

Reports Show Optimism That Ohio State-Michigan On Track To Play



With the status of The Game up in the air, reports on Dec. 7 indicate Ohio State and Michigan are on track to play at Ohio Stadium on Dec. 12.

Michigan, which canceled its previous matchup with Maryland due to a COVID-19 outbreak, has a “lot of optimism” and is “preparing to practice,” per Yahoo Sports’ Pete Thamel.

Sources: Lot of optimism out of Michigan today. They are preparing to practice, which is a good sign for playing the Ohio State game.

— Pete Thamel (@PeteThamel) December 7, 2020

Also, Michigan “is preparing as if the OSU game will happen” but did not confirm that the team was set for a return to practice, per The Athletic’s Austin Meek.

I've been told that Michigan is preparing as if the OSU game will happen. Still no word on a return to practice, but expecting to hear something shortly. Doubtful that we'll get a definitive answer on the OSU game today, but it'll be a positive sign if team activities can resume.

— Austin Meek (@byAustinMeek) December 7, 2020

It appears the Wolverines are “not out of the woods yet,” though they are “planning on being back on the field this afternoon,” per FS1’s Bruce Feldman.

SOURCE: #Michigan is expected to take a first step towards returning to play later today; Wolverines are planning on being back on the field this afternoon but am told, it will not be a typical practice, and they “are not out of the woods yet.”

— Bruce Feldman (@BruceFeldmanCFB) December 7, 2020

On the other side of the rivalry, Ohio State had to overcome the absence of 23 players and four full-time members of the coaching staff, including head coach Ryan Day to defeat Michigan State 52-12 in East Lansing on Dec. 5.

Ohio State associate head coach/defensive line coach Larry Johnson took over as interim head coach and offensive coordinator/tight ends coach Kevin Wilson handled play-calling duties in the Buckeyes' thrashing of the Spartans, who beat Michigan 27-24 on Oct. 31.

"I'd like to be quick because I think this is all about the leaders, it's all about coaches, who all stepped up in a big way," Day said postgame Dec. 5. "I can't say enough about the leaders this week and watching the leadership and watching the way these guys played. I couldn't be prouder, happier for them. ... I couldn't be prouder of a coaching staff, to watch Larry Johnson rally the team and Kevin Wilson this week drive the offense."

Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh was asked about The Game possibly being canceled and whether he would petition for the Big Ten to reschedule the rivalry matchup with Ohio State during an interview with WXYZ-TV Channel 7 in Detroit on Nov. 30,

"This is not the 'what ifs' kind of scenarios, this is day-to-day kind of stuff and we're going to continue," Harbaugh said Nov. 30. "It's been very successful for us here to - as it relates to health and safety of the players and COVID - the protocols of that kind of mindset has been in following those and being vigilant on just a daily basis. It's been successful and we're going to keep doing it that way."

Michigan originally announced Nov. 30 that the program had paused its in-person team activities due to presumptive positive COVID-19 tests, and the team transitioned to virtual meetings.

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