

Ohio State Offensive Coordinator Brian Hartline Talks Play-Calling Responsibilities, Reflects On First Year In New Role



Throughout the regular season, much has been debated among fans and media about the responsibilities offensive coordinator Brian Hartline did — and did not — possess during his first year at the position. While Hartline and head coach Ryan Day mostly kept quiet when questioned about the topic, the offensive coordinator offered some clarity on the situation on Wednesday, saying that the offensive game-planning is a collaborative effort during the week, with Day calling the shots on gameday.

“Coach Day is still head man and rolling,” Hartline said. “He’s calling plays. Obviously, I’m a big part of that conversation...I would say the biggest role (I have) is probably putting it together throughout the week. And how it’s called on Saturdays, that’s Coach Day.

“I’m sure it will continue to grow,” he continued. “I think the adjustments we make at halftime, the talking we’re having between series and really during the series at times, obviously, I’m a big part of that. But we really put it together, and then he calls it on Saturdays.”

Hartline was elevated to offensive coordinator this offseason after spending the last four seasons as receivers coach and the 2022 season as passing game coordinator. In his first year at the new position, Hartline helped guide an Ohio State offense that lacked the explosiveness they had in year’s past but still ranked third in the Big Ten in scoring offense at 32.8 points per game and first in total offense at 425.0 yards per game.

Hartline’s responsibilities as offensive coordinator in his first season may not have been as exhaustive as others in the same role around the country, but he did admit that he learned a lot about the role that he can take into next season.

The coordinator, who said he is “always self-reflecting” on the job he is doing, added that he has tried to broaden his understanding of Ohio State’s offense — beyond the wide receivers and quarterbacks — while also consuming as much knowledge from Day and his staff to help him learn more about the

position. These are efforts he thinks paid off for him as the season progressed, and could continue to benefit him as he gains more comfort in his role heading into 2024.

"I learned a ton (from this season)," Hartline said. From a people-skills standpoint, I have always kind of had that, that wasn't necessarily a learning part. I would say making sure I'm as diverse in my football knowledge and not just a receiver and pass-game guy has naturally been there. But demanding myself to be an expert in a different part of the game, you always want to do that.

"But until you are demanded to do that, it's a little different," he continued. "So I've demanded myself to do that. I think that's grown. My opinions and my feel of why to do things have grown. Everything is good and has gotten better.

"It's never going to be good enough, so you have to balance that. But I'm really just trying to be very perceptive of Coach Day and what he does and how he operates and make sure I continue to learn as much as I can from him. Obviously, we have a great staff, even defensively. I'm trying to pick things up from Coach (Jim) Knowles as well. So it's been a great first year. (I'm) looking forward to growing again in year two."