

Day Touches On Changing Environment Of College Football



The past few seasons have brought a constant cavalcade of change to the sport of college football, with new worlds for each head coach to navigate.

Whether it be the transfer portal, NIL legislation and the opening of it to players, playoff expansion, conference realignment or any number of in-game rule changes, there's constant ebbs and flows to go through.

Going on The Joel Klatt Show Monday, Ohio State head coach Ryan Day got a chance to discuss some of his feelings as the athletic endeavor moves ahead.

"When I first got here — you think about where things were, and then where things are now. But I think the thing that's stayed consistent is that every year, there's been a lot of change," Day said. "It really started early on. It was a big change for me to come here, then it was a lot of change in 2018. Then my first year (as head coach) in 2019, there was COVID. Now you have the transfer portal, you have NIL.

"So one thing that has stayed consistent is change. And things move faster now than ever. I saw something that our guys process more information now in a day than (people) would in 1776 in a whole lifetime."

For Day, the main improvement he feels the sport needs is better structure. A firm framework for programs to live by. That would help re-contain NIL after the calamity it's caused, it would help set standards for scheduling and conference alignment, all the different areas that have caused confusion and differences from team to team.

"I think when everybody comes together as one, that gives us our best chance," Day said. "College football, the way it is right now, there's no precedent. There's no benchmark, there's really nothing to compare it to. We have to do something to get ourselves in line with some sort of a structure. Whether it's like the NFL — not that we're going to be the NFL, we never are, we're collegiate — or something that has something to compare it to. We don't have that right now."

One way Day already sees college football becoming more NFL-like is in the new 12-team playoff format.

The new objective for national title contenders will not be to live and die by every beat of their regular season, but focus on growing and cultivating their teams to be their strongest by year's end.

"One or two games could ruin your entire season right now the way we have it set up," Day said. "I think the way it's moving forward with the playoffs, the idea is going to be to play your best football at the end of the season, very much like the NFL."

Day added that such changes will change the way teams approach offseason preparation leading into their first games, at least for major powers such as Ohio State, Alabama or Georgia. One or two losses will still get those teams into a 12-team College Football Playoff, so big season openers like the Buckeyes' clash with Notre Dame last year will have less postseason bearing.

There's a lot of good Day sees in the sport right now, some of which has been brought about by the litany of changes that have happened in the past five years. With better structure and some tweaks, however, he sees it becoming that much better.

"I think there's a lot going right," Day said. "I think when you look at the excitement around college football, it's still as high as ever when you look at some of the environments that we play in. There's so much excitement around the sport. And you know, now more than ever, with social media and all the different outlets, I think a lot of our guys are becoming household names.

"It's become more than just football, though, I think that you know, so many guys understand that. You know, there's more to it than just what goes on in the field. And I think guys are grabbing onto that, realizing that, 'When football is over, what's next for me?' And there's more opportunity than ever for these guys."