



Ohio State Media Day Quotes

Ohio State vs. Oregon
Saturday, January 10, 2015
Playoff Fan Central, Dallas, Texas



Ezekiel Elliott, Ohio State University Running Back

Can you talk about some of the challenges you've seen from this Oregon defense?

They're an athletic ball team. They are long. Their longness and their versatility between all the different players. It gives you a little bit of a problem.

What has changed in your game the last couple of games, you've gone over 200 yards. What has been the difference?

I just think the increase of game experience, the increased reps. It gives me an opportunity to be able to anticipate a little better.

How does your left hand feel?

My hand is alright. It's getting there. It's kind of reached a point where it won't get any better. It may get a little worse, but it won't get better. After this game, I'll have surgery on it.

You were carrying the ball in your right hand on the 80-yard run. Do you not trust the left hand?

Just the brace I wear on it during the game. I can't carry the ball in my left hand with the brace so at all times I carry it in my right hand.

Is that a weird change for you from how you are taught to carry it?

It's something I had to get used to as the season went on. When I first had surgery, just getting out there and practicing with it and only keeping it in that hand. It's become second nature, it's easy.

When did you first break the hand?

I broke it the first week of camp.

How did you do it?

I jumped up for a ball and came down and landed on it funny.

At what point in the season did you feel like you started to take control of the game?

I think the game that started it was the Michigan State game. I had a great game. I showed a lot of acceleration and made a lot of good reads.

What sticks out with the Oregon defense?

They are a team that plays hard. We don't play many teams that put forth the same amount of effort as us. They are a long defensive team and they have a lot of players that can play different positions.



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How does it feel knowing that an Ohio State victory really comes down to your shoulders?

It's a little bit of pressure but I know the big guys in front of me, we call them 'the slobs', are going to pave the way for me.

Have you been able to look back at what Arizona did to beat Oregon?

Yes, a little bit. They were able to establish the running game early. Their running back did a great job of breaking tackles and creating explosive runs.

How important is it to establish the running game early?

That's really important for us. We're at our best with a balanced attack when we can pass the ball and run the ball, so we like to establish the run and then be able to run play-action and take shots down the field.

Do you feel like you've been underrated most of the year?

I may have been underrated most of the year but that's not something I was really worried about. I'm just worried about going out there ever week, getting better and getting that W.

How do you feel like you've improved during the season?

Just through participation and game experience. I try to anticipate what the defense is going to do pre-snap and then post-snap.

Does being at the national championship game seem almost surreal?

I don't really even think it's sunk in yet. It's only our second day here and we got in last night at 6. I was thinking about it earlier that it doesn't really feel like we play in a couple of days. It will sink in pretty soon.

What do you remember about your official visit to Ohio State?

I was committed by then. Every time I visited Ohio State and walked on campus, there was just a certain energy you feel, a certain feeling you get from the staff and team. It's a sense of family - that was just very welcoming.

What was it that made you decide to commit?

I just thought that Ohio State was the best situation for me and I had a really great bond with my running back coach, Stan Drayton.

Did you expect to play right away?

Coach Meyer gives everyone an opportunity to come in and prove themselves and play early. Last season I got a little bit of experience at running back, but mostly just with special teams.