

# Rutgers University Football Media Conference

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Piscataway, New Jersey, USA

## Greg Schiano

Postgame Press Conference



Rutgers 35, Maryland 20

GREG SCHIANO: Thanks for coming out, covering us. Excited for our team. Really proud of our team. Kind of been a stretch where I think guys really trusted what we were asking them to do and they did it. I was glad to see them get the result that they did.

With that, I'll open up for questions.

**Q. Can you talk about the defense? You're getting more stops now that the in the past you might not have gotten. What's really changed with that group?**

GREG SCHIANO: Well, we are a long ways from being what we want to be, but we are making incremental improvement. That's all I asked them to do is just keep getting a little bit better every day. We're playing from behind. We've got to much can a up here. We're getting better.

But we need -- we've got work to do. I'm proud of them. Give up three points in the second half; that looked like real defense.

**Q. Antwan, big day for him obviously, but did you anticipate using him as much as you did or was that the way the game --**

GREG SCHIANO: Every game, we anticipated really wanting to fun the football. But to say that I anticipated 41 carries, that would not be true.

I thought the staff did a really good job, and Antwan, certainly, and the O-line. We really thought this game would be one of those games that had cumulative effects. 2- and 2-yard runs turned into 8 and 9s, and then turned into 14 and 16s, and I think that's how it happened over time. That part was part of the plan, yeah.

**Q. What stood out to you about the season Antwan has had and the way he's put these games together? And how much, also, do you feel playing behind Kyle**

**for a year and learning from him has helped his growth this year?**

GREG SCHIANO: You'd have to ask him that, but I'm sure it has. When you have an opportunity to learn from Kyle, who handled -- the way he approached college football was very much like a professional football player. I thought he set a great standard for the room.

I also think Coach Shaw does an incredible job with that entire room. As I've said many times, that can be a very selfless position because there's only one ball and only one guy plays at a time in that position. But Coach Shaw has done an incredible job of building a brotherhood and camaraderie in that room.

I know it's hard. Everybody wants to be the guy carrying it. But I enjoy watching those guys. No one was more happy for Antwan than Bengie, you know, which to me, that's what team sports is about.

**Q. The offense as a whole looked a lot more efficient in recent weeks and obviously the run game and pass game got going, too. What do you think was the biggest flip from the last couple weeks to get that effectiveness back?**

GREG SCHIANO: We got Taj White back. He missed last week. So I think the shuffle because we had to move Ty over to the other side. There's a whole bunch of things that aren't small things but we don't talk about because nobody cares. That's what we have and that's what we have to do.

I think maybe of getting back into a groove of people playing where they are supposed to play. You have to remember, two weeks ago, Ian was out, he comes back and he's playing first time back with not a lot of practice. Thought he played a great game today, as well.

I think kind of just being a little back to normal.

**Q. With the exciting factor that this quarterback has, ran his first touchdown, I was impressed that you held them to 98 yards passing. Talk about that today.**

GREG SCHIANO: Their quarterback is a fine young



player. We recruited him. We know him well. He's an exceptional person. Exceptional athlete. Exceptional quarterback.

I thought our defense did a good job of limiting that but he took off and ran. You know, we didn't do a great job there. You know, I was just proud of the guys; that they were able to keep him to three points in the second half. That's what was needed and they did it and kept playing and believing. To me, that is everything, when guys continue to believe.

**Q. 35 minutes' time of possession and also eight of 12 on third down conversions. Was the balance today a little bit more of what you want to see moving forward and more of a blueprint for these final two games?**

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, I'll take that performance for sure. Take that. But the reality is, every game is its own season, and I know people say, Oh, that's coach speak. It isn't coach speak. It's so hard to win in the Big Ten Conference. At this level, it's so hard to win. And you put everything you've got into the week.

So when it turns out like the week before, you're crushed. And literally, I said to the guys, there's nothing wrong with that. If you're not crushed after an Illinois loss like that, then you haven't put enough into it.

And when you win, it's really gratifying because you put everything you have from Sunday till the game's over on Saturday, every ounce of what you've got, you put into it. And then they get a little break here, and then -- now this week because they have a bye, they got a little better break, which is nice. They need it. We're beat up. We need to heal.

**Q. Five wins, two games left. The potential of getting 6 won, is that still a motivator for you in the program?**

GREG SCHIANO: Our motivator is to continue to get better. Certainly that's out there, and that's what you start, the minimum of a year, right, is you want to get to a Bowl game.

That's not our goals around here. I didn't come back -- I've said that many times, I didn't come back to do that. Do I want to do that? Yeah, I want to do that. I want to do that for a lot of reasons. They deserve it. We get extra practice. All that stuff.

But you start looking ahead, then usually trip over what's right in front of you. I told the players, we're going to have a little time off and then we're going to come back. Certain guys are going to need to heal up and we're going to intensity treatments and things like that. Guys that are

developmental players, they are going to get a lot of work this week. And then maybe some of them can play in the final two games.

There's some guys now that can play and still maintain their eligibility for the season and still redshirt. There's certainly going to be opportunities like that, and it seems like we got out of it pretty healthy, but you never know until tomorrow morning when the medical check happens. Sometimes things pop up. So we'll see.

**Q. Athan with 2,500 yards now in back-to-back seasons, first quarterback to do so since Mike Teel. What has impressed you about him this season, second year in the program?**

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, I'm really proud of Athan. I said it before he came in here as a transfer. We had an income being quarterback and he had to beat the guy out. I love the way he did it. Came in, didn't politic. Didn't try to become buddies. He came in and worked, and everybody recognized that. Then he got the chance to be starting quarterback, slow, gradual start. Midseason last year, his career took off. I think he picked it up where he left off.

This season hasn't been -- it's never like that (indicating smooth upward trajectory). It's always a little choppy. To do what he did, you know, to have two back-to-back 2500, we'll still got two games and maybe more to play. He's been a great leader. I've said to people, he's taken over this team. He's not only the leader of this offense; he's the leader of this team. That's the best quarterbacks I've been around. That's how they do it.

**Q. You seem down, is there something from the performance that's bothering you, or are you exhausted from the season entering the bye week or am I reading too much into it?**

GREG SCHIANO: Yeah, you're reading into it. Trust me I'm excited, I celebrated with our guys. And I am exhausted, there's no doubt about that, but so is everybody downstairs.

This comes at a good time. Grateful. Grateful to be able to do what I do for a living and to have people in our organization that really care about Rutgers and Rutgers Football.

You know, our players, you look across America, there's a lot of teams that just say, Nah, not this year, and certainly they had plenty of opportunities to do that and they just keep showing up and doing what we ask. Staff does it. So I'm proud of them.



**Q. Jordan Walker popped up on the availability report and didn't play much if at all. How has the defense been able to rally around not having their senior leader and how much did he try to get to a hundred percent?**

GREG SCHIANO: He did not play. Something popped up late in the week. You know, didn't think it was the best thing for him to play.

**Q. Your two last games, Ohio State, Penn State, measuring sticks in the Big Ten for all time. Curious about obviously we have to look ahead, your thoughts on having them left in the schedule?**

GREG SCHIANO: You look, I guess Ohio State had a chance to win the game. I haven't seen any of the scores but somebody told me that on my way up here. Then you look at -- did I say Penn State? I'm sorry, Penn State had a chance to win the game.

We've been on crossover with Ohio State a lot. We kind of trailed them in schedule. So when you do crossover film, and man alive, are they good. Tonight I'm not worrying about them. Tonight I'm going to relax a little bit and then tomorrow we have some recruits I've got to take care of and then I'll start on Ohio State.

Sure, look, I know it all too well. I was not there three years. I know the machine that they have there.

But I know one thing: Our players are going to be ready to play when that time comes. We hit the clock down stairs like we always do, and it's 13-manage days till we play. I'm going to take a quick break.

But yeah, and then to have Penn State, obviously, that school that's right down the road, we were the reason to bring Rutgers in a little more Eastern flavor in the Big Ten. So certainly it's Maryland, us, and Penn State.

But we'll deal with all that as we go. Right now it about getting healed up, and putting together a game plan to hit the road recruiting this week which will be important. Everybody will be kind of different times, myself included. So it will be a busy week but one that can be real productive if we have a plan, which our plan is already set. So we've just got to go execute the plan.

Guys, again, thanks for covering us, and there's nothing wrong. I'm excited.

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