

Brian Hartline Continuing Growth As Potential Play Caller



One of the biggest offseason storylines surrounding Ohio State football has been the development of wide receivers coach Brian Hartline as the team's new offensive coordinator and potential play caller.

Head coach Ryan Day won't alleviate himself completely of offensive schematic duties, but to the extent to which he will step back to focus on more big-picture items will be interesting to see.

"The more he can do of that, it certainly allows me more opportunity to move around the program and do more," Day said at his press conference Wednesday.

From Day's perspective, perhaps the least difficult element of an offensive coordinator's job is calling plays.

It's all the work that goes into the game planning ahead of time, building understanding and a relationship with players and implementing the correct plays that are a much taller task in his eyes.

"Probably the easiest part of being a coordinator is calling the plays," Day said. "If you were listing (the responsibilities), that's pretty low. It's really about the day-to-day organization. It's about deciding what plays you're going to install. It's about organizing your staff to make sure that they install it properly. It's about organizing practice to make sure every moment on that field is going to be done the way you want it, then watching the film and making the corrections.

"Now, there is an art to it, and there's adjustments in-game that have to be made. But it's all the other things that come with being a coordinator."

Day added that it helps to have great people around you to learn from, as he did during his first years as a coordinator at Temple and Boston College. Ohio State brought in an additional voice this offseason in former Miami Dolphins head coach Joe Philbin, who will fill a role as an offensive analyst. Then, of

course, experience will help.

“I was fortunate enough to have really good guys around me that helped me with (becoming an offensive coordinator),” Day said. “Brian’s doing a really good job for the first time, the first few months of doing that.”

On the relationship side of things, Hartline has already developed a good rapport with Ohio State’s quarterbacks. Both junior Kyle McCord and redshirt freshman Devin Brown, the duo competing to be the team’s starter this fall, noted the importance of the relationship between quarterback and play caller and are confident in their bond with Hartline.

“Coach Hartline did a great job this spring calling plays for the first time,” McCord said. “I was really pleasantly surprised with the way he saw the field. All his experience from coaching and playing showed. I think he kind of sees the field like a quarterback. He did a great job with the pass concepts, the run concepts, all that, and just getting on the same page with him is key.”

The evaluation of Hartline’s abilities as an offensive coordinator will be an ongoing process throughout Ohio State’s fall camp and into the team’s regular season. It’s something that could grow and change throughout the year, per Day.

It’s one of the more intriguing processes playing out in the background for the Buckeyes this upcoming year.

“It’s not going to be a clean break (for me from schematics) for sure,” Day said. “That’s just not going to happen that way. But as things go along and the more comfortable we all feel, then we go from there.”