

Ohio State Not Yet Set On Spring Game Format



Ohio State head coach Ryan Day confirmed on April 4 that as the Buckeyes sit just under two weeks out from the culmination of their spring practice session with the annual spring game on April 16, they've yet to settle on a formal format for the game and will not do so until they have a better idea of the depth and players available.

"We don't have a format yet," Day said. "We have to look at our depth and look at who is healthy and then make some decisions, but we're not that far away. By the end of the week we'll probably get a pretty good feel for what it's going to be."

If recent history is any indication, Ohio State will likely again use a two-hand-touch or "thud" format with a pre-game captain's draft for the scarlet and white teams, while quarterbacks and specialists are able to rotate teams as needed. With only three scholarship quarterbacks (and one who happens to be a 2021 Heisman finalist, unlikely to need a whole lot of spring game reps), something similar on that front seems probable this season.

Ahead of his first spring game in charge back in 2019, Day explained his reasoning behind utilizing thud tackling in these scrimmages.

"I thought about it a bunch, and tackling in the spring is a dangerous thing," Day said. "We spend so much time and so much effort recruiting these guys, getting them ready to go. I just don't think it's worth it, trying to put the guys in the ground right now."

That would jive, too, with statements from defensive coordinator Jim Knowles who has said repeatedly that he doesn't believe in tackling to the ground in practice and that good form tackling can be taught without risking serious injury.

Still, the Buckeyes are expecting a significant turnout as they have been able to consistently generate going back more than a decade. Ohio State welcomed just under 20,000 fans a season ago with a limited capacity stadium because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and checked in at 61,102 back in 2019. A record showing, like the 99,391 in attendance in 2015, is not expected - although Ohio State does hope to return to something closer to the 2019 figures without COVID restrictions to worry about.

"We're certainly looking for a great crowd there," Day said. "I think that's going to be a great day for us."