

# Ryan Day Says Luke Montgomery, Josh Padilla and George Fitzpatrick Are All “In The Mix” To Start On Offensive Line For CFP Game Vs. Tennessee



Coming off a subpar performance against Michigan in which the Buckeyes rushed for just 77 yards on 26 attempts, Ohio State is looking to reevaluate its options on the offensive line heading into the College Football Playoff.

When asked if he had a grasp of who he wanted to start on the offensive line for the team’s first-round CFP game against Tennessee on Dec. 21, Ohio State head coach Ryan Day said that while he hasn’t come to a complete decision yet, there are some reserves who could make a run at cracking into the starting lineup if they have a strong two weeks of practice.

“We’ll look at it and make sure it’s right, but yeah there’ll be some guys in the mix,” Day said. “Luke Montgomery will be in the mix, Josh Padilla will be in the mix. Based on how they practice, we’ll figure out how it’s going to look.”

While nothing is certain as of yet, Day’s mentioning of the sophomores Montgomery and Padilla as potential candidates to start could suggest that changes may be coming to the offensive line in postseason play.

Montgomery, a former-four star recruit who saw some playing time his freshman year in special jumbo packages, would likely be a candidate to start at left tackle, a position that against Indiana and Michigan was occupied by Austin Sieraveld. Padilla, on the other hand, could slot into the center position if he impresses in practice, a role that was previously held by Carson Hinzman after the season-ending injury to midseason AP All-American Seth McLaughlin.

Day also discussed potential changes at left tackle, a position that has been occupied by now-three-time first-team All-Big Ten selection Donovan Jackson since Josh Simmons went down with a season-ending knee injury after the Oregon game. The coach said that while Jackson is “probably” going to stay at tackle, that could change if junior George Fitzpatrick impresses in practice.

This would likely mean that Jackson would slide back inside to left guard, eliminating the possibility of Montgomery starting.

“Probably,” Day said when asked if Jackson will stay at left tackle. “We’ll look at a couple different things, but right now — (Fitzpatrick moving to tackle) could be a possibility, too. George can really show something this week and we can make that move there. But right now, he’s going to be at tackle.”

Regardless of who starts come Dec. 21, Day said that he is confident that his offensive line has the right personnel to thrive in the postseason and play at a championship level, as long he and the coaching staff could put them in the right position to succeed.

“Taking a couple of key injuries did set us back, but these guys have what it takes to go make this run,” Day said. “So we have to help them. We have to help them. And I think there are ways to do that.”