

No Update On Day's Contract, Says OSU AD Gene Smith



Rumors have swirled this offseason that a new contract could be in the works for Ohio State head coach Ryan Day, but athletic director Gene Smith confirmed Wednesday that no discussions have taken place yet regarding a potential extension for the football program's lead man.

"At the end of the day, he and Nina are very happy here," Smith said at his press conference. "His family's here. I think that's exactly what he shared when he was talking to you. I know that he's very comfortable here."

Day's current contract runs through 2026 after signing an extension in 2020. As part of his extension, he was paid \$6.5 million in 2021 and will be paid \$7.6 million in 2022.

A potential update to Day's contract has been expected following Ohio State's appearance in the 2021 College Football Playoff National Championship Game, as well as connections with job openings in the NFL, though both Day and Smith have refuted those reports.

"He and I haven't talked about (his contract)," Smith said. "We've been 100 percent focused on his current staffing. We just finished that with the football hires...There will be a time that he and I will sit down and talk about his contract, but we haven't done that at this point in time."

Beyond adding years to the contract, Day could be looking for a significant pay increase, especially considering recent contracts handed out to fellow Big Ten coaches.

This past season, Penn State head coach James Franklin signed a 10-year contract that will pay out \$7.5 million annually, and Michigan State head coach Mel Tucker signed a 10-year, \$95 million contract to become one of college football's highest-paid coaches.

"We've always tried to make sure that our top of the pyramid coaches like him are paid consistent with expectations and consistent with performance, so whenever we get to that, we'll look at it from that perspective and then we benchmark and look at the other people in the league, we look at national," Smith said. "I haven't even started, so we'll go down that process."

Given the comfort that Smith said Day feels in Columbus, he said he does not feel any urgency to get a contract extension done.

"I feel like we need to do it the right way with he and his family and the university president and board of trustees," Smith said. "We'll get to that, but historically, I've always tried to make sure that we compensate consistent with expectations and performance. I don't feel a sense of urgency.

"It kind of helped me you had to ask that question (about Day's NFL interest). He said, 'Yeah, I'm happy here and I'm not going anywhere.' Those rumors were rumors," Smith continued. "He and I are very transparent. If somebody had offered him a job he'd call me right away, so that didn't happen, so I'm good."