

Ohio State To Change Defensive Approach Against Tulsa



Ohio State head coach Ryan Day suggested that way the defensive coaching staff sets up will look different against Tulsa.

Day will decide on who will call plays for Saturday's game after practice Thursday. He said there could be changes to which assistant coaches stand on the field and sit in the press box.

Defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs called plays from the sideline last season, which continued against Minnesota and Oregon, while secondary coach Matt Barnes sat in the press box for those games.

"Every situation is different." Day said during an availability with the media on Thursday. "We have to figure out what makes the most sense for us organizing a game plan and calling plays on Saturday. We can't worry about feelings. We can't worry about anything other than giving our team the best chance to be successful."

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Day said there could also be changes to the depth chart against Tulsa. Bryson Shaw and Marcus Hooker will compete for snaps at free safety after Josh Proctor suffered a season-ending leg fracture against Oregon. He also mentioned that bullet Kourt Williams and cornerback Ryan Watts could see time at the position.

Ohio State will consider shrinking the rotation at linebacker. Coombs called upon five different players to play the position against Minnesota. That number increased by two against Oregon, as seven players received snaps. Teradja Mitchell led the unit with 61, followed by Tommy Eichenberg (38), Cody Simon (35), Steele Chambers (9), K'Vaughan Pope (7), Dallas Gant (5) and Palaie Geoteote (4).

Another area of concern against the Ducks came with the defensive line. Despite a unit filled with four- and five-star talent, including Zach Harrison, Haskell Garrett, J.T. Tuimolaou and Jack Sawyer, the Buckeyes did not sack Oregon quarterback Anthony Brown in his 35 passing attempts.

Day said he liked how the defense responded to criticism this week during practice. Still, he wants to see their preparation lead to results on Saturday.

“The energy has been good, but now we have to go put it on the field,” Day said. “It’s not something that gets fixed overnight, and I think guys understand that. You have to go out with great energy and be aggressive.”