

Hear From Ohio State Head Coach Ryan Day Following Monday's Practice



Ohio State head coach Ryan Day met with the media for about 20 minutes on Monday morning, at which time he named Justin Fields the Buckeyes' starting quarterback for the season opener against Florida Atlantic, announced team captains and much more.

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

- Day on starting quarterback Justin Fields: "All the guys had good camps, but Justin kind of separated himself in the last week. I still don't think he's where he needs to be, but over the past week, I think he's played at a starter level."
- Day on quarterback depth following the departure of first-round draft pick Dwayne Haskins: "Once Dwayne entered the draft, everything went into a tailspin." Talked about difficulty of piecing together a quarterback room.
- The staff has not made a decision on the No. 2 quarterback between Gunnar Hoak and Chris Chugunov. "(Hoak) has only been on campus for 15 practices."
- Day reminisced about his time as a starting quarterback. Said being named the starter at New Hampshire gave him confidence, but the key was remaining grounded. "You have to prove to your teammates you deserve to be the starter, and a lot comes with that."
- Day on how Fields compares to Haskins. "He's a little more athletic." The offense will be very similar to last year, though. He "can't go out and try to be what Dwayne was in game one. Can't go out and try to be what J.T. Barrett or Braxton Miller was." Just has to be himself.
- Day said Fields doesn't get too high or too low and took the quarterback decision in stride.
- Day said he anticipates Branden Bowen and Nicholas Petit-Frere will play at right tackle, though the former has had the best camp of his career. "This is still a big week for us as we head into the game."
- Day said there was some value in Fields playing as a freshman last season. Noted he recently turned on the Auburn-Georgia game and Fields was under center. "I slept a little better that night because he caught the snap and didn't turn the ball over, but that's different than leading and managing a team."
- Day added he's "very excited" about Fields' potential and mobility, but he's "not comfortable with

him taking a lot of his in the course of a game." Will be very calculated when calling quarterback runs.

- "We got tougher (in camp), but we're not where we need to be," Day said of the team's progress.
- Day met with quarterbacks this morning to break the news. "All this means is that Justin is taking the first snap in the Florida Atlantic game. If he doesn't do what he's supposed to do, someone else is going to have an opportunity."
- Day said junior running back J.K. Dobbins has run "really hard in camp."
- Day said defense has looked fast in practice. There's "a lot of give-and-take" between the offense and defense, with the latter doing a good job of forcing turnovers.
- No decision has been made on the backup running back spot, but Demario McCall seems to have a "leg up" at the moment. McCall has had a good camp while Master Teague has been limited with an injury. "I think he can be a weapon for us."
- Day said Fields didn't practice all that well in the first week of camp, but has progressed considerably and was named a "champion" in their scrimmage over the weekend.
- Day likes the depth along the offensive line. "We could see a lot of the offensive linemen play."
- Day said C.J. Saunders is in the mix to play at the H receiver spot behind K.J. Hill this season, battling with Jaelen Gill for those snaps.
- "You have to be ready," Day said of backup quarterbacks. "We'll take it play by play and week by week."
- Day said Ohio State chose seven captains because there was a considerable gap between the top seven and everyone else.
- Day said Kevin Wilson and Mike Yurcich will be in the press box on game days, but they're still trying to figure out the defensive staff assignments. Said they'll do a mock game this week to finalize.
- Every time there's a penalty in practice, that player runs a lap. "They miss a whole period," Day said. "If we can cut down on false starts or pre-snap stuff, we'll be fine."