

*Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2025*

**Remarks Honoring the 2024 College Football National Champion Ohio State University Buckeyes**

*April 14, 2025*

*The President.* That's a good-looking group behind me, and they're big. We're not going to get into any fights with them, I can guarantee you that. *[Laughter]*

So I want to just congratulate everybody. Coach, you have done some job. Man!

But today is my great honor to welcome the 2024 college football national champions, the Ohio State University Buckeyes. Way to go, fellas.

And it turns out January 20 was a big day for all of us. That's true. That was a big day. *[Laughter]* I loved that day. We'll never forget—*[laughter]*—we'll never forget that day.

To Ohio State President Ted Carter—Ted—where is Ted? Ted, congratulations. Good job, Ted. Wow. Athletic Director Ross Bjork. Ross? Where's Ross? There's—hi, Ross. Congratulations. Did you know they were this good? He said, "Absolutely." That's a good answer.

To Coach Ryan Day, who—and I have to read this, because this is not part of it, but I—they gave me a little briefing. I knew how good a coach—I didn't know he was that good. *[Laughter]*

It's Ryan Day, head coach, the Ohio State University. So here's just a little summary: Ryan was named head coach in December 2018. Think of this. First, he was a very young-looking guy. He's got a lot of time left. In his six seasons as head coach, Day has led the team to nine championship wins. You don't do that. He's currently the only coach to lead his team to the college football playoffs four times since 2019 and his first season as head coach. And Coach Day's overall coaching record seven—70 and 10.

So, in other words, Ryan, I'd like to be your agent. I want to represent you. *[Laughter]*

And he won the big one, right? He won the big one. That's the biggest of them all. That's fantastic.

Let me have your hand here, man.

*Head Coach Ryan Day.* Thank you, sir.

*The President.* Nice play. That's an amazing achievement.

*Mr. Day.* Thank you, sir.

*The President.* It's an amazing achievement at a young age.

And the entire team and everybody up here, we want to thank you and congratulate you, because this building behind you, there's nothing like it. I have a lot of buildings. This is the one. *[Laughter]* This one you can't beat, the White House.

And I think, you know, the coach was all excited about it. I threw it out just hoping that it wouldn't be a big deal. I said: "You know, Coach, afterwards, if you'd like, but only if you'd like—don't worry about it—we could take the team down to the Oval Office and show them what the Oval Office is, because it is spectacular."

*Participant.* Oh yeah!

*The President.* And I don't know if the floor could withstand it, that's the only question. [Laughter]

But we're going to do that. And you know, I've done some Trump touches to the Oval Office too. It's a little nicer than it used to be. [Laughter] I think most people——

*Audience member.* A lot nicer!

*The President.* A lot nicer, you're right about that. [Laughter]

No, it's special. Everything begins, ends, and rebegins at the Oval Office. And so we're going to take the team down there right when we're finished. Okay? If anyone doesn't want to go, that would be okay.

Who is going? Everybody? Okay. [Laughter] Okay. We look forward to it.

Also with us are many Ohio State fans from my administration, and the biggest of them all, of course, is our Vice President, who has been fantastic. A faithful Buckeye alum, J.D. Vance.

*Participants.* J.D.!

*The President.* J.D., oh, he's something.

But he was such a good student, he didn't stay there for 4 years. He got out in 2 years, number-one in his class. How do you do that? Do you have any better students than that? Better football players, yes. I don't know about students.

*Vice President James D. "J.D." Vance.* I think so.

*The President.* But J.D. is doing a great job.

Thanks, as well, to Secretary of State Marco Rubio for being here. Marco, you're doing incredible. Thank you.

As well as Representatives Warren Davidson and Mike Carey. Fellas, thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Governor Mike DeWine. Mike, where you—where are you? Hi, Mike. Doing a great job. Attorney General Dave Yost. Dave, congratulations on everything. Secretary of State Frank LaRose. Frank, thank you. Frank.

Mayor Trent Conaway—oh, I love Trent Conaway. Where is Trent Conaway? Where are you, Trent?

*Vice President Vance.* Over there—[inaudible].

*The President.* Look at him. That guy from East Palestine. I think, you know, you're the reason—they say that was—I visited and Biden didn't, and when I went there—and I went there right after the problem, right? And I met Trent, and I love Trent, but a lot of people give that—you a lot of credit for the success that we've had, because we won in a huge stampede, in a landslide. And I want to thank you, and you've been a great mayor. And you went through a lot, and we took care of you. We helped, and other people didn't. But you were a big stop in the first one, so thank you for being here. It's good to see you again. Thank you very much. Really nice.

And of course, the Ohio State legend. He's a current Lieutenant Governor, Jim Tressel. Jim, thank you. Where is Jim? Yes. Thank you. Thank you, Jim. Thank you very much. And he is a legend.

Thanks, also, to my friends, J.J. Cafaro and the Schottenstein family. They're here somewhere. There they are. Hi, fellas. Good to have you.

This was a historic year in college football. Standing together today, these men in the first college—think of that, are the first college football players in history who can proudly call themselves 12-team playoff champions. You're the first ones. That's right. You had to go through a lot. That's not easy. You're the first ones. Congratulations, Coach.

This team showed the world that the road to greatness is paved by hard work, sweat, and often a great deal of adversity. They had a lot of adversity because—I shouldn't say this; I actually said, "Should I leave this line out?" And they said, "Sir"—[*laughter*]—

[*At this point, the President gestured to the audience.*]

They're saying, "Yes, leave it in"—"Sir, they want to hear the whole thing"—the bad and the good, right? But many people counted you out, as you know, after the losses against Oregon, which is a great team, and that team up north. We won't talk about it.

*Audience members.* Boo!

*The President.* But you refused—[*laughter*]—but you refused to let the Buckeye nation down. You went—you got better and better and tougher and tougher as the season went along.

And after a very strong regular season, but with adversity, you held a closed-door, players-only meeting. This extraordinary group rallied together for a single glorious mission: to win four straight playoff games against the finest teams in college football, and you were able to do it, obviously.

In the first playoff game, Tennessee [Ohio State; White House correction] quarterback Will Howard scorched the Volunteer defense—I watched that game; I said, "That guy is good"—[*laughter*]—defense for 311 yards and completed 24 of 29 passes. Known for his accuracy, strong arm—but, boy, is he known for his accuracy—where is Will? I want to see this guy.

*Quarterback Will Howard.* Right here.

*The President.* Will, where are you? Boy, oh boy.

*Mr. Howard.* Sir, how are you?

*The President.* Is he that good?

*Mr. Howard.* Yes, it's all of these guys, man.

*The President.* [*Inaudible*]

*Mr. Howard.* All these guys.

*The President.* [*Inaudible*]

*Mr. Howard.* Thank you, sir. I appreciate you.

*The President.* You are fantastic. Oh, he's going to be so rich. Ai yai yai. [*Laughter*] Think of that: to look like that and to play. That's a good combination.

But Will went on to set an alltime college football playoff record with 1,150 yards passing. That's a incredible thing.

Great to meet you.

*Mr. Howard.* Great to meet you.

*The President.* I'm going to be watching you for a long time, I think.

*Mr. Howard.* Yes, sir.

*The President.* Okay?

*Mr. Howard.* Thank you.

*The President.* We'll be watching him for about 15 years, maybe longer.

The next game was a chance at redemption against the top-ranked Oregon Ducks, which was a tough team. It was a total team effort by Ohio State.

In the first half, the Buckeyes built an insurmountable 34-point lead thanks to the scores from veteran playmaker TeyVeyon [TreVeyon; White House correction] Henderson. Where is he, TeyVeyon [TreVeyon]?

Oh, man. Get up here. [*Inaudible*]

*Running back TreVeyon Henderson.* Appreciate you, man.

*The President.* [*Inaudible*]

You think I could beat him in a race? I don't know. [*Laughter*] Great going.

And Ohio State—and also your receptions leader, Emeka Egbuka. Where is he? Look at this guy. [*Inaudible*]

Congratulations, fellas.

How important were they to your passing?

*Mr. Howard.* Oh, they were everything.

*The President.* Okay. That's good. You said the right thing.

Then came the team's biggest test in the semifinals: a trip to Texas for the Cotton Bowl. And that Texas was pretty much rated the number one team at the beginning of the season, right? So that was a tough team. I know that.

It was neck and neck late in the fourth quarter. Texas was down a score, but marching in the red zone with 2 minutes left on the fourth-and-eight. With 2:29 on the clock, hometown legend Jack Sawyer—boy, that's a good name. [*Laughter*] Jack Sawyer. Sounds—it sounds like the name of a legend, right?

A son of Columbus—we won Columbus by a lot of points; I like it too—[*laughter*]—gave the world an alltime great Ohio State football moment. You—most of you know what I'm talking about.

In one amazing play, Jack exploded off the line; strip sacked the quarterback, which is not easy to do; scooped the fumble recovery; scored an 83-yard touchdown return; and punched Ohio State's ticket to the championship game.

That's a hell of a thing. You mean, you took the ball out of the quarterback's hand? How—I don't want to say this. I don't want to make—how do you think that other team feels? Not too good. [*Laughter*] That's one of those disasters for another team, right? Oh, that quarterback doesn't feel good.

Where is he? I want to see this guy.

*Defensive end Jack Sawyer.* How are you doing, President Trump? Nice to meet you. Thank you. Appreciate it.

*The President.* You're some big people. [*Inaudible*] [*Laughter*]

*Mr. Sawyer.* Nice to meet you, Mr. President. [*Inaudible*]

*The President.* How does that feel? Pretty good?

*Mr. Sawyer.* Phenomenal.

*The President.* Are you that fast that you can get down?

*Mr. Sawyer.* I had some great blockers leading the way. [*Laughter*] Or else I would have got caught, probably.

*The President.* That's unbelievable, actually.

The size of these guys. I used to think I was quite a big fellow. Not so much anymore.

But he later said that it was the best feeling he'd ever felt. Are you sure about that, Jack? I don't know about that. As he gets older, who knows? [*Laughter*] But I don't think he's ever going to forget it.

And, Jack, you earned it and congratulations—that's really a special—so that's—you thought that game was—you—it was maybe over, Coach. What do you think?

*Mr. Day.* That's when I felt like we were going to win.

*The President.* You felt like it was going to—that's why he's a good coach. He felt he was going to win. That was pretty amazing. That was—and the other team was tough, right?

*Mr. Day.* They were a good team.

*The President.* Will they be good again this season?

*Mr. Day.* We open up the first game with them next year.

*The President.* Oh, you have the first game with them. Wow.

*Mr. Day.* Yes.

*The President.* That's tough. And a lot of your players are coming back, but quite a few great ones are leaving, right?

*Mr. Day.* For the NFL.

*The President.* How do you feel about—to the NFL. That's the good thing about—every one of them goes.

How do you feel about the season?

*Mr. Day.* It's going to be exciting.

*The President.* Better be good.

*Mr. Day.* We're going to miss some of these guys, but we got good young guys. And we're excited about next year.

*The President.* Yes. Well, I'll bet you're going to do great.

But the Buckeyes had defied the critics, but the job just wasn't finished. This tremendous team needed one more win for the ultimate victory: the National Championship game against Notre Dame.

Offensive MVP Will Howard led the charge again, completing 14 of his first 15 passes—I'm telling you, the guy has an accurate arm. [*Laughter*] How many times do I have to tell you that?

Quinshon Judkins reached the end zone three times. Where the hell is he? [*Laughter*]

*Participant.* He's gone.

*Vice President Vance.* He didn't make the trip.

*The President.* Three times.

Defensive MVP Cody Simon stuffed the Fighting Irish rushing attack. Where's Cody?

*Participants.* Right here.

*The President.* Come here. Come here, Cody. [*Inaudible*]

Got some big people here, huh?

Do you notice the way they're sitting in, like, a little trench? I didn't want them at the same level. [*Laughter*] Actually, it was really—but I feel very good about that, J.D., right?

*Vice President Vance.* Yes, sir. Yes. That's right.

*The President.* Keep them down a little bit.

But offensive MVP Will Howard red—led that charge. And really, these people are going places that—going to be very exciting in the future. We're going to be watching them all on Sundays and for a long time to come, I believe. Many of them—many of the people behind us.

But Cody Simon, that was a very important deal.

And Buckeyes star Jeremiah Smith pulled down the unforgettable deep ball on third-and-eleven to clinch the championship. Where's Jeremiah? [*Inaudible*] [*Laughter*]

He's got 2 more years, right?

*Mr. Day.* Two years left.

*The President.* Oh.

I shouldn't say this, but the coach was giving Jeremiah some major praise backstage. I said, "So what's the future?" He said, "Well, we have a guy, he may be the best ever." That's a lot to think about, Jeremiah, just be real good. [*Laughter*] Go be Jerry Rice, right?

Who's your favorite?

*Wide receiver Jeremiah Smith.* Jerry Rice, for sure.

*The President.* Jerry Rice?

*Mr. Smith.* Yes.

*The President.* Jerry Rice is a great guy too.

But Jeremiah was the only freshman that was just at a level that few people have ever seen before, according to what I hear. And nobody could stop him all year long, even as a freshman.

And let's not forget the resilient offensive line that helped Will achieve this record-breaking season. Get ready, fellas. Come on up here. Josh Fryar, Luke Montgomery, Carson Hinzman, Tegra Tshabola—oh—[*laughter*]—Austin Siereveld, and Donovan Jackson stepped up when you needed him most, and they protected this valuable quarterback.

*Offensive tackle Josh Fryar.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*The President.* Great job. [*Inaudible*]

*Participants.* [*Inaudible*] Thanks, man.

*The President.* [*Inaudible*]

*Participants.* [*Inaudible*] Awesome.

*The President.* It's nice when they can say, "Yes, we're going to the NFL," with other people saying, "Gee, think I can make it?" [*Laughter*] You're going, and you're going early, from what I hear.

Good luck, fellas. [*Inaudible*] Good luck in the NFL.

*Offensive lineman Carson Hinzman.* Thank you, sir.

*Offensive lineman Austin Siereveld.* Thank you, sir.

*The President.* You're not——

[*The President gestured to Vice President Vance.*]

I'm saying—I'm looking at him going, "What's he doing?" [*Laughter*]

*Vice President Vance.* I'm short compared to these guys, sir.

*The President.* Thank you. Great job.

*Mr. Siereveld.* Thank you.

*Mr. Hinzman.* Thank you. Thank you, sir.

*Vice President Vance.* Thank you all.

*The President.* That's so important. That offensive line is so important. We have—you have no idea. I've seen teams that were great, but they didn't have the offensive line, and it just doesn't work out. Right, Will?

*Mr. Howard.* That's right. [*Laughter*]

*The President.* You beat the Fighting Irish that day 34–23, and for the first time in 10 years, proudly claimed the title of the great State of Ohio, the great State. I love that State. We won that State in a landslide, Governor. We won it in a landslide. I love Ohio. We'll never let you down. I swear. I promise. And if I let you down, he won't.

[*The President gestured to Vice President Vance.*]

Okay? So you have a backup.

But I do love the place. And so today I'm honored to call the Ohio State University Buckeyes national champions. You're the national champions, and you're standing right here at the White House. And it's a proud day for all of us, but it's a proud day for the Scarlet and Gray. Congratulations, once again.

And, Coach, you are special—you are a fantastic person. I got to know him just a little bit back there, and I realized almost immediately that he's really a special, special guy. And to your wife and your three beautiful children, congratulations.

And I'm going to ask J.D. to say a couple of words. It's an honor to have everybody at the White House. You are a very special group from a special State: the State of Ohio.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

*Vice President Vance.* Well, thank you, Mr. President.

Thanks to Coach Day and the entire team for being here at the White House.

I'm so proud to be part of team scarlet and gray today. Congratulations to the Ohio State Buckeyes on a hell of a 2024 season.

[*Vice President Vance continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

But I just want to say: proud of this team. Mr. President, thank you for hosting. And thanks to the whole State of Ohio for showing up and cheering for our Buckeyes. God bless you guys.

*Mr. Day.* Mr. President, Mr. Vice President, and other distinguished guests, on behalf of the Ohio State University, the Department of Athletics, thank you for inviting the national championship Ohio State Buckeyes to the White House this afternoon.

*[Mr. Day continued his remarks, concluding as follows.]*

Our families, thank you so much for your love and your support along the way. To our coaches, thank you for your hard work and for your leadership. And to our players, thank you for everything. Your story will forever be told.

And, Mr. President, thank you again for this incredible honor. God bless America, and go Bucks.

*The President. [Inaudible]*

*Mr. Day.* Thank you very much.

*The President.* Great job.

*Mr. Day.* All right. We have some really nice gifts that we're going to have our captains give Mr. President and Mr. Vice President.

*[The President was presented with a team jersey and helmet.]*

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John J. Cafaro, executive vice president, Cafaro Co.; Emeka Egbuka, wide receiver, Jack Sawyer, defensive end, Quinshon Judkins, running back, and Cody Simon, linebacker, Ohio State University Buckeyes; former National Football League wide receiver Jerry Rice; and Christina "Nina" Spirou Day, wife, of Mr. Day, and their children Ryan, Jr., Grace, and Ourania. The transcript was released by the Office of Communications on April 15.

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