

Ohio State's Ryan Day, Kerry Coombs Discuss Ohio State's Win Over Indiana, Upcoming Game Against Illinois



Ohio State head coach Ryan Day and defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs met remotely with the media on Tuesday afternoon to discuss the Buckeyes' 42-35 win over Indiana and Saturday's game against Illinois (12 p.m. on FS1). It marks the only pregame media availability this week due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Here's a bullet-point recap of what Day and Coombs had to say:

- Day said he spends most of his time with the offense, but did consult the defensive coaches following the win over the Hoosiers. "Certainly met on Sunday after the game and went through every position group and each player and talk about their performances and finish it up and talk about things schematically."
- Day said the defense is designed to avoid big plays, but that was the glaring issue on Saturday. "We have to get a couple things changed."
- Day said there are many players playing at a high level right now and that the Buckeyes are "not that far away."
- Day on the second-half defensive lapses: "We have to keep hammering that home."
- Day on the defensive line's pass rush: "I think they're getting a lot of hits. I think they're getting a lot of hurries."
- Day said they'll play younger guys if they practice well.
- Day on quarterback Justin Fields' career-high three interceptions: "He's his worst critic. He's very hard on himself. That's what makes him great. He's so competitive."
- Day, a former New Hampshire quarterback, noted he once threw five interceptions in a game against Northeastern, which was coached by Michigan defensive coordinator Don Brown. "When those moments happen, you just have to erase what happened and work your way through it."
- Day on Fields' development: "It's rewarding. That's one of the best parts of coaching quarterbacks."
- Day noted how difficult it is for the players to not see their families and friends amid the pandemic. "It's really hard on all the families and these young men."
- Day said he hasn't been around his own family this much either. Called it a sacrifice.
- Day said they've been more light-hearted this year in situations where they'd typically be very

serious. "If they're not having fun when they come to the building, the product's not going to be very good."

- Day said the difference between this year's defense and 2018's defensive struggles are that the issues are solely in the pass game now and that's fixable.
- Day on former safety Jordan Fuller, who had two interceptions in the Los Angeles Rams' win over the Tampa Bay Buccaneers on Monday night: "Jordan was really good. You saw what he did last night."
- Day on cornerback Marcus Williamson: "Marcus has had some good moments. He's also been a little inconsistent."
- Day believes the lack of fans hurts the defense.
- Day doesn't think there's anything wrong schematically with the defense. "I like what we're doing. I think we have the right stuff in. Just have to execute it a little better."
- Day said he hopes the players keep perspective amid criticism. "If you put 200 people in the Shoe, you wouldn't even notice them."
- Day said he's really impressed with Fields' ability to extend plays: "He's strong. He's powerful. He's really athletic. That the give and take."
- Day said he was very upset about the missed targeting on 4th-and-1 late in the game. "They missed that one."
- Coombs on Ohio State's defensive scheme: "I think there's constant questions about how we're doing things. You're always evaluating what you're doing and how you're doing it. That's exactly what we're doing."
- Coombs said he expected Ohio State to have more sacks, but that Indiana quarterback Michael Penix did a good job of getting ball out quickly: "I think we're getting very good pressure."
- Coombs believes the players feel pressed to make a big play on defense. "We don't need to necessarily go make all the big plays. Those are fixable errors that have to be fixed. That's our job and that's my job."
- Coombs wants to try and get more players rotated in throughout the secondary. "We're constantly looking for opportunities to get more guys on the field."
- Coombs mentioned safety Marcus Hooker and Sevyn Banks as players who could have played better, but also said that falls upon himself. "It's my opinion, when we make a mental mistake, that's my fault."

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