

Ryan Day Says Ohio State Has “A Lot To Prove” This Season



For the second-ranked team in the country entering the season, some confidence - and perhaps even a bit of ego - would be expected as one of the few teams viewed as a contender for the national championship.

That is nowhere to be found on this year's Ohio State squad, according to head coach Ryan Day. While the team is confident, and that has been apparent throughout fall camp as the season approaches, Day said that the confidence has not led to anybody on the team developing an ego.

“Coming off last year, there are no big heads,” Day said Tuesday. “We’ve got to go win this first game and they know that. They have a lot to prove.”

Expectations remain high for Ohio State's offense, expected to be among the best in the country, and for the defense, which has been reworked under defensive coordinator Jim Knowles and has many believing that the Silver Bullets could be in for a dramatic turnaround.

The opener at Notre Dame on Sept. 3 will be an early indicator as to whether or not the Buckeyes can reach their goals this season, as the Fighting Irish - ranked No. 5 in the country - will play in the first-ever top-five, season-opening matchup in Ohio Stadium's storied history.

The build to the game has been rampant ever since a primetime kickoff was announced during the offseason, but Ohio State is trying to not add any additional pressure to the game despite the circumstances and storylines.

“The nation will be watching, and you will be front and center,” Day said, “but we can't make it bigger than it is. We've got to make sure we focus on what really matters.”

The same is true for Knowles, who is making a big jump from Oklahoma State to Ohio State, and the

contrast will be made even stronger when the Buckeyes kick off their season in one of the year's premier non-conference games.

"It's the same process, the expectations are different," Knowles said. "That hasn't changed what I do or how I do it, you just know it's there."