

Day Preaches Development As Ohio State Completes 11th Spring Practice



As spring camp has progressed, Ohio State head coach Ryan Day has preached the value of competition on a near-daily basis.

The heightened emphasis on building competitive habits is a continuation of the culture Day sought to build last season, in which the buzzwords “competitive stamina” and “competitive callouses” were heard at nearly each press conference Day took part in. While Ohio State is still diving head-first into building those traits, spring camp is also a time for developing the team’s younger crop of players and Day noted he feels the Buckeyes have done a good job at that to this point.

Ohio State’s practice on Friday wasn’t as high-intensity as previous sessions viewed by media, but Day emphasized that he was pleased with the competitive nature that his team brought while also pointing to the value of spreading reps between returning contributors and younger players alike.

“That’s about what we wanted to get done with the practice (today),” Day said on Friday. “(There was) a lot of back-and-forth. We had some different situations there, in terms of first down, red zone pass, third down and short yardage. We got a bunch of situations done.

“We have to keep playing,” he continued. “We have to keep getting the young guys better. There are 10,000 reps that they need to master their craft. Today was a good day, though. I thought the guys competed well.”

In order to facilitate development in competitive situations, Day and his coaching staff are holding players accountable for mistakes in team drills and scrimmage scenarios. On Friday, a pair of offensive linemen found this out the hard way. After jumping offsides during the 11-on-11 third-down situational drill, Day sent the linemen on a lap around the field to hammer home that mistakes will not be tolerated during the season.

“Anytime you’re in spring practice, preseason, there have to be consequences for making mistakes,”

Day said. "We try to simulate the game the best we can. To make a mistake and think it's going to be OK just doesn't work, so if there's a penalty, they get a lap and we take them out of the game, on both sides of the ball.

"We just trying to just make sure that there's a penalty for making a mistake because it can't just be OK."

Day's focus on development is highlighted in this offseason's quarterback battle between Devin Brown and Kyle McCord, as both signal callers seek to take the reigns as the starter after each learning in the shadow of C.J. Stroud.

McCord and Brown are continuing to come along in the spring, and while Day has tried to delineate his time to multiple position groups, he was present with the quarterbacks for much of Friday's session and noted that he's seen mixed results from the unit to this point.

"There are times where I see things that they're doing at their progression that I haven't seen other guys do," Day said. "There are other times where I feel like, maybe, they're a little bit behind. There are some things in there that they're on track for, but other things that they need to continue to improve on."

While Friday's practice didn't quite carry the same attention to competition as previous sessions during camp, Day walked away still feeling encouraged by how his team competed against one another with the spring game nearing on April 15.

"I think you're seeing the guys compete out here," Day said. "You saw the energy level, it was just a bunch of guys getting after it on a Friday. If we keep building on that, we're going to have a good team."