

Laurinaitis: ‘Tough To Call’ 2018 Ohio State-Michigan Game



Former Ohio State linebacker James Laurinaitis knows what it takes to beat Michigan. He did that four times while starring for the Buckeyes without losing in The Game.

In most years, Laurinaitis, now a contributor to 97.1 The Fan in Columbus, would head into Michigan week with plenty of confidence that the Buckeyes will come out on top. This year, though, things aren't as clear thanks to a Michigan squad that ranks fourth nationally with a 10-1 record and perfect 8-0 mark in the Big Ten.

That said, Laurinaitis told BSB that he's glad Ohio State has at least one big advantage.

"I think the fact that it's in Columbus is obviously a huge advantage for Ohio State but it's the first one in a while where it's a tough one for me to call," he said.

Laurinaitis stressed that Ohio State's pass protection will be key. The Buckeyes struggled to block Michigan State's Kenny Willekes two weeks ago, and they'll be facing multiple high-end pass rushers - most notably Rashan Gary and Chase Winovich, assuming the latter is healthy enough to go - against the Wolverines.

"You're kind of hoping that was just an off game on some of that stuff," Laurinaitis said.

He noted that Michigan has speed at every level in addition to being aggressive on both sides of the ball.

When the teams kick off at noon at Ohio Stadium, though, he said he expects The Game to come down to one simple thing.

"It's all going to depend on which team takes care of the football, right?" Laurinaitis said. "It sounds cliché, but the same basic things in this game come true. If you're able to get more possessions and get short fields, that's how you score on this Michigan defense."

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