

College Football Playoff

Media Conference

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Ohio State Buckeyes

Wyatt Davis

CFP Media Conference



COLLEGE FOOTBALL
PLAYOFF

Q. I know that there's been a little bit of a trend in recent years of players from California going south and Midwest, especially some of the higher recruited ones. I wanted to see how that applied to you and what your reasons were and why you think that's happening.

WYATT DAVIS: Honestly, at least for me, I know my reason for coming all the way to Ohio State was to have the opportunity to play in a game like this. For me personally, I just always was infatuated with programs like Ohio State.

It was the easy decision for me, and I just feel like guys from out west, especially in California, if you're going to go through college football and put yourself through the type of commitment that it is, why not go to a school that puts you in the position to play for it all.

So at least for me, that's what I think the reasoning is for why a lot of people are choosing where I'm from to go to these bigger schools is to have the opportunity to play in games like this.

Q. Obviously you almost made the decision to not play this season, to opt out. You come back and now you're here in the National Championship game. How special is it that this all culminates in an opportunity for you to play for a title?

WYATT DAVIS: It's huge. I mean, there were guys on my team after the Clemson game messing with me about it, saying, Wow, you would have chose to sit out and miss out on this. It's honestly crazy just how everything that I wanted to happen this season is happening. Now we just have to go finish.

Words can't really describe how I feel personally just to have this opportunity I'm in. I remember watching in high school the National Championship and just how much of a big deal it is for me, me telling myself at a young age back

then, hopefully one day I'll be on that field playing, and here I am now a couple years later with that opportunity.

It's definitely special.

Q. I'm sure that you're somewhat privy to a lot of the things that Thayer Munford had to go through just to attend Ohio State, let alone have the career he's had, and you're familiar with some of the things he's gone through since he's been there. What do you maybe respect the most -- what do you remember the most about him as a teammate and what he's gone through during his time here?

WYATT DAVIS: Just how much of a brother he is to me. I mean, we came into this program and we were roommates actually in the dorm, as well. And like what you said, what he had to go through. He played a whole season with a messed-up back and didn't complain once. I mean, that was a guy that was at practice every day that season practicing with his back issue. The way he bounced back from that. A lot of guys in his situation could have quit.

But what I would say is the thing I'm most impressed with him and respect the most is his determination and grit. I mean, like you said, him coming here, just all the obstacles he had to go through in life, and he never once quit I think says a lot about his character and the type of person he is.

That's one guy if he has a goal set, he's going to get it done. That's probably something that I will definitely remember the most from him.

Q. Two years ago when Coach Day took over, there was a lot of people that wondered if Coach Stud would be retained on the staff and stay moving forward. Fast forward, you guys have had one of the best offensive lines in the country. What is it about Stud, the way he's handled the last couple years, the way he coaches you guys that has produced this level of school?

WYATT DAVIS: I would say his expectation. It all starts from practice. I feel like a lot of it -- I feel more nervous to make mistakes in practice than I do in games just because he expects a lot out of us and he pushes us to get to points where we're at now, to have success, for yourself as well



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as for the team.

I will just say the thing he does the best and that I've noticed is whether you're a walk-on or a starter, when he gets into you, it's the same as everybody else. No one is held to a different standard. That standard is excellence, and that's what he demands out of us.

At least for me it's more a thing I want to play so hard because of him and how he pushes us because I know he's doing everything in his power to put us in a great position to succeed. You know, as far as it goes for me playing, I feel like I have to return the favor.

I feel like he's a great leader, and he's just so knowledgeable of the game, techniques and what to do in certain situations. I mean, there's stuff that we've done this year against certain teams as far as blitzes go that teams were struggling with, and he just breaks it down so easy for us to understand and to really look for it.

I feel like his film sessions is a lot of the reason why we've had the success we've had, because I thought I knew how to watch film until I got here and started working with Coach Stud. Just all those things combined is I think why we're so successful.

Q. Yesterday we heard Haskell Garrett say this game will be won in the trenches on Monday. So looking forward to the National Championship, how important do you think your match-up against the Alabama defensive line will be important in winning this game?

WYATT DAVIS: It's going to be very important. I feel like that's basically how it goes every single game, Alabama or not. The battle is won in the trenches. They have a great defensive line up front, they have a great offensive line, Joe Moore Award winners, and we're just going to have to come out and play football.

Obviously they're very talented. We're very talented, as well, otherwise we wouldn't be playing each other in this situation.

So going into it we know where the battle has to be done, and it's definitely in the trenches. And they have great players and a great scheme defensively, which is what we've been working on all week.

Just going out there and playing I think is probably the most important. Just playing the game of football.

Q. What has stood out the most about Justin's game in the Sugar Bowl, and for people who might have been doubting him or questioning him after the

Northwestern game, what do you think he showed?

WYATT DAVIS: I think exactly that, not to count him out. The shots that he took during that Clemson game and the fact that he came back after that and had the type of game he had says a lot about the type of leader he is, which is what I've been preaching all season. The amount of respect he has for his brothers to just not quit. I think that's why he's so respected on this team and he's held at a high standard.

I don't think there were any doubts, again, that if he could, he would go back in and play. But I would just say as far as playing goes, I mean, in pass protections, obviously it's great that we have Josh Myers who's extremely smart and breaks it down, but we also have Justin back there, too, that is a student of the game.

He helps us out at times where we might not see something that he sees that they're going to bring, just stuff like that. I mean, this is a guy that watches film for hours and will be the last guy leaving, the Woody Hayes. So just his will to win I would say is probably the most impressive thing for me.

Q. You talked a little bit about the toughness that Justin showed there. I remember talking to him, though, about sort of when he first got to Ohio State, and of course he committed without having been on campus and met all you guys in advance, about him being a little bit homesick, not really knowing where he fit in with things, and it took him a while to get his footing there. What do you remember about how you guys sort of embraced him when he got there, and when did you start to see him really start to come out of his shell and become that leader that you're talking about?

WYATT DAVIS: Yeah, so I could definitely tell when he first got here he was definitely trying to figure out his role and didn't really know anybody on the team really. I had reached out -- the whole O-line reached out to him prior to him being here and working out with us.

But I would say he started -- I would probably say after that FAU game is really when I felt like he was truly comfortable with everything and felt comfortable enough as a leader on the team to speak out. I would say that this year he's taken it to another level, hence why he's the captain this year.

But, again, I would say probably after that FAU -- after the first game, especially when he had that long run, I remember everyone on the team was like, Sheesh, this guy can move. I just feel like as the season went on, the more and more comfortable he got.

Q. You had already talked about opting back into the season and all that, but what's it been like the last two years? I think you've talked about this before. What's it been like the last two years just being beside Josh and working with him and growing with him as two offensive linemen that probably deserve a little more recognition than they both get?

WYATT DAVIS: Well, it's been great. I knew Josh even prior to coming to Ohio State. Went to camps with him together, and we just built a great relationship from the first time we met. And going into college, pretty much going through similar stuff, we both got here, we both redshirted and then just really working to earn our spot as a starter.

We just went through such a similar grind, and to now be able to do the type of stuff that we've done -- I mean, he's a Rimington finalist, and honestly, I couldn't be more proud of just how he's grown, not only as a player, but to me as a brother and a friend.

It's been really cool just to see the evolution of Josh Myers take off. It's been great, and I'm really excited for the future he's going to have as far as football goes. He pushes me to go harder every day. That's a guy that I know going into each game I've got to compete with him with knock-downs, because if he has more than me, he'll definitely let me hear it.

But no, it's been great seeing him grow.

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