

Running the Show

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PHOTO BY MARVIN FOGG / THE PLAIN DEALER

In December, UNH's footprint on the college football coaching scene got a bit bigger with the announcement that Ryan Day '02 would become the 25th head football coach for Big 10 powerhouse Ohio State University. A business administration graduate of the Whittemore School of Business and Economics (now Paul College), Day was UNH's starting quarterback from 1999–2001, setting nine school records during his tenure that included pass completions (653), completion percentage (59.9 percent), touchdown passes (53) and total offense (8,492 yards).

After graduating, the Manchester, New Hampshire, native coached as part of the team's offensive staff under then offensive coordinator Chip Kelly '90, and later worked for

Kelly with both the Philadelphia Eagles and San Francisco 49ers as quarterback coach. He was hired as co-offensive coordinator at Ohio State in January 2017.

Last fall, when Day led the Ohio State team for three games while then head coach Urban Meyer served a staff-related suspension, Kelly spoke about his protégé's potential. "You could tell he was destined to be great at this profession," Kelly said. "He's always been mature and level-headed; he's as composed of a person as I've ever been around."

Kelly isn't the only one who saw something in Day from the start. Wildcats head coach Sean McDonnell '78 calls Day one of the most competitive players he's ever known.

"What made him such a good player here was his competitive nature and his ability to understand things," McDonnell says. "He was a smart kid, a smart player. I don't care what sport it was. We followed this kid from about his sophomore, junior year in high school, watching him play quarterback, watching him play point guard in basketball, watching him be a catcher on the baseball team. He was always in a leadership spot, being the team guy that was running the show."

Now, Day is running one of the biggest shows in collegiate football. He succeeded Meyer as Ohio's primary play caller following the Buckeyes' 28-23 Rose Bowl victory over the University of Washington Huskies on Jan. 1.

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