

Ohio State's Defense Looking To Continue Building Momentum At Rutgers



Ohio State's defense has been off to a blazing start this season, boasting the nation's second-ranked scoring defense (10.0 points) and fourth-ranked total defense (259.9 yards). But the unit is looking for more, and will do so on Saturday when it visits Rutgers and a struggling Scarlet Knight offense.

"I say to them get better, and they respond with 'Every day.' Then I show them things we're doing well and things we need to get better at," defensive coordinator Jim Knowles said Tuesday. "It's just a constant process. When you have more good things, it's better. It's like praise, praise, correct. Maybe other times, it's correct, correct, praise. When you have more highlights, it helps everybody."

Rutgers has been among the worst offensive units in the country this season, averaging just 327.1 yards per game - 106th nationally - and has particularly struggled passing the ball, totaling just 148.4 yards per game, which is 124th in the country. But quarterback Gavin Wimsatt has been effective in other ways, rushing for 362 yards and seven touchdowns through eight games.

Ohio State has been more than stout against the rush, however, allowing just 99.8 yards per game. Led by an improving defensive line and consistent linebacker play this season, the Buckeyes present a significant challenge for the Scarlet Knights.

"They have got a lot of good players," Rutgers head coach Greg Schiano said. "You're looking at a front that is probably all NFL players. Their front seven will be all NFL players. But the good thing is, the back four or five are all NFL players as well."

"You're looking at a defense that is probably - I mean, I don't want to be exaggerating. I think every single guy there will be an NFL player, which includes some depth players, which it is what it is. That's why they are one of the top defenses in the country. We'll have our hands full for sure."