

# Ohio State Arrives At Rose Bowl For “Business Trip”



After several days of practice and media interviews in Columbus, Ohio State inched closer to kickoff against No. 1 Oregon at the Rose Bowl when it arrived at their team hotel in Los Angeles Sunday night.

As each member of the program stepped out of the team bus and into a swarm of media personnel outside the hotel, two of the Buckeyes' most experienced veterans — fifth-year quarterback and linebacker Will Howard and Cody Simon — spoke to reporters in attendance about their excitement for upcoming battle with the Ducks on New Year's Day.

“(The Rose Bowl) means a ton. It’s crazy that God has blessed me and put me in this position to be a quarterback at the Rose Bowl,” Howard said. “A game that I grew up watching every single year, some unbelievable games I’ve watched in the Rose Bowl, some classics. Just to be a part of it is a blessing. We’re all humbled to be here, and we’re all understanding of how unbelievable this opportunity is, and we’re not taking it lightly.”

“It’s truly an honor,” Simon added. “I didn’t get to play in the last one (when Ohio State played Utah in the Rose Bowl), so for me, I want to take in the moment but also be ready to do my job and do everything we need to do to get a win. But obviously, I understand the importance of this game and the history around it. It’s great to be out here.”

Although the Buckeyes seem to be soaking in the moment in the Golden State, they also know they are there for a reason — to keep their “natty or bust” season going with a win over top-seeded Oregon in the College Football Playoff quarterfinal round.

Both Howard and Simon mentioned that the team’s mentality during these few days leading up to the game is to fully focus on game planning for the Ducks and avoiding all distractions that come with playing in a prestigious venue like the Rose Bowl.

“We’re trying to treat it like a business trip. This isn’t a normal bowl trip,” Howard said. “We’re not here to necessarily go sightseeing or check out the city or anything. We’re here to win a football game.”

"It's not a time for just hanging out and doing whatever," Simon added. "We have the right attitude, I think, coming into this, and we're going to be prepared."

The Buckeyes will need not only the right attitude but the right game plan if they want to slay the dragon that is the 13-0 Oregon Ducks, one which they came just one point shy of achieving during their Oct. 12 matchup in Eugene, Ore.

In order to accomplish that feat this time around, Howard said they will need to finish the week of preparation out strong and play to their potential Wednesday night in the "Granddaddy Of Them All."

To the Scarlet and Gray's veteran quarterback, a Buckeye team who is playing at their full potential is a tough team to stop.

"I want to lead these guys, and drive the machine, because when we're on our stuff we're hard to stop," Howard said. "We just have to make sure that we finish our preparation right these last two days and go out there and put our best foot forward."