

Rose Bowl Game presented by Prudential: Oregon vs Ohio State

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Pasadena, California, USA

Oregon Ducks Bryce Boettcher Press Conference



PLAYOFF
QUARTERFINAL



Q. Growing up in Oregon, being from Oregon and being a Duck on this stage, does that have any special meaning to you?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, it has a lot of meaning, man. That's what you grow up being a Duck, to play in this kind of game. This Rose Bowl is a huge one for us, and it means a lot.

Q. You've received quite a bit of recognition for what you've been able to do on the team this year. Are there players on the team who you think have not gotten enough recognition, and if so, who and why?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, there's a countless number of dudes, man. Even down to our last walk-on, our equipment manager. But our guys up front, especially the D-line, make my job really easy, Jamaree Caldwell, Derrick Harmon, you've got Keyon, you've got Burch, endless dudes up front that just eat up double teams and make those gaps easy for me to run through. Shout-out to the D-line for making my job easy.

Q. I was talking to Pat about you guys' high school days. Do you remember anything about playing --

BRYCE BOETTCHER: No, I definitely had a fair amount of run-ins with Patrick in high school. All the sports, football, baseball, football. He was a beast in all of them, so we'd go toe-to-toe. I remember we played them my sophomore year and he sacked me about three times when I was playing quarterback. That one hurt a little bit. But definitely got him back in some other sports.

But it was awesome going, like I said, head to head in all those sports with him, and he'll be a lifelong friend.

Q. He says he has a photo somewhere --

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, I haven't seen the photo, but I'm sure he does. I'm sure he has those receipts somewhere.

Q. How has the relationship evolved to where you guys were not enemies but opponents for so long in high school? Haven't you played each other since you were like nine years old?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah. Yeah, it's awesome, man, especially, like I said, being from the area. We've known each other forever, but we've never been on the same team. Like I said, always competing against each other, so we never had that friendship, but it kind of started when I first joined the football team in 2022 when we went on that service trip to Guatemala, it started to kind of grow our friendship, and it's just gone on from there. He's a great dude, great family, and he'll be a friend for a long time.

Q. What does it mean to have not just one player from Eugene on this team but multiple amount of players?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: It's super cool. I mean, it's pretty rare to have so many Eugene kids -- well, not so many, but two, on the team and be a core part of the team. It's cool to be a part of this team's legacy and this team's history, and just looking to move forward and keep doing the same.

Q. What do you expect out of a rematch in a game of this magnitude when you face a team a second time?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: You know, I expect them to come in and give us their best shot. They've got something to prove because we beat them the first time. But like I said, they're a good squad. Whether playing a team twice is hard or not, I don't think so. I think it's a little bit of a misconception. They're a great team, and we have to do our job, but I think if we do our job, we'll come out victorious.

Q. What's been the burden of being the only undefeated team in this field? Do you guys feel that?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: No, not really. We know that every team is going to give us their best shot. That's what we



want. We don't want a team to just roll in and give us a poor effort. We want to beat you at your best, and that's what we find fun in football and just being a competitor.

Q. Every bowl game has its own vibe. What's a Rose Bowl feel like to you guys?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: I smell the roses.

Q. What does this mean to you? You've talked about in the past that the Civil War means war to you. What does it mean to be in a game where you saw Marcus play and beat Florida State and things like that?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: It means everything, man. This is the game, like I said, other than the Civil War, playing UW, that's one of the biggest games of the year, just because of the magnitude and the history behind it. Yeah, it means a lot to myself and my family and definitely the Oregon community, so I'm looking forward to Wednesday, and it's going to be a fun one.

Q. I grew up in Bend, so always around Duck fans wanting a National Championship so bad. What would it mean to you to keep this train moving on?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, it would mean everything, man. It would show all of our team's hard work this season paying off. It's quite the journey, and I'm just glad all these guys in this room can share it with me because it's definitely a special opportunity, and I think everyone realizes it.

Q. What do you want the fans to remember you guys by, and what do you want them to remember you by, not only after this game --

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, obviously Rose Bowl champions after Wednesday, and just being an Oregon team who, yeah, was fast but also physical. I think that's where Oregon's lack of times in the past, we're known to be fast, but to win those big games you have to be physical, and I think that's what this Oregon team has, and we're going to show it on Wednesday.

Q. Is Ohio State different from the last time you played them?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, they definitely have some new tendencies. You can't be the same team all season. You've got to adapt and change. They've got some things that are the same, obviously. They're a good team and they'll mix it up when they have to but keep doing what they're doing when they're successful with it. They've got a good OC in Chip and I'm looking forward to the opportunity.

It's going to be fun.

Q. How did you feel you played in the first game against them?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: You know, solid. We did enough to win. Obviously we had some things to clean up. It wasn't a perfect game by any means.

Like I said, when you can win tight games like that, it shows a lot about your team and a lot about your character, which we've been able to do this season. We've been able to win a lot of close games, which is important.

Q. What kind of adjustments have you had to make with how long the season is now? Do you have to take care of your body differently?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Personally, no. I mean, I take care of my body the same every week, same routine. I'm not one to pace myself. I'm kind of full go, balls to the wall at all times. Maybe some guys do but not myself.

Q. I keep going back to you growing up a Duck fan. How cool is it you get to wear different jerseys like this? When you put on (indiscernible) do you feel that much better?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, we're certainly blessed to be given this kind of gear. Uncle Phil definitely provides us with all the funds and gear, and Kenny Farr does a great job. I'm blessed to be in this situation. At the end of the day, it's not really good the gear. I'm kind of old-school, whatever you put in front of my locker I'll put on that day. But it's certainly nice to put on an Oregon jersey with my last name on it and represent this university in the right way.

Q. Just being an Oregonian, what has your career meant to you, and to get to this point and soaking it all in, how cool has the path been, and what do you want to show to high school athletes in Oregon that they can get to this point in the year?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, I just want to show if you keep your head down and keep working, no matter how gloomy it may look or negative it may be, you can definitely achieve your dreams. There's going to be more bad days than there are good days just with how competitive football is and baseball. Being a walk-on from the area you're going to be overlooked, but if you know what to do and you just keep working, good things can happen. You can come and play in the Rose Bowl and be a Big Ten champion and do all those things that you dreamed of. It's definitely a blessing, and there's a lot of people that have helped me

achieve what I've achieved so far in my career. But I'm not done yet and still want to do more.

Q. Big Ten champs in baseball maybe?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: That would be awesome. Unfortunately I won't be out there but I'll be rooting from afar.

Q. What's your impression of Dontae Manning?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: That's a good relationship, man. He's a quarterback. He's kind of got that baseball vibe to him a little bit. I think he'd do well -- he's a great football player and does well in the football locker room, but I think he'd also do well in the baseball locker room. He's talented in a lot of things. We were playing pool the other day in the center they've got for us in the hotel and he's a good pool player. He'd be good in a baseball locker room. He can sling it. He's a good leader and a good athlete. He's really loose there in the pocket, and when the ball comes out of his hand, it's a pretty one.

Q. How about Dontae Manning?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Oh, I thought you said Dante Moore. My bad. Yeah, Dontae Manning, another good one. God, he might actually be the funniest person I know, maybe second to Trikkeze Bridges from last year. That dude was next level. But yeah, Dontae always keeps a smile on his face, keeps it light in the locker room, and he's one heck of a football player, too. He makes some plays where I'm like, holy smokes, how did you come up with that. Great team, great leader, and I love the guy.

Q. (Indiscernible) what does it show about his character that he's stuck with it despite the year he's had?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: I respect him utmost for that. It's very rare nowadays that you have guys that stick it out, and you need that in college football. It builds culture. He's a big part of the leadership that we have on this team, and he upholds the culture that we have here at Oregon football. I respect him a lot for that and just what he comes out and does every day at practice and in the games. He's a great teammate and a great guy off the field.

Q. (Indiscernible) how do you feel like he's embraced the opportunity overall?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, I think he's, whatever you want to call it, maybe not upheld his standard from high school. I think he has. We're a really talented team, and whatever his stars indicate, whatever you want to say, I

think that dude has proved everything he can. He's a hell of a player and even a better person off the field and a better leader. It means a lot when you can come off the field or Nikko and he comes in, and there's no downplay at all. He's one heck of a player. He's great.

Q. How is the excitement and enthusiasm in preparation for the Rose Bowl Game?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Doing great, man. It's a dream come true to play in this kind of game. Preparation is not done yet, but looking forward to Wednesday.

Q. What will it take to come out victorious in the Rose Bowl?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: You know, elite communication and playing hard between the whistles, being the most physical team. If we do those two things, I think we'll be a winner at the end of this thing.

Q. What are the ingredients that have caused you to rise to this level of success so far?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Just a lot of hard work and dedication, just trusting my instincts and my confidence and knowing that there's a lot of bad days and a lot of good days, but on those bad days just knowing I'm still doing the right thing, and there's going to be a good day on the other side.

Q. Who's your inspiration in life?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Inspiration in life? Ooh, that's a good one. I've got a lot of inspirations. There's a lot of people that have inspired me. But I'd say my grandma and grandpa are definitely one of my inspirations.

Q. What are the words that you live by?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: That I live by? Work hard and be humble. That's a good one.

Q. What would you say to all your friends, family and fans?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Love you guys. Couldn't do it without you. Thanks for always supporting me throughout this journey. It's been amazing.

Q. Obviously there's a lot going on right now, a lot of energy in this room. Has it sunk in yet?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Oh, it's definitely sunk in. It's a pretty great feeling. But I'll have a better feeling once we

win this game on Wednesday. We're still preparing, getting ready for it, but it's definitely a dream come true to be in this spot.

Q. What do you remember about that first match-up with Ohio State?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, it was just two really talented teams who wanted the game, and obviously we came out on top, so I'm expecting another good rematch here on Wednesday and hope they bring their best shot because we're certainly bringing ours. It's going to be one for the books, that's for sure.

Q. Anything you individually remember from that first match-up that you picked up on that you're going to apply to this game?

BRYCE BOETTCHER: Yeah, I'd say just communication, pre-snap. Chip did some things on offense you've got to make sure you're ready for. Then just being the most physical team in between the whistles. I think if we do those two things, we'll win this game on Wednesday.

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