

# Jake Diebler, Dusty May Pushing For Annual Home-And-Home Series Between Buckeyes, Wolverines



The first-ever matchup between the Jake Diebler-led Buckeyes and Dusty May-led Wolverines on Sunday afternoon provided plenty of fireworks and storylines, but unless the two teams meet back up in the Big Ten or NCAA tournament this March, fans will have to wait another year until the rivals match up for another intriguing game on the hardwood.

With the two teams only scheduled for one regular season matchup this season due to a scheduling quirk that accounts for the new 18-team Big Ten, both head coaches are hoping this will never happen again in conference play.

Shortly after Michigan's thrilling 86-83 win over Ohio State in front of a near-capacity 18,058 Value City Arena crowd, both Diebler and May said they requested that the Big Ten schedule a home-and-home series between the Buckeyes and Wolverines each year at the Big Ten offseason meetings held in California this offseason.

"I love being a part of this game, so much so that I was asking anybody that would listen to make this a double-header every single year when we were out in California," Diebler said. "I know there's a lot that goes into that, but I think our fans deserve that. Both schools deserve that.

"Let's play this game twice a year, if we can make that work. Because (the Feb. 16 game) was a great atmosphere. Our fans deserve to have this game here every single year. And I think there's probably do as well. Our fans showed out, they were great. We felt their energy, and they deserve to have this game every year, in my opinion."

"Obviously, it's hard, because it's two rivalry games versus one, but it's just what's good for the game," May added. "It's what's good for the sport. It's what's good for our players. It's less travel. It's big for

TV. It's big for our fan bases.

Both coaches indicated that it was Diebler who led the charge in this potential scheduling guarantee, where he brought up the matter to both May himself and league officials during the meeting, which was attended by each coach in the Big Ten.

"When we left that, and they talked about protected rivalries, I specifically asked the league, 'Why is Ohio State and Michigan not protected?' Diebler said the day after the game on 97.1 The Fan. "There were a few different thoughts as to why that wasn't the case. And so then I approached Dusty and said, 'Hey, what do you think about this? Because I'd like to push for this.' And I think he was behind it, too. So then I told (the Big Ten), 'Hey, I talked to (May), and we'd like to really take a hard look at this.' "

While it will likely be unclear whether this scheduling change will take effect until the next few seasons, both May and Diebler said that they hope both teams can match up twice a year sooner rather than later, as doing so would be beneficial for both teams, fanbases and all other parties involved.

"We should have that game in Columbus every year, and we should be going up there every year, because rivalry games are great for all the obvious reasons. So it's great that Dusty is on board too, and we'll see what happens with it. But hopefully we can get that done."

"Even though it might not be as fun as it could be — it's a gut wrenching preparation and anticipation for the game because of how much it means — we both agreed that going forward we'd like for that to happen," May said. "I don't know if we can do a quick flip next year, but we both requested that from the league."