

# Rutgers University Football Media Conference

Monday, November 4, 2024

Piscataway, New Jersey, USA

## Greg Schiano

### Press Conference

GREG SCHIANO: First want to wish best of luck to Coquese and Steve as they start their seasons, women's team tonight and men's on Wednesday. Looking forward to watching both of those seasons unfold.

Our guys, we had a good bye week. Academically, certainly going out SC, missing classes Wednesday and missing classes Thursday, these guys had to catch up and did a good job of doing that. It's later in the semester now and a lot of things are coming due.

So a big academic load on these guys right now and I think they have done a good job stepping up. All different kinds of work for different guys, certain guys needed rest. Certain guys needed reps and so whether you needed rest or reps, I think the guys got it.

Now we get ready for what might be one of the hottest teams in America right now, winning four straight and really playing very complimentary football. When you watch their offense, defense and special teams have been performing, it will be a great challenge. Excited to be back home in our stadium. Our kids have worked their tails off to try to correct the things that we can do now. Try to get healthy. We have some really, really intense efforts by guys to try to get better. Who knows what this week of practice will hold. But I think we'll be in a better place health-wise than we were and that should help us.

But a really, really talented football team. Really, really good offensively, the quarterback is certainly a good player, very, very efficient and he knows what he wants to do in their offense.

The running back, Taylor, who I think is really one of the best running backs in our league, very patient, reminds me of Kyle. Running similar-type runs. He understands how to run them. He's patient and then he's very explosive and tough.

Jackson, the receiver, No. 9, is a really, really talented wide receiver. Certainly have our hands full, gigantic offensive line. Defensively, Coach Hetherman is doing a



great job out there as I knew he would, one of my favorites to work with when he was here.

When you look, we know some of the guys, Jay Joyner when I first came back here, we had recruited him for a cup of coffee there at the end of recruiting. Really a dynamic player. Won the game with a sack fumble the other day.

Lindenberg, the linebacker, is really a good football player. You could tell he's the heart and soul, runs the operation. And then Wally the corner, I think is an NFL player.

At all three levels, they are talented. Big, big defensive front. They understand, and as I said, they are well-coached. And then special teams, you know, they are really consistent. They know what they want to do. They have two really good specialists.

Their field goal kicker who has got a huge leg, and I guess was in a little bit of a slump to start the beginning of the season, but has really come on like gangbusters here. I think it's six or seven in a row and he seems to be on track. Their punter is an experienced guy that knows that to do within their scheme.

Really, as I said to open, they are one of the hotter teams in college football right now and we are bringing them here. It's time to go. We had our break. We had an opportunity to get haled up and now it's time to go compete. Try to help you with anything I can.

**Q. When you're going up against a defensive coordinator that's so familiar with your personnel, how does that affect game planning?**

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, Corey is an excellent coach. Knowing the personnel certainly helps him a little bit. But Corey knows what he's doing and he's going to try to take away the things that we do. It's just going to be a matter of whose players play the best.

That's going to be the key. We'll put them in position. He'll put them in position. We have to go be physical. We have to be tough. That's the way we play. That's what we count on. What they have done a great job in is taking care of the football and taking the football away.



Right now in their winning streak, they are plus nine in turnover margin. Overall they are plus 12 but in this four-game streak they are plus nine. When you're having that kind of success holding on to the football and taking the football away, it leads to victory.

Certainly that's a key to the game but how does that happen, who plays harder or tougher and obviously obsessing about the football, that's what both programs do.

There's a lot of similarities how the game will be approached. We have to go coach it and play it and who does that the best, will win.

**Q. Going against his former team, how do you anticipate he'll handle the emotion and will he be playing with something to prove?**

GREG SCHIANO: I hope he handles the emotion fine. I don't think he has anything to prove. I think, you know, it's worked out for both teams. I don't feel that way. I can't speak for Athan but this is a game, one that we need to play our very best to win and that's what we're going to set out to do.

**Q. What have you worked on defensively and what gives you hope that you guys can make some fixes that have been plaguing you?**

GREG SCHIANO: I think, first of all, several of those guys that were playing really banged up are going to feel better. Are they going to be well -- I told you that isn't going to happen, six to eight weeks until the end of the year but they will feel better and that will help.

We fundamentally went back to square one and started working on things. Our guys bought in and really wanted to do it. They are frustrated like just we are. We went back to work together and I think we figured a few things out. We just have to go play that way on Saturday. We have another three days of practice to do and I'm looking forward to doing that and being ready to play on Saturday.

**Q. The offense the past couple weeks has looked more efficient, a little bit more explosive. Where do you see this unit after a rough couple games midseason?**

GREG SCHIANO: Well, I think we're getting better every week. You know, even in the Nebraska game we did some good things. We just didn't score points. And obviously you've got to score points to be an effective offense. But I think we're getting better, and that's the key, right. The nose is pointed up. You just have to keep it there. You have to keep getting better every day and where that

stacks up against a really, really good Minnesota defense, that we'll find out on Saturday.

**Q. How important is it for this program to make a Bowl game this season to show progress after last year?**

GREG SCHIANO: I'm not even worried about a Bowl game. That's probably a fan's concern. Right now every ounce of my being is focused on today, game planning Minnesota, and we'll take it day-by-day. I'm not going to get into those bigger picture questions because quite honestly all they do is stale from now. Now is pretty important.

**Q. How confident do you feel that this team can make a Bowl game?**

GREG SCHIANO: Again, now you'd be stealing from now, right. Let's live in the here and now.

**Q. Looked like Kyle took a shot to the head at the end of USC. Is he good to go?**

GREG SCHIANO: That will be on the availability reports everything is each week. That's the beauty of that system because you post that and everybody knows exactly what's going on.

We'll make sure that we're prepared the very best we can be.

**Q. What stood out about him as a coach and the way he connected with the linebackers?**

GREG SCHIANO: Corey, start with he's an incredibly detailed football coach and very passionate, so he connects with his players. He helps his players get better. When you're detailed and passionate, that usually is the case. Real fine football coach.

**Q. Just touching on the offense again, last year it seemed like there was a lot of clock control and you were putting together long drives when you were able to move the ball, this past year, maybe a little bit more explosive, some of the drives have been more three or four minutes. Is that where you want to see the offense? Are you okay with the short drives as long as they end up in points or would you rather shorten the game with long, sustained drives?**

GREG SCHIANO: I'll take both, yeah. If we can have some explosives and then have some sustained drives that eat up clock. Again, it's all about playing complimentary football. The better you're playing on defense, the more you don't mind quicker drives, right. But again, you hit it on

the head, right. What is an effective offense is an offense that scores points. How you score them, you know, you're not going to get too picky on that. We do have an identity but again, if we take shots over the top and we hit them, you know, I'm not going to turn them back in. I'll keep them.

**Q. You touched on Minnesota's turnover margin being so good. Is that a buy product of doing things schematically defensively or just taking the ball away and protecting the ball?**

GREG SCHIANO: I think they play really hard. I think, yes, they have a very good scheme. But right now, they are playing very, very well together. They have a way that they are playing very hard and as I've always told every defense I've ever coached, you get lucky in relation to how hard you play. The ball is on the ground; well you made your luck. You tackled extra hard. You ran to the football extra hard. And you had more people there when the ball came out, right.

It's the same things we talk about. Are we quite at the level? No. Not yet. But we are getting there. We'll get there.

**Q. Tomorrow is election day. How do you make players available to be able to vote and do you do any kind of education on the voting or importance of voting?**

GREG SCHIANO: My biggest thing is don't take it for granted. It's one of the great things about our country. I don't think people I don't understand the sacrifices people have made so they can vote. Because we had a bye week, did I early voting which was something I've never done.

I went and voted on Saturday. Literally, ten minutes.

So I'll tell you what, I think it's easier for people to vote, and I think there's no excuse not to. I mean, you have that right and that privilege in this country, and it's only one vote. Well, if everybody thinks about it that way they are only one vote. I got our guys to understand that.

We'll talk about it, and we'll talk about it again tomorrow. Plenty of time to get there. Plenty of places to vote. Some do write-in ballots and some vote in person. I'll make sure our team understands them and I'll remind them.

Again, good luck to Coquese and Steve, and we'll see you guys on Saturday.

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