

Ohio State Head Coach Ryan Day Discusses Trey Sermon, Season Without Fans And More During Wednesday Teleconference



In lieu of a post-spring press conference, which was obviously cancelled amid the worldwide coronavirus outbreak, Ohio State head coach Ryan Day spent roughly 45 minutes on a teleconference with reporters on Wednesday morning.

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

- Since Ohio State couldn't hold its annual Pro Day on March 25, Day said he and the assistant coaches have received a higher rated of calls from NFL personnel than usual. "Just fielding a lot more questions about the guys."
- Some teams have even inquired about Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback Joe Burrow, who transferred from Ohio State to LSU ahead of the 2018 season. "When people ask about our guys, they bring up Joe. (I have) nothing but the highest praise for him, his work ethic and his ability to play."
- When presumed starting running back Master Teague was injured on the first day of spring practice on March 2, Day said the staff started doing their homework on Oklahoma transfer Trey Sermon, who was officially added to the roster on Wednesday. "Master getting hurt here in the spring put us behind the eight ball a little bit in terms of depth and Marcus (Crowley) coming off the ACL (injury)." Day noted they never had a face-to-face meeting with Sermon before he announced his commitment to the Buckeyes, but the Sooners' staff had nothing but great things to say about him. "We have been very, very impressed in our conversations with him."
- Sermon dealt with his own ACL injury in November, but is expected to make a full recovery before the 2020 season.
- Day said he doesn't anticipate quarterback Justin Fields being impacted by the lack of spring practice. Has an impact on younger players and the backup quarterbacks, though. "I think that's really where we were looking to come out of the spring with a lot of reps under their belts."
- Day said he's remained busy despite working from home, with most of his time spent on the phone. He also noted its more difficult to watch film or implement new schemes as opposed to when the entire staff and team is in the same building. "Not having a spring is hard. It's one thing to come up with plays. It's another thing to have them learn them."
- Day doesn't expect the Early Signing Period to be changed, as everyone is dealing with the same

problem and it's ultimately up to the player if they want to sign in December or February. "We've given them two options, so I'm in favor of just keeping it the way it is."

- Day said there have been conversations about a possible altered season, but the biggest concern is public health and the student-athletes' well-being. "I think we'll come up with a great solution if we put our minds to it." He added there are too many unknowns to make any changes at this time, and called it a "once-in-a-lifetime situation."
- On defensive end Chase Young, who is projected to be a top-five pick: "I think he and Jeff (Okudah) both are very, very high-end players who will play in the NFL for a long time." Called them both "can't miss guys."
- Day said the NCAA has not made a ruling on wide receiver C.J. Saunders, who applied for a sixth year of eligibility. "Certainly we would love to have him back."
- Day said strength and conditioning coach Mickey Marotti has put together workouts for players to do at home.
- Day believes the increase in transfers has forced the staff to have better communication during the recruiting process. "I think you have to be really, really honest in recruiting."
- Asked about the coaching staff taking pay cuts, Day said you have to think about others. "During this time, we've got to do what we can to help those people. Take that money and put it back into the community." Mentioned the donations he, athletic director Gene Smith and basketball head coach Chris Holtmann made to the local foodbank.
- Day said "anything is worth considering" when asked about an expanded College Football Playoff amid the current situation. "We may need to be creative. I think everything's on the table. The more ideas the better. I just think until we know this season what we're dealing with, I think it's hard to make any decisions."
- Day believes the six-week window of preseason before opening the season remains a good starting point, then you can build potential models for the season from there.
- Asked about the injured players who are rehabbing, such as Teague, Day said they're monitoring them biweekly. He noted the players still living near campus can access the Jameson Crane Sports Medicine Institute at this time.
- Day said former co-defensive coordinator and secondary coach Jeff Hafley helped Okudah take the next step between his sophomore and junior seasons.
- On running back J.K. Dobbins, who has been projected by some as a first-round pick: "I think his future will be really strong because he does a lot of things." Mentioned how Dobbins can run the zone and cap schemes and can pass block.
- Day said "any football is better than no football," and that Ohio State will "do whatever we need to do."
- Day said the team has actually grown closer because of the separation they're currently dealing with. "We just miss each other. Can't wait to get back together."
- On potential of playing season with no fans in the stands, Day said they "need to look at all options." Added it would be "eerie" to have the opposing sideline hear what they're yelling across the field.