

Ohio State Head Coach Ryan Day Previews Sugar Bowl On College GameDay



Ohio State head coach Ryan Day made an appearance on ESPN's College GameDay on Friday morning to discuss his team's final preparations ahead of tonight's Sugar Bowl against Clemson (8 p.m. on ESPN).

Here's a brief recap of what he had to say:

- Day said the 29-23 loss to the Tigers in the 2019 Fiesta Bowl has been a motivating factor for this season. "I think coming off the game last year, it was fresh in our minds. Then, as we went into the quarantine, it kind of got pushed to the back with all of the distractions. But as the season went on, you start to see that its a possibility to get back here. Now we're here again. It certainly was a motivation throughout the season, that we got where we wanted to go but didn't finish it the way we wanted to."
- Day said the key to this matchup is execution, especially after Ohio State failed to turn red zone opportunities into touchdown last year. "When you get to this point, you know you're going to be playing really players, really good teams, really good schemes. What it really comes down to now, with all the emotion, is execution on the field. That's what we're trying to focus on."
- Despite some thinking Ohio State would be fresher thanks to playing fewer games than Clemson, Day thinks it's actually hurt the Buckeyes. "That's been the challenge. We just haven't played as many games, especially in the last month. There hasn't been that cohesiveness. That's one of the things we been talking about in the last month is that we have to play our best game, however that works out, in all three phases. I don't think we've done that yet. I don't think we've done that on offense. I don't think we've done that as a team. So, there have been times where we have flashed and played well. But the focus is just about one night, we all have to come together and execute at a high, high level. That's all about preparation leading into the game, spending as much of our time as we can, not so much on playing Clemson or the rematch or all the things that come with that, but more about doing your job and accountable to the guy next to you."
- Day on quarterback Justin Fields, who has thrown five interceptions this season. "He just needs to be himself," Day said. "He's a great quarterback and he's a winner. Last game was a little clunky and we lost Chris [Olave] a couple days before the game. He never really got into a rhythm. He's played good this season. He's put a lot of work in. He's only played six games. We hope he plays his best game tonight, but he doesn't have to do anything extraordinary. When you have such a lead up to a season and I'm sure the Heisman Trophy was in the back of his mind. You just can't

do too much. You just have to play within yourself because his best is plenty good enough.”

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