

Questions To Be Asked At Big Ten Media Days



With Big Ten Media Days lingering just six days away for Ohio State, there are plenty of queries to be posed to head coach Ryan Day and the team's three player representatives.

Before BSB hits the road to Indianapolis Tuesday, here are three of the biggest questions that Day, wide receiver Marvin Harrison Jr., tight end Cade Stover and defensive end J.T. Tuimoloau will face at the massive press conference.

Where does the quarterback battle stand?

The race to replace C.J. Stroud has been underway since he made his intentions to go to the NFL Draft known in January, with junior Kyle McCord and redshirt freshman Devin Brown being the two runners squaring off.

McCord showed some flashes in the spring game but didn't separate himself for the job, the same being true for both players in spring practice sessions open for media viewing. Brown didn't play in the spring game due to injury but is now back to 100 percent.

Day will certainly get his chance to update where he sees both quarterbacks in their progression. The battle is expected to drag out for at least a week or two into fall camp, perhaps longer.

It'll also be good to get Harrison's perspective on the situation, being that he is arguably the best wide receiver in the country going into the 2023 season. Harrison holds a bond with McCord that dates back to high school — the duo were teammates at Philadelphia St. Joseph's Prep. They won three straight state championships together.

How their relationship has evolved since entering college and the chemistry Harrison has developed with Brown over the past two seasons should provide some context on where both stand as well.

Can this be a breakthrough year on defense?

Ohio State's defense took a nice step forward in 2022 in its first year under defensive coordinator Jim Knowles, but ultimately fell flat when it mattered most against Michigan and Georgia.

Most of the pieces are back from that defense. It starts up front, where a glut of former five-star or top 100 recruits now have starting experience. But can they produce consistently? That will be an important question to answer, and it pertains to perhaps no one more than Tuimoloau.

Against Penn State last year, Tuimoloau had one of the greatest defensive performances in school history. As a defensive end, he intercepted two passes, running one back for a touchdown, and batted a pass that was intercepted by a teammate. He added six tackles with three tackles for loss, two sacks, a forced fumble and a fumble recovery.

He had just 1.5 sacks the rest of the season, even if his presence was strong in other ways. Tuimoloau and the defense will be looking to develop their ability to produce week-in and week-out, and how they're attacking that task will be an interesting quandary for Day and Tuimoloau.

How does the team respond to back-to-back Michigan losses?

Day and players have already been asked an abundance of questions related to this topic, but it doesn't change its importance or the fact that many more will be asked until the Buckeyes and Wolverines meet once more Nov. 25.

From what Day said this offseason, it will be a matter of focusing on the process, how to beat Michigan instead of the result of actually doing it. He feels that was a mistake the team made in its preparation last year.

Turning the tides of the rivalry back in their favor will be no easy task this season, however. Michigan is considered to be among the best teams in college football and returns many of the pieces that were essential to its defeat of Ohio State last year.

What's the day-to-day focus of the team as it relates to the Wolverines? In what other ways will players and coaches change their approach? It might be July, but the contest in November already looms large.