

Ohio State Head Coach Ryan Day Previews Game Against Maryland



Ohio State head coach Ryan Day returned from the open week on the schedule to meet with the media for about a half hour on Tuesday afternoon. Among the many topics, the Buckeyes' upcoming tilt with Maryland (12 p.m. on FOX).

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

- Day said assistant secondary and special teams coach Matt Barnes' had a significant impact on Maryland last season.
- Day on recruiting Hawai'i, where the Buckeyes have been poking around lately: "We obviously want our foundation to be right here (in Ohio), but we go throughout the country to find the best players in the country." Added the Buckeyes put a lot of time and effort into making sure the interest is reciprocated before hopping on a plane to recruit the islands.
- Day on last year's 52-51 win over Maryland: "It seemed like who had the ball last would win." Said the Buckeyes did a good job of adjusting well throughout the game. "It was one of those back-and-forth games."
- With the same players as last year, Ohio State's defense has improved dramatically since then. "This team is hungry. It was a bunch of guys who heard all offseason how they struggled. Now they're playing at a high level." Pointed to a higher level of maturity rather than pinning it on the scheme the team ran last fall.
- Day said tonight's College Football Playoff rankings are for the fans, not the team. "If we lose this weekend, we're not going to be in the top four. What matters is the record at the end of the season and where you're ranked then."
- Day said Ohio State must have a mentality that every game is big as they host Maryland, head to Rutgers the next two weeks. "They're all big. If you don't think they're big, trying losing one."
- Day said he wants the team to have fun and enjoy the journey. "This time of year, the fun's a little different. The fun's in the winning. It's not silly, goofy fun."
- Day said he's in favor of playoff expansion, but didn't want to get into the details and said he'll table the talk until the offseason. "If you win your conference, you should get in."
- Day said he tries to get players ready to play as soon as possible, but cites the difference in skill level, physicality and maturity for most freshmen. Also said players a few years into the program typically have the first shot at playing time, hence why wide receiver Garrett Wilson hasn't seen more playing time out wide or as a returner.

- Day said it's a bit easier to recruit quarterbacks given his background as a quarterbacks coach. "It does matter because you're going in there as a head coach with a background and resume with college quarterbacks. It's one thing to say something, but another to show them what you've done."
- Day said Ohio State learned a lot about itself during last year's win over Maryland, particularly in the two-minute drill and red-zone offense. "That game, as tough as it was, kind of catapulted us (to the win over Michigan and Rose Bowl victory).
- Day was highly complimentary of safety Damon Arnette coming back for his final season, getting his degree and becoming a leader on the team. "That's a success story."
- Day on former linebacker Keandre Jones, who transferred to Maryland in the offseason. "It's great to see him play with a lot of passion and effort." Hated to see him go, but glad to see him flourish closer to home.
- Day said one of his favorite things to do go home after a noon game, sit on the couch, order food and watch football with his family. "Hopefully that's the case on Saturday."
- Although Alabama and LSU play at 3:30 p.m., Day declined to say he has a rooting interest in that game because of Tigers quarterback — and former Buckeye — Joe Burrow.