

Ryan Days Says There Is “Damage Control” After Losing To Michigan



In an interview with ESPN’s Heather Dinich, Ohio State coach Ryan Day spoke about the loss to Michigan this past season, saying that there is “damage control” that must be done after a loss to the Wolverines.

The Buckeyes suffered a loss to Michigan for the second consecutive season, the first time that Ohio State has dropped consecutive games to the Wolverines since 1999 and 2000. Ohio State also fell short of a Big Ten title and came up just short in the College Football Playoff against Georgia, failing to complete any of the program’s three major goals heading into a given season.

“The expectation here every year is the same,” Day said. “Win the rivalry game, win the Big Ten and win the national championship. We fight like heck to do that and we’re right there. You can feel it, you can taste it, and that’s motivated the guys this offseason. When you get that close and you don’t get there, you didn’t get it done. And it certainly does motivate.”

That motivation has been felt in how Ohio State has attacked changes on the defensive side of the ball, with defensive coordinator Jim Knowles taking responsibility for defensive lapses against the Wolverines and Bulldogs that led to both teams putting up impressive offensive performances against Ohio State.

“We had some matchup issues, which I blame myself,” Knowles told Dinich. “Got put into positions where the matchup was not in our favor. That’s my job to fix that and look out for that. We had some times where we lost our eyes and we didn’t execute. I call it eye violations. When the moments get big, our vision has to get smaller and more condensed.

“At times we had guys who were doing too much and not focused on their assignment,” he continued. “That goes back to me. Nobody wants to make the critical mistake, they don’t want to give up the critical play. That’s not how our guys are built. So then I have to look at my teaching and the environment.”

Those changes are aimed at getting Ohio State back to where it needs to be in the conference race, national race and against Michigan. Day said the Buckeyes do not have a choice when it comes to national championship expectations, and the work being done this offseason is helping to right the mistakes from last season.

“The expectation is that you do (win a national championship),” Day said. “The rivalry game is obviously very important, and when you look at those games, and you see the single plays that really cost us the game, when you’re talking about on defense giving up explosive plays, that’s very important, that’s how games can go sideways. We have to identify that and get that fixed.”