

Rutgers University Football Media Conference

Saturday, November 25, 2023

Piscataway, New Jersey, USA

Greg Schiano

Postgame Press Conference



Maryland 42, Rutgers 24

GREG SCHIANO: As always, guys, I want to thank you for covering our team, especially on a holiday weekend.

But you know, there's a lot of guys downstairs that are hurting. We ran out of gas. I thought we could maybe squeeze one more before the break. But we had too many guys, you know, some guys just didn't play, couldn't play, and then we had a lot of guys that were playing that, you know, maybe they were 70 percent. But they were gutting it out, and some of them couldn't continue. Some of them could.

But at the end of the day, that's part of our development, to build the depth. I keep talking about the pipeline, and to build the depth that when you lose people, you can still operate at or close to the same level.

And we just, you know, as the season wore on and some of the opponents we were facing every week, it took its toll on us. We got a little unlucky in some of the situations, but you never know what you're lucky in either, do you. You just know what happens to you.

We need to heal but disappointed, very disappointed about today. But very encouraged about our team.

I sat Friday in the afternoon by myself, and just a couple games were on and stuff and working on my own stuff, and really grateful that we get the opportunity to continue to play for another month. There's a lot of historic blueblood programs that are done this weekend. They are calling it quits. We get to develop, and it's huge.

So I'm excited about that. I was really happy for Kyle Monangai to go over a thousand yards, and I guess he ended up being the Big Ten rushing leader in the regular season, which what a feat that is for him.

There was some guys who stepped up. I think D.J. stepped in there and I don't know without watching the tape but he sure flashed a little bit.

But what comes last is consistency, right. When you build depth, consistency is what comes last, and we just couldn't quite get it done today. And it's on me. It is totally on me as the head coach. I have to build, maybe differently. I have to make sure -- I thought we did as much as we could to protect the team and their health and all those things. I'll reexamine everything but just felt like we were a little bit with one hand behind our back.

But that's the way it goes. We'll get ready. We'll heal. We'll practice. We'll develop our young guys. We'll get our older guys that are bumped up, get them healed and get them into their practice, and then we'll get ready for a great Bowl opponent, whoever that is; and a great opportunity for our guys to go to a Bowl game for the first time as a Bowl-eligible and not a substitute. This has got to become what we do at Rutgers and just keep going up that ladder.

So let's get into the game. I'll answer any questions I can. But we've got a lot to be grateful for.

Q. You always talk about the importance of having grown men in your program. Can you talk about this bunch and the last home game with those guys?

GREG SCHIANO: That's what's sad for me. I really wanted them to be able to sing with their teammates on the field and as winners in their last home game.

We had a pretty good home season. It's fun to win at home, right. The fans love it and we had a great turnout today, for a holiday weekend, I thought the student section was outstanding, for a break. Kids aren't even in school. But that's what hurts the most is those seniors don't get to that have memory of their last win being their last game in SHI Stadium.

But as I just got done sharing with them, in life, right, when you have unfulfilled expectations, it's frustrating. And it can do one of two things: It can either make you frustrated and make you something that you wouldn't do normally, or it can drive to you focus even harder. And I'm confident that's what to do with our team and my staff and myself is it will drive us to focus even more acutely.



Q. What did you think of how Gavin played today, and this whole season, have you seen enough growth and improvement from him that you feel confident that he is the guy next year moving forward, the solution at the position?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, we still have this year. We still have a game. As I told them, we will play another game in '23 and I can't wait. All that stuff happens at the end of the season, all those considerations, all those thoughts.

What I think is he's truly developed in a very big way. He is the quarterback of a team that's going to a Bowl game. And as I said, you just go down the list of the guys that aren't, and he's the quarterback of that team. 18 touchdowns himself this year, you know, either throwing or running. I mean, yeah, he's not ready yet. Consistency comes last. But he's done some really good stuff. Today weren't his best day, but I can say that for a lot of guys.

One guy does not a team make; it's everybody playing together, everybody executing together, and we just need to continue to improve.

Q. What was Maryland able to do in their first few possessions to get the defense in some tough spots and find some holes?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, I thought it was more some individual, we got beat. Now, is it us not having people in the right position? I've got to look. I hope that's not it. It just looked that we were a step behind, a step slow. We haven't looked that way. We definitely lightened up the last two weeks to try to get them to the finish line but maybe I didn't do it enough.

You know, that's why I say it's on me. I told them, I've got to figure out a way to make sure that we continue to move forward and are we didn't do that today. We struggled today.

Q. Do you feel like the style of offense lends itself to you guys running out of gas when you reach this point in the season?

GREG SCHIANO: It's an interesting question. I don't -- I don't think so, but the fact that you asked it, I probably need to think through that a little bit. I don't -- I think it's a style that you build your program to, and I think it's a style that's very, very flexible.

When we develop and when we grow up at certain positions, I think things are going to change a little bit. To win six games this year and be Bowl-eligible, this is the way that I thought we could do it, and I think our staff,

Coach Ciarrocca and Coach Harasymiak, we work at that together.

Let's -- I failed to do this I never do and I'm ashamed that I did it.

Let's talk about the team that won the game because they certainly deserve our respect. I mean, No. 3, I guess he's the all-time passer in the Big Ten after today, so he's done this to more than just us. He's a really good player and they played well. My hat's off to them. I should have said that at the beginning.

Q. Obviously a lot is going to happen before you guys get on the field again with the portal opening, recruiting happening, all that stuff happening. This loss on top of the three before, make it any harder to navigate those choppy waters at the end of the year?

GREG SCHIANO: You never know. You're dealing with individuals, so it's all what those individuals think. I can't get inside their head.

I know what I know. I know where we're headed. I know where this program is headed. I think no one can explain it better than I can because I live it every waking moment.

And I'm confident that what we'll do in recruiting; we've got a great recruiting class right now that I love. And again, it's ranked well, but that's not why I love it. I love it because the kids, the guys that we have, we will go into the portal and we will try to secure some more guys. You know it, I know it, and NIL is part of that. If we don't have the firepower to do that, it will be harder, so I'm working on that constantly.

Yeah, there's a lot that will go on this month. There's a lot that will go -- I've got to get to bed tonight because I've got a day tomorrow of planning out the next month.

Rather than do it this week, because I was tempted, I wanted to put every ounce of my energy into Maryland. I know it might not have shown but that's what I did. Just wasn't quite good enough.

Now tomorrow, get up early, and we've got a lot of planning to do, both recruiting, visiting our own players, guys that are considering the National Football League, portal and then a Bowl schedule once we know who and when we are playing.

We know the range of dates. So that's all I will go by; so set up a few different schedules depending.

Q. What is it about Maryland that makes it such a

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difficult matchup for Rutgers?

GREG SCHIANO: You know, I thought about that at one point in the fourth quarter when probably right when they scored the last touchdown. I said you know what, we just didn't match up today.

I don't know if it's maybe because we play them last, and maybe, I don't know, I don't want to spend too much time thinking about it on field. But you know when you're there, and it's the last three minutes and you know the game is out of reach, a lot of things go through your head.

We've been beat up at the end of all of the seasons, but every team is to a degree. I guess they did a little better job of keeping healthy because they had more of their original starters out there playing.

We need to develop guys, and we need to keep our guys a little more healthy. So I've got to figure that out.

But I think more good players that are developed, not young, more good players that are developed in the pipeline, that lends to being a better team at the end of the season.

So we'll get there. Maybe it's the end, I don't know. I think No. 3 had something to do with it, too, right.

Q. Although today didn't go your way, what can you say about this defense that came out, gave up four in the fourth quarter, but ultimately ended up giving two the rest of the game. What can you say about them?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, the defense, there's a little kind of like chipping away. Like we lose Reem, who is just an absolute one of our best players on the team, Tyreem Powell. And then we have some guys that are out there playing, like seniors, Mayan Ahanotu wanting to play his last game, really hurting.

Deion Jennings, what he did today, and I don't know how long he went because I lost track. But the fact that that kid even played today, so much respect. He is a legitimate tough guy. He wanted to play his final game in SHI Stadium.

We have to get those guys well for the Bowl game. That's what we've got to do. We've got to figure out a way to get them well.

Q. I know you spoke about the impact of Kyle Monangai in this game, but what does he mean big picture for this game looking to the Bowl game and looking ahead, being one of those building block

players?

GREG SCHIANO: Kyle, I've said it before, he had a great season. What did he have today, he had over a hundred today, right. He had a good season. He had a really solid game today. And when you have one of your hardest workers, one of your profitability productive players, it's great as a head coach because you can point to that.

He is a leader on the team and he is fully invested in everything we're doing. It's huge for the program's development. Yes, the production is huge, but internally, the building of the culture and the continual development of the culture, guys like he and a bunch of others are what allow us to do that. So yeah, he's a critical piece.

Q. I know you talked about being disappointed and the lack of depth and running out of gas. But at the beginning of the year, you talked about, you've got a full class in. Are you where you want to be, or is that something that's still down the road?

GREG SCHIANO: What do you mean? I'm not sure I understand a "full class in."

Q. Well, a full recruiting class, like four years' worth.

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, I don't -- I don't consider that we have that. I think this '24 class that's going to come will be the last class in the cycle, and then we start pushing them out the other end.

When you get hired, you get 11 days to recruit a class. And we had COVID. There's a lot of extenuating circumstances. But even without those extenuating circumstances, I think this '24 class, like I said, who I'm really excited to coach, they will finish out and fill the pipeline. And then we've got to grow them. We have got to develop them.

Q. Are you where you want to be?

GREG SCHIANO: Well, you're never where you want to be as a coach. You can always recruit a little better, you can always coach a little better, you can always develop a little better.

But I keep going back to what I just said. It was one of those moments where I was giving (indicating patting himself on the back). Certainly not doing that.

But I said, look at some of these programs that are not playing after tomorrow, or after yesterday, and we are playing. I'm excited about that. I am. We have a great chance to continue to develop.



So if I use the words I used downstairs about today, you wouldn't be able to write it. I mean, I feel that angry about today because I wanted so badly for those kids to go out.

But when I look at it, moving forward, I can't wait, I can't wait to wake up tomorrow and layout the schedule and get ready to go attack this development, and the next time that we're after a game, hopefully we're celebrating a Bowl win. That would make me really happy to send these seniors out as a Bowl champion. That's the goal.

Q. I know you ruled Johnny Langan out for the season, can you talk about losing him, how tough that might have been?

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, Johnny is a warrior remember. What he did the last two weeks, I don't know many people that would do that. Especially guys with NFL aspirations, right. This guy is a legitimate NFL prospect. He loves Rutgers so much that he waited to get the surgery. He was going to wait until the end of the year, and then he injured something else last week, so now he has to do it. I have got so much respect for that kid.

And when we started here, he was a quarterback. And when he didn't win the battle and we moved him to tight end, he said, "Coach, I'll do whatever I can to help this team win." And boy, did he do that. He was the PP on punt. He did so many things for us.

And today, I told him, I said, "I know how hard this is for you because you're a football player, not a football watcher but you can help this team," and he did. He coached and he fought and he did everything he could.

So yeah, it's hard. It's hard for him, right. But he'll get the surgery and he'll start mending and hopefully week have a great NFL career.

There was really something that I wanted to mention, and it's sad, really sad. But you know, Saint Joe's in Montvale, is part of the New Jersey football community, and they had such a tragedy in our program. Our hearts and our prayers are out to Rocco Rodden's family, but also to the Saint Joe's program and all those kids. We had a bunch of Saint Joe's kids here today and coaches. It's just a tragedy to lose a guy, young guy like that.

But like I said, our hearts and prayers are out to them. And you know, sometimes for someone like me, it puts it all in perspective. Doesn't mean we're not going to keep fighting. But really, I wanted to share that and send my condolences out from our entire program. It's so pointless, so useless, the value of life for that to happen is sad.

But again, guys, I appreciate it. We'll meet again after the Bowl game, right, but I really do appreciate the way you cover our team. And it helps. It helps us in our development, the kind of attention that you give us, so thank you.

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