

Big Ten Conference Football Championship Game: Ohio State vs Indiana

Saturday, December 6, 2025

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Lucas Oil Stadium

Ohio State Buckeyes
Coach Ryan Day

Julian Sayin

Postgame Press Conference



decision-making and then the execution on the two red zones where you had third-and-one and didn't come up with any points?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, on the first one, we tried to sprint out to Jeremiah. It didn't work. And then we tried a sneak there that looked like we had. I guess they said his knee was down and it was short. That was that one.

And then on the next one, we tried to roll out on the third-and-one and it was batted down. And then felt like at that point, let's just get the three points and get the defense back on the field and see if we can play for another possession, get a stop and get the ball back, kick a field goal to win the game. But we didn't execute that.

At the end of the day, we went down there two times and ended up with zero points. And that's how you lose a game.

Q. Went for it on fourth, the kick, how much, the fact that you guys have struggled in some of the sneaks -- last week in the rivalry game against Michigan, the sneak was short, and this sneak was short as well, how did that influence the thinking there?

RYAN DAY: For the most part, our sneaks have been pretty good this year. How many have we not got this year?

JULIAN SAYIN: Just two.

RYAN DAY: It's been pretty good for us, and we felt like we've been pretty good at it. But we didn't execute it in this one. We'll have to figure out if it's the right thing moving forward and try to put our guys in the best position to be successful.

Q. You guys have stressed routine so much all year, moving things around to make sure you stick to a routine. I know you don't want to make excuses, but how tough was this week? Obviously there was a million things you guys had to balance. Do you feel it threw off the routine? Do you feel it impacted what happened today at all?

Indiana - 13, Ohio State - 10

RYAN DAY: Very disappointed just overall with how we played. Didn't play very well in the situations. Third downs were not very good. Not very good in the red zone obviously in the end. So very disappointed.

I thought Indiana played really well, did a great job. But just obviously we're all disappointed in the locker room that we didn't finish out this regular season the way we wanted to.

Q. Coach, your team's allowed six sacks the entire season, and in the first two and a half quarters Indiana had five of them. I know they're a great defense, obviously, looking at their numbers, but what were they doing in particular that just made this a miserable night for the offensive line?

RYAN DAY: They obviously brought different pressures and twists, but that was something that they had done all season. They're very good at it. We didn't handle it very well at all. There were times we did, but we weren't consistent enough.

And this is a major lesson for this team is that it can come down to one play or two plays or three plays that decide a game like this. So this is a tough lesson to learn, but we have to be more efficient across the board.

It can't just be us doing our job once or twice or three times. I mean, it's got to be every single time. And that didn't happen. And that starts with the coaching and then goes from there.

Q. Ryan, could you go through the thinking, the

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RYAN DAY: I would say it's the same for both teams. At the end of the day, that's our job, to come out here and execute and win games.

So we're not going to make any excuses about any of this. We wanted to win this game. The guys had a good week of practice. But at the end of the day, we know we came up short.

So we've got to get back and figure out why that happened, what the issues were, and get it fixed, because the season is not over. We've got a lot of football ahead of us, and hopefully we can use this as a way to get better as we head into the playoffs.

Q. Ryan, with everything that was going on with Brian this week and going to USF, did anything change at all in the way you guys game planned or called the plays tonight from the rest of the season?

RYAN DAY: I'm not going to get into too many details on it all. I think Brian is doing everything he possibly can to finish his time here the right way, and I appreciate that. So we're all involved with it and we're all doing everything we can to make sure that we put the guys in the right situation to be successful.

We've got a bunch of guys in that room. And we'll make sure, as we head into the next few weeks, that we're on point, we're doing our part.

Q. After missing the game-time field goal, do you regret going for it on fourth-and-two at the end of the third quarter?

RYAN DAY: When it doesn't work, I always regret it. So that's how it works. You know, when it works, it's good. When it doesn't, then you want to take it back. That's how life works.

At the end of the day we've got to make decisions in real time that we think give our guys the best position to be successful and practice it enough to execute it. And when it doesn't, then certainly we've got to deal with what comes with that.

And that's my responsibility. So at the end of the day, I've got to make sure that we're putting our guys in the right situation to be successful.

Q. The offensive line has been playing much better. Tonight it had its troubles. Can you pinpoint why it struggled so much, especially in protecting Julian?

RYAN DAY: I'm going to have to really get on the film and figure out where most of the breakdowns were. I think there was some good play but not enough against a good defense. They've done a nice job all year. Continue to do a nice job.

I think they were averaging 10 points going into the game and held us to 10 points. So you've got to give them credit.

But we'll get back to it and figure out what that was and where we're coming up short. And usually, when that happens, it's everybody. It's not just one person or one thing. But it wasn't good enough, that's for sure.

Q. Ryan, obviously this wasn't the result you wanted but Caden, all over the field today, was making plays outside the stat sheet. What did you see of him and how important was he today?

RYAN DAY: I thought the guys played really, really hard and certainly Caden led the way with the three TFLs. But he's been like that all year. That's who he is and the player he's become.

So, I thought the defense was gritty tonight, played hard, and gave us a chance to win, and he was a big part of that.

Q. Obviously some of the red zone stuff has worked for you, some of the stuff you guys ran today has worked this year. Obviously Indiana is a really good red zone defense, what did you see in the red zone? And when you're inside the 10 twice and you get zero points, as a play caller, do you start to second-guess or change things? Maybe they didn't work the previous time, and do you feel like that leads to over-thinking at all?

RYAN DAY: Well, when you get in the red zone, you have to get positive yards -- and we had a couple of drives that started right around the 10-yard line, and when that happens, I mean you've got to get three and four yards or else you can find yourself behind the sticks real quick. And that didn't happen.

Then the passes that we threw on those first and second downs weren't successful enough. We tried a couple of things that didn't work out. So we've got to make sure that they're the right plays and that we're executing them well enough and that we're practicing them well enough, all the things that come with it.

We spend an inordinate amount of time to try to figure out what is the best scheme that fits what you're going to see in the game, and then we go from there. We're all involved with it, and we've all got to own it.

Q. Could you comment on the team sportsmanship in the red zone?

JULIAN SAYIN: Yes we've got to do better execution-wise. Starts with me, I just gotta be able to, when we get down there, just put point on the board, because as a quarterback, ultimately you're judged on how the offense does and when we score points or not.

I gotta do a little bit better down there in the red zone and make sure we end up with points, especially on the quarterback sneak. You know, fourth down we've got to end up with a first down there.

Q. Last year, you had that loss at Michigan and kind of regrouped, gave you a chance to kind of re-examine. Do you try to revisit that, anything that you learn from that moving forward?

RYAN DAY: I think every year is different, every group is different. But, yeah, there's going to be a lot of hard conversation here over the next couple of weeks for sure. This is not going to sit well with anybody. It's going to sting.

And we can't let this game beat us twice, but we can use it as an opportunity to get better and grow from. But that's only going to happen if we get to work and do it. It isn't magically going to happen.

When you lose a game, it hurts, it stings. That's one of the things we've talked about all year is, let's not wait for a loss to have great urgency. Let's not wait for a setback to motivate us more. Let's continue to fight every day to make sure that we're on top of all of that.

But the truth is that, with this group, I think that this is going to make us more hungry because this is a competitive group. To walk off that field without a championship is going to hurt. And that's what we wanted to do. There's a lot of guys in that locker room that are pissed off right now.

Q. Julian, on that third-down play there before the missed field goal, what were sort of your options? Because obviously you were looking to the end zone all the way there. Take us what your thoughts were on that particular play?

JULIAN SAYIN: I had a rollout with the running back in the flat. And I thought the defender was too close; he was covered. So, I moved on to my next read and tried to fit it in there and they ended up batting it away. So we've got to convert on that in third-and-1 and keep the offense on the field.

RYAN DAY: I don't think Julian couldn't have done anything different on that play or a couple of those plays down there. I know it wasn't maybe perfect, but I thought Julian played well tonight. I thought he played hard and was gritty. Had some tough situations where he didn't make bad situations worse, quite honestly.

Q. Third downs were huge tonight. Mendoza hit a couple of huge passes. Did you give it up (indiscernible) a little bit? (Indiscernible)?

RYAN DAY: Yeah, it depends on what you're seeing, but they certainly made -- they were 6-of-13 and we were 4-of-12. And some of those were big plays in the game. So, we can't let that happen, obviously. But they executed it, and that was part of the game, part of the story of the game.

Q. Ryan, how much did you consider on the fourth-and-one before the field goal going for it? And how might that affect your decision-making the rest of this season if you get in another spot like that?

RYAN DAY: I mean, obviously, when you miss a field goal you're sick over it and you second-guess yourself right from the jump. I felt like there, that was a situation -- I forget exactly how long the field goal was, but sort of a chip shot. Get the thing tied up and let's go.

We were struggling down there in the red area, and let's get the thing tied up and see if we can get the ball back and look to kick a field goal to win the game. So you know when it doesn't look at it and you second-guess it for sure.

Q. Julian, last year you guys ended the season with a 13-10 loss, came back and were dominant the rest of the way. What's going to be the key bouncing back with the playoff in front of you and the opportunity to still win a national title?

JULIAN SAYIN: Yeah, I think last year with me being a freshman, I just saw that group stick together. And the leadership in that group they were together, and that's going to be a big part for us, just sticking together and having each other's backs.

Q. Julian, this was the second straight game you had to bounce back from an early interception. What is it like for a quarterback to deal with something like that, and how did you think you handled it today?

JULIAN SAYIN: First off, can't turn the ball over early in the game like that and put our defense in a bad spot. I ended up giving up points for that. Those points are me.



Just battling adversity and not letting it overtake your mind and just being able to move on to the next play.

Q. Julian, there was time in the first half, I think when your shoe came off on the sideline there. Did that -- got something taped up -- did that affect you at all later on? What happened there?

JULIAN SAYIN: No, the shoe came off. I got it taped up so it stayed on.

Q. I wanted to ask about the right guard spot real quick. Gabe VanSickle was there late in the game. Was that a matter of him just being your best option at right guard? Was there anything wrong with Tegra? And I guess moving forward what do you see at that right guard spot?

RYAN DAY: Well, we wanted to split the work up a little bit in this game and take some pressure off of both of those guys. We felt like that was the right thing to do in this game, and we'll decide if that's the right thing to do moving forward.

Q. I'm sure you've thought that holding Indiana to 13 points would have been enough for your offense. I guess, your thoughts on the offense overall and, I don't know, disappointment, frustration, where are you right now?

RYAN DAY: Just finishing off the drives, obviously, was huge and really the story of the game. There were times when we moved the ball well and we had some decent drives. But when you get into the red zone and you don't finish like that, that's how you lose games.

I mean, that to me is really the story of the game. And then on third downs, 4-of-12, just not good enough, didn't really establish the run.

They were playing a decent amount of coverage. So when they're playing that much coverage, you should be able to run the football consistently. When you're not and you're not converting on third down and you're not scoring in the red zone, that's the story of the game. So, you know, it's a tough lesson to learn, but it's got to get fixed fast.

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