

Clemson Head Coach Dabo Swinney Talks Absence Of Tony Elliott, Final Preparations Against Ohio State



Clemson head coach Dabo Swinney spoke to the media Thursday over Zoom call in his final joint press conference with Ohio State head coach Ryan Day before the Tigers and Buckeyes take the field Friday.

- Swinney opened his press conference by thanking the Sugar Bowl staff and by crediting Ohio State's team as a whole.
- Said the team is "definitely going to miss" offensive coordinator Tony Elliott, but that the Tigers are well prepared for it and that he'll have to be asked after the game how it turned out.
- "We're motivated by winning just as much as we are losing." Said that winning a national championship before just makes Clemson want to go back and do it again.
- Swinney on the availability of his players: "Everybody's here, except I think we had two guys who didn't make the trip, one walk-on and one scholarship player who are just unavailable."
- "It's been very different" in this season's preparation compared to ones in the past, "but we've made it work."
- "We've found a way to still have joy in the journey." Said "it's not an accident" that Clemson is here in the playoff.
- Swinney on the change in recruiting this year: "We've got a couple guys moving to campus on Sunday that I've never met, like, in person."
- Called running back Travis Etienne's season "incredible," and said he is excited for Etienne to return to his home state of Louisiana.
- Said that being the favorite is "just the norm" now for the team. Also said that the expectation is to win and that Clemson has been primarily the favorite in most of their games in recent seasons, so it's nothing new to the team.
- Swinney said that this is a game of emotions, but that you don't want to play emotional, and it will come down to fundamentals for who will win this game.
- Swinney wouldn't say if Trevor Lawrence would become the best college quarterback of all-time with a national title this year, but said he is the greatest winner that he has ever been around.
- Because of the conditions of the pandemic, Swinney said that Clemson had a contingency plan for Elliott's absence. "We've all had to prepare for that," and said that there is a plan for a replacement if any member of their coaching staff is out, like a depth chart.

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