

Rose Bowl Game presented by Prudential: Oregon vs Ohio State

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Pasadena, California, USA

Ohio State Buckeyes Lathan Ransom

Press Conference

Q. Looking at this week and the moments that meant to you, how do you put into respect where you are at right now?

LATHAN RANSOM: Man, first of all, I just want to give thanks to God, My Savior, really, and just when I got, when we first lands here at the Rose Bowl, so many emotions went through me. Just from being here the last time, and full circle coming to be back.

It's been a long journey, a lot of ups and downs. I'm just so appreciative that everything I've learned about myself, about my friends, my family, my teammates, I just -- I'm really just embracing and enjoying the whole moment.

Q. The ups and downs of this season, to get to this moment, what does it mean to the way that you guys got here and to play as well as you did?

LATHAN RANSOM: I think it says a lot about our team. Sticking together through all the adversity we faced, a lot of outside noise and a lot of people trying to break the team up when we stuck together. I think learned a lot. From wins and losses you learned a lot but you honestly learn more from the losses, and from the loss we learned a lot about our offense, about our defense about, our team, about our chemistry. And we're excited to be here at the Rose Bowl.

Q. When you look back at the way this program has been led and how Coach Day leads, how would you describe his leadership?

LATHAN RANSOM: Yeah, I feel like his leadership has been at an all-time high this year, especially just with everything that's gone on, like we said, all the adversity we faced, all the outside noise we heard he kept the team together. This is the closest team I've ever been on and he's the biggest reason for that. I'm excited to call him



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being our leader leading us into this Rose Bowl.

Q. You guys obviously played Oregon and know all the different weapons that they have offensively but how do you guys as a defense embrace what's ahead here?

LATHAN RANSOM: Yeah, I think we are just excited to face Oregon again, a great offense, a great team all around, and you know, they do a lot of great things that we're excited to play against, and we're just excited to embrace that challenge.

Q. What goes into your game plan here, your preparations as quarterback?

LATHAN RANSOM: We faced some great quarterbacks throughout the year and I think, yeah, he's one of the best quarterbacks if not the best that we're going to face. He does a great job of running the show. He does a great job checking, making different looks, seeing what the defensive end and the O-Line also does a great job getting a lot of time for him to go back there and do his things and letting explosive receivers get open. It's going to be a great team effort to slow their offense down and that's what our defense is trying to do.

Q. How different are you guys from the first time you played?

LATHAN RANSOM: Like I said, we are definitely different. We learned a lot from our wins and losses and we learned a lot as a defense in general. So we're going in there. We're excited for the challenge and we're excited for the moment.

Q. How many times have you been asked about what happened last time in the Rose Bowl?

LATHAN RANSOM: Yeah, I feel like doing these interviews, a lot of times we get asked the same questions. I've gotten used to it. But we're excited for the game.

Q. Fairly close to home. Probably have a ton of family there?



LATHAN RANSOM: Yeah.

Q. How many people do you have?

LATHAN RANSOM: I think I'm going to have 12 or 13. The most I ever had actually at a game. So it's exciting for me, exciting moment for me. Like you said. Close to home. I've got family out in California. I can't wait to breathe in that West Coast air before I go into the game.

Q. How important is it to have that happen, especially in the Rose Bowl?

LATHAN RANSOM: Definitely it's a lot of déjà vu and a lot of similarities from the first time we're here. Yeah, I mean, I really don't know the emotions I'm going to feel when I get back to that field and stuff but I'm excited to be here. I feel like God put me through that for a reason and I learned a lot about myself and from that moment.

I'm so thankful to be here again, and thankful for another opportunity to play. It was definitely a crazy moment last time.

Q. How much did that shape your career?

LATHAN RANSOM: Yeah, I feel like everything happens for a reason. God has a plan for you but like I said I could have sat there and always think about, man my career could have went like this, my career could have went like that but I feel like this was the way my career meant to go.

I'm excited to be here again and I'm excited to play in the Rose Bowl and excited to get back on that field and have it end in a different way this time.

Q. You don't get as much attention as Caleb but you've had a hell of a year. Do you ever feel overlooked?

LATHAN RANSOM: It doesn't really matter to me, man. All that matters to me is how the team does, and when I didn't comeback for it, to hear about it or hear about myself. Came back like all the other seniors, for bigger reasons, and it's to get to the Rose Bowl here and continue to play the season.

Q. What was the injury?

LATHAN RANSOM: I broke my tibia and fibula.

Q. How long did it take?

LATHAN RANSOM: Thanks to Stu, man, it was supposed

to be six to eight months, and me and Stu got back, and the fastest he's ever seen a fractured leg come back from that, that's all thanks to Stu and our training staff. He worked me every day.

When there was time off and stuff, I stayed with Stu and worked with him, worked with him through it. He's the reason I got here today, through all the knickknacks I've ever had, man, so I appreciate Stu.

Q. Which leg?

LATHAN RANSOM: My left leg.

Q. I wanted to ask you about Denzel.

LATHAN RANSOM: I think Denzel handled himself. He's an extremely confident player. His confidence never wavered, whether he played how he didn't want to play, man. I'm excited to see what he's going to do. I think Denzel is one of the best cornerbacks in the nation and I'm excited to see him show that.

Q. Do you sense that in him?

LATHAN RANSOM: He's such a calm dude and relaxed dude that it's hard to sense anything in him but I feel like any time we go out there and strap up in the game that he's going to go out there and try to dominate and I'm excited to see him do that.

Q. You're a West Coast guy, how much was it a goal playing in the Rose Bowl when you were growing up in Arizona?

LATHAN RANSOM: I think this is one of, if not the best Bowl game to play in. There's so much history about it, especially Ohio State. So many Ohio State games have been played here and so many players have made names for themselves that will be remembered always, making plays in this game.

Growing up, be a West Coast dude, I think this is the best Bowl game to play in and I can't wait to play in it.

Q. Do you have any games that you remember watching?

LATHAN RANSOM: That would be tough, people are going to remember the most recent one with Jackson going crazy.

Q. What do you remember from that environment?

LATHAN RANSOM: I got hurt in that game so I don't



remember very much. I remember from my hospital bed cheering on my team. I remember cheering loud.

Q. When you look back at your career, does that help you just take in the moment a little bit, now that you're playing every game, senior year, that you know that this is something that you can't take for granted?

LATHAN RANSOM: Yeah, of course. I think that's what the injuries, you know v done for me. I appreciate football. I think one of the most people -- I'm one of the people that appreciate it more than anyone. Any time I get to step on the field, whether it's practice or whether it's meetings or whether it's the game. I'm just so happy to be here. I thank God for being here and I appreciate every moment because I know what it's like to have it taken away.

Q. How often have you been passing that down to the underclassmen?

LATHAN RANSOM: They probably get annoyed but as much as I can. As much as I can.

Q. What's different about ladies and gentlemen an ransom in 2024 compared to ladies and gentlemen an ransom in 2023?

LATHAN RANSOM: That's a good question. I think just a year and a half ago from here, I was watching the game and not able to play. That's the biggest difference. I've grown as a player and a person, but I have the ability to play this year.

Q. Stylistically, what do you think has been one of your biggest strengths as a safety this year?

LATHAN RANSOM: I think being a veteran, my knowledge of the game has grown tremendously:

And then to be a leader. Being someone the defense can look for in big games like this, so that's what I'm excited to do.

I'm excited to play in this game and I can't wait to see what God has in store for me.

Q. You and Caleb both play safety but you have different responsibilities. How much do you push each other out there?

LATHAN RANSOM: That's my closest friend this year on the team, and we push each other in everything we do, whether it's meetings, practices, drills, we're always staying active, to get a little extra work in and compete. And like you said, my close friend, my biggest competitor and like

you said, we are always going out there trying to outdo each other.

Q. Are people sleeping on the Ohio State secondary?

LATHAN RANSOM: I don't really pay attention to what people are saying about our secondary or not. But I think we are excited to go out there for another big opportunity.

Q. Den gel got picked on a little bit last time you played Oregon and he's been playing lights-out since. What do you think his mindset is right now?

LATHAN RANSOM: I think Denzel's mindset is like every other game, going in locked in, excited for the moment, and I'm excited to see what he does.

Q. What did you see in Dillon Gabriel? When you get those cut-ups, what do you see out of the Oregon quarterback?

LATHAN RANSOM: He's a great quarterback, a veteran that runs the show and really knows how to extend plays. Really accurate. Doesn't turn the ball over very much. I think just all-around great quarterback.

Q. How many times have you been asked about the injury and the last time you were in the Rose Bowl?

LATHAN RANSOM: Yeah, I've definitely been asked a couple times about it. That's part of it. Yeah, like you said, I'm taking it all in because last time I was here, it didn't go the way I wanted it to go. But I wouldn't change it for a thing. I'm excited to be here and get another crack at it.

I had a lot of family at the last game that didn't get to see me finish the game. Having a lot of family at this game, I'm just so blessed and excited for them to watch me play.

Q. Will this be the first time?

LATHAN RANSOM: Game day will be the first time. There will probably be a lot of emotions running through my head but I'm excited to get back there.

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