director Gene Smith, whose name has reportedly been connected to an opening for Pac-12 commissioner. "Gene and I have had no conversations about that. If anything like that ever happened, that would not be good." Said Smith means the world to him and his family and that his leadership has been unwavering.

***For four free issues of the print edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin, no card required, sign up at the link here: <http://www.buckeyesports.com/subscribe-4issue-trial/>***