

Matt Barnes To Become Defensive Coordinator At Memphis



After three seasons in Columbus, former Ohio State assistant coach Matt Barnes will be heading to Memphis, where he is set to become the school's next defensive coordinator, according to multiple reports.

Barnes will replace former defensive coordinator Mike MacIntyre, who was hired as Florida International's head coach following the conclusion of Memphis' regular season. Last season, the Tigers ranked 91st in scoring defense (29.3 ppg) and 95th in yards allowed at 418.5 per game.

At Ohio State, Barnes held a number of positions, including special teams coordinator and coaching the safeties and secondary. He was part of head coach Ryan Day's initial rash of hirings when he took over, including Barnes, linebackers coach Al Washington and special teams coordinator Parker Fleming.

This past season, he took over play-calling duties from Kerry Coombs following Ohio State's challenging start defensively, highlighted by a 35-28 loss against Oregon in which the Ducks rushed for 269 yards, going for over seven yards per carry.

While the defense still experienced some struggles after Barnes took over, namely in the loss to Michigan where Ohio State was gashed on the ground, there were improvements seen during the middle stretch of the season, including a four-game stretch against Akron, Rutgers, Maryland and Indiana in which the Buckeyes allowed just 11 points per game.

During his time coaching the secondary, Barnes has helped send a number of Buckeyes to the NFL, including cornerback Jeff Okudah (2020, No. 3 overall), cornerback Damon Arnette (2020, No. 19 overall) and cornerback Shaun Wade (2021, 160th overall).

His departure was expected following Ohio State's hiring of Jim Knowles as defensive coordinator, who will likely look to bring in some of his own staff. If Knowles is to add additional hires, more departures will be necessary for Ohio State to get to 10 assistant coaches.