

Ryan Day, Greg Mattison Provide Ohio State Spring Practice Update



Ohio State's 11th practice of the spring on Friday morning was open to the media in its entirety, which allowed those in attendance a chance to watch individual drills and a full team scrimmage.

After practice, head coach Ryan Day and co-defensive coordinator Greg Mattison met with the media for roughly 15 minutes apiece.

Here's a brief synopsis of what was said:

- After several years at Michigan, Mattison said recruits have mentioned they never imagined him in scarlet. "My wife thinks I look really, really good in (it)."
- Mattison, who considers himself a defensive line coach first and foremost, believes the Buckeyes' group is "as good as there is. I've always been a believer that if you have talent up front, turn them loose, let them loose."
- After 13 years at Michigan, Mattison said he's "fortunate to be here and I'm excited to be here." Referred to the Wolverines as "the team up north."
- Mattison touts Ohio State's depth on defense. Had several moments where he looked at a player and said, "That's a second-teamer? It's more of a first-team and second first-team."
- Mattison said he likes what he's seeing from his players, who are adjusting to a new scheme this season. "It's never been schemes that have won. It's what you teach to the players to run and who's running them."
- Mattison called himself a "coordinator of peoples' ideas." He's trying to incorporate every member of the staff rather than just tell them what to do.
- Mattison doesn't want to look back at what went wrong on the defense before he arrived. He instead wanted to look at the positives, which include "You've got a secondary that is fast, strong and experienced. Also said linebackers look like defensive linemen but "run like they're supposed to run."
- Mattison praised the 40-year-old Day, "He's just so far ahead of his time." Day was a grad

assistant at Florida in 2005 when Mattison was the co-defensive coordinator and defensive line coach.

- Mattison on newly installed Bullet position: "He can play middle safety, he can play half-field safety and he can come down and be your old strong safety. And then at the same time, he can be that 9 technique, SAM outside linebacker. If he can also blitz, he's got the whole package."
- Mattison wants the linebackers to be versatile and interchangeable. "The Mike's got to play Will, the Will's got to play Mike." Notable that outside linebackers Malik Harrison and Dallas Gant both got reps at middle linebacker during today's scrimmage.
- Day said Mattison and new co-defensive coordinator/secondary coach Jeff Hadley have "been doing a really good job" working together and coordinating the defense. Mattison focuses most of his efforts on the front seven, while Hadley focuses on the secondary.
- Day said the numbers for quarterbacks Justin Fields and Matthew Baldwin are similar this spring are "on par" with what Dwayne Haskins was at this time last year.
- Day said they're still evaluating under-center packages, which allows them to have multiple looks on offense including two-tight end sets. Calls that a strength of the offense.
- Day said offensive guard Wyatt Davis did not practice today because he was sick. Redshirt senior Branden Bowen took first-team reps at the position. Several members of the offensive line have been dealing with the flu.
- Day said he's been very impressed with center Josh Myers and offensive tackle Nicholas Petit-Frere and their development this spring.
- Day said they hope to have 16 scholarship lineman, so they're a bit light this spring. Only 11 linemen will be available for the Spring Game next weekend.
- Day believes it's important for Ohio State to hold its spring game so coaches can evaluate the players in front of large crowds and get youngsters experience in Ohio Stadium. Added there will likely be a running clock in the second half.
- Day said safety Josh Proctor has shown flashes of his potential this spring. "He still has a lot to learn. It's a slow process, but he's very, very talented. He's got a lot of range and a lot of talent."
- Wide receiver Austin Mack had a slow start this spring as he returned from an injury, but Day believes he's progress throughout camp.
- Walk-on wide receiver Garyn Prater, who caught several touchdown passes during Friday's practice, "shows up every day and makes plays." Day said he could work his way into playing time.
- Day said Bowen, a fifth-year senior, "has to be a leader for us" because of his experience and versatility to play several positions along the offensive line.
- Day on Mattison: "Great man, great husband, great dad... When he speaks, people listen." Calls him a mentor. "When we had an opportunity to get him, that was important for us."
- Day said he wants to challenge his players and assistant coaches to find their purpose. "Being unselfish and motivating their unit from within is the key."
- "I thought that was one of the most energetic practices we've had," Day said.
- Day said he expects the middle linebackers battle between redshirt junior Tuf Borland, junior Baron Browning and sophomore Teradja Mitchell to continue well into the fall. Borland was sidelined today with a knee injury, while Browning and Mitchell took first- and second-team reps today.
- Wide receiver Chris Olave had some hamstring tightness and was limited in practice today.
- Despite fight between wide receiver Jalyen Harris and cornerback Damon Arnette, who landed a punch to the head that forced Harris to miss the rest of practice. "I think if you have one or two every now and again, I think it's good." Added you have to play with emotion, not emotion play with you.

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