

Ohio State Officially Hires Former UCLA Head Coach Chip Kelly As Offensive Coordinator, Quarterbacks Coach



After reports surfaced Friday that Ohio State was looking to hire UCLA head coach Chip Kelly to the team's vacant offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coaching role, the Buckeyes made it official later in the evening that Kelly had been hired by the program in a three-year deal through 2026.

Welcome Chip Kelly, OC/QB Coach !!
#GoBucks pic.twitter.com/AWyF4KuN4e

— Ohio State Football (@OhioStateFB) February 10, 2024

"We are extremely excited to have Chip and his wife, Jill, joining our program," head coach Ryan Day said in a statement. "His experience as a head coach at Oregon, UCLA and in the NFL will bring immediate value to our entire team. I am really looking forward to reconnecting with Chip, introducing him to our staff and team and chasing a championship together."

As Day alluded to, Kelly comes to Ohio State after head coaching stints at Oregon and UCLA as well as in the NFL with the Philadelphia Eagles and San Francisco 49ers. One of Kelly's earliest head coaching gigs, however, was as offensive coordinator at New Hampshire from 1999-2006, where he coached Day before later hiring Day to his staffs in Philadelphia and San Francisco.

Kelly's hiring happened rapidly following the departure of brief offensive coordinator Bill O'Brien, who accepted the job in January but left on Friday to become the head coach at Boston College. Day indicated on Wednesday that even if O'Brien were to leave, the Buckeyes had contingency plans in place, as Day plans to hand off play-calling duties.

"I would also like to wish coach Bill O'Brien and his family well as he takes over at Boston College," Day's statement also said.

Kelly leaves UCLA after six seasons as head coach of the Bruins with a 35-34 record, and is coming off an 8-5 campaign with a win in the LA Bowl. Kelly's most notable stint, however, was with the Ducks from 2009-12.

He led Oregon to a 46-7 record and to the BCS National Championship Game in 2010, as well as wins in the Rose Bowl in 2011 and the Fiesta Bowl in 2012. He engineered four top-eight offenses, including the nation's leading scoring offensive in 2010 at 47.0 points per game and the second-leading scoring offense in 2012 at 49.6 points.

But Kelly's offenses did most of their work on the ground. Oregon running back LaMichael James led the nation in rushing yards in 2010 with 1,731 yards and 21 touchdowns and finished second in rushing (with 1,805 yards) the next season. In 2012, Oregon averaged 315.2 rushing yards per game behind 1,767 yards from Kenjon Barner, who was named an All-American and finished ninth in Heisman Trophy voting.

This is the first time Kelly has not been a head coach since he was the offensive coordinator at Oregon from 2007-08, and it would be an unprecedented move considering Kelly would have coached UCLA as it began play in the Big Ten next season. But Kelly never appeared long for UCLA, as he interviewed with several NFL teams in recent weeks for open offensive coordinator roles.