

Radio Show Recap: Greg Schiano Says Ohio State Takes Momentum Into Maryland, Calls Shaun Wade ‘Really Progressed’



While the Michigan State offense might not be the biggest measurement stick for the Ohio State defense, defensive coordinator Greg Schiano embraces the unit's performance against the Spartans as the Buckeyes enter Saturday at Maryland.

Ahead of the noon kickoff on ABC from Maryland Stadium, how does No. 10 OSU (9-1, 6-1) project on defense against the Terrapins (5-5, 3-4) and a skillful offense?

After head coach Urban Meyer and offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Ryan Day addressed other areas of the team's Big Ten clash with UMD in College Park, Md., Schiano rounded out Thursday's radio show on 97.1 The Fan with an overview of the defense from the secondary to the defensive line.

Greg Schiano

- Non-offensive touchdowns fueled Ohio State's 26-6 win over Michigan State on Nov. 10 as the Buckeyes recorded scores on defense and special teams, which Schiano benefited from the boost between a fumble recovery for a touchdown by junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones and a voluntary safety on a punt.
 - "Any time you can get non-offensive scores, it fires everybody up because it's a quick hit and it can change the complexion of the game," Schiano said. "We talk about that a lot. If you get a takeaway, don't be satisfied with a takeaway — see if you can turn it into points. Fortunately, they fumble the ball in the end zone. So Dre'Mont did a great job jumping on that one. The one they snapped over the head on purpose, that comes with a reason. That's the way, playing field-position football (works). Punting them down, keeping them down and that was their third punter who pulled a hamstring. So they were on their fourth punter. I actually thought it was a pretty good move by (Michigan State head coach Mark) Dantonio. Why (punt)? This is your fourth-string punter who wasn't even on the team when the season started. Now he's punting out of the back of the end zone. The only bad part about it is — good for us, bad for them — is they kicked (the ensuing kickoff) out of bounds. So that kind

of backfired, but strategically, I thought it was a good move.”

- With an assist to sophomore punter Drue Chrisman, Ohio State won the field-position battle against Michigan State as the Buckeyes’ defense ultimately kept the Spartans’ offense out of the end zone.
 - “It’s no doubt — the complementary football that was played Saturday is the way you love to see it as a coach,” Schiano said. “You play field position, you punt them down, you hold them and as a head coach I used to always say, ‘They’re scoring drives. They don’t necessarily have to be one drive.’ Scoring drives could be two or three drives. It can be as long as you move the ball, field-position wise, eventually you’re going to punch it in. That’s kind of what we live by around here is play good defense, play good in the kicking game and win the field-position battle. Eventually, it’s going in the end zone.”
- While sophomore safety Brendon White has emerged as Ohio State’s starter next to junior Jordan Fuller, Schiano still sees promise in the development of Shaun Wade after the redshirt freshman progressively bounced between multiple spots in the secondary.
 - “He’s really progressed,” Schiano said of Wade. “You could see, had tremendous athletic ability but not yet been inserted into the game plan where he had to really have understanding of everything. He was in the kicking game mostly. He did well in the kicking game. That escalated him into the defense. I think he’s done a great job playing the nickel. He played safety and then he goes down and plays what is essentially a cornerback position on the inside. He’s that kind of talent. With him and then with Brendon White coming along, that’s really giving us some flexibility there.”
- After the departure junior defensive end Nick Bosa, whom Schiano called “the best football player in the country this year” up until core muscle surgery, Ohio State had to adapt and has gradually gotten better up front because of players such as junior defensive end Jonathon Cooper playing “so incredibly hard.”
 - “That’s the standard around here — to play at a high level,” Schiano said. “Dre’Mont Jones is the leader of that pack. I think the guys that are doing a good job — (junior defensive tackle Robert) B.B. Landers, who’s in the middle, doesn’t get a lot of credit because’s getting doubled teamed, he and (junior defensive tackle) Davon Hamilton, but those guys have done a good job of really taking up double teams and controlling the line of scrimmage.
- What stands out about Maryland’s offense? On top of talent at their skill positions, sophomore Tyrrell Pigrome provides the Terrapins with a dangerous backup quarterback after they lost redshirt freshman starter Kasim Hill to a torn ACL.
 - “They’re really talented, that’s first and foremost,” Schiano said. “Their skill people — (former head coach D.J.) Durkin did a good job of recruiting skill. The receivers and the running backs, they’ve had some injuries in the backfield and they still have talented running backs. The quarterback position, as you know, we’re going to have the backup. But remember, the backup was the starter. A whole year and a half ago, they beat Texas with this guy. So he is really a good player. Unfortunately for them, both of those quarterbacks have gone through surgeries and injuries, but he’s really good. He’s mobile, he can throw it and he’s short. So if you can cloud the vision a little bit, I think that could be one way to help us. But when he can see it, he’s got a very strong arm and he’s very, very athletic running the football.”

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