

Big Ten Football Championship Game: Northwestern vs Ohio State

Saturday December 1, 2018

Dwayne Haskins Urban Meyer Chase Young

Ohio State Buckeyes postgame

Ohio State - 45, Northwestern - 24

COACH MEYER: It's an honor to represent the East and represent the Big Ten as champions. Coach Fitzgerald and his staff are, he's a very good friend of mine and one of the best football coaches in America. Their players are exactly what that university and what their coach stands for. They're tough and what a great game and our guys just kept coming and they kept coming and it was a great game.

I've never been more proud of a group of people, my players and staff, to stick together the way they did, all the way from early in the season to losing arguably the best player in America, Nick Bosa. And then we just kept coming and coming and coming. And you lose Austin Mack and Demetrius Knox, two very good players for us. And they just kept coming and we're Big Ten champs, back-to-back champs and make sure these guys enjoy it.

Q. All we heard all season was Ohio State's up and down, but you only lost one ballgame and ended up with a Big Ten Championship. Talk to us about how you guys were able to endure the conversation that people were having that you were up and down but you only lost one game?

COACH MEYER: Well, we were up and down. And that's, I guess, what happens when you have some injuries you're dealing with. You have a little bit adversity to deal with. And not many teams are out there perfect.

Like you said, we're 12-1 champions of arguably the best conference in America. But the way I got through it, I hope the way our players did, who cares? You just show up for every Tuesday practice and get a little better. And that's what they did.



Q. Is the Big Ten Championship enough right now? I don't know, it's unlikely that you'll make the playoffs. Does that even matter tonight, at this point?

COACH MEYER: Sure it matters. You're talking about some elite players to my right. The ultimate prize is a National Championship. But you certainly can't be in that discussion unless you win your conference. So our objective is to get to Indy, win in Indy, win the conference championship. If we have a chance to play for a National Championship, our guys will be ready to go.

Q. With a lot of debate about the college football playoff, is it good wins, is it bad losses, is it improvement over the season? What do you think it should be and what do you think is the case for your team?

COACH MEYER: I don't know. I don't really want to get into that tonight. I think those people -- I think they're in Dallas, wherever they are, and it's a tough situation they're in. There's a lot of great football teams out there. And we're one of those great football teams. And I think there should be a lot of merit in winning your conference, which we did.

You look at the road wins we had -- at Penn State, at Michigan State, at TCU. And then obviously the way we played against the fourth-ranked team in America. And the way we played tonight.

So I don't know if we're in a position to start making statements about where we belong. But I know they've got a tough decision to make, because we're a heck of a football team.

Q. Had three Big Ten Championship teams down here at Ohio State. Given what this team's been through, ups and downs, how do you think you'll remember this team maybe down the line?

COACH MEYER: I'll never forget this team. You know, that's not shortchanging the other Big Ten champs and the other championship teams we've had.

But we had a handful -- it's very odd to have fifth-year seniors come back. And they came back with a purpose. And they got that purpose. They wanted to have a ring and be back-to-back Big Ten champs and they were. One of the most unselfish group of players

I've been around, these players.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the players.

Q. Dwayne, what did you feel about your performance tonight overall? What kind of went right for you tonight?

DWAYNE HASKINS: We had great protection all game. Receivers bringing a lot of clutch plays on third down and first down. We had great play calling. And the biggest thing was execution. And the thing I had to do was give the ball to playmakers and let them make the plays. I'm just the distributor. And we did a great job tonight.

Q. Dwayne, you finished with a 499 yards. I think we need to go back out there get one more yard just to get you over 500, how about that? Talk to us about what you were able to do and did you know that you were that far along?

DWAYNE HASKINS: I mean, we got the one; that was the win. That's all that matters. I could have thrown for 80 yards or 600 yards, all we needed to do is win the game. I'm proud of how we played today. Sure, one yard would have been great. But we're Big Ten East champions, Big Ten champions. What else would you want to be?

Q. Terry McLaurin obviously had another big day. Seems like whenever he comes in this building he has a big day. What did you see from him, I guess, today?

DWAYNE HASKINS: This is where Terry grew up. Whenever he has an opportunity to come back and play in this stadium, he does it for his family, for each other, for our teammates. And he shows out and he did a great job today.

Q. Dwayne, staying with Terry. How about that first drive, that third-and-11 where that could have easily been a sack? You were able to spin away and flush out and find Terry for the touchdown.

DWAYNE HASKINS: A lot of quarterback-receiver relationship is trust, and relying on a receiver to make a play when you need them to. Terry was there for me, made a clutch play on third and 11, bought some time, let him get open. And really credit to how much we worked in practice on scramble drill and just getting open for everybody.

Q. Dwayne, I asked you this question earlier this week about did you think you were a Heisman candidate. You just simply said, yeah. When somebody asked you use said you didn't want to go into it because you wanted to focus on this game. Now that you've won this game and you've added another great game to your catalog, do you

want to go into any elaboration why you think you should be one of the three finalist for Heisman?

COACH MEYER: I'll help him with that. That's my job as a coach. He's without question a Heisman candidate. I've seen the statistics of the other two great players, and there's no doubt. Dwayne Haskins is a Heisman candidate, and he should be in New York City.

Q. Thanks, Coach.

COACH MEYER: You got it. I saved you there.

Q. Coach, now that we have this game behind us, what are your plans for your future at Ohio State?

COACH MEYER: I plan on coaching and enjoying this championship. Chase had three sacks.

Q. Chase, what was your approach tonight overall going after Clayton Thorson trying to slow them down?

CHASE YOUNG: Coming in, we knew he was a real good quarterback an NFL pro-style type of quarterback. And Coach Schiano said we have to get after him. Ran certain blitzes to block the storm press. And today, we just won. And we followed what Coach Schiano said and we got the win.

Q. I don't think you've coached in the Rose Bowl, correct me if I'm wrong, but maybe a dream has come true if you end up there is too strong, but is that something that you grew up, that was the granddaddy, that was it for you?

COACH MEYER: It sure was. And it's amazing. I've never coached in that game. Kirk Herbstreit and I talk about it all the time. So if that's where we end up, we'd be so proud to be there. And I know our players would feel the same.

Q. Both of you, obviously a lot was made of last week's Michigan game. What do you think has been the biggest difference with this team the last two weeks where you kind of found that switch or whatever they want to call it?

CHASE YOUNG: I think after we lost Purdue, we sat down with Coach Schiano. We had a real tough meeting. And we just got together and just had to trust each other. And that was what the meeting was about. And I think every game since then, Coach Schiano trusted us. We trusted him. We trusted our offense. Trusted Coach Meyer. I think everybody just trusted in -- we call it the brotherhood -- and I think the brotherhood was real strong today.

DWAYNE HASKINS: Like Chase said, it was all about trust. And Coach Meyer does a great job of emphasizing that. When I need you the very most, you did your very best. Whether that was offense, defense,

special teams, we all relied on each other to make the plays when they mattered the most, whether that was versus Maryland or the Team up North, or today's game against Northwestern.

What's so fantastic about this game is that I looked to my left, my right, and we're all ready to go out there, make a play together and be trusting one another, trusting the coaches when they put us in that situation. And what better way to go out on a win today.

Q. You said you'll remember this team forever. How much of that is because of everything that's almost -- you guys have been through even from July, and you yourself, health-wise, being on suspension, coming back, Nick Bosa, how much of all that goes into how you'll remember this team?

COACH MEYER: Yeah, this was a very unique year. And there's only one explanation for why we're sitting here as Big Ten champs and two of them just left the podium here, and that's that group of players.

I've got to point out guys like Parris Campbell and Terry McLaurin and Johnnie Dixon. I don't know what you do without those guys. There's no chance we're in this situation, without Dre'Mont Jones, no chance, without Tuf Borland. Isaiah Prince. The captains on this team were phenomenal.

And I mean when Nick Bosa, that was a shot, and we all love Nick. I'm not saying that -- but that guy means so much to our program. And that was -- that was one that took a while to recover from. But our guys did. Obviously we love Nick. I'm just saying. But you take the best player in college football now and a great locker room guy. That was one.

And then all of a sudden Austin Mack goes down, who is one of our warriors, and then Demetrius Knox, who was a great player for us, went down as well. And they kept swinging and swinging and swinging.

Q. You mentioned Terry there. What gave you the confidence coming into today that he was going to have the game that he had?

COACH MEYER: He always has a game like that. It's a matter of us getting him the ball. He actually could have had more today. He broke loose a couple times. But Terry will go down as a Buckeye great. And there's so many unselfish things he does for this program and team. Him and Parris gave the pregame talk today. That's how powerful those two guys are.