

Ryan Day Talks Fiesta Bowl Loss, Adjustments Heading Into Ohio State's Offseason



Head coach Ryan Day spoke to the media for the first time since Ohio State's 29-23 loss to Clemson in the Fiesta Bowl on Dec. 28 to discuss the defeat, the hiring of Corey Dennis, as well as what the team is focusing on heading into the offseason.

Here are some of the things he had to say:

- Day opened his press conference by thanking the media for the coverage and respect they have given the team all season.
- Day said since he's been here, newly named quarterbacks coach Corey Dennis "has kind of been my right hand man."
- On Dennis' decision to stay at Ohio State instead of taking the Colorado State job: "I know it was exciting for he and his family."
- Day on LSU quarterback Joe Burrow: "We talked to Joe several times on the award circuit ... it was great to see the way he played."
- "When you think about Joe Burrow, Dwayne Haskins and Justin Fields, wow, what a problem to have."
- "I think it was a successful season for sure. For the first year for the coaching staff and first year for the QB, it was positive. Certainly, we didn't reach all of our goals."
- Day said finding the new leaders of the team will be a big challenge during the offseason. Also noted that the running back room will be an area of inexperience, as well as the secondary.
- Day said he has "moved on from the anger part" of the loss to Clemson. Noted the finishing of drives early, the Clemson four-play, 96-yard drive and lack of finishing the final drive as areas that could have been fixed.
- "The roughing of the punter was a huge mistake we made."
- Said that the Dennis hire is necessary instead of Day just running the quarterback room because there is so much that he already has to do as head coach, and that he has to trust in his coaching staff.
- Day on the targeting rule: "I do think that some of those things should be looked at ... it's in there for the right reasons, but there is some gray area in there that is hard."
- Day also said he does not agree with the "walk of shame" that players who get called for targeting have to take when they are ejected from the game.
- On loss to Clemson: "We're not going to just flush this ... it's going to stay fresh in our minds."

- Day said he wanted Mike Yurcich to stay as passing game coordinator, but the money he was offered at Texas (reportedly \$1.7 million) was too good to pass up.
- Day said Shaun Wade will move from slot corner to outside corner next season. “He should be a Thorpe Award finalist right off the get-go.”
- Day said Justin Fields wasn’t dealing with anything “catastrophic,” but was not 100 percent for the Fiesta Bowl. Said he missed some practices during the season, especially ahead of the Big Ten Championship Game.
- Day said Dennis’ eye for talent is really good, and that his “dynamic personality” helps him a lot in recruiting.
- Day on Chris Olave: “I love Chris Olave ... I’m not sure he ate solid food for three or four days after that game. He was crushed ... But nobody cares more than Chris. He’s hungry, and I think he’s gonna be a leader in that room.”
- Day doesn’t feel that the Dennis hire is a risk because of how much he has seen him grow and how much talent he has shown, and that the continuity that he can bring by staying with the Ohio State program for a long time.
- Day did not confirm if Kerry Coombs will be replacing Jeff Hafley as Ohio State’s next secondary coach. “We haven’t hired anybody yet, and still going through it all.”
- Day said the national championship game was “hard to watch, I’m not gonna lie,” and said he told his players to watch the game, as hard as it was, to think about how much they want to be there next year.

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