

Ohio State Looking For Answers After Third Consecutive Loss To Michigan



Ohio State is still reeling from the team's 30-24 loss to Michigan on Saturday in Ann Arbor, the third in as many seasons to the Wolverines, and it left the team with few words following the contest.

"(It's) hard to describe," Ohio State head coach Ryan Day said. "I'm just sick, the fact that we came up short in this game. You work your whole year for it, and we came up short."

The shortcomings were across the board, as Ohio State's offense had several self-inflicted mistakes, the defense had their worst performance of the season in allowing 30 points and 338 yards, and the special teams also had their share of miscues, including poor performances in the kicking game.

But through it all - Michigan dominating the fourth quarter, including a late drive that ate seven minutes off the clock with Ohio State desperately needing a stop - the Buckeyes still had a chance for the win, only for quarterback Kyle McCord's final pass to be intercepted after he was hit as he released the ball.

"It hurts," McCord said. "It's really the only word for it. To work that hard for that opportunity and just to come up a few plays short hurts. There's no way around that, so it's a tough feeling."

It leaves Ohio State in a precarious position. Not only does it leave in question the Buckeyes' immediate future as it relates to the postseason, but it also brings into question the long-term status of McCord, the defense under coordinator Jim Knowles and the general decisions of the coaching staff that led to struggles against Michigan over the past three seasons.

Those are all problems, however, that Ohio State will have time after this season has concluded to work out. In the mean time, while a College Football Playoff appearance remains unlikely given everything that would have to go right, there will still be a bowl game in Ohio State's future. And McCord said the Buckeyes - even through the pain of defeat at the hands of Michigan - are moving forward, even if they don't have their hands on the wheel anymore.

"It's tough," he said. "To be honest, there really aren't a lot of words to say in a moment like this. It's one of those games where you put everything in and it hurts to come up short. We'll regroup tomorrow,

watch the film, make the corrections on it, but the worst part is that we kind of have to sit back now and see how everything shakes out, it's out of our control.

"I know last year we had a second chance of life, getting in the playoff, and we came ready to play and motivated. But we'll see. The worst part is that it's out of our control."