

Ohio State Head Coach Ryan Day Discusses Nation's No. 2 Recruiting Class



In the locker room, Ohio State head coach Ryan Day and his team are completely locked in on Northwestern for the showdown in the upcoming Big Ten Championship Game.

However, recruiting waits for no one, and Day discussed the Buckeyes' second-ranked recruiting class in the nation during a Zoom call with members of the media upon the beginning of the early-signing period on Dec. 16.

What follows is a bullet-point rundown paraphrasing what Day said today:

Kyle McCord?

- Kyle right from the jump was somebody we recognized early as very, very talented. We got to see him play and thought he was going to be a very, very good player. He did a good job of recruiting the other players too, which helped us build the class.

TreVeyon Henderson?

- As a person, TreVeyon is one of the more special people I've gotten to get to know. 4.0 GPA student. The craziest thing is that he committed without ever being to campus. And he's coming in with another running back. I can't wait to get around these guys. TreVeyon did a great job recruiting other guys in the class too.

Ohio class?

- The Ohio guys this year are special. One of the first things I did as head coach was meet with Jack Sawyer and his family. I can't say enough about what he and his family have done. He's going to have a huge impact for us.
- Mike Hall has been great. Reid Carrico won a state championship and he's a guy that when you look in his eye, he's going to get something done. Ben Christman and his family have been tremendous from the jump. All the guys in Ohio are going to be really good players. This Ohio group is very, very special.

Signing six defensive backs?

- It was a huge emphasis for us, the secondary. Kerry Coombs did a great job early on. Mark Pantoni deserves so much credit for what he has done in putting this class together. Kerry did a good job with this group; we needed some corners. J.K. [Jakailin Johnson] and Jordan (Hancock) give us that. Jantzen (Dunn) and Andre (Turrentine) did some really good things this year. Denzel (Burke) never visited here. He's a guy I got to see out in Arizona, and we're really fired up that he's a Buckeye. Jaylen (Johnson) has a great way of connecting with other recruits and he's been a glue.

Emeka Egbuka?

- Emeka is a special young man. Brian Hartline did an excellent job of establishing a relationship with him and his family. Culture fit. The fact that Emeka decided to come and become a Buckeye is huge for us. I'm talking about another 4.0 GPA student, so the fact that he wanted to come across the country to become a Buckeye is huge.

Offensive line?

- Stud [OL coach Greg Studrawa] worked his tail off, and Mark and his staff. Ben (Christman) is a big, athletic and strong guy. Donovan Jackson just jumps off the film. When he committed in my office, I was not expecting it, and almost fell to the floor. His loyalty and trust has been tremendous. Zen (Michalski) put on a lot of weight and improved a lot as a senior. He has the chance to be special.

Why should you make it to the CFP at 6-0?

- We've all been through different things. We've always felt like we have a special team. We can play with anyone in the country. We've been through more than any team in the country in the north. Once we came inside, the COVID numbers went through the roof. And we haven't been able to play as many games as others. But everyone has their own opinions.

Can offensive lineman commits play tackle?

- All three can play all three positions if you need them to. We liked the versatility of all three of them.

How were you able to build this class into such a solid group during these crazy times with no visits?

- We identified some really special families that just built this thing. We used their feedback as well. Who are the guys that fit our culture? We have been very honest in recruiting. If you come here, we are going to do everything we can to take care of your son and maximize his potential. And I think people see that.

Do you view your class as the best in the country?

- It's the best class in the country for Ohio State. One thing you know if you come here is it's going to be hard. You have to compete to get on the field and you have to compete for a national championship. When I was young, a coach came into my room and dropped a book called "How To Close A Sale." Those days are over of trying to talk a player into coming to your school. To me,

that's a short-term gratification.

What do you pitch to recruits?

- You can always talk about what's there. You can talk about your offense. You show them what it is. You can show them your record. You can show them we had a GPA over 3.0 You can show them your passing statistics.

TreVeyon Henderon and Evan Pryor?

- They would both tell you that they are different styles. Evan can do some things in space, catching the ball and taking jet sweeps. TreVeyon is a bit more of an every-down back. We try to get the best available players and then adapt to their strengths.

Can Kyle McCord compete for the starting QB job as a freshman?

- That is going to happen. He is going to compete. I know he's looking forward to getting in here and getting to work right away.

Can you put your finger on what makes you guys different?

- Because of this year, it's probably changed a little bit. I'd say their maturity. They've had to handle a lot this past year. They've become very, very mature, and I think that's neat. I want to win the championship and then we can have something to show for all of this sacrifice.

Preparing for noon kickoff in Big Ten Championship Game?

- We are going to practice the last couple days at noon. The fact that there are no fans there, it will be kind of like the combine in Indy. There will be nobody there. Usually it's one of the more electric environments year to year at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indy.

How did you put together such a great class?

- A lot of hard work, and we had to connect with this family without being able to see them in person for most of the last year. And these recruits came together, and you can tell there are already leaders in this group.

Preparing young QBs?

- Any time you're playing with quarterbacks who haven't played, you're anxious. They have practiced a lot but they haven't played. There's nothing like game reps. Maybe once we get going in the spring, we'll figure out how to address that issue.

Sam Hart ready to go if tight ends leave?

- We feel good about the tight end room's depth. A lot of these have grown. We're going to miss Luke (Farrell), and Ruck's [Jeremy Ruckert's] got to make a decision.

Managing expectations for standout freshman?

- One thing you talk about in the process is the truth. Everyone's journey is different. And the however you think your journey is going to go, it's not going to go that way. We talk to them about that in recruiting.

Interested in winning a recruiting crown?

- No. It doesn't. I'm not really interested in that, because it's just someone's opinion. I respect it, and I get it. But we have to bring in the best fit for us and the right guys for us. The true test of a recruiting class is where are they at four years from when they sign?

Jack Sawyer bringing fellow commits to campus?

- It's leadership at a young age. Really mature young man with a great family. This group is already really, really tight. I wouldn't be surprised if you guys see really good things from this group moving forward.

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