

WATCH: Incoming Head Coach Ryan Day Recaps Ohio State's 2019 Recruiting Class



Tasked with taking over Ohio State's recruiting efforts full-time Dec. 4 when he was introduced as head coach Urban Meyer's successor, Ryan Day's next 15 days culminated Wednesday when the offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach announced his 15-signee class of 2019 in the Woody Hayes Athletic Center team room.

While the Buckeyes secured majority of the 16 prospects who were committed to start the early signing day, they saw several decisions take the class for twists and turns in the morning and throughout the afternoon.

Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas four-star defensive back Jordan Battle flipped to Alabama and Oak Park, Mich., four-star quarterback Dwan Mathis switched to Georgia, but Lewis Center (Ohio) Olentangy Orange five-star defensive end Zach Harrison and Wake Forest, N.C., three-star defensive tackle Jaden McKenzie offset the attrition with pledges to OSU.

Ohio State has 16 players in its 2019 class with 15 signed, leaving Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley four-star offensive guard Doug Nester as the only unsigned commitment. Nester issued his pledge in August 2017, but he delayed signing until Feb. 6 after Meyer's retirement — effective Jan. 2 — went public.

With the bulk of the class in the bag, though, how does Day feel about the current signees and where do the Buckeyes go from here? He addressed his past two weeks, looked ahead to OSU's next two months on the trail and more in the video and transcript below.

Ryan Day

National Signing Day Press Conference

□ LIVE from the Woody Hayes Athletic Center: Ryan Day speaks to media members about his recruiting class on national signing day. □Signing day central
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โพสต์โดย Ohio State Buckeyes เมื่อ วันพุธที่ 19 ธันวาคม 2018

RYAN DAY: Really excited to talk today about the 2019 early signing day. We signed 14 players as of right now in the early signing period, and we're very, very excited about all the players that we signed. I think this class would rank top five nationally when grading the individual player, not cumulatively. We don't lose a lot of seniors this year, and so within the 85 scholarships, there's really not that many spots and limited room. So when you look at the quality of the player, and obviously we'll talk about the student-athlete, as well, how important it is, we think we're as good as we've ever been.

10 different states represented in the class, five from Ohio, two from Georgia, and then one from Florida, Tennessee, New Jersey, Maryland, Missouri, Texas, Indiana, North Carolina. The class includes players at nine different positions, four on offense, five on defense. Two players were voted Gatorade Player of the Year in their respective states, and five players helped their teams advance to the state title as seniors, and two of them won state championships.

Three players, Zach Harrison, Harry Miller and Garrett Wilson, were all finalists for the All-American Man of the Year Bowl down in Texas, and that award recognizes high standards in community service, education and athletic distinction.

I think when you look at this class, some of the things that come to mind are loyalty. Some of the things that come to mind are great families and quality student-athletes. And we're very, very excited about the future as these guys will be a foundation moving forward into the next few years.

With that, I'll take any questions.

Q. Zach Harrison, how did you make it happen, and what was said a week or two to be something still up in the air?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, it's been a long process. His head coach, Zebb Schroeder, had a lot to do with this. Larry Johnson has been recruiting Zach for a long, long time. Obviously Urban had a big part of this thing, and it's been a long time coming. We had a home visit last week. It was really important to sit down in the home and talk to the family about the direction of the program, and having some communication just on some of the leadership changes obviously that comes with the change in the head coach, and that communication stayed all the way until last night.

And so it was kind of down to the wire, but couldn't be more excited to have him part of this family, a special young man that's going to do great things, and he's going to have a lot of help along the way to do it with him.

Q. Did you feel good when you left his house last night?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, I did. I did. I think there was a connection made there, and obviously the connection that Larry had with the family was really, really important, and I believe that the family trusted that we

were going to take care of their son when they came to Ohio State.

Q. Ryan, just first of all, the past two weeks you were a head coach, just named the head coach two weeks ago and now you're finishing up early signing day. What have the past two weeks been like for you?

RYAN DAY: Exhausting, yeah. It started, right, that first day when we hit the road after the Big Ten Championship game, and it didn't stop until now. It's been a whirlwind. Obviously any time something like this happens, you have to make sure you're building relationships with the guys that you've recruited but also maybe some of the guys that you didn't have your hands on, especially some guys on defense, getting to know their families, and then also reaching out to some of the guys on the team during this transition and getting to know their parents some more.

But a ton of phone calls. I felt like I had two phones to my ear for the last two weeks, but a tribute to obviously what the staff has done here and the relationships that have been built over the last few years.

Q. You talked in your introductory press conference about the importance of recruiting kids in Ohio and making that a priority. You've got five Ohio kids out of 14 right now. How do you feel about those numbers? Is that something that you feel you need to emphasize even more going forward, or do you feel like you're about where you need to be?

RYAN DAY: It's always a priority, so we want to make sure that in the next class that's a huge emphasis, as well. But we're recruiting the kids from Ohio harder than anybody in the country, and it's going to continue to be a priority.

Q. You guys obviously lost a quarterback today. Where are you generally with that position right now?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, Dwayne, we're going to find out in the next week after the bowl game kind of where he's at, and we always want to have four guys on our roster. It's always a process of one guy is on the field, and it's hard to get two and three guys in the game. It's never going to change. We're going to always look to have four guys on the roster, and just like anything else, after Dwayne makes the decision, we'll go from there.

Q. I guess you can't assume that Dwayne is going to go, but whatever happens with Dwayne, it does seem like you would have natural successors with Tate and Matthew on the roster, yet you are reported to be interested in some high-profile transfer options. Why is that the case when you have guys like Tate and Matthew on the roster behind Dwayne?

RYAN DAY: I'm not going to speculate or anything like that or comment on anything like that. Tate and Matthew have both done a nice job in the bowl practice, and this is a great opportunity for those guys to get work and get fundamental work and get better and get reps. Even when Dwayne was in New York, those guys got an opportunity to be with the first and second team and get really quality reps with the offense. And so they've done a good job of that. They're growing, and we're going to keep going through that in the spring.

Q. What is your confidence level in either of those guys if you do find yourself in a position to

have a quarterback competition in the spring?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, growing every day. And like that's the thing. Like Matthew, when he came in, he came off the ACL, and really wasn't ready to practice in the preseason. And then once the season started, he didn't really get a whole bunch of reps because we had the ones and Tate took reps with the twos. So this is a great opportunity for him to step in and start to get some work, so that's — the confidence in him is growing, and then Tate actually had opportunities to work with the ones and did a nice job.

Q. In February the late signing day, late signing period, what are your expectations, roughly how many you think you'll sign in that late signing period?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, hard to tell because, like you said, it is kind of one of those things. We had three guys right now declare, so there's some moving pieces there. There play be another couple few guys that we're obviously going to recruit going into the February signing period, but we're going to keep working through January, and then as that number moves around, we'll adjust from there.

Q. The grad transfer market every year seems to be growing and growing and growing. That might be something past the next signing day, the late signing period, but how active do you expect you'll be testing those waters as far as grad transfers?

RYAN DAY: We'll always look at all the options. Whatever we think can help our roster. The guys who are in our program, obviously they develop and work through our program, and so those guys obviously have priority. But if there is a need and there is someone that we need to plug in there, we'll look at all those options.

Q. You talk a lot about family, and when it comes to recruiting I assume that's a huge piece of it, really connecting. You mentioned or maybe somebody mentioned faith, too. How does that play into it, really looking at getting a little deeper than just family?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, you mean when we're getting into homes? I think there was some faith right here because I've only been on the job here really for a couple weeks, and so when you step into a home — the good thing was early on in August and in the first three games, there was a lot of communication to some of the recruits and their families, so there was some familiarity there with the families and myself. So that was good. I think that they felt comfortable with that, so that helped with the faith that you're talking about.

And I think that when you connect with people and you look them in the eye and you sit in their homes, there's a connection to be made there. I thought that happened.

But we have such great families here, there was a lot of communication along the way. Some of the families like the Wilsons and the Millers and some of the families that I was close with early on in the recruiting process that were kind of my own personal recruits, I think they communicated with the other parents to say, hey, this is our experience with Ryan and this is what you can expect. So I think that went a long way.

Q. Did you get a lot of questions about transition with Urban being gone, and how did you tackle that, I guess?

RYAN DAY: Well, you know, that was the number one question. Most people had their phones out and they would look at their phones and they would turn on their phones and just kind of scroll through all the questions they had while we were sitting in the home because they knew we didn't have a bunch of time. But the first one that came up was exactly that, your direction and what you see the vision for the program. And the way that I answered that was that we think we have the most comprehensive program from A to Z in the country and the infrastructure is here and the plan is not to change that. The plan is not to come in and blow all that up. There's a reason why there's been so much success here in the past, and we want to keep that going. Any time there's a leadership change, there's a change in personality and demeanor, and that will be part of this. But we want to keep really the infrastructure in place.

Q. What do you remember the first time you met Garrett Wilson or watched him work out?

RYAN DAY: I was watching Matthew Baldwin, so I went down to watch Matthew throw, and I see this wide receiver drill going on, and I see a wide receiver drill a guy and then drive — I told his dad this story, drive a guy into one of the trees and just start yelling and barking at him, and I said, who is this kid. And they said, that's Garrett Wilson. I said, that's Garrett Wilson, the one who grew up in Dublin? They said, yeah. And then from then on, I just followed him really, really closely, studied his film, got to know — Hank Carter down there is one of the more talented coaches in all of American. He had nothing but great things to say about him, and then his film spoke for itself. As talented a young man as I've been around in terms of ball skills, speed, changing direction. He could be a Division I basketball player if he wanted to be.

But even a better young man. The way he handles himself is with class, and that's because they have such a great family.

Q. You've touched on his family and Harry Miller's family. And I know you were involved with recruiting both of them. Could you have kept this class together, kept the number of commits you had without those two sort of leading the way?

RYAN DAY: You know, I don't know. But what a statement about who they are. It goes back to relationships. Any time you're in recruiting, it comes back to the relationships and the trust that you have. They had a big part of this. But there was a lot of people that were involved in it. You know, we have some great families in this past weekend, the Jacobys, the Potters, great people from Ohio, the Stover families. Being able to go through and sit in everyone's house and get a feel for who these people are, it's been a really great experience.

One story that I share sometimes is Saturday when we were in New York City, we were down in Times Square and there were people everywhere, thousands and thousands of people, and we were in the busiest place in all of the world, and the next morning we drove up to see Cade Stover and his family and I was on his farm with not a person to be seen taking a picture with his pet pig Ronnie, and it was like the most extreme — New York City and then up on the farm taking a picture with a pig. That's been kind of my last two weeks.

Q. From the moment you got off the podium at your introduction press conference, what was the next 48 hours of your life like?

RYAN DAY: Ooh, a blur. A blur. Yeah. Every moment I had, I was on my phone trying to make calls.

There was a lot of work to be done. Still a ton of work to be done. But in that period, trying to make up, I guess, for lost time, for lack of a better term, and it's just been nonstop since then.

Q. You and Chris Holtmann kind of have some similarities as far as both of you are replacing coaches that for the most part are probably the two most successful coaches at their individual sports. Have you had any conversations with him about his experience during his first year and how you may approach things?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, Coach sent me a text message, gone back and forth a little bit, and actually my wife and his wife had an opportunity to meet this past week and kind of discuss what it is like and some of the things moving forward as a wife of a head coach in basketball and football here. Look forward to spending some more time with him.

Q. Lastly, obviously signing day for 2019 class, but have you started at all looking forward to the 2020 class which will be your first initial class as a head coach?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, yeah. That's going to be a big one for us. And obviously I think looking ahead, there's probably going to be more guys signed in that class. We've got work to do there, but off to a good start.

Q. Could you describe what you think you're getting as a player in Zach Harrison, just how good is he potentially?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, I mean, when you look at somebody who runs a 10.8 100-meter dash at his size and the potential that he has, all you think of is the Bosas of the world and some of the top defensive ends in all of America.

He thought this thing through. This wasn't something he just jumped to, and obviously being under Larry's tutelage, that's a big part of this thing. And so it isn't all going to happen at once, but the ceiling for Zach is really, really high.

Q. We know he did recruiting on his terms, he was very precise in how he wanted to do it. How important was it to win that battle considering you are a new coach, considering that the two programs in competition were who they were, and you were considered to be behind at the time? How important was that?

RYAN DAY: Huge, huge. Like any time you're competing, you're competing for recruits, you're competing on the field, and this was one of those ones we had to win. He's down the street, and so that was a big get for us.

Q. When you are in this two-week transition period right before signing day, I think a lot of people thought that you might want to add a bunch of kids, but how important was it? How much of an emphasis was it for you to just keep the class intact? I know you guys lost a few, but was that kind of just like the main focus in this last few weeks, keep what we have intact, go from there, and how do you think you did?

RYAN DAY: Well, a couple things. One, we only have so many spots. It was 14 today, and really don't have many more, so that was the first thing.

The second thing was that the kids that we have, we love. We love these kids. We think the quality of the guys that we've signed here is excellent. So we wanted to keep them all. And so that was really important for us. But when you look at who these kids are in the last seven months, and their loyalty, it's amazing. You know, what happened in August and then there's a coaching change here down the stretch and these kids stuck with us, that means a lot to us, and we're not going to forget that moving forward.

Q. This is only the second year of the early signing period, but a large portion of the best players in the country are now signed today. You guys, kind of doing the math for you, might take six, seven more depending on how things shake out. Is it a unique situation for you guys to be so active in that last three months needing to fill out this class, and how do you approach that with so many of the kids that are, quote-unquote, Ohio State caliber have already signed somewhere else?

RYAN DAY: I don't think it'll be that high. Yeah, I don't think it'll be that high. We have to stay under 85, and like I said, we're only graduating a small class of seniors, and three guys have declared. So there isn't going to be that much room. And we want to make sure that we sign the right guys moving forward. Don't just want to take a guy down the stretch just to say that we took a guy. This is Ohio State and we want to recruit the best players in the country. But that being said, we're going to do a really good job of identifying who's out there in January and evaluate them. That will be really important here because I think that's a huge part of that.

You go back and you look at last year, guys like Chris Olave maybe weren't the highest recruited guys in the world but come in and was a starter and had a major impact this season, so we've got to do a great job of evaluating in January.

Q. When you talk about your offensive line, if Michael Jordan goes pro, you guys will have 11. It looks like you might need two or three more. Can you talk about the state of offensive line recruiting and evaluate the way Greg has done this and how much of an emphasis is that going to be the last few weeks of the recruiting cycle?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, it's important to go identify them. We've got to go identify them. We've got to do a really good job obviously in the 2020 class. We're a little bit down in the O-line, so we've got to do a great job moving forward to get that addressed. We're hoping Mike stays. Obviously that would be a huge part of this next year, and so into January we'll keep looking at it. We have a few guys obviously that we're close with, and so we'll just look to close those guys out.

Q. Ryan, Marcus Crowley, you had two running backs committed for a while, one — I don't know if you guys decided to look elsewhere or if he decided to look elsewhere, but why Marcus Crowley and what kind of process went to being seemingly off the radar to a week later he's a Buckeye, and what have you seen in him?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, comes from a great program. Shaun Wade and Tyreke Johnson both come from the same high school. Much respect for all the coaches there and what they do with their program. So that was the first thing.

Second thing, he was Gatorade Player of the Year in the state of Florida, and that's saying something. He had a great year. He's a big back. We think he's got great potential. He's going to come in mid-year.

And so when he came up on the radar, especially after having the season that he had, we jumped all over him, and we're really excited about him.

Q. Brian Snead, is he going to be — is he eligible to play in the bowl game? Will he be with you guys?

RYAN DAY: I don't have an update on him right now, and when I do, I'll let you know.

Q. Obviously it's important at all positions, but how does recruiting/managing relationships with quarterbacks change when you go from offensive coordinator to being the head coach? Like you said, there's only one bowl.

RYAN DAY: You know, it doesn't change all that much. I do think that after the season we had with Dwayne, the interest level is at an all-time high. People are very, very excited about what we're doing on offense. The quarterbacks are very, very excited about getting into this offense, and so that's exciting. That's fun to have that opportunity.

But still going to be very, very involved with that as we move forward, so that's exciting.

Q. That was kind of my second question was I know you can sell Dwayne, Heisman finalist, record setter, all that kind of stuff, but when you're working with recruiting a quarterback, what's something behind that, how do you sell the relationship you have with Dwayne? Is that more important?

RYAN DAY: It's both. Obviously you can say whatever you want and people talk about theory, but the testimony for us is what happened this year, and you just look at the numbers and what happened in his sophomore year for a kid who had no college starts going into his sophomore year, and then in 13 starts he is where he is, and having an opportunity to possibly be a first-round draft pick and a Heisman Trophy finalist and look at all the records he broke in one year. I think it's a huge selling point.

Q. Both current players talked about the impact of Larry Johnson on them. Noah Potter said that he would go wherever Larry Johnson goes. How big of a deal is it to have someone like him on your staff?

RYAN DAY: Huge, huge. Larry's — he's a legend. He has a legacy here, and what he's done with the defensive line, obviously, again, that's testimony. And so there's defensive linemen all over the country that want to come to get coached by Larry Johnson, and you can see that again in this class and the relationships that he built are really, really important, but again, the way he develops the young men on the field and off the field is what's key.

Q. You're losing a lot of great skill position players off this team, Campbell, McLaurin. You didn't just shove freshmen into those spots, but you did recruit pretty good wide receivers. Can you talk about those receivers, Wilson, Young, and those skill position guys that you're adding?

RYAN DAY: Sure, yeah, we lose three really good wide outs and a lot of good leadership in that room. They're going to leave a legacy, though, of hard work and leadership that's hard to replace. That being said, we think we're replacing them with some really talented young guys. Jamison Williams is a deep

threat who has legitimate track speed. He can really go. Comes from a great family, great program in St. Louis, so we're excited about him. We spoke about Garrett, and so those are two additions to the program that we think could have a major impact right away.

Q. I want to also ask, talking about relationships with these prospects and how they gain that with your position coaches, I know you said after the Rose Bowl you're going to take a really hard long look at this and see who will be on the staff next year, but it sounds like Brian Hartline obviously has been elevated and Larry Johnson will be here. Beyond that can you shed any light on what direction things may go and what you're looking for in a staff makeup?

RYAN DAY: Sure. Well, we're very excited about Brian. He did a great job stepping in this year, and he's doing a nice job here in recruiting, so that's a big hire for us. To get him elevated like that means a lot to our program. He's done a nice job with that. Other than that, the focus right now is this bowl game and just recruiting because it takes every ounce of your energy every day. So that's the focus.

But in terms of putting your staff together, the number one thing that we have to do as a staff is recruit. That's by far and above the number one thing as an assistant coach that you need to get done is recruit. And the second thing we talk about is power the unit, which is getting your guys to play hard, making sure that your unit is accountable to everybody in the room. And then the last thing is we start talking about scheme and what you're going to put running on the field. So having the right pieces in your staff is very, very important.

Q. Ryan, you guys were No. 2 in the country in recruiting class the past two years. You're talking about the individual star rating of this class is still very high. Philosophically in terms of you talked a lot about Ohio and how important that is, but in terms of going out and going after the best national guys, can you describe a little bit philosophically what your recruiting style will be like, how you sort of felt as a head coach now doing this, and how will Ohio State be able to stay at a level where you're recruiting one of the one, two, three best classes in the country going forward?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, we're going to put a great — our staff is going to be one of the best recruiters in the country. That's the first thing. That's the first part of this thing as we move forward. And when you know what Ohio State is all about and you understand the type of student-athlete that we're attracting here right now, it's amazing. We're beating some schools like Stanford and some really high academic schools — Harry Miller was an example of that where it was us and Stanford in the end and he chose Ohio State. Ohio State attracts everybody. They attract people from all over the country, and so that's a huge part of this thing.

In terms of our program, like I said, we're going to put together a staff of great recruiters, and then we're going to do a great job of loving them up and understand that the culture we're going to have here is one of love where we're going to love our kids, they're going to enjoy coming into the building every day, they're going to have great energy, and they're going to be developed at the highest level.

But the total package, and this isn't going to change, and this is why we're keeping the infrastructure the way it is right now, is that the most comprehensive program from A to Z, from academics to real-life Wednesday program to Coach Mick and the strength program all the way across the board we think is the best in America and want to keep it that way.

Q. Along those lines, what you've found in these couple weeks, will it at all be a tough line to balance maintaining the continuity of what has been successful here while also establishing this is the Ryan Day head coach program, right, that you're not going to tear everything down, but you've got to be you, right? What have you maybe learned in these couple weeks of how you're going to strike that correct balance?

RYAN DAY: Well, I think you trust your instincts on it. I think there's no right or wrong way to do it. You see the things that you think are really good and you look to enhance them. You see the things that maybe you want to change, and then you get them changed.

It's not going to be all at once. The good news is there's so much in place right now that we can keep building on. I'm not just going to go about changing something that doesn't need to be changed, yet there is going to be a lot of things that have my own personality to it that we're going to make adjustments on and look to enhance other areas. So it will be a work in progress.

Q. Last thing, on quarterback recruiting specifically, you talked about what you guys did with this offense this year, what Dwayne did. People noticed that, right? There's not a million Dwayne Haskins out there, but is this what you would like this offense to look like, and as you recruit quarterbacks going forward, is arm talent and the ability to throw the ball that Dwayne has done, is that going to be near the top of the list of what you're looking for with quarterbacks, or are you still very interested in quarterbacks who also have a real big run threat to their game?

RYAN DAY: I think the number one thing you look for is some sort of extraordinary trait. That's the number one thing you look for. From there there's a whole 'nother list of things that we go through. Certainly arm talent, certainly accuracy is a huge part of that. But the number one thing we want is some sort of exceptional trait. And J.T. had one and Dwayne had one, and I think one of our strengths on offense is the ability to adjust the offense to fit the quarterback and to fit our personnel, and I think in college that's really, really important because sometimes if you're looking for a specific style, there may not be one in that class, so let's go find somebody that has some sort of extraordinary talent and then build around it.

But that being said, being able to throw and accuracy is really high up on the list.

Q. What would you say is the number one lesson you've learned from recruiting from Urban Meyer?

RYAN DAY: It's about the relationships and that it's constant. It's every day. It's text messages. It's phone calls. It's not only to the student-athlete or the recruit, it's to the parents, it's to the uncles, it's to the high school coaches. It's all the people that are around them and building those relationships because at the end of the day, that's what it comes down to.

Q. You've said a couple times now that one thing that you can see changing about Ohio State going forward is its personality. What do you see as being the personality change you're talking about?

RYAN DAY: Well, I think it's hard to say. I think that as we move forward, everybody has a different way about them, and I'm going to have my own way, and I think that the guys on the team felt that for the

first two months and will continue to do that. But to explain it to you right now, I don't know if I can do that. I think it'll happen naturally.

Q. You guys talked about quarterbacks are lining up, receivers are lining up, running backs are lining up, but in Ohio in the last two years, there's been five in-state offensive linemen that have been offered and missed on. Have you noticed in the last few weeks what the disconnect is recruiting the offensive line, and how do you intend to adjust that moving forward?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, I mean, it's been so busy the last two weeks. It's something that for sure I'm well aware of, and it's an area that we've got to do a better job at.

Q. The last two weeks you've had an opportunity to work with Urban that you didn't get in August and early September. How different has that change — how has that changed what you're doing as a head coach?

RYAN DAY: Well, you're talking about the last couple weeks? It's been awesome. What Coach has done for me and our relationship is as strong as ever. Been a huge help in terms of making this transition, and forever in debt to what he's done. It's a great working relationship. He's given me a lot of information and obviously who better to know than Urban Meyer.

Q. You guys announced soon after you took the job that you were keeping a lot of the support staff, and to piggy-back off what was already asked in terms of the personality of recruiting nationally, what was the decision behind keeping Mark Pantoni and how integral is he going to be? Do you work with him to design that philosophy? Does that carry over, and can you discuss your relationship with him?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, I mean, the last two years obviously we got a chance to spend a lot of time together, and in the last couple weeks even more time together, and I got the ultimate respect for Mark. I think he's as good as there is in the business. He's really talented at evaluating the players. He works really hard in pushing his staff. I think that what we do with our creative team, what we do with communicating with the student athletes and the recruits is as good as anybody in the country, and he heads that up.

He's got a good feel for the coaches. He's got a good feel for the players, what's going on on social media, and he drives it, and he's the driver behind the whole thing.

Yeah, he's going to be a big part of this. He's going to be a big part of our recruiting moving forward and going to help me as we start to build that, like we talked about.

Q. I know he does all the programs, but when it comes to where should we spend time today, California, Texas, should we go nationally —

RYAN DAY: All part of the discussions, and those are open discussions every day in our meetings. We have staff meetings whether it's over the phone in a conference call, we're talking about that constantly, and Mark is right in the middle of the whole thing.

Q. Recruiting quarterbacks to me is kind of reminding me of a Seinfeld episode where we talk

about getting a car reservation. It's not the taking the reservation, it's the holding it that's important. Where is this going do you think from a college quarterback standpoint? I know you can't talk specifically about some things that maybe happened today, but it's clearly impacting you guys from a future standpoint. Where do you see that going, getting wilder or what's your take on it?

RYAN DAY: It's pretty wild. It's pretty wild. The thing that's tough about quarterbacks is only one quarterback can play, and these guys, they want to play. I think that when recruits are being recruited, they need to understand that the best chance they have to go reach all their goals is to be at a place that can develop them. It isn't about getting on the field right away. One of the best things that happened to Dwayne Haskins in my opinion, and Dwayne will tell you the same thing because we agreed on it, is that when he had his opportunity to play, which was two years in, and he wasn't happy about that. He wanted to play last year, but he'll tell you that he wasn't ready last year. He was ready this year. When he stepped on the field, he was ready. He had two years of development, and he played his best football, and I think it's so important for young quarterbacks to get developed, not just go from place to place and when things don't go well. That being said, one quarterback can play, and so it's sensitive, and it's a very unique situation.

Q. Do you anticipate getting a quarterback to go with this class or transfer type situation in the next couple of months? Is that imperative that you get one from a numbers standpoint?

RYAN DAY: We always want to have four, and it's going to start off with Dwayne and seeing what his decision is, and then we're going to go from there.

Q. If you look at Ohio State right now, what happened offensively and defensively with this team this year setting I think school record for total offense to this point and maybe setting some records the other way defensively from yards given up, et cetera, it's almost like a Big 12 team landed here this year. How imperative is it for you going forward to get fixed maybe what you saw wrong with the defense? I know it's big for you, but how acute is it, I guess, from a standpoint of serious?

RYAN DAY: It's the number one thing in our plan to win is to play great defense, and that isn't just the guys on defense, that's part of the offense, as well. But yeah, it's really, really important for us. It's the tip of the spear of the whole team, that and special teams, and so I think anybody in the program will tell you that that's the most important part of what we do in the plan to win is to play great defense. So that's the expectations here, and that's not going to change.

Q. What was the biggest difference that you've noticed the last three weeks, two and a half weeks, being a head coach recruiting as opposed to being that assistant coach trying to deliver his guys? What's been your biggest adjustment, I guess?

RYAN DAY: Well, it's been such a hectic last couple weeks. I think it was more of getting into the homes and telling them the vision of the program and kind of getting to know them and giving my background and who I am as a person and having my family come in and meet recruits and having them meet my family and showing them pictures of who my kids are, and that's really what it's been like. I think everybody on the recruiting trail really wanted to get to know who I was and then the second thing was the vision for the program, and so that was really the focus and a lot of the conversations in the homes.

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