

# New Ohio State Athletic Director Ross Bjork Praises Head Coach Ryan Day In Introductory Press Conference



Incoming Ohio State athletic director Ross Bjork spoke highly of head coach Ryan Day at his introductory press conference held at the Covelli Center on Wednesday. In his first public appearance since being officially announced as Ohio State's ninth athletic director on Tuesday, Bjork lauded the coach's leadership and football acumen, traits that he said has allowed him to build a championship-caliber program in Columbus.

"Coach Day and I spent about an hour together on Monday as part of the meeting process," Bjork said. "I didn't know him personally (before the meeting), but we have a lot of similarities in terms of crossover. (He's a) brilliant mind in the game of football. High-level leader, knows what championship football looks like. Knows how to put all of those pieces together."

Bjork, who is set to become Ohio State's athletic director — replacing Gene Smith — on June 30, 2024, said that he and Day also spoke on Monday about the weight the Michigan game holds for the program and its fans — a rivalry matchup that has gotten the better of Day and Ohio State for three straight seasons, leading to mounting pressure and criticism directed towards the fifth-year coach. Bjork added that he will do everything in his power to make sure Day and his program are fully equipped to defeat the Wolverines — along with continuing to improve the program as a whole — an effort he thinks will be a collaborative one between administration and the coaching staff.

"We get it," Bjork said. "The Game matters. And so he and I talked about that. And the best thing that I can do is lock arms with him, figure out if there are any barriers, figure out key decisions. He's the coach, he's the strategist, he has to build a roster. And it's my job to say, 'What are the infrastructure pieces? What are the culture pieces that I can help you with? And then let him go to work. And by all accounts, those things are all coming together.'"

"We had great conversations," Day said. "We have a lot in common. I think he and I both have the same vision moving forward."

Despite the three straight losses to Michigan casting a negative light on the program, Bjork said that he feels Day — who was in attendance on Wednesday along with head men's basketball coach Ryan Day and head wrestling coach Tom Ryan, among others — has all the tools and intangibles needed to compete for a national championship, something he believes will happen in the near future.

"I'm a football guy," Bjork said. "I'm going to help. And I'm going to make sure that we compete at the highest level, because the pedigree is here. This guy right here, he's going to get it done. And it's going to be a lot of fun when we win those championships."