

# Ohio State Quarterback Will Howard Calls Beating Michigan A “No. 1” Priority



Newly-committed Ohio State quarterback Will Howard had only been a Buckeye for just a few hours, but that did not stop him from already recognizing the importance of taking back bragging rights in The Game.

Speaking with the media after he committed to Ohio State on Thursday, Howard was quick to correct a reporter who referred to the Buckeyes’ arch rivals as “Michigan,” saying that he would prefer the program to instead be called a name that is only uttered by those who bleed scarlet and gray.

“You mean The Team Up North,” Howard said with a laugh. “They won’t say that ‘M’ word. I guess I won’t be saying it either.”

Howard, who is a native of Downingtown, Pa. and played in the Big 12 at Kansas State for three seasons, has yet to play in The Game, but he said he has already begun to understand the significance the program places on beating Michigan. The former Wildcat told reporters that he had talked with head coach Ryan Day and his staff about the pressure and implications that come with playing the Wolverines, which has only been amplified after three straight Ohio State losses to their arch rivals, as well as a Michigan sign-stealing investigation that has seemingly put both programs at odds with one another.

These types of conversations, according to Howard, allowed Howard to come to the realization that there is nothing that matters more to the program and its fans than dethroning the Wolverines, something he will likely have a chance to accomplish next season if he earns the starting quarterback job in his one and only season with Ohio State.

“We definitely talked about (the rivalry),” Howard said. “That game means so much. The pressure is on. Beating that Team Up North is priority No. 1 on the way to the national championship and all our other goals. That’s huge, and it’s everything when it comes to playing for Ohio State.”

“I know the implications and what it means to the fan base and everyone in the program. That’s The Team Up North now.”

If he is named the starter, Howard will have the opportunity to end the Buckeyes three-game losing streak against Michigan when they welcome the Wolverines back to Ohio Stadium on Nov. 30, a date that marks exactly five years since Ohio State last defeated their rivals in a 56-27 win in Ann Arbor.