

Rutgers University Football

Media Conference

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Greg Schiano

Press Conference



GREG SCHIANO: Big week, looking forward to going out to Indiana. Had a chance to watch them now some, last night and today. They have a good football team. You look at the four teams they have lost to, combined, they have lost three games the whole season.

So you look at the way they played University of Michigan, you look at the way they played against Ohio State, Louisville, they are a good football team that has come up short a little bit.

Just read where Coach Allen said they are going to settle on one quarterback and stick with him. There are some things that we're not sure of. There are some things that we know we have to get ready for, and we're going to do that.

With that I'll open up for questions.

Q. You just mentioned the quarterback situation. What do you see from the two guys on film that they have been kind of rotating through?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, they are both really good players. They both can throw it very well. They are both athletic. I don't know, it's going to be a challenge whoever lines up back there. But knowing who starts the game, that will be the guy, then we've just got to be ready for both.

Q. A similar situation as you guys were in last year in the sense of rotating quarterbacks and they fired their offensive coordinator at the bye week. What were the challenges of that experience you remember from last year, and is there anything that you can take from that experience to your advantage this week playing against them?

GREG SCHIANO: No. I think every situation is totally unique and totally different, and without being there, I have no idea what their situation is.

So no, I really don't think I can.

Q. Kyle Monangai is leading the Big Ten in rushing. Was that -- did you expect that coming into the season, or that a little bit of a surprise to you?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, it's not a surprise he's doing well. I mean, you never know how it's going to pan out, right. What I think Kyle is a great representation of is this is his fourth year in the program. He's developed year after year. He's gotten stronger. He's gotten better as a football player. He's matured and now he's a grown man playing running back.

And I look back at over the history of the program, whether it was Ray Rice or Brian Leonard or it was Pop, very, very aggressive, physical backs, downhill backs, that run violently, and he fits right into that category of guys that as they developed, became more and more violent downhill runners.

Q. I know you've had some different looks on the offensive line in terms of personnel as the season has gone on. What do you make of how that group has been able to sort of get into a rhythm with those changes and just how they have progressed as the season has gone on?

GREG SCHIANO: I don't know if the rhythm has anything to do with it. I think what's happening is cumulative repetitions is starting to take hold, and we are getting better. It's slow progress but we are getting better.

As I said, it's just got to continue and as I said there are some guys right on the cusp behind them, young guys figuring out how to play. It's definitely arrow up, but not as fast as I would like it to be. You know, that's life.

Q. What steps in maturity have you seen from this team when maybe the game isn't going the way you want it to and looks like things are getting out of control, they are able to get things back on track. Last season, sometimes things had a tendency to spiral a little bit.

GREG SCHIANO: I think it's leadership. I think the leadership, again, I keep talking about it, I don't want to bore you, but it's that pipeline. And now we have more



guys towards the back end of the pipeline that have been in the program for three and a half years, understand the culture inside-out, have paid the price, off-season, spring, summer, and then in-season. And the cumulative effect, those cumulative repetitions not only of game reps and practice reps, but the inter program and all those things that make you mentally tougher, physically stronger.

So when push comes to shove, those guys got to lead the program, right. There's a bunch of young guys that are playing out there, they don't know. So who do they follow? They follow the leaders. We have some guys right now that I'm really encouraged when our guys follow them.

Q. I know the answer to this question is probably "chop" but coming off an emotional week and just getting the team to focus, how do you do that, given everything that went into Saturday's game?

GREG SCHIANO: You throw the Indiana tape on, all three phases and that gets your attention in a hurry.

You look at -- first off, Tom Allen is an excellent football coach. I've known Tom for a while now. He's a great coach. He's a great person, and his program, I know Rod Kerry, who is now the offensive coordinator, is an excellent coach, the line coach, Bob Bostad was my line coach down in Tampa. They are a well-coached football team.

Tom is so heavily involved in the defense, and you can see it. It's just they make you really check every box in your preparation because they bring pressure from everywhere. They bring line movements that are hard to block. They rush secondary guys. They have good players.

Like their D-Line is unique, seven of the eight, two-deep, are transfer guys. You look at it, and you say, well, when I heard that -- I read it before. I always read the write-up before I throw the tape up. I read the write-up and expected to see a disjointed group that just came together. Far from it. They look like they have been coached by the same coach for a long time. They all played with pat level. They are stout.

And then you know, Casey, 44, he's one of the top five linebackers in the league. How do you rank them? There's a lot of good linebackers, including ours, in this league. He's strong; he's fast; he's tough, he's instinctual.

The secondary has a bunch of first-year starters but they are playing well there. Whoever is coaching that group is doing great job. I'm not that familiar with exactly how their staff works, but I think it all comes back to Coach Allen. He runs that defense. I've seen him, when I was down in Tampa he was down in South Florida and I was doing TV

at the time, and I went over to watch one of their practices and I didn't know Tom Allen from a hole in the wall. I just watched him coach. I said, that guy, he's really good. You could see it back then, and that would have been 2014 the first time I saw him.

Offensively, Rod Kerry, he's a seasoned coach. Been a head coach at two different places. He's an Indiana guy, Indiana grad. You can see already in just one game, they had a bye week and one game, but you can see some of the stuff he used to do at Northern Illinois, some of the stuff at Temple. You know, it's midseason, so how much are you really going to be able to change? But you can see his influence.

Again, I think player-wise, their center, No. 50, is a really good player. The receiver, No. 6, I think his name is camper. He really catches your eye when you're watching him.

And then their old quarterback, McCulley, No. 1, is playing wide out and he's a big athlete. There's a lot of things that you have to defend offensively, schematically and personnel-wise.

So how do you get their attention? Throw that tape on and point those things out and say, look, we are going on the road. It's going to be a challenge. Go on the road in the Big Ten against a good, well-coached, talented football team. We've got our hands full, and we're going to have a great week of preparation because they do challenge you many ways schematically, as well as physically.

Q. Your team so far this year has outscored opponent the 79 to 34 in the fourth quarter. What do you think the key is to having those kinds of strong finishes to games so far?

GREG SCHIANO: I think you can draw anything you want. So you could write the story however you want. I don't know that that ever adds up to: Are we in better shape than the other guys.

I think every game takes on a life of its own. I've told you guys that. It seems like some of our games have taken on that story.

But the guys who are making that story happen are our players. So I'm proud of them being able to do that.

But that means nothing in this Indiana season. All it can do is it can mean confidence that we've done it before, but it doesn't mean that it's going to happen again. You have to go make it happen again.

And that's one of the things, to your point, is you have to chop this moment. We have an opportunity to go to Indiana and be 1-0 at the end of that Indiana season. And we have to stay focused on that all week, we have to stay focused on that when we go on that plane to go out there and throughout until we get back on that plane.

Q. (Mo Toure) has playing at a high level all season, week-in, week-out, how big has his return been for the defense and what have you seen from he's been able to do consistently?

GREG SCHIANO: I think Mo's doing a great job, like you said, and I think what it does, it gives us great depth at the linebacker position. Instead of guys playing 70, 80, 90 plays, they are playing 50, 48, 52, and they are splitting those reps, and over time that adds up.

We are playing our eighth straight week. Now the two teams we just played had byes before us. This team had a bye a week ago and we are going on our eighth straight week. If you don't have depth like that, I think those -- that week after week takes its toll. I think it still is taking its toll but it's helping for sure.

Q. The Big East, seems like it's been Ohio State, Penn State, Michigan and the rest of the division. Do you view games against teams like Indiana, Michigan State, Maryland as an opportunity to establish the pecking order and having Rutgers climb up the hierarchy of the division? Do you view that at all as an opportunity to elevate Rutgers in the sense against the rest of the division?

GREG SCHIANO: I don't think of any of it that way. I think about: Can we win this game.

I think all those things -- I think your job as a reporter is to think that have stuff, and I think it's great because that's what you do.

If I get caught up in that stuff I'm focusing on that stuff, I'm focused on the wrong things. If I let my team get caught up in that, we're focusing on the wrong things because we can't control anybody else.

But what we can control is how hard we work, how disciplined we live, how we study, all those things, how we take care of our academics, what kind of people we are on and off the field. Like, that, to me is what we have to focus on, and the rest takes care of itself. That's the only way I've ever done things.

Again, I've said it to you, and you may think I'm downplaying it, but I think if you think of things the other

way, it gets too big. It's too much of a burden. If you just keep it simple, and you know, this is what we've got to do right now, I think it helps everybody involved.

Q. You switched your punt returner after Rashad Rochelle muffed that punt; put in Christian Dremel. Who will be your punt returner, I guess, this week?

GREG SCHIANO: I'm not ready to decide that yet. Definitely we were discussing it as a staff. We'll look at it during the week. But I don't know the answer to that right now.

I'm surprised you know it was Christian Dremel, No. 47 on it. You had to do a little ID work. Yeah. That's a pain in the rear end, having to keep track of everybody who is duplicate numbers. But that's the way of the world these days.

Q. What was your conversation like with Tyreem after the game, and given everything he went through the first half and keeping him and getting him on track with having to bounce back?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, I felt bad for him. The only thing I told him was, hey, at least in the first half, dude, so you're able to start right away at Indiana.

But I did, I felt bad for him. It's tough. I mean, those are the rules and you've just got to play within the rules.

So it's a good lesson, I guess, for everybody. We talk about it. We show it, and just got to make sure that you leave it beyond a shadow of a doubt, and that's what we try to do. Some things are unavoidable I think.

Sometimes you get into a situation, it's just an unfortunate situation. But Tyreem will be back and he'll be ready to roll.

Thanks, guys, appreciate it.

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