

Ryan Day Recaps Ohio State's 5th Spring Practice Following Student Appreciation Day



For the seventh time in the last eight seasons, Ohio State invited students to attend spring practice as part of its Student Appreciation Day. Parents and a number of top-rated recruits were also on hand for the morning session, which included individual drills; first- and second-team drills; a student kicking competition; and an autograph/photograph session afterward.

Following practice, head coach Day met with the media for roughly 15 minutes. Here's a quick recap of what he said.

- Redshirt senior left tackle Josh Alabi missed practice with flu-like symptoms. As a result, fifth-year senior Branden Bowen took first-team reps at left tackle, while redshirt freshman Nicholas Petit-Frere was at right tackle.
- Redshirt junior linebacker Tuf Borland did not practice today and was wearing a brace after taking a shot to his right knee. Junior linebacker Baron Browning also missed practice with a hamstring issue, so sophomore Teradja Mitchell took first-team reps.
- Ryan Day wanted to create an atmosphere with Student Appreciation Day because of the recruits in town this weekend. "This was a big home run for us."
- Day said both sophomore Justin Fields and redshirt freshman Matthew Baldwin are taking reps at first-team quarterback. They're still working on installing various packages, but Day is "very, very encouraged" by their progress this spring.
- Day mentioned wide receivers Garrett Wilson and Chris Olave, offensive guard Wyatt Davis and center Josh Myers as underclassmen who have stood out on offense thus far. Adds sophomore linebacker Dallas Gant on defense.
- Day confirmed departure of redshirt freshman wide receiver L
- Christian "Blue" Smith. "[He] voluntarily left the program," but will remain on scholarship through the end of the semester.
- Early enrollee freshman wide receiver Garrett Wilson has already added 15 pounds to his frame since he arrived in January. Day said there are still things he needs to work on, but they're "encouraged" by what they see.
- Fifth-year senior Robert Landers is day-to-day with minor shoulder, back and knee issues. The staff is being cautious with him this spring.
- Fifth-year senior K.J. Hill sits atop the depth chart at H-Back, but redshirt freshman Jaelen Gill, fifth-year senior C.J. Saunders and sophomore tight end Jeremy Ruckert have played there, as

well.

- Senior Austin Mack has been rotating between X and Z receiver, along with Wilson and sophomore wideout Chris Olave. Senior Binjimen Victor and junior Jaylen Harris have been rotating at strictly X receiver.
- Redshirt junior H-Back Demario McCall has been limited practice with a calf injury, but is close to full-go.
- Day mentions redshirt junior offensive guard Gavin Cupp as someone who had a great offseason. He's seen reps with the second-team all spring.
- Day thinks Gill could have a big role within Ohio State's offense this fall. "If he can grab onto the culture... then I think he's going to be a really good player."
- Day said the staff is "excited" about Mitchell and what he can bring to the table at the middle linebacker position.
- Junior running back J.K. Dobbins has a "white-belt mentality" this spring, Day said. He's like a beginner in martial arts who is listening and trying to get better at the small things every day.
- Arguably Ohio State's weakest unit last spring, Day said the linebackers are playing fast this spring. "They have energy and they're playing hard. Hopefully we can build on that."

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