

Radio Show Recap: Day, Schiano Prepare Ohio State For TCU's Speed On Both Sides



To cap their last week of media availabilities in Urban Meyer's absence, Ryan Day and Greg Schiano filled in once more Thursday on the head coach's radio show with 97.1 The Fan.

Before the Buckeyes travel to the Lone Star State for their top-15 tilt, Day and Schiano provided a final assessment on both sides of the ball as imperative matchups further emphasized the Horned Frogs' speed and athleticism.

As No. 4 Ohio State (2-0, 1-0 Big Ten) approaches No. 15 TCU (2-0) for Saturday's 8 p.m. ET kickoff, the acting head coach and defensive coordinator provided parting thoughts prior to the primetime showdown in Arlington, Texas, at AT&T Stadium.

Ryan Day

- Sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins' hot start as a 42-of-53 passer (79.2 percent) 546 yards and nine touchdowns to one interception is a product of how hard he prepares for his games, Day said.
 - "He's working really hard in his preparation," Day said of Haskins (6-3, 220). "I think that when you work in the meeting room, as a quarterback, you have to spend so much time preparing for the game and you only get so many reps in practice and then you have to put it on the field, so you have to play with an imagination. You have to do a good job in the meeting of recognizing what the coverage is going to be, visualizing yourself in the game and then being able to put it on the field. So a lot of it is in the meeting room, a lot of it is on watching film and talking through it in the meetings."
- In addition to Haskins, redshirt freshman quarterback Tate Martell (5-11, 210) through two games as a 13-of-14 passer (92.9 percent) with 154 yards and one touchdown has been given time to throw because of the offensive line's solid performances so far.

- “It does start with protection,” Day said. “The protection’s got to be there so they can set their feet in the ground. When you go to seven on seven for these tournaments and you watch guys plays seven on seven, it’s really not football because there’s no rush, there’s nobody in front of them. We have such a big line that you have to look over the trees. You have to find the passing lanes and do those things, but when you can set your feet and the timing is right, that’s a huge part of it. So protection’s big and the communication of who’s coming, too. Rutgers (Sept. 8) was bringing a lot of blitzes, but we were able to identify the blitz, set and align the right way and then, obviously, the routes and the spacing has really been great.”
- Haskins and Martell are “building every week and finding their own way” in their first year of increased playing time at quarterback.
 - “Every time you do well, you gain confidence,” Day said. “And then the guys around start to believe in you and they follow you, and that kind of goes in that path. But each guy (is) finding their own way.”
- At running back, sophomore J.K. Dobbins (5-10, 214) and junior Mike Weber (5-10, 214) have nearly split the carries with 27 and 20, respectively. Day, however, has not looked at the touches as 50 percent each by design.
 - “It hasn’t worked that way,” Day said. “But when somebody’s in there for five, six, seven plays, we start to send in Mike or J.K. and keep those guys fresh. ... But when those guys have the opportunity to get to the second level, they’re making guys miss and hitting big plays.”
- Martell’s playing time increased extensively vs. Rutgers compared to Sept. 1 against Oregon State. Day saw further development in Martell as a passer and runner.
 - “I think it’s great to get him out there,” Day said. “I think, for the first time, we got to see what he can do in a game. He can beat you with his feet, he had the long run and also doing it with throwing the ball — he was 10 for 10 — that was good, he was efficient throwing the ball. But then he also took a shot on the sideline and came back, and I thought that was a good sign for him to come back and then come down the field and score a touchdown.”
- Day said the offensive line’s size and athleticism have stood out two weeks into the season, but their communication — especially on the left side — should be put to the test in the team’s first game of the season away from Ohio Stadium.
 - “The center, the left guard and the left tackle — you’ve got (sophomore) Thayer (Munford), (fifth-year senior) Malcolm (Pridgeon) and (junior) Mike (Jordan) — they’ve never communicated in that way before between all three of them and then, obviously, the quarterbacks,” Day said. “You had (quarterback) J.T. (Barrett), you had (center) Billy (Price). You had Malcom (6-7, 310) playing in there a little bit, but Mike Jordan (6-7, 312) was playing the left guard and then you had (left tackle) Jamarco (Jones). So it’s all new guys in those spots, and so the communication going on the road is going to be critical.”
- Against a veteran head coach such as TCU’s Gary Patterson, who has been at the helm for nearly two decades, the Horned Frogs forge a new challenge with their mix of speed and scheme, which Day compared to Southern California’s in the 2017 Cotton Bowl between “running to the ball” and being “really athletic.”
 - “This is the game that’s been circled on their(s) and our calendar for a long time,” Day said. “So we know that there’ll be something going into the game that we haven’t seen and the

ability to adjust is going to be important. Coach Patterson's been in the system for a very long time. They do a great job of adjusting. So we've got to do as good of a job, if not better, of adjusting as the game goes on."

- Asked about Austin Mack, Day considered the junior wide receiver "a really good route runner" among the reasons for Mack's emergence as a top target for Haskins.
 - "He's the 'X' receiver, so when you get into a three-by-one set, with a one-on-one (matchup) there, we expect the 'X' to win and he's done that so far," Day said of Mack (6-2, 215). "You've got to win, but you've also got to catch the ball. The ball's got to be on time, so it's on everybody. But he's had a nice camp. He and (6-4, 200-pound junior wide receiver) Ben (Victor) are the guys we count on to win those one-on-one matchups in the bottom."
- As the team makes its first trip of the year for the neutral-site matchup at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, Day discussed the importance of players following the routine with a walkthrough and some rest at the hotel because "we don't want to shoot our gun too early in the day" before the 8 p.m. ET kickoff.
 - "Young guys, they think, 'Oh, we're going down to Arlington. It's kind of a field trip.' And that's not the case," Day said. "As some of the older guys will tell them, is that it's a business trip and we're going down there to play in a big-time atmosphere. The older guys take the lead on it, obviously, and show the way for the younger guys."
- On top of the second-team unit's increased reps against Rutgers, Day pointed to the first-team front and Munford's early emergence as a first-year starter at left tackle.
 - "He's doing a good job," Day said of Munford (6-6, 319). "Kind of thrown in there this year. We made that move in the offseason and he's handled it well. He played a little bit of there in high school, but he was mostly at right tackle last year, so he's done a nice job."

Greg Schiano

- Junior defensive end Nick Bosa, junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones (6-3, 286) and sophomore defensive end Chase Young headline the forces on the first-team defensive line. Asked about Robert Landers, however, Schiano credited the junior defensive tackle
 - "The defensive line's playing really well and, certainly, Nick's the leader of that crew," Schiano said of Bosa (6-4, 263). "He's made some incredible plays this year. He's someone that I think the offenses have to account for, for sure. And then you mentioned it, B.B. Landers (6-1, 283) — quick inside there on the first play of the (Rutgers) game to get a TFL is always a good way to start it off. When you can do those kinds of things and get them behind the chains, then it makes, certainly, calling the game easier."
- Schiano called redshirt freshman cornerback Shaun Wade "a gifted athlete" after he flew around against Rutgers with two tackles and his first career interception across multiple positions, particularly in the outside and nickel slots.
 - "He can play in a lot of different places," Schiano said of Wade (6-1, 195). "And with the ability to do that, it's easier to get him on the field. So you don't have to displace this guy or that guy. He can dabble at all of them. He's a bright young man, so he can learn the positions. He has — he's played outside, he's played inside (and) he's going to play a little safety."
- Tuf Borland boosted his snap count when he played increasingly with the first-team defense and

fellow sophomore middle linebacker Baron Browning (6-3, 240) against Rutgers. As a result, Borland received valuable time on the field before the TCU game.

- “He’s around the ball,” Schiano said of Borland (6-1, 230). “He wasn’t perfect. Let’s be clear on that because he was shaking off the rust. But even when he’s not right, assignment-wise, he somehow finds a way to get around the football. So that’s a natural instinct that we’re blessed that he’s here.”
- The rotation at linebacker was on full display against Rutgers, which Schiano emphasized was not because of the blowout score.
 - “We’re going to play more than three, even in a tight ballgame, because we feel like we have more than three,” Schiano said. “Baron Browning’s getting better and better and better.”
- In addition to Borland and Browning at middle linebacker, Schiano mentioned junior Justin Hilliard and fifth-year senior Dante Booker among the other standout players to have earned more time across the position group.
 - “Book is getting more and more like the old Book,” Schiano said of Booker (6-3, 235), who underwent offseason shoulder surgery. “His shoulder, he’s getting stronger and all those things. He’s getting some reps now back under his belt. You look all the way across, Justin Hilliard (6-3, 230) is a guy that’s practicing very well. We feel very comfortable with him going in the game.”
- Sophomore quarterback Shawn Robinson presents the first true dual-threat quarterback as TCU’s top passer and rusher, statistically, which caught Schiano’s attention since the week started.
 - “When he runs, a lot of guys are good at making the decisions but are just OK runners — he’s as good as any running back,” Schiano said of Robinson (6-3, 228). “He’s strong, he’s big — he’s close to 230 pounds at quarterback. So not only do we have to decipher (the read option) correctly, but then we have to make a tackle on a big man. So it’s going to be a challenge. Very strong-armed as well, so he can get the ball anywhere on the field — deep, shallow, in between, the intermediate routes. So we have our hands full.”
- After junior Jordan Fuller (6-4, 204) made his first start back at safety when he returned to the defense from a hamstring issue that sidelined him for the season opener against Oregon State, Schiano said “the other side is up for grabs” between sophomores Isaiah Pryor (6-2, 197) and Jahsen Wint (5-11, 196).
 - “I thought Isaiah took a big step between week one and week two,” Schiano said of Pryor. “And it might not have been spectacular plays, but it was consistency. And that’s, as a coach, what you’re looking for — can you consistently go out and do your job play after play after play? Jahsen’s going to keep pressing him. ... There’s some other names — (sophomore) Brendon White (6-2, 210) and even Shaun Wade is going to get into that mix. So there’s going to be a fierce competition and that might go for a little bit. And that’s OK with us as long as, when you’re in there, you’re doing your job.”
- Despite four new starters, Schiano considered TCU to have “a really good offensive line.”
 - “We only have two samples of this line to look at, but they’re very physical, they’re athletic, they’re big,” Schiano said. “So as an offensive line, those are three pretty good things to start with and we’re going to (have), by far, the biggest test we’ve had. And I said it earlier in the week — they remind me of a really good Big Ten offensive line.”
- At running back, Schiano broke down the different skill sets TCU poses between juniors Sewo

Olonilua (6-3, 231) and Darius Anderson (5-11, 212).

- “They’re both really good,” Schiano said. “They both can run. They both can catch the football. So they’re multi-talented guys. When you have two backs like that, you don’t ever have to let one get tired.”

- The wide receivers trio of senior Kavontae Turpin, sophomore Jalen Reagor and senior Jaelen Austin.

- “They’re all very explosive guys,” Schiano said of Turpin (5-9, 157), Reagor (5-11, 195) and Austin (6-2, 198). “So you’ve got to cover them in the pass game. They’re going to run speed sweeps with them, they’re going to run reverses with them. And when you look at (Turpin), he’s a classic reverse guy, classic tunnel-screen guy. We’ve had some issues with the tunnel screen early in the season. So we’re going to have to be ready for all of those things. It changes when they’re fast fast like these guys are. The angles change a little bit. So we really have to be on point because if you’re one step off, they’re out the gate.”

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