

Ryan Day Recaps Ohio State's Win Over Penn State, Previews Michigan



Ohio State head coach Ryan Day met with the media for about a half hour on Tuesday afternoon, marking his first and only media availability ahead of Saturday's game at Michigan game (12 p.m. on FOX).

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

- Day said Michigan's defense is playing a lot more zone this year. Credits defensive coordinator Don Brown for giving a number of different looks this year.
- "Anytime you see your starting quarterback on the ground, it's not a great feeling," Day said of Justin Fields' late injury. Said he'll be fine for Saturday.
- Day said they'll do Senior Tackle on Thursday and let the players spend time with their families on Thanksgiving after that. Will practice on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.
- Day said the big rivalries in his life growing up in New Hampshire was Red Sox-Yankees and Celtics-Lakers.
- Day said they engrain the rivalry into the players from the beginning of the recruiting process. Adds a lot of players come to Ohio State specifically to play in this game.
- Day said he played against Brown in college, Brown coached his brother at UMass, they coached together at Boston College and then they're now coaching against one another.
- Upon his arrival ahead of the 2017 season, Day said he and his son would constantly watch the Michigan highlights at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center to get up to speed on its importance.
- Day said they'll pipe in the crowd noise in practice to account for playing on the road.
- "This game means everything to us. Nothing matters if we don't win this game."
- Day pointed out several players on Michigan's offense, including wide receiver Donovan Peoples-Jones. "This will be the most talented group we've seen by far."
- Day said everyone within the program understands the importance of the game. "If you're working on it all year, then you're prepared."
- Day said director of player development Mark Pantoni compares its recruiting board to Michigan's. "We just want to know exactly who those guys are because we're going to be playing them."
- "It's no secret that part of your evaluation at Ohio State is how you do in this game," Day said.
- Day on co-defensive coordinator Greg Mattison and linebackers coach Al Washington, who were with Michigan last year. "I'm sure there's a range of emotions, but it's just one of those things

that's part of the job. They know there's a lot riding on this game. I'm sure there's a lot of emotions going on." Adds there was no special reason to bring them from Ann Arbor, but did so because of his previous relationship with them.

- Day on wide receiver Chris Olave, who blocked a punt and scored two touchdowns in last year's win as a freshman: "I think you learned what followed after that, which is that he's a great player."
- "For me to see what this means for the people of Ohio and Buckeye Nation, that's where it really hits home to me." Adds it's an unbelievable responsibility because "it means so much to so many people."
- Day, who played quarterback at New Hampshire, recalls playing a rivalry game against Maine in the Battle for the Brice-Cowell Musket. The Wildcats went 1-2 with Day as their starter.
- Day on fumbles against Penn State: "Completely inexcusable. That's how you ruin a whole season right there." Neither Fields nor running back J.K. Dobbins graded out as champions because of the turnovers. "They were warriors, not champions."
- Day said defensive end Jonathan Cooper will play in one more game at some point this season, but "we just don't know exactly which one yet."
- Day said Michigan is playing its best football right now. "We're going to get their best shot Saturday."
- Day on former head coach Urban Meyer's legacy against Michigan: "To think that he's 7-0 is completely overwhelming sometimes."