

Ohio State Head Coach Ryan Day Trying To Keep Message Same For Title Game



When Ohio State and Notre Dame head coaches Ryan Day and Marcus Freeman entered the Savannah Ballroom in Atlanta’s Westin Peachtree media hotel Sunday morning to preview Monday night’s national championship game, they were met by hundreds of media personnel and a swarm of flashing cameras.

There was a palpable energy in the room, as in under 35 hours, either Day or Freeman’s team would sit at the top of the college football world and be crowned national champions for the 2024 season.

While the stakes are certainly as high as they could ever be on Monday night, Day made sure to keep the message simple heading into the matchup. The Buckeyes have focused all Playoff on avoiding all outside distractions and executing on all three phases — a strategy that has gotten them three straight wins against top 10 opponents — and they aren’t going to change anything with legacies and a national title on the line.

“For us, the playoff has been a natural ramp up to this game, and has allowed us an opportunity to get into a routine,” Day said. “And I think when you start to make it bigger or change what we’ve done over the last few weeks, I don’t think that’s good. So what we’re going to do is the same thing we’ve done the last three weeks — have the same routine and focus on our execution.

“There will be plenty of emotion running around on Monday night. I think that there’s a back and forth of recognizing what’s at stake, but also just making sure we recognize the fact that it’s about our execution on the field.”

Day — who will be coaching in his second national championship game as Ohio State’s head coach, the first one coming in 2020 against Alabama during the COVID-19-shortened season — said that while emotions are running high, there is nothing he can say or do in pregame that could persuade his team to play better on the field.

While energetic locker room speeches can get emotions flowing even further — Day did give impassioned speeches before each of the last three CFP wins that were all captured by the program’s social media team — all that matters at that moment is the preparation they have done and the plan

they put in place to defeat the Fighting Irish, and the rest would take care of itself.

“Certainly, we know what a great opponent we have and how good they are. So that’s it. That’s what we have to focus on,” Day said. “Being in the locker room is a special moment. It is. But you all of the sudden can’t just ramp a guy up in the last second to get a guy to go play really, really hard. It’s a buildup, and usually starts at least 48 hours out, to get your body, your mind, your soul ready to play in a game like this.”