

# Big Ten Football Media Days

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## Michigan Wolverines

### Jm Harbaugh

#### Press Conference



JIM HARBAUGH: Thank you. Thanks to Kevin too. This feels good to be back. I hope everybody's enjoying themselves. It's great to see everybody here. I know I'm here to have a really good day visiting with other coaches and also just seeing the players. They've made it really special. This is a really special thing for the players who get to come to this media day and represent their teams. But to see them in the locker room is, Kevin's got us set up, and his staff has us setup in the Colts' locker room with each of their jerseys there and got a gift bag and their name on the locker, and every single guy is taking a picture with their phone. So just want to thank Kevin, the entire Big-Ten staff, for putting this on. Excited to be here. Got three great guys with us today. Aidan Hutchinson, All-American-type football player. Also Hassan Haskins and Josh Ross. All three of those players are real football players, true football players, freaky in the nature of their athletic ability, compared with their strength, the force that they put out. And I can say all three guys, even better guys than football players. So no speech. We go right to questions.

**Q. You have a number, you've had number of new coaching hires this off-season. Could you talk about what they bring to the program?**

JIM HARBAUGH: Yeah. So there's been a number of new hires on the coaching staff. The thing that I think they all have in common is just what they know about football, their experience, the teachers that they are. And the other thing is just how they have come together, really, the trust. When I sit in the defensive room and Mike MacDonald, our coordinator, is talking and there's input coming from Coach Clink and George Helow and Shaun Nua, the dialog that's going on in the room is really tremendous. There's, Coach Bellamy, as well, has brought so much. And nobody's afraid to talk. Nobody's afraid to put their opinion out there and it gets batted around. I love that. There's a tremendous analyst, Doug Mallory, Coach Oz, Joe. It's a really good room, the GAs, Dillon and Steve, I mean, it's almost like a scrimmage, almost like a scrimmage is going on, ideas are flowing and getting talked through, and it's a fun, exciting room. You can tell that there's trust. You can

tell that there's trust in the room. Guys can speak their mind and be heard and then they bat it around and they get to a good result. So that's been tremendous.

I see the same thing offensively too. Common question, I mean, Josh Gattis going into his third year as the offensive coordinator and the guy that knows most about that room, the trust that he has in the other coaches on the offensive side of the ball, the trust that we all have in Josh and the same kind of free-flowing dialog and looking at the tape, you're scheming, your putting in ideas, but that same kind of energy, that same kind of trust is there. Sherrone Moore coaching the offensive line, Jay Harbaugh, Mike Hart, all respected, all valued, doing a heck of a job. Matt Weiss has been a great addition coaching the quarterbacks, and also Steve Casula, analyst on offense, I love him, what he brings. Kyle DeVan, what he brings. To be in those meet things, both offensively and defensively, and to see the interaction, see the dialog, see the trust, has been, has exceeded my hopes and expectations.

**Q. I know there's a great quarterback competition that's going on right now. I know with the departure of Shea, Milton transferring, it's actually good to see that you got several bodies back there competing for the job. So kind of looking at what are you looking for besides leadership? What kind of attributes do you look for a starting quarterback and to get that intense last game of the season win?**

JIM HARBAUGH: Well, you mentioned some of the great qualities that you need as a quarterback, being able to move the team, being able to put the ball, putting points on the board, drives, good at 11 on 11 football, making everybody else around you better. Those are the things you look for in a quarterback. And somebody that takes command. Is that leader on the field, when the offense is out there, coaches, kind of the 12th man, trying to put guys in position to be successful. But that quarterback is the, he's the straw that's stirring the drink. So right now, Cade McNamara is, has done a tremendous job. He played in some games last year and did very well, went through spring practice and was outstanding. So he's our No. 1 quarterback going into fall camp.



You talk about taking the reins and leadership, that's something that he has done. He has been that guy throughout the entire spring and the training cycle in the summer, by example, and also pulling other guys along with him. He's a fiery competitor. He's got that gene, that he must win, must give it his best at all times.

And then J.J. McCarthy has some of those very same qualities and did an excellent job in spring practice. He's fighting. He is, he's got the athletic ability and the arm talent to get it done, but Cade McNamara is not letting him take it away, and that's probably the best thing for our team and for J.J. and all of us. So that's where we stand, as I see it, at quarterback. Dan Villari is a big, strong good athlete who has been improving his throwing mechanics and accuracy, velocity. Getting to the point where he can make all the throws very effectively as well. And also I want to see him contribute on special teams as well. I mean, why be the, why get -- get on the field, help the team in any possible way that you can. I mean, yeah, the obvious example is going to be what Taysom Hill has been able to do. Maybe every football team is looking for that. I think we got that in a guy like Dan Villari that can be a dual threat quarterback and contribute to the team on special teams. But that's in his hands how much of a desire he has to do that.

Alan Bowman, transferring in has had a good summer cycle. I've heard good things. I like his energy. I like the confidence that he has, the experience that he has. He's played in a lot of football games. Tough guy and excited to watch him compete when we go to start the training camp.

But that's, that's pretty much where we're at at the quarterback position and there's actually a couple other guys I really like too and are doing a nice job, but hopefully that answers it.

**Q. With Coach Macdonald, what did maybe you observe and maybe were impressed with most when he was with your brother in Baltimore and how do you envision him maybe changing your defense philosophically at least in the early stages?**

JIM HARBAUGH: Yeah, the -- I hadn't been around Mike a lot, except the times I had gone to Baltimore and visited there and talked some football. My brother John was like, Yeah, this is the guy I would hire and probably would be our next defensive coordinator here in Baltimore after Wink. And what he liked about him, what he told me, when I asked him what he liked about him, he said he's really smart, he was in on the ground floor of the Ravens when they changed their defense, invented their defense and their scheme. Very detailed and very good teacher.

So that, I had gotten a lot of recommendations from a lot of people that I really trust in football, that I've worked with and know extremely well. I mean, guys I love like a brother. But all that being said, this came from John and I even asked him, I said, John, I mean, that's pretty awesome that you would recommend somebody you think so highly of that's on your staff. And he said, Well, I really love Michigan football and I really love you, so I want to see you both be successful.

And then, of course, started talking to Mike through the interview process, Ward was involved as well, and we really felt Mike was great, what we were looking for, and then since that hire it's worked out even better than I had hoped. Tremendous at coaching pretty much all the positions on defense and really good communicator, really good installer, really good on the field, really good at identifying traits in players and where they can be plugged into and then moved around, I mean, so that an offense can't say, Well Aidan Hutchinson is going to be there, you know. He could be there, he could be there, he could be -- all options are open.

And then as I said when I first started talking, just the way he's involved the entire defensive staff, the trust that they have built in a very short time, the way they communicate, it's been better than I had hoped.

**Q. Losing Kwity Paye, a first round draft pick, it's never easy, but the good news is you got Aidan back. So talk to me about how he has been this summer in practice, just been a leader and how he's going to take your defense to the next level?**

JIM HARBAUGH: Yeah, and I don't know whether it's losing a guy. Kwity graduated, he's going on playing right here, right here in Indianapolis. So proud of him. I mean, he's a guy that all the right things matter, he thinks about all the right things -- talking about Kwity Paye. And then that is also Aidan Hutchinson in the very same way. True football player, real football player, he's a big 267-pound guy that can move and move laterally, move forward, move backwards, move low, move quick. I mean, he's got tremendous force, acceleration, mass, and a great desire to be good and to have his teammates be good. You talk about leadership, I mean pulling other guys in, holding himself accountable, holding other guys accountable. It's the kind of player that as a coach, if you're sitting down, you're rolling up in your chair, if you're standing up, I'm like leaning forward here to tell you that, yeah, this is one of my absolute favorite guys that I've coached. And for all the right reasons. He does everything that you would want him to do. He gets the best grades, wins the most awards, excels at sports. He's a really good guy. Great family, honors his dad, but he's also setting his own legacy and it's

all A plus, plus.

**Q. You've won a lot of games but you haven't beaten Ohio State and you haven't won the Big Ten championship. Where do you think the program stands right now, what steps need to be taken to take that next step and do you feel rejuvenated by the coaching changes?**

JIM HARBAUGH: Well I'm here before you, I'm as enthusiastic excited as I ever am, always am, even more to have at it, to win the championship, to win the, to beat Ohio, your hometown there. Our rival is Michigan State, everybody, that's what we want to do. And we're going to do it or die trying, you know.

It's like -- I was talking to my daughter this summer, we were going up this, we were climbing Sarah, Addy and I were going up this mountain, it was like a mountain climb -- I don't know how high it was, but it was pretty high, we probably did 15,000 steps to get up there, she was counting it on her phone. And we were getting up close to the top and I remember she said, We got to apex, dad, we got to get to the top. You're darn right we do. We got to get there. That's what we got to do. We got apex this, we got to get to the top. She's got that gene in her and I was darn glad to see it.

And I tell you I got that gene in me, and some of the guys we talked about here already, Aidan Hutchinson, Hassan, Josh Ross and a lot others, we got that gene in us, we got to get to the top.

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