

Ryan Day, Kevin Wilson and Greg Mattison Recap Ohio State's Win Over Michigan State



Although Ohio State has an open week on its schedule, head coach Ryan Day, offensive coordinator/tight ends coach Kevin Wilson and co-defensive coordinator Greg Mattison met with the media for about an hour on Tuesday afternoon.

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

- Day said the goal in the off week is self-improvement and self-evaluation. "The idea is what we have done well and what do we need to improve."
- Day called the win over Michigan State a physical game. "We're a little battered." Added that's what happens after playing half the season.
- Day said he's involved in all aspects of the team, but relies upon his assistants to do their job. "Too many cooks in the kitchen isn't good."
- Day on having a deep class talent-wise in Ohio for the 2020 and 2021 cycles. "Our recruiting base is Ohio. When you have so many talented guys right down the street, it's huge."
- Day said, "Ideally, you'd have as many Ohio guys as you can. When they're from Ohio, they're going to have a leg up on everyone else in the country because they're Buckeyes." Adds it can fluctuate based on team needs, however.
- When evaluating the first six games, Day said the team's chemistry has been really good. "We have played with toughness." Said tackling, running the ball, quarterback play stands out. "We have to keep that going. Keep building."
- Day said the win over the Spartans was the first game they played a full 60 minutes.
- Day reiterates that the open week allows for them to evaluate things that work and things that don't, as well as giving them two weeks to
- Day on possibility of NFL teams like the coach-less Washington Redskins calling to inquire about his services. "I don't really ever want to talk about that stuff. I love it here. This is where I want to be."
- Day on Brendon White's lack of playing time this fall. "He's working at it, learning that Bullet position. This week is a great opportunity for him to see what he's doing well and improve upon." White is sharing snaps with Pete Werner, Jahsen Wint and Justin Hilliard.
- "It's great to be 6-0," Day said. Talks about looking at season in chunks (six games, open week, two games, open week, remainder of season). "There's been a lot of hard work and hours put in here, but we haven't proven anything yet."

- “When it was tough sledding early on, they didn’t panic,” Day said of the offensive line. “To run for over 300 yards against that outfit is saying something.”
- Day on quarterback Justin Fields’ play: “His leadership and toughness have shown.” Adds he still has room to grow, though.
- Day, asked again about potential Redskins interest, reiterates he doesn’t want to discuss the subject but added the team has not contacted him.
- Day on former quarterback Dwayne Haskins’ early struggles and sitting the bench as a rookie in Washington: “He’ll be fine.” The two still talk regularly.
- Day said he wasn’t aware of Fields’ dual-threat ability and overall toughness because the Buckeyes didn’t really recruit him in high school. Fields was committed to Penn State before flipping to Georgia while Ohio State held a commitment from Emory Jones, who later flipped to Florida. “There’s some grittiness there, and that’s very exciting. A lot of guys on the team are taking notice of that.”
- “I think we’re very explosive in the pass game,” Day said, noting the balance between passing and rushing yards. “Certainly, any offense will tell you they want great balance.”
- Day said defensive back Shaun Wade gives the Buckeyes a lot of versatility on defense, particularly with the emergence of slot receivers in the college game. Cited Wade blowing up screens throughout the year.
- Day on Jonah Jackson: “He’s as close to a man and pro as I’ve been around in some time.” Adds Jackson has immersed himself into the program and unit despite being a fifth-year senior. “It says a lot about the culture on the offensive line, too.”
- Day on when he decided that college was the career path for him rather than the NFL: “When we had to move our family three times in three years. It was not good.” Mentions how his wife and children had to make new friends with each move, and doesn’t want to put them through that again.
- Day on Nick Bosa’s play in the Monday Night Football win over the Cleveland Browns. “He was a terror out there.” Smiled when asked about Bosa planting an imaginary flag in the field after sacking Baker Mayfield, mimicking the second-year quarterback’s midfield celebration after the win over Ohio State in 2017.

Mattison followed Day at the podium:

- Mattison on freshman defensive end Zach Harrison: “He’s a typical Buckeye who works hard each day. He has a lot of talent, character and wants to be a great football player. Every day, you see him get better.”
- “He’s who you want to work with,” Mattison said of Ryan Day. “You want to work with guys who have great character and care about their players more than anything.”
- Mattison on how quickly he got up to speed on Ohio State’s traditions and culture: “I think I played against Ohio State 15 times. I didn’t have to study.”
- Mattison said this open week offers an opportunity for the Buckeyes to scout themselves.
- Mattison talked up Wade, as well as the overall depth at defensive back. “We’re trying to play anybody that has earned the right.” Mentions guys like Josh Proctor and Cameron Brown and how they’re seeing the field more in recent weeks.
- On Wade specifically, Mattison said Wade allows them to match personnel better. “You can match what they give you and still have the same aggressive attitude.”
- Continuing the praise for Harrison, Mattison adds he’s “as fast as some running backs in some places.”
- Mattison on cornerbacks who talk trash: “Especially when you play as much man-to-man as we do,

you better be a little different and you better have a lot of confidence in yourself or you're just not going to make it out there." Character and discipline allow them to get to that point but not go over it.

- Mattison said the veteran players do a great job of mentoring the younger players.
- Mattison mentions the position change from safety to a linebacker-type position for White as for why he may not see the field as much as some people believe he should. "It's still early."
- "I don't like to compare head coaches," Mattison said when asked about differences under Day, Urban Meyer and Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh, his former boss.

Wilson wrapped up the presser:

- "We're not allowed to taunt in college," Wilson quipped when asked about Bosa's celebration.
- Wilson believes his background on offense complements Day's background, as well as the other assistants.
- Despite being in the thick of the season, Wilson has been able to watch his son play high school football on Friday nights. Appreciates Day and previously Meyer for their belief in work-life balance.
- Wilson said both fifth-year seniors Branden Bowen and Josh Alabi are dealing with minor injuries. "Those guys are capable of being really good, but I think we might need both to be really good, if that makes sense." Kind of like tight end, Wilson thinks both will be playing down the stretch.
- Wilson also said he likes what he's seen from redshirt freshman Nicholas Petit-Free, but trusts the fifth-year seniors more.
- Wilson said center Josh Myers has been playing "real good. Real good. Real good. He's playing good." Added Harry Miller could start right now, but also gives them some depth at the position because other interior offensive linemen have played well.
- Wilson said his concern with Fields entering the season was the lack of time in the program and ability to learn from players in front of him, as Haskins did under J.T. Barrett. "I didn't know what kind of prepper he was."
- Wilson on blocking downfield by the tight ends and wide receivers. "Running the ball is an attitude. It's a mindset." Mentioned Luke Farrell, Garrett Wilson and others for buying in to the team aspect.
- "We want to be a team that plays with a physical presence and toughness," Wilson said.