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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

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"We're going to have to make some decisions. Those decisions have not been made."

- Urban Meyer

Decision Time

TIM MOODY

LOOKING FORWARD – Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer is tasked with picking a new starting quarterback for the 2018 season.

With Spring Practice Over, Meyer Has A Choice To Make

By **TIM MOODY**
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

There are no more spring practices. There's no more data to be gathered. There's no spring game left to evaluate the quarterbacks battling to be the next starter at Ohio State.

There's nothing left for head coach Urban Meyer to do other than meet with his coaches, talk to the players, evaluate all aspects of the battle and, eventually, make a choice.

"I know I'm going to get a bunch of questions about the quarterback," Meyer said after the Buckeyes completed their annual spring scrimmage on April 14. "I'll go ahead and answer one of them right now, and that is we're going to have to make some decisions. Those decisions have not been made."

That scrimmage presented junior Joe Burrow and sophomore Dwayne Haskins – and, to some extent, redshirt freshman Tate Martell – with one final chance to prove themselves on the field in front of the coaching staff. Unless the battle spills over into fall camp – which is unlikely for a variety of reasons – all the quarterbacks can do is sit back and wait for a decision to be made.

That process will include various steps for Meyer, who was initially scheduled to meet with the media for a post-spring press conference on April 16 before the event was canceled that morning. It's safe to assume he had other things on his mind.

"You've got Joe Burrow and Dwayne, obviously, competing right now, along with Tate," Meyer said. "Next week – I want to take the weekend off (because) we've got recruiting and that – but Monday (April 16), Tuesday, we're going to have some very good meetings and productive meetings. I

want to see all of the statistical data – we have everything charted – and go from there."

Throughout spring practice, as Meyer said, the Buckeyes kept track of everything. Every throw made by every quarterback. Every snap, every little thing that might impact the decision.

That data will play a role in the choice, which is ultimately up to Meyer, but he'll receive plenty of input from others as well. After the spring game, he said he was scheduled to meet with offensive coordinators Ryan Day and Kevin Wilson later that same day for a quick update before an in-depth meeting the following Monday.

He was certainly going to meet with the players themselves, he was going to evaluate that data, and he was going to weigh all other aspects.

Meyer also noted that he wants to make sure he makes a choice that is, first, best for Ohio State, but also best for the players. That's where a spring decision comes into the mix.

Throughout camp, the coaching staff made it clear that the battle was neck-and-neck between Burrow and Haskins, and that idea was certainly held up in the spring game.

Burrow and Haskins both played mainly for the Gray squad that won, 37-14, although all three quarterbacks played at least some for both sides in the scrimmage.

Tallying up their overall stats, Burrow was best on paper after going 15 of 22 for 238 yards and two touchdowns, including strikes of 50 and 42 yards to sophomore H-back Demario McCall in the second half, the latter coming on the final play of the game. Haskins was 9 of 19 for 120 yards and two more scores, and he made some eye-opening throws, including a 25-yard laser to

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BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

In a quest that began earlier this year, Buckeye Sports Bulletin is trying to put together a comprehensive poll to determine who the greatest Ohio State quarterback of all time is. Our ballot appears on page 6 of this issue, and BSB subscribers can also vote online on the brand-new forum on BuckeyeSports.com – more information on the forum can be found throughout the paper. For now, we aren't publishing the results from our poll, but here's a sampling of what some of the voters had to say.

When it comes to Troy Smith, it seems as though everyone focuses upon the last game of his career vs. everything he accomplished for Ohio State from 2004-06. The three straight wins over That Team Up North, plus the Heisman Trophy, give him the nod for me.

Rex Kern, despite a lack of gaudy statistics, ranks second with his record as a leader and winner from 1968-70. J.T. Barrett has set just about every record possible for Ohio State and within the Big Ten, and ranks third in my ballot. Honorable mention goes out to Craig Krenzel for his steady play during the 2002 national championship season.

– Charles Minnich

Cornelius Greene had a 31-2-1 career record as a starter! Never lost to Michigan! Big Ten MVP in 1975, Rose Bowl MVP in 1974, two time All-Big Ten (1974-75), Hula Bowl MVP (1976), OSU Athletics Hall of Fame!

– Daniel Laville

My selection is Cornelius Greene. As an OSU student in TBDBITL from 1972-75 (Archie was in my graduating class) I got to experience all games from field level. Although not the most prolific passer (17 TDs, 20 INTs), he was a master at distributing the football in Woody Hayes' system, as well as running the ball (2,066 yards; 29 TDs). He had a 31-2-1 record as a starter, won three Big Ten championships, a 2-0-1 record against TTUN and played in four Rose Bowls, starting three. My biggest

regret was not winning the national championship in the 1976 Rose Bowl. We beat UCLA earlier in the year in a nonconference game, but they got us back in that game.

– Stephen Sinkey

A challenging and fun debate/exercise. I imagine if I did another ballot in a room with other voters discussing the candidates, my order would be different.

– Clark Kellogg

Since 1954, the best QB was Art Schlichter, who was a great leader and passer and could run the option if needed. He could throw any kind of pass. Joe Paterno said he was the best QB he had ever seen on film. What if he had Urban Meyer as head coach and Tom Herman as OC?

– Bob Zachman

I feel that Troy Smith has the best overall résumé, including talent/stats, Heisman and wins/performance against TTUN. Really felt tugged to leave Joe Germaine out of the top 10.

– Kelly Rine

Braxton Miller and Terrelle Pryor would have eclipsed or been close to J.T. Barrett's total yardage records had they played QB a fourth year.

– Brandon Oles

From The Pages Of BSB

35 Years Ago – 1983

Among the countless tasks Ohio State football head coach Earle Bruce had to fulfill during spring practice in 1983 was finding players to replace the six team captains who had exhausted their eligibility the previous fall. Fortunately for the Buckeyes, Bruce said the team did not have a leadership vacuum.

"In college football, graduation is always a problem because you lose some good football players," Bruce said. "We are, obviously, losing some fine football players. But basically, after graduation, someone is supposed to spring up and take over. If they don't, you are not successful."

30 Years Ago – 1988

Former Ohio State All-America quarterback Art Schlichter signed a contract with the Ottawa Rough Riders of the Canadian Football League for a reported \$125,000. Schlichter signed with Ottawa a day after filing for bankruptcy on March 29. He listed debts of nearly \$1 million and claimed assets of \$1,800.

Schlichter played for Ohio State from 1978-81. He completed 497 of 951 passes (52.3 percent) for 7,547 yards with 50 touchdowns and 46 interceptions.

The Bloomingburg, Ohio, native was selected fourth overall by the Baltimore Colts in the 1982 NFL draft. He was with the Colts, who moved to Indianapolis prior to the 1984 season, from 1982-85 but missed the 1983 campaign because he was suspended for gambling.

25 Years Ago – 1993

Ohio State football head coach John Cooper underwent back surgery for the third time since 1990, having a ruptured disk removed on April 2.

Physicians who attended the surgery reported that the hourlong procedure went according to plan. Cooper was expected to be hospitalized for three to five days, but within three he was back observing OSU spring football practice.

In October 1990, Cooper had a herniated disk removed

from his back. Then, in June 1991, he suffered a ruptured disk and it was removed with the two adjacent vertebrae fused. Cooper spent most of the 1991 season in a back brace.

20 Years Ago – 1998

Ohio State defensive lineman Paul Breed missed OSU's Sugar Bowl trip after being charged with theft in connection with a Dec. 1 incident at the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Airport. As the Buckeyes opened spring ball on April 2, however, Breed was back on the practice field.

"Nothing has been resolved," Cooper said. "He's back out here today, but his case hasn't gone (to trial)."

Breed had entered a not guilty plea to a felony theft charge stemming from the incident where he allegedly stole money from a sleeping woman's purse. Because the amount was in excess of \$300, the charge became a felony.

15 Years Ago – 2003

Former Ohio State football player Andrew Lee was sentenced to life in prison without parole in connection with the murder of a Columbus video store clerk. A jury handed down the sentence April 3 in Franklin County Common Pleas Court. Lee, 21, was convicted of aggravated murder, aggravated robbery, rape and kidnapping.

The jury could have considered the death penalty in the case of Lee, a former Columbus Brookhaven standout who enrolled at OSU in the fall of 2000.

Lee's stay at Ohio State was short. He was suspended from OSU and dismissed from the team in October 2000 after being convicted of beating a North Linden woman.

10 Years Ago – 2008

Ohio State announced that the football team would have a home-and-home series with Tennessee, set to begin in 2018.

The first game of the series was scheduled for Sept. 1, 2018, in Knoxville in the season opener for both teams. That was to be followed by a Sept. 7, 2019, contest in Columbus.

"Tennessee-Ohio State is a great natural matchup for two

tradition-laden schools that are less than 400 miles apart," said OSU associate athletic director Steve Snapp. "Playing the Volunteers for the first time during the regular season will be a great series for our fans."

In the only meeting between OSU and Tennessee, the Volunteers beat the Buckeyes, 20-14, in the Florida Citrus Bowl following the 1995 regular season.

Five Years Ago – 2013

Ohio State announced April 15 that men's hockey head coach Mark Osiecki would not return after three seasons at the helm.

"We are making a change in our head hockey coaching position," OSU athletic director Gene Smith said in a statement. "There was a difference of opinion over the management of the program that could not be resolved."

Associate athletic director Chris Schneider, who oversaw the hockey program, told BSB the decision was not based on any NCAA rules violations or the team's performance under Osiecki, who went 46-50-16 with the Buckeyes. Instead, Schneider pointed to the phrase about differences in program management that appeared in Smith's statement.

"I keep going back to the statement," Schneider said. "It's a difference in the management, so it's an overall management of the program that we had a difference in."

One Year Ago – 2017

When Ohio State opened its 2017 spring football practice, head coach Urban Meyer noted that wide receiver James Clark was set to graduate and transfer to another school that semester. Weeks after Meyer's announcement, Clark told The Daytona Beach (Fla.) News-Journal that he had selected Virginia Tech as his next destination.

"You can see the production they have out of the receivers," Clark, a four-star wideout in the 2013 class from New Smyrna Beach, Fla., told the News-Journal in regard to Virginia Tech. "And as a team they went to the ACC championship last year and they know how to get their playmakers the ball."

OSU Got Some Value Out Of Spring Game

through the second quarter. Playing for both the Scarlet and Gray teams, Burrow attempted 22 passes and completed 15 of them for 238 yards and a pair of touchdowns.

seem to have much touch on timing patterns and once threw the ball away on fourth down.

Martell also appears to have a run-first mentality. Several times during the spring game, he seemed to get through only one or two of his progression reads before tucking the ball and taking off.

But when he takes off – well, that's when he excels. Martell scampered for 69 yards and a touchdown, numbers that likely would have been much higher had quarterbacks not been off-limits to contact. He seems not that dissimilar to the kind of disruptive force Johnny Manziel was when he won the 2012 Heisman Trophy as a redshirt freshman at Texas A&M.

So, Who's The Man?

Did 15 spring practice sessions determine who will succeed Barrett as the Ohio State starting quarterback? Perhaps, although Meyer went out of his way to make it seem that the issue was still up for debate.

Martell is likely not going to be the starter, but he is going to play in some form or fashion. Dating back to Josh Harris at Bowling Green through Tim Tebow at Florida and Barrett at Ohio State, Meyer has always liked a quarterback who can run the football, and it would be a safe bet to believe there will be some short-yardage and/or goal-line packages in the offensive playbook designed with Martell in mind.

As for the other two quarterbacks, it depends upon how you assess the situation.

Last season, Haskins played in eight games as Barrett's primary backup, throwing for 565 yards and four touchdowns with only one interception while completing 70.2 percent of his passes. Burrow played in just five games last year and attempted only 11 passes, completing seven of them for 61 yards.

It is worth noting, however, that Burrow had apparently won the backup role over Haskins until Burrow suffered a broken bone in his throwing hand late in fall camp. Furthermore, Burrow has three years' worth of experience in Meyer's system, and that is a huge factor in the head coach's mind. Additionally, Meyer once favorably compared Burrow to current Washington Redskins quarterback Alex Smith, who led a Meyer-coached Utah team to an undefeated season in 2004.

Still, if Burrow is not going to be the Buckeyes' starting quarterback in the fall, he has other options and should be allowed to explore them. He is on track to graduate from Ohio State this spring, and as a graduate transfer, he could move on to another program where he could start immediately.

"I love Joe Burrow," Meyer told ESPN reporter Marty Smith after the spring game. "He's a loyal soldier and I think I owe him an answer. Our staff owes him an answer. And I don't know what it is right now. (He's) a guy who gives so much to our program. I believe we've given a lot back to him, but you play quarterback to play. He's a great kid (and) he's a very good quarterback. We'll see what happens."

If I were a betting man, I would wager that Burrow will be a starting quarterback in the fall, but it will be with a different program – possibly the University of Cincinnati, where he has a relationship with Bearcats head coach Luke Fickell.

That leaves Haskins as the starter and Martell as the change-of-pace guy for the Buckeyes in 2018.

Is that a winning combination? Only time will tell, of course, but once upon a time at Florida, Meyer used that kind of swinging door at the position and Ohio State fans remain painfully aware of how well it worked.

After a spring game that more resembled a fire drill than a full-blown contested scrimmage, the Ohio State football program achieved a multitude of its goals.

Although threatening weather and a start time of 11:45 a.m. conspired to push official attendance figures south of 50,000, the university sold each of its 79,000 allotted tickets for the game. That figure will likely allow OSU to lead the nation for the fourth straight year in spring-game attendance.

Dozens of former players were in attendance to help bolster enthusiasm for the estimated two dozen high school prospects on official or unofficial visits, a roster that included "Rocket" Ronnie Hickman, a four-star athlete from DePaul Catholic (N.J.) Wayne, who offered his verbal commitment to the Buckeyes the night before the spring game.

Lastly, Ohio State finished spring practice in much the same fashion it finished the 2017 season after clobbering USC in the Cotton Bowl – as the program everyone else in the Big Ten is chasing for supremacy.

Michigan, Wisconsin and Indiana each canceled their spring games because of impending inclement weather, while Michigan State's nighttime spring affair was so sparsely attended that someone could have shot off a cannon in Spartan Stadium and not hit anyone in the stands. Then there's Iowa, whose choice to have its spring game on a Friday evening is so popular that even the Big Ten Network chose to telecast a softball game between third-place Nebraska and fourth-place Minnesota over live airing of the Hawkeyes' spring game.

About the only thing the Buckeyes and head coach Urban Meyer did not accomplish during this year's set of 15 spring practice sessions was to determine who would start at quarterback now that J.T. Barrett has exhausted his college eligibility.

More to the point, that mission was not accomplished if we are to take what Meyer says at face value. Something gnaws at me when a coach of Meyer's pedigree claims to be undecided about a three-man race for the quarterback position on his team. Perhaps it's the cynic in me or maybe it's just because I've seen this movie many times before during my career, and I pretty much know how it ends.

To prevent anyone from become disenchanted or disgruntled, each of the candidates is told he remains very much in the hunt for the starting position. The hard work continues, the competitive juices keep flowing, and the coaching staff evaluates which players are willing to do whatever it takes to secure the job for their own.

Playing quarterback – especially in Meyer's system – is not entirely about who has the strongest arm or quickest feet. In all of his years as a Buckeye, Barrett was never the most gifted athlete in the quarterback room. But he was always the most cerebral, and if history has taught us anything, intangibles such as leadership, thoughtfulness and an ability to see the bigger picture are every bit as important to Meyer at the quarterback position as athletic ability.

But there is something to be said about raw numbers, so it's worth discussing spring-game statistics if only because we have such small sample sizes of what the trio of prospective starting quarterbacks can do in an Ohio State uniform.

Three-Man QB Derby

Joe Burrow, set to begin his fourth year in the program, had the most impressive numbers during a truncated afternoon that featured 10-minute quarters, a running clock in the second half and no contact until midway

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Mark Rea

Burrow seemed a little out of sync to begin the game, misfiring on two of his first three attempts. But he shook off that early trouble and was much sharper during his second series. He hit all four attempts during the possession, including effortless tosses to H-back Parris Campbell and tight end Luke Farrell as well as a pinpoint sideline throw to wide receiver Binjimen Victor.

Later in the game, Burrow connected on a pair of long touchdown passes to sophomore DeMarco McCall, who spent most of the spring trying to elbow his way into crowded groups at both the running back and receiver positions. McCall got himself wide open early in the fourth quarter to reel in a 50-yard touchdown pass from Burrow, and the duo hooked up again on the final play of the game, this one a decidedly more difficult pitch-and-catch that Burrow deposited over a couple of defenders and into the waiting arms of McCall for a 42-yard score.

While Burrow was proving his accuracy, sophomore Dwayne Haskins showcased the powerful arm that has most Ohio State fans assuming he will be the starter in the fall. Haskins has built whatever reputation he has so far on the howitzer he has dangling from his right shoulder as well as his relief performance in last year's Michigan game.

For anyone who might have forgotten, Haskins entered the game midway through the third quarter against the Wolverines with his team trailing by a 20-14 score and rallied the Buckeyes to a 31-20 victory. If you know anything about Ohio State football, you understand a win against Michigan banks a whole lot of fan-base capital for a quarterback. Therefore, most Buckeye Nation denizens believe that by the time the Sept. 1 season opener against Oregon State rolls around, it will be the 6-3, 218-pound Haskins under center.

Not that Haskins' spring-game performance did anything to undermine that notion. Like Burrow, he played for both teams – albeit taking fewer snaps – and completed 9 of 19 attempts for 120 yards and two touchdowns. The first of those scores was a 25-yard strike to sophomore receiver Jaylen Harris, a touch pass just over the outstretched arms of defender Marcus Williamson.

The third man in the quarterback derby is redshirt freshman Tate Martell, a wild card if there ever was such a thing.

At first glance, the 5-11, 207-pound Martell would seem to be the product of the recruiting hype machine, a frenetic ball of energy with dizzying high school numbers but whose frame appears too small to withstand the rigors of playing quarterback in the Big Ten. Then he hits the field and brings an electricity to the huddle that quite frankly neither Burrow nor Haskins seems to possess.

Martell has not yet displayed a big-time arm, completing only 5 of 16 throws for 28 yards and pitching the only interception of the spring game. His idea of a deep ball seems to be throwing the ball as far as he can and hoping the receiver can make a play on it. He overthrew targets on several occasions, didn't



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OHIO STATE INSIDER

Meyer: Jones Had Best Spring Among Buckeyes

Dre'Mont Jones could very well have been preparing for the 2018 NFL draft this spring. Instead, the defensive tackle, who had 20 tackles in 12 games as a third-year sophomore in 2017, decided to return to Ohio State for his junior campaign this coming fall.

At least from OSU head coach Urban Meyer's perspective, it appears Jones made the right choice.

"The guy that probably had the best spring of anybody on our team is Dre'Mont Jones," Meyer said after the program's annual spring game on April 14. "He was outstanding this spring. For a guy to come back when a lot of people thought he should leave, a lot of times we have to deal with – whether



JOSH WINSLOW

STANDING OUT – Junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones (86) was one of Ohio State's top performers in spring practice.

it be effort issues or guys asking, 'Why am I doing this?' – zero. That's a credit to his family and (defensive line coach) Larry Johnson. He had a great spring. If he continues his development, he could be one of the best in America at what he does."

Jones, who also had five tackles for loss and one sack in 2017, missed two games last season after scraping his leg in the locker room. Despite missing time and rotating out in many obvious passing situations, the Cleveland native still led his position group

in tackles. Tracy Sprinkle was closest with 16 stops.

Ohio State defensive coordinator Greg Schiano agreed with Meyer, saying Jones had a tremendous spring. Schiano said he was particularly pleased with the fact that Jones, who is all but guaranteed to be a starter for OSU this season, didn't simply go through the motions in spring ball.

"I'm thrilled as well with the spring he had," Schiano said of Jones. "And I've said it a few times – he did not come into this spring to try to get through it like a lot of guys would that have the talent and have had the

kind of season he had last year. He came into this spring really trying to improve his game, and he did that.

"How do you see that? You see that in some of his pass-rush moves. He's always been a good pass rusher. I think this spring he took another step. But I see it also in some of his run-defense play where he's just more stout."

In his press conference following the scrimmage to culminate spring camp, Meyer explained that the coaches kept a win-loss record of all of the one-on-one battles they put the players in during winter workouts in January as well as spring practice. For example, if a wide receiver caught a pass over a cornerback, the receiver earned a win while the corner took a loss.

Given the type of spring Jones had, Meyer said he has an idea of how impressive the defensive tackle's win-loss record will be.

"When (the players) meet with me next week, I'm going to have a sheet of paper in front of me that's going to say how many times they've won and lost," Meyer said. "That's why I'm so proud of Dre'Mont. I can't wait to see it because I've got a feeling I know what it's going to look like – not a whole lot of losses in the competitive situations."

Jenkins, Shazier Headline Former Buckeyes At Spring Game

While players currently on the Ohio State football team competed in the spring game, a contingent of former Buckeyes were at Ohio Stadium to watch the scrimmage.

Two OSU gridders in particular who were on hand were cornerback Malcolm Jenkins and linebacker Ryan Shazier, the two honorary captains for the exhibition.

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Ohio State vs. Purdue: Oct. 19-21 – 2-night motorcoach trip to Indianapolis/West Lafayette, Ind., with hotel accommodations at the new Drury Inn located in Carmel, Ind., with breakfast daily and Drury Inn's famous "kick-back party" on Friday night with game tickets. Pricing on website

Ohio State vs. Michigan State: Nov. 9-11 – 2-night motorcoach trip to Mt. Pleasant/East Lansing

Mich., with accommodation at the Soaring Eagle Casino Resort and Hotel in Mt. Pleasant with daily meal allowance and casino credit and game tickets. See website for pricing.

Ohio State vs. Maryland: Nov. 15-18 – 3-night motorcoach trip (or land only) to Washington, DC/College Park, Md., with accommodations at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Georgetown with breakfast daily and full day of DC touring on Friday and game tickets. Pricing and inclusions on website.

Macy's Day Parade Package for TBDBITL First Ever Parade Performance: Nov. 21-23 – 2-night air package from Columbus (land only available) leaving on Wednesday with Friday return and accommodations at the Sheraton Times Square with breakfast daily, airport transportation and private outdoor parade viewing on parade route with private brunch included. Full program on our website.

Indians vs Yankees: Sun., July 15 – Same-day motorcoach trip to Cleveland to see the Indians vs. the Yankees for 1:05 pm game with club-level seating and all-you-can-eat from 1 hour before game until end of 7th. All info on our website.

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Last BSB Quickly Set For April 24

The final issue of the electronic BSB Quickly will be posted on April 24. BSB Quickly is being replaced by our revamped website, BuckeyeSports.com, which is a 24/7 site with up-to-the-minute Ohio State sports news. The new website remains free to Buckeye Sports Bulletin print subscribers. If you are currently reading BSB Quickly, you have already seen the changes and know that your username and password remain the same and the login process is also the same, though the login boxes are in a slightly different place.

The most significant change to the site is the addition of the BSB Forum, which allows subscribers to interact with the BSB staff and other readers. Please be sure to take advantage of this exciting feature. Remember to check the site often, as new stories and videos are posted frequently and there is always action on the Forum. While BSB Quickly fades into the sunset, archived issues remain on the website and electronic versions of BSB print issues remain available on Mondays during football season and Tuesdays of print weeks the rest of the year.

Current subscribers who are not already enjoying the new BuckeyeSports.com must email their name, address, phone number and preferred email address to subscriptions@BuckeyeSports.com. We will send back simple instructions on how to access the site, as well as the electronic version of the print BSB.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at (614) 486-2202.

Jenkins recently finished his ninth season in the NFL and fourth with the Philadelphia Eagles, helping the franchise win its first Super Bowl in February. Jenkins, who was selected to the Pro Bowl in 2015 and 2017, is the first Buckeye to win a Super Bowl with two different teams (he also won one as a rookie with the New Orleans Saints in 2009).

Shazier, a two-time Pro Bowl linebacker for the Pittsburgh Steelers, is recovering from a serious spinal injury he suffered during a game in early December. Still struggling to walk, Shazier entered the Horseshoe driving a golf cart. During a timeout in the spring game, he drove to midfield and stepped out of the cart to be recognized by the Buckeye faithful, who offered him a warm ovation.

Some of the other former Buckeyes who were there were quarterback J.T. Barrett, the only three-time captain in OSU history; wide receiver Santonio Holmes, who won a Super Bowl with Pittsburgh following the 2008 regular season when he was named MVP of the title game; safety Malik Hooker, a consensus All-American in 2016 and now a member of the Indianapolis Colts; offensive lineman Andrew Norwell of the Jacksonville Jaguars, who recently became the highest-paid guard in the NFL; H-back Curtis Samuel, who was an NFL rookie last season with the Carolina Panthers; wide receiver Michael Thomas, who helped OSU win a

2018 BSB Quickly Schedule

Feb. 20	March 27
Feb. 27	March 30
March 13	April 6
March 20	April 10
March 23	April 24

national championship following the 2014 regular season and already has more receptions over his first two NFL seasons (196) with the New Orleans Saints than anyone in league history; All-America cornerback Denzel Ward; and safety Damon Webb, the 2017 Cotton Bowl defensive MVP.

Spring Game Sells Out Despite Unfavorable Forecast

Three days before the spring game, Ohio State announced that the intrasquad scrimmage was already sold out.

Ohio Stadium, which typically has a capacity well north of 100,000, could hold about 79,000 for the spring game due to construction, although there were plenty of empty seats in the available sections of the stadium. OSU moved the start time from 1:45 p.m. to 11:45 a.m. due to thunderstorms in the forecast, which may have kept fans at home.

The actual attendance of the spring game ended up being 47,803.

The Buckeyes set a national spring game attendance record of 100,189 back in 2016. Last season, with the stadium under construction at that time as well, the spring game had a national high of 80,134 in attendance.

Togiai Becomes First 2018 Signee To Lose Black Stripe

Ohio State announced via Twitter on April 11 that early enrollee defensive tackle Tommy Togiai, a native of Pocatello, Idaho, had his black helmet stripe removed, making him the first member of Ohio State's 2018 recruiting class to officially become a Buckeye.

Togiai (6-2, 300) was rated a four-star prospect coming out of high school, the No. 55 overall recruit in America and the No. 3 player at his position, according to the 247Sports composite rankings.

"He did everything right," Meyer said of Togiai losing his black stripe. "He's got a wonderful family all the way from Idaho. To come this far away and to be the first black stripe, that's a heck of an honor. He just did everything right. He practices really hard and takes care of his academics. He's a great guy to have on your team."

2 Buckeyes Named To NFF Hampshire Honor Society

Former Ohio State football players Elijaah Goins and Sam Hubbard were named members of the 2018 National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame (NFF) Hampshire Honor Society, the organization announced April 11.

Nominated by their respective schools,

Continued On Page 6

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Continued From Page 5

members of the NFF Hampshire Honor Society must have completed their final year of playing in 2017, achieved a 3.2 cumulative grade-point average and met all NCAA mandated progress toward degree completion.

Goins, who was a three-year member of the OSU football team, played 26 games over the 2016 and 2017 seasons primarily on special teams while studying pharmacy. A two-time Academic All-Big Ten honoree and OSU Scholar-Athlete, Goins graduated in December and is now heading into pharmacy school. Just before the 2017 season started, he was awarded a scholarship.

Like Goins, Hubbard graduated in December of 2017 and earned his degree in finance. He was a fourth-year junior for Ohio State last fall and was a first-team Academic All-American in 2016. The Cincinnati native ranks 15th all-time in school history in quarterback sacks (17.0). He finished with 116 career tackles, including 29½ tackles for loss.

Mitchell, Mavunga Taken By Indiana In WNBA Draft

Stephanie Mavunga and Kelsey Mitchell didn't know if they would be teammates again after they completed their Ohio State basketball careers this past winter. It didn't take long for them to find out that they would, in fact, reunite at the next level.

Both were selected in the 2018 WNBA draft by the Indiana Fever at the Nike New

York Headquarters in Midtown Manhattan on April 12. Mitchell went No. 2 overall while Mavunga was the second pick in the second round (14th overall).

Mitchell, a native of Cincinnati, was Ohio State's first four-time All-American. She finished her career second in NCAA history with 3,402 career points and made more three-pointers (497) than any woman in NCAA history. The three-time Big Ten Player of the Year holds 30 NCAA, Big Ten and OSU records and was the winner of the Dawn Staley Award this past season as the country's top guard.

Mavunga, who hails from Brownsburg, Ind., had a connection with the Fever before being drafted by the franchise. Her sister-in-law, Jeanette Pohlen-Mavunga, is also on the roster. She is married to Mavunga's older brother, Julian.

Mavunga was a first-team All-Big Ten honoree for Ohio State in 2017-18 after averaging 16.6 points and 11.0 rebounds per game. She is just the third Buckeye to average a double-double for an entire season, a feat she accomplished in each of her last two seasons in Columbus. She shot 63.2 percent (239 of 378) from the floor this past year and grabbed an OSU single-season record 385 rebounds. Since 2000, Mavunga is one of just seven players nationally to notch more than 1,700 points, 1,200 rebounds and 300 blocks in their career.

Mavunga and Mitchell helped lead Ohio State to back-to-back Big Ten regular-season crowns and the 2018 conference tournament title. The Buckeyes were 28-7 this past season and made their fourth-straight trip to the NCAA tournament, losing at home to Central Michigan in the second round.

Women's Hoops Signs Hungarian To 2018 Class

The Ohio State women's basketball team announced April 16 that it had received a signed letter of intent from Dorka Juhász, who is from Pecs, Hungary, and will join the program this fall. Her verbal commitment had been announced previously.

Juhász, 6-4, is the No. 12 international player and No. 5 forward, according to Prospects Nation. A member of a number of Hungarian national teams since 2015, she averaged 11.7 points and 9.4 rebounds over seven games at the International Basketball Federation U19 Women's Basketball World

Who Is The Greatest Quarterback In Ohio State History?

The Options:

J.T. Barrett _____
 John Borton _____
 Greg Frey _____
 Joe Germaine _____
 Cornelius Greene _____
 Kirk Herbstreit _____
 Bobby Hoying _____
 Stanley Jackson _____
 Cardale Jones _____
 Jim Karsatos _____
 Rex Kern _____
 Craig Krenzel _____
 Tom Matte _____
 Braxton Miller _____
 Terrelle Pryor _____
 Art Schlichter _____
 Troy Smith _____
 Mike Tomczak _____
 Don Unverferth _____
 Other _____

Instructions:

Number your picks 1-10 (feel free to write in any players we left off the list) and mail this ballot to Buckeye Sports Bulletin, P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, OH 43212. Lists can also be emailed to bsb@buckeyesports.com or subscribers can vote on the forum at BuckeyeSports.com. Please provide your name, age and any additional comments regarding your ballot. Copies of the ballot are accepted and voters are welcome to attach additional paper if more space for comments is needed.

Comments:

Cup this past summer. Her mother, Hajnalka, was a Euro Cup winner.

"I'm incredibly excited to add Dorka to the Ohio State women's basketball family," head coach Kevin McGuff said in a statement. "She's a versatile player who can not only score around the basket but also from the perimeter, and because of that, I'm excited to get her into our system. I believe she'll be immediately impactful as we aspire to continue to compete for Big Ten championships."

Juhász joins a 2018 recruiting class that also includes Barrington (R.I.) St. Andrew's School guard Janai Crooms and 6-3 post player Aaliyah Patty of Montini Catholic in Lombard, Ill. The Buckeyes also have received a pair of commitments from graduate-transfer guards in Pacific's Najah Queenland and Bowling Green's Carly Santoro.

Nazlymov Retires After 19 Seasons As OSU Fencing Coach

Vladimir Nazlymov, who guided the

Ohio State fencing team to three national championships in his 19 seasons as head coach, announced his retirement on April 13. A national search for his replacement began immediately, according to a university release.

In 2003-04, Nazlymov's fifth season, he led OSU to the program's first national title since the competition became a combined total of the men's and women's results. The Buckeyes won their second and third national championships under Nazlymov in 2008 and 2012.

Nazlymov coached nine Buckeyes to individual NCAA titles, three of whom won multiple titles, and 10 to the Olympics.

"Vladimir's passion for fencing is contagious," said Carey Fagan, Ohio State assistant athletics director. "He has touched the lives of so many student-athletes and staff members in our department. We wish him much happiness in retirement and look forward to the continued success of our fencing program."

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The curious afterlife of a tin



Multiple Factors Will Go Into OSU's QB Choice

Continued From Page 1

sophomore Jaylen Harris for the game's first passing touchdown. As a passer, Martell was clearly third best, completing just 5 of 16 attempts for 28 yards while being picked off once by redshirt freshman cornerback Shaun Wade. Martell, a redshirt freshman out of Las Vegas, acquitted himself nicely with his legs, though, making some of the game's most energetic plays while running for 69 yards and a touchdown on 11 attempts – numbers that would likely have been even better had the scrimmage been live. Instead, Martell was called down by contact in numerous situations where the defender would have struggled to make a tackle.

All of those numbers will be added to the data package Meyer will evaluate, but data is second best when it comes to making his final decision.

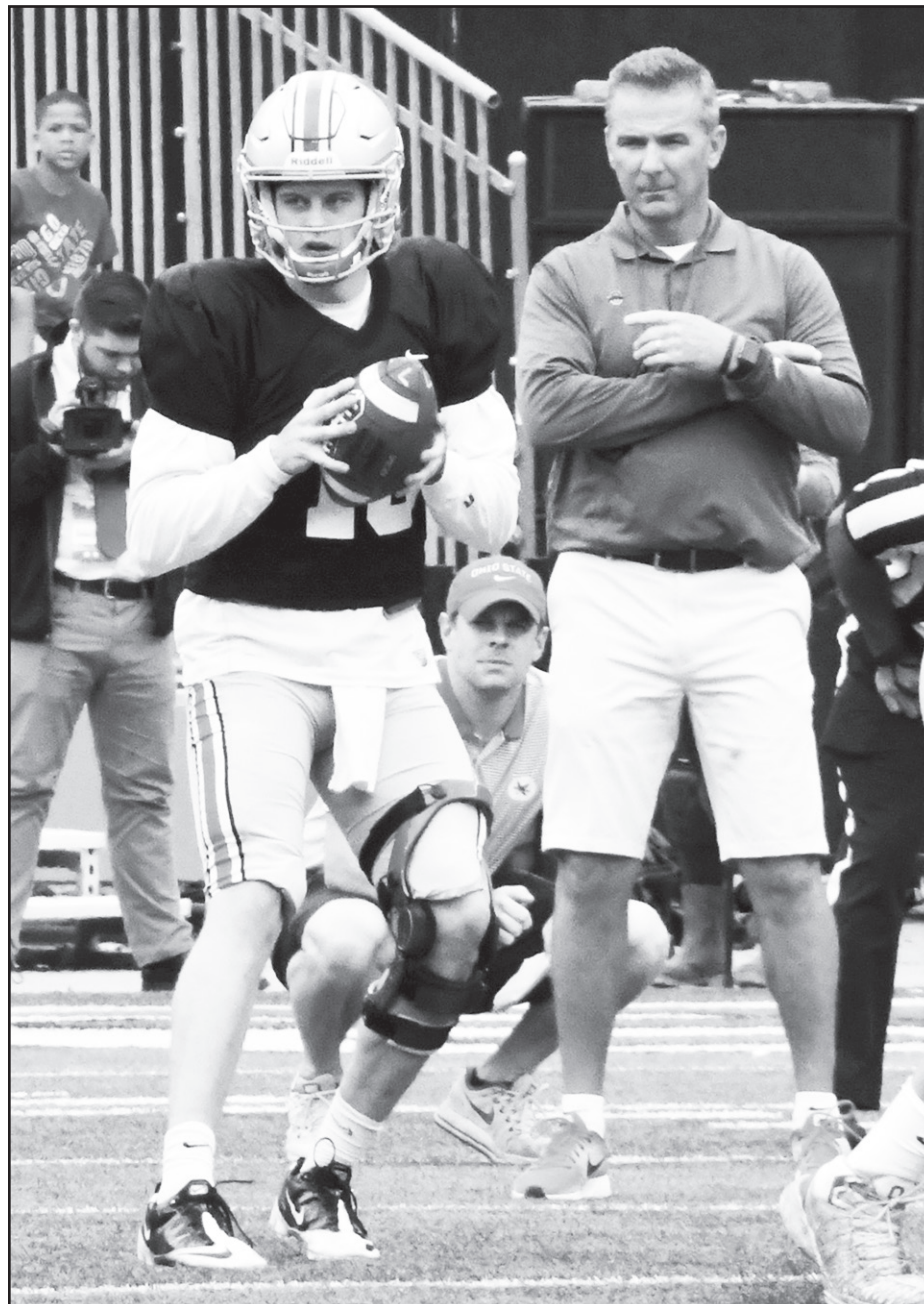
"It's something that helps you because it's also factual," Meyer said. "Intangibles are, obviously, going to be very involved in the decision."

Meyer's "30 years of gut" feeling will play a role as well, he added.

Based on the available data, the battle was certainly close this spring, which in typical circumstances would lead to it continuing into the fall. For Ohio State, under these circumstances, though, that's unlikely.

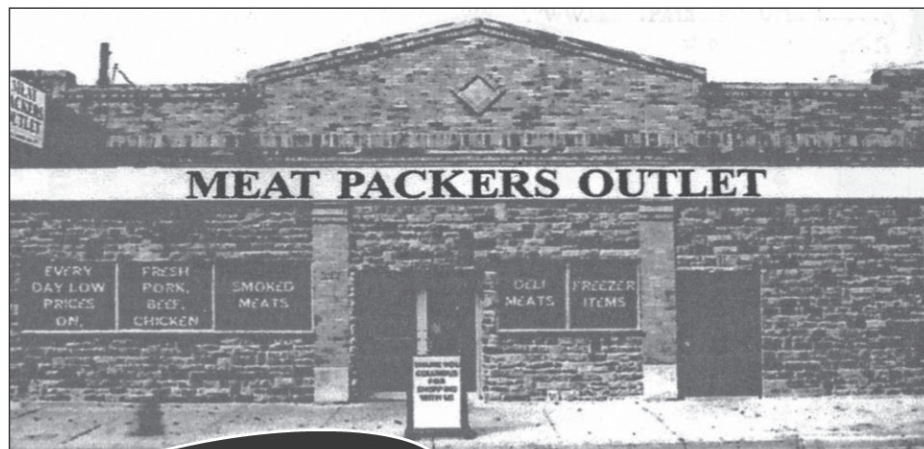
The best thing for the team might be to continue the battle, but Meyer has acknowledged that's not what would be best for the players – specifically Burrow.

The Ohio native from Athens High School is set to graduate this spring after just three years in Columbus. With his degree in hand, Burrow would have the option to transfer to another school and play right away with two years of eligibility



SONNY BROCKWAY

LAST LOOK – Head coach Urban Meyer (right) had his last chance of the spring to evaluate Joe Burrow (10) on the field at the spring game.



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remaining. If he chose to stay at Ohio State without winning the job, there's a chance he would never end up as a collegiate starter, even though he has the talent to start and star at that level.

Haskins is a year younger than Burrow, meaning he could lose out on the job and stay while still becoming the Buckeyes' starter down the line. Haskins would also have to sit out a year while losing a season of eligibility if he transferred since he's already used his redshirt. The same applies to Martell, the youngest of the bunch.

With Burrow's future at the school in question depending on the result of the battle, Meyer said he'd like to see all three signal callers back in Columbus this fall, but he knows that's not a guarantee.

"I hope so," he said of having all three back. "I'll just leave it there. I hope so."

In Their Own Words

With the on-field portion of the competition likely over, both Burrow and Haskins left spring practice feeling confident. Martell is confident as well, but this has all the signs of a two-man race, while the Bishop Gorman product is more likely to find his way into the fold with special packages showcasing his athletic skill set next season.

For now, the decision for Meyer and the staff looks like a choice between Burrow and Haskins. Both look good enough to start, and both feel they can deliver if called upon – but they had very different ways of articulating their thoughts after the spring game.

Burrow, for one, was confident in his own ability but understood that there's not much more he can do.

"I think this was the best offseason that I've had since I've been here," he said. "Last fall, last spring, all of this, I think I took a big step this spring."

"Now some decisions have to be made. You've got to step back and evaluate everything. You've got to meet with the coaches and see what they're thinking, what you're thinking, and you have to kind of meet in the middle."

For Burrow, the decisions aren't limited to who will start, but also where he'll be playing football this fall.

Haskins, on the other hand, was much more direct in saying where he feels he stands, but he acknowledged that any player would feel the same way.

"Everybody has the right to feel that way," Haskins said when asked if he thought he should be the starter. "I feel like I should be the guy. I'm going to keep doing so until it's proven."

"I feel like I've done enough, but enough is never enough. You've got to keep going. So I'm going to keep pushing myself, keep pushing my teammates."

For now, Burrow and Haskins are both waiting, but their mindsets are unlikely to be the same going forward. Haskins feels he has the job won, but losing the battle would likely delay his time as the starter at Ohio State rather than eliminate it.

Burrow feels he's good enough to start as well, but losing the competition would likely

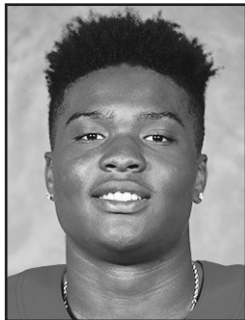
end his hopes of ever being the guy for the Scarlet and Gray.

"I came here to play," Burrow said. "I didn't come here to sit on the bench for four years. I know I'm a pretty darn good quarterback, and I want to play somewhere."

Playing at Ohio State has always been choice No. 1 for Burrow, but he's known for a while that playing elsewhere was a possibility. He said he loaded up on classes the past three semesters in order to make sure he graduated in time to transfer and play right away.

Even though he laid the groundwork for a transfer, Burrow doesn't want to leave. He chose Ohio State for a reason, and being the quarterback in Columbus is what he wants.

"It would be really hard for me to leave," Burrow said. "I've put so much into this. I've put my heart and soul into it. If I were to leave it would be pretty devastating for me."



Dwayne Haskins

At the same time, I would understand how they went."

If Haskins is the choice, his superior arm strength would likely put him over the top. It's something he said adds a "really great dimension" to Ohio State's offense.

If Burrow wins the job, he said he feels his intangibles – namely toughness and leadership – will make his case.

"If they were to go with me, I think that would be the area that put me over the top," Burrow said. "Dwayne has an arm you don't see a lot. I have a pretty good arm, too, but I think my leadership and my intangibles really came alive this spring."

Leadership or not, strong arm or not, the quarterbacks can't do much more than wait for a decision. They've stated their cases, and the ball is in Meyer's court.

"Now you just kind of sit back and relax," Burrow said. "You know the body of work you have. I know I played very well. I took a big step as a leader this spring as well. I'll kind of just sit back and see how it plays out."



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Spring Game Ends Without A Winner At Safety

Ohio State football head coach Urban Meyer said after the team's spring game on April 14 that junior Jordan Fuller will man one of the starting safety spots when the 2018 season kicks off Sept. 1 against Oregon State. As for who accompanies Fuller at the back end of the defense this fall, Meyer said he, co-defensive coordinator and safeties coach Alex Grinch and defensive coordinator Greg Schiano will have to sort that out.

SPRING GAME NOTEBOOK Ryan McGlade

"The field safety is probably our No. 1 concern on our team right now," Meyer said. "We're just not quite sure who that is. Jordan Fuller will be a starter. Who the other the guy is, that's Coach Schiano and Alex Grinch. We're going to meet on probably (April 18). They're going to give me a depth chart, and we'll go from there."

Schiano said after the scrimmage that he was pleased with the progress of Fuller, who started 13 games last year.

"The field safety – we've kind of moved Jordan over there and that's kind of been the evolution a little bit," Schiano said. "Jordan performed at a very high level this spring. Now, he didn't have a lot of live contact by design. But as far as playing the position, I feel like he was excellent."

"After Jordan, it's been a real battle for the other side and for the backup positions. I know that we don't come out of spring with a clear-cut guy. So the competition will continue into training camp, and I'm confident we'll have two guys that start that game that will be really game-ready. It's developing depth behind it that will be the challenge."

As recently as April 11 while on the Big Ten teleconference, Meyer said sophomores Isaiah Pryor, Brendon White and Jahsen Wint were among the many names vying for the other starting safety post.

Pryor took the field with Fuller and the

first-team defense for the first snap of the spring game, finishing with four tackles. Wint had 11 stops while White had one. Amir Riep, who switched to safety this spring after spending his freshman season of 2017 as a cornerback, logged five tackles from his new position in the exhibition.

The Buckeyes will be adding two more safeties to the fold this summer when 2018 signees Marcus Hooker, the brother of former OSU safety Malik Hooker, and Josh Proctor join the team.

Schiano noted that he was not worried the staff had yet to determine the team's other first-string safety because many of the candidates displayed promising signs in the spring.

"I do feel like we have guys that can play, but you would always like it – it's cleaner if you come out with a guy that established himself," Schiano said. "It's not that none of them didn't show things – they did. It's just none of them showed it that much more than the other and you can say, 'That's the guy.'"

Munford, Prince Reverse Roles In Spring Game

Throughout spring practice, it was understood that senior Isaiah Prince was taking reps at left tackle while sophomore Thayer Munford occupied right tackle, where Prince started the last two seasons.

When the spring game started, those two were flipped, with Munford handling the blind side and Prince back on the right end of the line while working with the first-team offense and mainly blocking for junior quarterback Joe Burrow and sophomore Dwayne Haskins.

Meyer said Munford and Prince spent time at both positions this spring and that nothing is final yet.

"We've done both," Meyer said. "That decision hasn't been made yet. Isaiah has been playing a lot of left, too. I think we're just trying to get that rotation of who's going to be the third tackle. Obviously, we've got a good one coming in too with (five-star 2018 signee Nicholas Petit-Frere). He's a guy that's been here watching and is a very talented young man. Josh Alabi has also earned a right to maybe get in a little bit. We're just kind of figuring out what's best."

Meyer Names Starters, Discusses Other Position Battles

While one starting safety spot and the two tackle slots remain unclear, Meyer was able to confirm players at other positions who locked up starting jobs at the end of spring ball.

The coach said fifth-year senior Brady Taylor is the team's starting center heading into the summer but must prove himself again in fall camp. Meyer added that redshirt freshman Josh Myers stood out in the battle to anchor the offensive line.

Moving down the offensive front, Meyer said sophomore Luke Farrell, who only briefly played in the spring game, will start at tight end. Like Taylor, though, Meyer said Farrell will have to earn his spot again in the fall. The head coach also mentioned junior Rashod Berry and sophomore Jake Hausmann as tight ends who caught his eye. Berry did not play in the spring game because he suffered two stingers days before, Meyer said.

Defensively, Meyer said nothing is set in stone with the linebackers. Sophomore Tuf Borland would be the leading candidate to be the starting middle linebacker, but he

suffered an Achilles injury during the spring and will be out until sometime in September. Fifth-year senior Dante Booker was out all spring with shoulder injuries. The ailments to Booker and Borland gave fellow linebackers such as sophomore Baron Browning, early enrollee Dallas Gant, juniors Justin Hilliard and Keandre Jones and sophomore Pete Werner an opportunity to impress the coaches. In the spring game, Werner had six tackles, Gant had five and also forced a fumble, Browning had four tackles and Hilliard and Jones each had one.

"Linebacker is still open with the injury to Tuf Borland," Meyer said. "I thought Baron Browning played very good today. I think Hilliard is right in the middle of that thing too. We'll see."

Much like in years past, Meyer said the team will plan to employ a three-man rotation at cornerback with junior Damon Arnette, sophomore Jeffrey Okudah and junior Kendall Sheffield. Okudah had shoulder surgery in January and therefore did not play in the intrasquad scrimmage.

Meyer left open the possibility of a fourth corner breaking into the lineup.

"You know how we like to play three guys," he said. "There might be another one that pops in there if young guys keep developing."

Victor Still Working To Improve His Consistency

Binjimen Victor appears to have all of the tools necessary to transform into an elite wide receiver for Ohio State. The 6-4, 200-pounder was a four-star prospect in Coconut Creek,

Fla., and was regarded as the No. 97 overall prospect and No. 12 receiver in the 2016 recruiting class, according to the 247Sports composite rankings.

Ratings and measurables haven't translated into steady excellence on the college gridiron for Victor, though. He appeared in only five games as a freshman for Ohio State in 2016, logging four receptions for 64 yards with one touchdown. He showed flashes of his ability on that scoring grab, which went for 25 yards, at Maryland in the 10th contest of the year and on a 21-yard catch against Clemson in the College Football Playoff semifinal.

Victor then assumed a more prominent role in Ohio State's crowded wideout rotation last fall but still wasn't quite the game-breaker the team expects him to be. He played in all 14 games and caught 23 passes for 349 yards and seven touchdowns. Eighteen of those receptions came during the first seven weeks of the season, however, with the other five occurring over the second half of the campaign. He failed to record a catch against Penn State, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin in the Big Ten Championship and USC in the Cotton Bowl – some of the most important games for Ohio State.

In the spring game, Victor reminded everyone of the type of skill he possesses. He hauled in five balls for 91 yards, including a 43-yard snag down the sideline, and a touchdown.

"I felt like I needed to make plays today," Victor said after the scrimmage. "Coming into the spring, what I feel like I really wanted to focus on was separation, and that's



TIM MOODY

OPEN SPOTS – Sophomore Pete Werner (20) is among a handful of linebackers competing for playing time in 2018.

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Spring Game Box Score

Gray 37, Scarlet 14

April 14, 2018 • Ohio Stadium; Columbus, Ohio

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
SCARLET	0	14	0	0	- 14
GRAY	3	14	7	13	- 37

First Quarter

GRAY – Nuernberger, 40 yard field goal, 1:45; 8 plays, 53 yards, 2:56 TOP.

Second Quarter

SCARLET – Teague, 1 yard run (Nuernberger kick), 5:26; 13 plays, 85 yards, 4:16 TOP.

GRAY – Martell, 2 yard run (Nuernberger kick), 4:50; 2 plays, 65 yards, 0:36 TOP.

SCARLET – Harris, 25 yard pass from Haskins (Nuernberger kick), 2:53; 5 plays, 65 yards, 1:57 TOP.

GRAY – Williams, 3 yard run (Haubeil kick), 0:16; 11 plays, 65 yards, 2:37 TOP.

Third Quarter

GRAY – Victor, 2 yard pass from Haskins (Haubeil kick), 4:30; 5 plays, 59 yards, 5:30 TOP.

Fourth Quarter

GRAY – McCall, 50 yard pass from Burrow (Haubeil kick), 8:43; 2 plays, 72 yards, 1:17 TOP.

GRAY – McCall, 42 yard pass from Burrow, 0:00; 7 plays, 62 yards, 3:40 TOP.

Att. – 47,803.

Team Statistics

	SCARLET	GRAY
First Downs	16	14
Rushing	8	4
Passing	7	8
Penalty	1	2
Rushes-Yards	27-144	16-124
Passing Yards	135	251
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	13-30-1	16-27-0
Offensive Plays	57	43
Total Net Yards	279	375
Third Down Efficiency	2-11	1-8
Fourth Down Efficiency	3-5	3-3
Punts-Avg.	2-35.0	2-39.0
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	0-0
Penalties	2-16	3-23
Time of Possession	16:02	23:58

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) – SCARLET: Teague 14-73; Martell 9-59; Rossi 3-9; Burrow 1-3. GRAY: Weber 1-63; Williams 5-47; Martell 2-10; Burrow 2-5; McMahon 2-2; Dobbins 1-(-1); Haskins 3-(-2).

PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD) – SCARLET: Martell 5-14-1-28-0; Haskins 4-11-0-58-1; Burrow 4-5-0-49-0. GRAY: Burrow 11-17-0-189-2; Haskins 5-8-0-62-1; Martell 0-2-0-0-0.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) – SCARLET: McCall 6-65; Harris 3-39; Gardiner 1-23; Teague 1-4; Burrow 1-3; Malone 1-1. GRAY: McCall 5-100; Victor 5-91; Campbell 4-40; Farrell 1-15; Mack 1-5.

PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) – SCARLET: Chrisman 2-35.0-36. GRAY: Chrisman 2-39.0-51.

MISSED FIELD GOALS (Yds.) – SCARLET: None. GRAY: None.

FORCED FUMBLES – SCARLET: None. GRAY: Gant.

FUMBLE RECOVERIES (No.-Yds) – SCARLET: None. GRAY: None.

INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) – SCARLET: None. GRAY: Wade 1-0.

SACKS (No.-Yds.) – SCARLET: Young 1.0-2. GRAY: Hamilton 1.0-5.

TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) – SCARLET: Young 1.0-2; Johnson 1.0-1; Landers 1.0-1; Cornell 1.0-1. GRAY: Hamilton 1.0-5.

TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.) – SCARLET: Pryor 4-0-4; Wa. Davis 3-0-3; Sheffield 2-0-2; Banks 2-0-2; Johnson 2-0-2; Werner 1-1-2; Young 1-1-2; Toggai 1-1-2; Cage 0-2-2; Fuller 1-0-1; Jones 1-0-1; Landers 1-0-1; Hilliard 1-0-1; Cornell 1-0-1; Arnette 1-0-1; White 0-1-1. GRAY: Wint 8-3-11; Riep 4-1-5; Gant 3-2-5; Werner 4-0-4; Browning 3-1-4; Hamilton 2-2-4; Jester 2-1-3; Banks 2-0-2; Hamdan 1-0-1; Cox 1-0-1; Dever 1-0-1; Williamson 1-0-1.

what I did. In the summer, I've just got to keep improving in that."

Victor stayed in the exhibition much longer than other first-team wide receivers such as Parris Campbell, Johnnie Dixon, K.J. Hill, Austin Mack and Terry McLaurin. Meyer said that was by design.

"Vic, I kept him in there because he has to just keep getting better," Meyer said. "He's still got a ways to go. That's one of the most talented receivers we've ever had. It's consistency and fight and those kinds of things (that need to improve). When he does (have consistency and fight), it's fun to watch. He's a very talented guy."

Victor agreed with his head coach saying he still has room for improvement. The junior also said that he views Meyer calling him one of the most talented players at his position to come to Ohio State as motivation.

"I have a little way to go, but I feel like he says that because he sees what kind of player I am and what kind of player I could be in the future," Victor said. "I've just got to keep working at that and meeting that high expectation."

Victor added that the consistency Meyer referred to applies to more than just having a presence in every game, something he struggled with during his first two years on campus. Victor said the consistency pertains to every day in practice as well.

"Don't have up-and-down days," he said. "Every day has got to be a good day. I feel like that's what I need to work at as well. I'm really looking forward to this summer and making that happen in the fall."

While there is much focus on where Victor can further develop his game, the Floridian has made strides as a Buckeye. Since signing with Ohio State in February 2016, he has put on 27 pounds and has seen his part in the offense increase each season.

When asked to reflect on his OSU career to this point, Victor was candid in how challenging it has been.

"The journey has been pretty up and down with the playing level, the meeting rooms, gaining weight and all of that," he said. "But that's what football is about. It's not an easy sport. I've just got to go through it and maintain like I can."

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Competition Brings Out Best Of OSU's RBs

By GARRETT STEPIEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

From figuring out the starting quarterback to the handful of other position battles Ohio State had to sort out over the course of spring camp, running back has been the least of the Buckeyes' concerns.

The only problem – if it can even be called that – OSU has on its hands at tailback is in determining how to cut up the carries among a loaded stable of players in the position group. Four-year starting quarterback J.T. Barrett departs after 656 rushing attempts for 3,263 yards and 43 touchdowns, but Ohio State could be better off with more designed runs for its pair of 1,000-yard rushers in sophomore J.K. Dobbins (2017) and junior Mike Weber (2016).

With Dobbins and Weber back in the Buckeyes' backfield, the duo returns a combined 477 carries for 3,125 yards and 26 touchdowns over the past two seasons. Like anyone else with the team, though, running backs coach Tony Alford emphasized they still need to earn their place in 2018.

"I'm not a kind of guy that keeps people happy," said Alford. "Ask my children. I'm not into keeping people happy. The guys that deserve to play are going to play. There's going to be a lot of competition. They all know it. They're going to champion each other's successes and help one another out when somebody's not having success."

Alford added that the carries would be divided on a week-by-week basis.

"They're both going to play," Alford said. "They're both going to play a lot."

From past experience, Dobbins and Weber understand Alford's message. After all, they each jumped into action early in their respective careers as freshmen.

After Weber went for nine touchdowns and 1,096 yards on 182 carries in 2016 to become the Big Ten Freshman of the Year, Dobbins took 194 totes for 1,403 yards and seven touchdowns in 2017. With Weber limited throughout the first half of the season due to a lingering hamstring injury, Dobbins made the most of his opportunity.

The result, after Weber passed on early entry to the NFL draft, is a hungry tandem looking to take the next step.

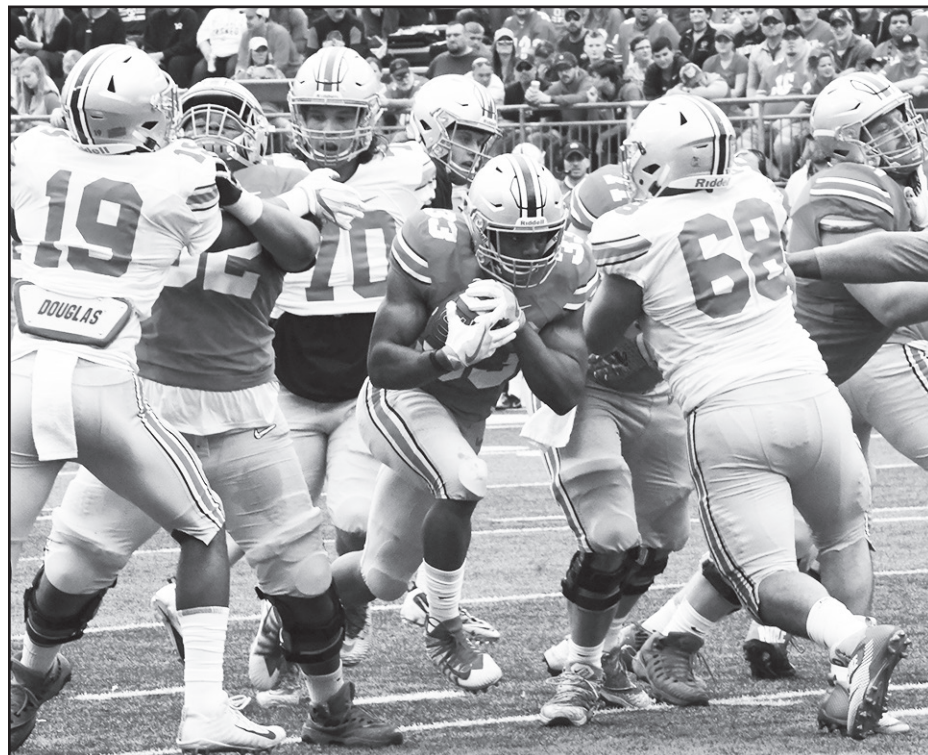
"We push each other, of course," Dobbins said. "We're almost like best friends, so we push each other."

Dobbins added his weight bumped up seven pounds of muscle since playing at 208 last season. He entered the spring listed at 212, but he said that his 5-10 frame filled out to 215, while improving his blocking and speed. Weber, on the other hand, worked to sharpen his all-around game further after he showed an improved burst when healthy at the end of last year.

Dobbins and Weber naturally keep their competitive edge in everything they do.

"It's a competition every day from tying our shoes to sprinting," the 5-10, 214-pound Weber said. "That's how it is at Ohio State, period."

Beyond Dobbins and Weber, the culture of competition spills over to the other running backs in the room. Antonio Williams, for one,



SONNY BROCKWAY

ADDING DEPTH – Freshman running back Master Teague (33) carried the ball 14 times for 73 yards and a touchdown in the spring game.

is a walking example. After limited action last season behind Dobbins and Weber yielded 57 rushes, 290 yards and three touchdowns for Williams, Alford considered the junior among the most-improved players on the team.

"First and foremost, he's a pro," Alford said of Williams. "He's a professional based on how he handles his business. He's an extremely, extremely mature kid. He has improved. He's probably, in my estimation, one of our top three guys on the team as far as improvement. He's had a great spring, a great attitude but he's a pro."

The 5-11, 210-pound Williams was big off the field for the Buckeyes when he hosted Avon, Ind., four-star running back commitment Sampson James for his unofficial visit the weekend of March 17. Williams, who came to OSU as a four-star recruit from New London (N.C.) North Stanly, kept his head down and worked through his latest spring on campus.

"Like what Coach (Urban) Meyer says, it's never too late for anything," Williams said. "As I've experienced things here in my career, some things have taken a different path, but all the goals I have for myself are still reachable,

and I'm not putting any of those out of the window yet."

Freshman running back Master Teague (5-11, 215) rounds out the position group in the spring, while incoming Seffner (Fla.) Armwood four star Brian Snead (5-11, 200) projects to come in and compete immediately for reps when he enrolls in the summer. Teague, for the time being, has already begun to turn heads on the team from the coaches to the players.

"He should be getting ready for prom right now, right?" Alford said of Teague. "He's getting a lot of reps. He's kind of drinking through a fire hose right now, but he's a very conscientious kid who wants to do great, is almost a perfectionist and is doing well."

The depth Ohio State has at running back was on display in the spring game, mainly through Williams and Teague. Dobbins rushed just once, losing a yard, while Weber had a carry for 63 yards. Teague finished the scrimmage with 14 attempts for 73 yards (5.2-yard average) and a touchdown while Williams rushed five times for 47 yards (9.4) and another score.

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Haskins The Leading Pick Among BSB Staffers

Ohio State's 2018 spring practice was wrapped up with the annual spring game on April 14, allowing media and fans one last look at the Buckeyes before the end of the academic year.

The Gray team topped Scarlet, 37-14, although the rosters were mixed and matched throughout the contest, so the true winners are hard to determine.

As expected, the quarterbacks were front and center, with Joe Burrow and Dwayne Haskins showcasing their arm talent while Tate Martell showed what he can do with his legs. Demario McCall also had a feature role as an H-back, catching 11 passes for 165 yards and two touchdowns, including a 42-yarder from Burrow on the last play of the game.

With the spring game – and spring camp – in the books, BSB editor Tim Moody and staff writers Ryan McGlade and Garrett Stepien took some time to analyze the Buckeyes' spring camp and their performance at the Horseshoe.

Let's just get this out of the way – who do you think should be the starting quarterback and who do you think will be the starting quarterback?

Garrett Stepien: Dwayne Haskins and Dwayne Haskins. I believe that from both sides, I said it before the spring and I'm sticking to it now. Despite an applaudable effort from Joe Burrow, who left everything he had on the field in the spring game, Haskins flashed the same promise he showed in his spurts of action during the 2017 season.

Among the three of them, Tate Martell's performance confirmed he clearly isn't there yet. He does, however, have a place in this offense with the special packages catered to his dynamic athleticism — which he showed off on a few of the big read-option runs he ripped off in the spring game. Not only do I believe starting Haskins with Martell off the bench was the plan from the jump for Ohio State, but I also think it works out best for the offense in 2018 with the returning personnel in the unit.

Tim Moody: I agree with Garrett that Haskins will start, but I don't agree that he should.

While Haskins brings a stronger arm and the ability to make a few throws that Burrow can't, the junior from Athens, Ohio, can still make all the throws necessary to run the offense, and he does so more accurately and more consistently from what I've seen. Burrow is also a better runner, and he makes better decisions when throwing the ball.

At the end of the day, though, Ohio State will have a star at quarterback next season, and whoever doesn't win the job will have success on the football field eventually – whether it be in Columbus or at another school.

Ryan McGlade: I guess I'm kind of in the middle between Garrett and Tim. I certainly think Haskins will get the nod, largely because of what he did at Michigan last year. I also would *probably* say Haskins should get the starting job. You can't deny Haskins' cannon of an arm. But like Tim said, Burrow can make all the necessary throws to the run the offense. I thought it was important that Urban Meyer said after the spring game that intangibles such as leadership and toughness will play a large role in the coaches determining the starting quarterback. I would say Burrow has the edge in that department. But in the end, I think Haskins' performance at the Big



TIM MOODY

STRUTTING HIS STUFF – Sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins (7) threw a pair of touchdowns in Ohio State's spring game.

House last fall and his ability to take the top off the defense with his arm will lead to the coaches going with him.

Martell looked really good running the ball but was just 5 of 16 with an interception as a passer. What role do you see him having in 2018?

RM: The coaches hinted multiple times throughout the spring that they were working on a package for Martell to be used as a running back and/or receiver. I truly believe that if we see Martell in the fall, that is what we'll see him doing. He still has a long way to go to be a polished passer, so I would be very shocked if he throws much in 2018. He redshirted as a true freshman last year, and Meyer will not want to waste the type of talent Martell possess. Expect the Las Vegas native to be a wild card in the Buckeye offense this coming season.

TM: I was honestly surprised by how poorly Martell threw the ball in the spring game. I knew he wouldn't be a perfectly

polished passer, but I expected him to be a bit further along.

That said, I was impressed by his running ability, as he proved to be even more of a game-breaker than I expected. Like Ryan said, Martell's role in the offense will be complementary to the starting quarterback, but there will be a role. To me, Meyer should look back to his Florida days at how he used

Tim Tebow as a freshman, complementing Chris Leak on the way to a national championship for the Gators. Martell needs to be on the field, and he needs to be given the ball with a chance to make plays in space. He should get sets as the quarterback and should also have a few plays where he's on the field with the starter.

My best guess would be 8-10 snaps per game for Martell, which should lead to some highlight-reel moments for the Buckeyes.

GS: Not to say Haskins can't do it at all, but he sure isn't able to duplicate what Martell brings to the inside run. Martell might have some situations on the rare chance where he lines up at receiver in the slot just to throw defenses off, but I wouldn't bet on serious involvement outside of coming in and running the read option. As he showed in the spring game, he has the IQ to make the quick decision to tuck it and run, which is an overlooked element to that approach beyond only athleticism. If his special packages involve plays like those, he has the speed and acceleration to make a defender or two miss on his way to a house call – something Haskins can't do – that only opens up the offense further beyond the skill players it already has.

With spring practice in the books, which player made the biggest step forward in your mind?

GS: Damon Webb will quietly be a tough act to follow for whoever replaces him beside

Continued On Page 14



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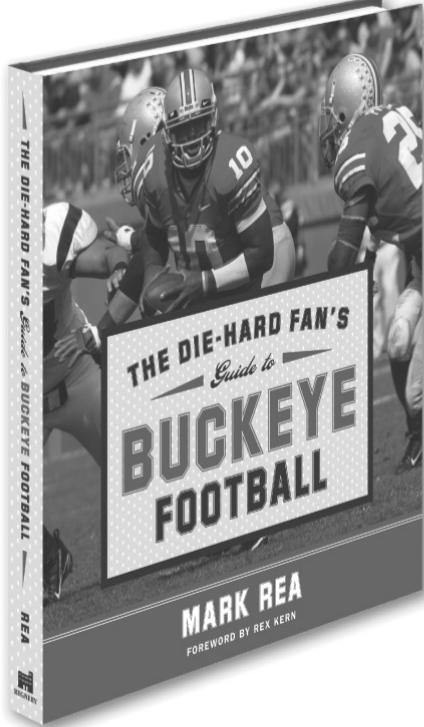
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DE Young Dominated Ohio State's Spring Game

Continued From Page 13

Jordan Fuller at safety, but Isaiah Pryor has all of the tools to make for a seamless transition at the position. The coaches have said Jahsen Wint, Brendon White and incoming signees Josh Proctor and Marcus Hooker are still in the mix, but I put more stock in comments from Fuller and Alex Grinch on Pryor earlier in the spring. The 6-2, 207-pound sophomore has the physical and mental makeup to form a dynamic duo on the back end of the defense with Fuller.

RM: I think I'll have to say Baron Browning. The sophomore linebacker had four tackles in the spring game, but what caught my attention more is the praise Meyer had for him throughout the spring. The head coach went so far as to say in late March that Browning is "as talented a linebacker as has ever walked through these doors." That without a doubt raised my eyebrows. Browning is right in the thick of the linebackers race, so I would not be shocked to see him excel on the field this fall.

TM: I'm sure there are guys who didn't play last year who have taken a big step forward, but it's hard to say how far they've come since we had yet to see them on the field.

That said, I'll go with a guy who actually redshirted last year, but we've already seen a lot of him for the Buckeyes: Demario McCall.

He was limited last year before taking a medical redshirt after a few appearances, but he seems to be right at home – finally – as an H-back in Ohio State's offense. He's a perfect fit for the position, and he looks

bigger, stronger and faster than ever. McCall is a star in the making, and his performance this spring proves that the coaching staff will have to find a way to get him on the field this fall.

The spring game isn't the best time to evaluate defensive players, but we take what we can get. Which defensive player stood out the most to you?

TM: First of all, they need to either play with flags or play tackle football. Playing the weird two-hand-touch brand in the spring game makes it almost impossible for defensive players to go full speed, which limits what they can do.

That said, Chase Young might have had five sacks if it had been a live game. He was credited with only one, but I'm not sure even the best offensive linemen Ohio State has can block him, and the Buckeyes have some pretty good players up front. Young combined with Nick Bosa will be a freakish tandem on the field, and that's in addition to guys like Dre'Mont Jones and Jonathon Cooper.

I'll also give a shout-out to redshirt freshman cornerback Shaun Wade. He lost his first season to injury issues, but he's every bit as talented as Jeffrey Okudah, and probably more talented than Damon Arnette. He showed off that skill set with a really nice interception on the sideline, and he should find his way onto the field in some capacity this season.

GS: Chase Young handled Thayer Munford, a pretty darn good offensive lineman, so easily that it's impossible for me to ignore. The defensive line is sure to miss guys like Jalyn Holmes and Tyquan Lewis on the ends, but any indications that Young is a star in the making were confirmed when he dominated the spring game. Young is



Chase Young

bigger, faster and only going to get better with summer workouts before he returns for fall camp ahead of his second season. The more Young improves, the easier it is for someone like Bosa or Cooper on the defensive line, which looks like it very well could be even better than it was last year.

RM: Allow me to make it 3 for 3 – Chase Young. He manhandled any offensive lineman who lined up across from him, which is pretty impressive considering the talent OSU has along its offensive front. We all thought Nick Bosa and Sam Hubbard coming off the edge was lethal last year. I don't know the word to describe what it will be like to watch Bosa and Young rush the passer in 2018. One thing is for certain, Ohio State's offensive tackles should become some of the best in the country going up against guys like Bosa, Young and Cooper in practice every day.

Now that you've seen them on the field, do you think any of the early enrollees will have a real role this season?

RM: I couldn't help but notice Master

Teague in the spring game as he pounded out 73 yards and a touchdown on 14 carries. Though he should be wrapping up his senior year of high school right now, Teague looks like he's already been in Mickey Marotti's strength program at OSU for a couple of years. With Teague being a running back, though, it'll be tough for him to earn significant playing time with J.K. Dobbins and Mike Weber ahead of him on the depth chart.

GS: A ton of coach speak comes out of spring camp, especially when we ask about early enrollees, but I really think defensive tackle Tommy Togiai has a strong chance to crack the defensive line as a true freshman in 2018 after the spring he had. From the viral video of him dominating the circle drill to the rare removal of the black stripe as an early enrollee and ultimately the heavy bulk of first-team reps he received throughout the spring game, Togiai solidified his positioning for time at a spot where depth has been a slight concern after the slow recovery of Antwan Jackson from surgery on a broken left foot.

Togiai's big spring drew rave reviews from his teammates to Meyer. With all of that, why shouldn't he be on equal footing with the others involved – except for someone like a returning starter in Dre'Mont Jones – on the inside entering fall camp?

TM: Teague had a great spring, but he could very well end up redshirting behind Dobbins, Weber, Antonio Williams and, potentially, Brian Snead. Togiai has looked great as well, but he'd have to get in front of one of four returning players – Dre'Mont Jones, Haskell Garrett, Robert Landers and

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ANALYSIS

Davon Hamilton – to crack the primary defensive tackle rotation.

Offensive tackle Max Wray is solid as well, but his contributions probably won't extend beyond special teams, which can be said for linebacker Dallas Gant as well. Then there's the corners, Tyreke Johnson and Sevyn Banks, who are future studs but won't have a defensive role this season in all likelihood.

That's all a roundabout way of saying that I don't see any of the early enrollees making a huge impact this fall, but there are a bunch of them who will see the field and have a chance to make their mark on special teams.

Looking back at spring camp, how would you assess the Buckeyes overall?

TM: How Ohio State's season pans out pretty much comes down to how the 11 new starters fare, and it's tough to accurately project that in the spring. From what I've seen, though, I expect a lot of new names to step up and thrive in prominent roles.

To me, the offensive line will be key – the defense is going to be very good and very fast, but the offense won't be able to do anything if the five guys up front struggle. Brady Taylor might be the biggest question mark, but it will be interesting to see who slots in at left tackle as well. Isaiah Prince spent most of spring camp in that spot, but he was back on the right in the spring game with Thayer Munford on the left. Both are capable players, but neither has started on the blind side for Ohio State before.

RM: Like Tim said, I think it's hard to accurately gauge the Buckeyes from the handful of times we saw them in spring practice and then at the spring game. There are a few positions I think the coaches have to spend little time fretting over as we head into the summer – cornerbacks, defensive line, running backs, tight ends and wide receivers.

We all know the quarterback situation, so I won't spend time on that here. Like Tim mentioned, offensive line is a bit of a mystery. Ohio State seems to have plenty of depth at the position with Branden Bowen, Matthew Burrell, Michael Jordan, Demetrius Knox, Thayer Munford, Malcolm Pridgeon, Isaiah Prince and Brady Taylor. It's just a matter of everyone playing up to their potential. The starting safety spot opposite Jordan Fuller is the other glaring issue with spring camp now complete. Isaiah Pryor seemed to be the leading candidate, but Meyer indicated that defensive coordinators Alex Grinch and Greg Schiano have some work to do to decide who joins Fuller at the back end of the defense.

GS: For what the team lacks in leadership it had last year, Ohio State makes up for it with the talent the Buckeyes bring into next season. Even in the few times we were able to see OSU throughout the spring, it looks every part of a contender, notably because of the depth they have across both sides of the ball.

Of course, offensive line is undoubtedly the biggest concern, but the abundance of skill players spread out across the unit should make life easier for the group as it finds its footing after some of the shuffling. I'm interested to see how the new starters, from quarterback to the trenches, enter the fold with Ryan Day expected to have more of an influence on the offense. I think Tim summed it up best when he said new names are going to step up in prominent roles. The talent is certainly there, and it will be fun to watch the development from the start of fall camp and into the season.

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Vrabel Headlines Ohio State Coaches Clinic

By RYAN McGLADE
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

As the Tennessee Titans' new head coach, Mike Vrabel is tasked with getting his team prepared for the 2018 season, particularly the NFL draft that takes place April 26-28. The former Ohio State defensive lineman and assistant coach, however, managed to find time in his busy schedule to return to Columbus to speak to high school football coaches during OSU's 87th annual football coaching clinic, which was held from April 12-14 at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center.

Vrabel was a Buckeye from 1993-96, during which time he was a two-time Big Ten Defensive Lineman of the Year and two-time consensus All-American. The Akron native was then selected by the Pittsburgh Steelers in the third round of the 1997 NFL draft. He went on to enjoy 14 seasons in the NFL – four with Pittsburgh, eight with New England and two with Kansas City.

Vrabel is most known for his time as a Patriot. He won three Super Bowls with New England in 2001, 2003 and 2004. For his entire professional career, he played in 206 games, including 140 starts, and recorded 511 tackles, 57 sacks and 11 interceptions.

Following his NFL career, Vrabel, who received the "Ohio's Finest" award for an NFL performer at the clinic, began coaching and was Ohio State's linebackers coach in 2011 before being the defensive line coach from 2012-13. He spent the next four seasons as an assistant on the Houston Texans' staff and was hired as the Titans' coach on Jan. 20. He is one of four former Ohio State players to be named a head coach of an NFL team, joining Sid Gillman, Dick LeBeau and Don McCafferty.

Vrabel spoke at the clinic on April 13 for about half an hour. Within the opening minutes of his presentation, he recalled his time as an assistant at Ohio State.

As mentioned, Vrabel was the Buckeyes' linebackers coach in 2011, when Luke Fickell was the head coach. After that season, OSU hired Urban Meyer as head coach. Vrabel said Meyer, who named Fickell the team's defensive coordinator and linebackers coach,

conducted an interview with him for an opportunity to become the program's defensive line coach.

"I went through an interview process, and I butchered it," Vrabel said. "It was brutal. It was awful. That's exactly what (Meyer) said. He said, 'I want you to come back at 6 o'clock in the morning and I want you to do this again.'

"I went home, I grabbed my stuff and I told my wife, 'I'm going back to the office.' I clearly wasn't prepared. I thought that I knew how to coach, but I didn't know how to coach. I didn't have a progression. I just wasn't doing it the right way. I stayed up all night in that office back there in the back (of the Woody). Then I came in the next morning and the whole staff was there, and I did a great job. I got the job."

Vrabel left Ohio State following the 2013 season to become the linebackers coach for the Houston Texans from 2014-16. Houston head coach Bill O'Brien, who was the head coach at Penn State from 2012-13, promoted Vrabel to defensive coordinator prior to last season.

Vrabel then pursued a head coaching position in the NFL. He said at the clinic that he interviewed with Tennessee, the Detroit Lions and Indianapolis Colts before inking a deal with the Titans. When Vrabel was done speaking to the coaches at the clinic, he told a small group of reporters what his message was to the NFL teams that were considering him.

"Here's what I told everybody when I interviewed," Vrabel said, "I said, 'You know what, just like every other coach, I'm going to make mistakes. I'm not going to make too many, and I'm not going to make the same mistake twice.'"

Vrabel made sure to inform the coaches at the clinic that he wouldn't have been able to ascend the coaching ranks so quickly without Meyer's help roughly six years ago.

"I tell Urban before every interview I've gone into," Vrabel said, "I say, 'No interview will ever be worse than that one.' I realized that you better be prepared and you better not take

things for granted. That's one of the reasons that's helped me get to where I am today."

The bulk of Vrabel's speech was dedicated to explaining to the high school coaches what he believes makes for a successful program. Vrabel said his three core values as a coach are teaching, developing and inspiring players. He said he learned the importance of those three aspects from coaches he played for or coached under including John Cooper (Ohio State), Bill Belichick (New England), Bill Cowher (Pittsburgh), Meyer and O'Brien.

Teaching players, Vrabel said, comes down to the environment of the program, having high expectations for the athletes, having honest communication with them, providing them with a clear objective and being concise and direct with them.

As for developing players, Vrabel said it is a coach's responsibility to identify a player's weaknesses and then improve them. He added that it's vital that a coach learns the hobbies of his players and finds creative ways to simulate those hobbies on the football field so the players remain interested.

When it comes to inspiring players, Vrabel said a coach must be able to give hope and trust to the player that he can excel at his position. Vrabel pointed out that motivation is different from inspiration. He said players are motivated for various reasons such as earning a scholarship or getting paid. Inspiration, Vrabel said, is making players believe they can execute their job.

After describing to the high school coaches what he believes makes for a successful organization, Vrabel told the reporters he was glad he could appear at the clinic and give back to his home state.

"When you leave here and you make a decision to pack up two kids and a wife who you thought you'd live in Columbus with for the rest of your life, it's cool to come back," Vrabel said. "It's cool to come back in this position to be able to try to help coaches of this state who come to the clinic and certainly help Coach Meyer and his staff any way I can."



Mike Vrabel

Pace Recalls Coach's Influence

Former Ohio State offensive tackle Orlando Pace spoke at the clinic on April 13 as well.

Pace, an NFL and College Football Hall of Famer, played at Ohio State from 1994-96. As a Buckeye, he was a two-time winner of the Lombardi Award, an Outland Trophy winner, a two-time consensus All-American, a two-time Big Ten Offensive Lineman of the Year, the Chicago Tribune's Silver Football award winner as the best player in the conference and the No. 1 overall draft pick in the 1996 NFL draft to the St. Louis Rams. Pace, who received the "Ohio's Finest" award at the clinic for his achievements on the college gridiron, also won a Super Bowl with St. Louis following the 1999 regular season.

While Pace's speech was much shorter than Vrabel's, he used his five minutes on the stage to tell high school coaches they can have great effect on their student-athletes. Pace, a native of Sandusky, Ohio, said that early in his prep career he was unsure of how talented he could be as a football player until a coach offered him some assurance.

"I can recall a time where one of my coaches – I don't know why it stuck out to me – told me as I was a freshman that I could play at any university in the country by the time I was a senior," Pace said. "Why he said that, I don't know. Why it resonated with me at that time, I don't know. But from that time on, everything I did on the football field was to get an opportunity to play at a high-level college institution like Ohio State."

"I always go back to what he said and what that meant to me. Prior to that, nobody had ever said to me, 'Orlando, you can play this game at a high level.' That just goes to show the impact of what high school coaches mean to some kids. You get kids at a young age so you're really able to shape and mold who they are."

Johnson Sleeps Football

Ohio State defensive line coach Larry Johnson was one of seven OSU staffers to speak at the clinic. The other six were offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Ryan Day, co-defensive coordinator and safeties coach Alex Grinch, Meyer, defensive coordinator Greg Schiano, wide receivers coach Zach Smith and offensive line coach Greg Studrawa.

Johnson spent most of his presentation showing coaches different pass-rushing techniques he teaches his defensive linemen. Johnson's passion for football, however, was on full display toward the end of his speech.

He said he puts his cell phone on his nightstand when he goes to sleep at night, which he said his wife, Christine, can't stand. Why? He said he often dreams about football, which causes him to wake up, make notes in his phone about the dream, draw what he dreamed about on the board at the meeting room inside the WHAC the next morning and then have his players go through that drill that afternoon.

He then shared an anecdote from his time as Penn State's defensive line coach from 2000-13.

"I've been married 33 years to the same lady, and I'll tell you what, she could come up here and do my pass-rush stuff," Johnson said. "When we were playing Ohio State when I was at that other place and (OSU) beat us, I walked into the house feeling pretty down and pretty sad because we just lost. She looked me straight in the eye and said, 'What's the matter?' I told her, 'Man, we just lost a tough one today, sweetie.' She said, 'Well yeah, because you've got no pass rush.' I realized I taught my wife too much."




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Buckeyes Add 4-Star ATH Hickman For 2019

Thunderstorms were in the Columbus forecast for April 14, but booms were emanating from the Ohio State campus the night before when 2019 Wayne (N.J.) DePaul Catholic four-star athlete Ronnie Hickman announced his commitment to OSU during an unofficial visit for the program's annual spring game. He selected the Buckeyes from a group of six finalists, which he unveiled April 9, also featuring Florida, Notre Dame, Penn State, Rutgers and Virginia Tech.

RECRUITING OUTLOOK Ryan McGlade

"My path has been filled with great moments and many obstacles but my dream has remained the same," Hickman wrote in a Twitter post. "Thank you to all of the college coaches who have taken their time and interest to recruit me. With God's will and blessings, along with hard work and dedication, my dream has come true. I will be continuing my education and football career for the next four years at The Ohio State University."

Hickman, the No. 124 overall prospect and No. 13 athlete in the 247Sports composite rankings, made his college decision almost a year after he received an offer from the Ohio State coaches, who are known for tweeting "Boom" when a commitment takes

place, on April 19, 2017, and roughly two months after he unofficially visited Ohio's capital the weekend of Feb. 3.

The 6-1, 200-pounder plays both wide receiver and safety for his high school team. Last season, he caught 44 passes for 809 yards and 10 touchdowns while recording 47 tackles, including one tackle for loss, two interceptions and nine passes defended. Ohio State is expected to start him at defensive back in college.

Hickman, rated the second-best player in the state of New Jersey, becomes the fourth member of Ohio State's 2019 class. He joins Mentor, Ohio, four-star offensive tackle Ryan Jacoby; Avon, Ind., four-star running back Sampson James; and Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley four-star offensive tackle Doug Nester.

A full profile of Hickman can be found in the March 24 print edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin. Electronic versions of all print papers can be found on BuckeyeSports.com. For signup information regarding BSB's new full-service website, free to all print subscribers, see page 5.

OSU Hosts Three Official Visitors For Spring Game

The last time BSB went to press, Ohio



Ronnie Hickman



TIM MOODY

FUTURE HOME – Ohio State commit Doug Nester (left), a four-star offensive tackle from West Virginia, took his official visit for the spring game.

State was planning to host five recruits from the 2019 cycle on official visits for the spring game on April 14: Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas four-star safety

Jordan Battle; Buford, Ga., four-star center Harry Miller; Nester, who was Ohio State's first pledge of the 2019 haul; Austin (Texas) Lake Travis four-star wide receiver Garrett

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ASK AN ANALYST

With CBS Sports Network's Tom Lemming

You recently started your cross-country trip evaluating the nation's top talents in the classes of 2019 and 2020 for *Prep Football Magazine*, beginning in the Midwest. Who are some of the most impressive prospects you've come across in the Ohio area?

"I see the kids ahead of time on film before I actually go see them, but (Cincinnati Anderson four-star offensive guard) Zeke Correll was one of them. Another guy, (Cincinnati St. Xavier five-star) Paris Johnson, a 2020 kid, will be one of the premier offensive tackles in the country next year. I've seen almost everybody, and I've been in Springfield already and I've been in Columbus and Cleveland. I went over to Mentor High School. It looks like a good year in state for talent, but I know the Buckeyes' philosophy is to go after the best players in the country. So there'll be some guys in state they won't go after. Jowon Briggs, a four-star from Cincinnati Walnut Hills, is an All-American defensive tackle type of prospect. I saw him and I was impressed with a good amount of the guys. Zeke is a thumper. I think he'll be an outstanding guard in college. He has All-American potential."

Up at Mentor, Ohio State already has a commitment from four-star offensive tackle Ryan Jacoby. The Buckeyes are also on a teammate of his in four-star defensive end Noah Potter. What stands out about him?

"He's got length, real strong and violent hands, he's got a great first step and a relentless style of play. When you see him on film, he's different than a lot of other high

school linemen you see. So I can see why Ohio State offered him. They only offer great players in the state because they can get great players around the country. So they're not like the other teams at Ohio State. Urban (Meyer) isn't like the other head coaches at Ohio State, the previous three or four up to Woody (Hayes) because they mainly stayed in Ohio and then looked around in Florida and elsewhere, but Urban's made Ohio State become a national team like Alabama. They can get a great pick of their players nationally. So for them to offer Potter means he's obviously an elite talent."

Ohio State had a loaded list of visitors April 14 for its spring game, from top prospects in the class of 2019 to former players now starring in the NFL. How is it as a recruiting tool for OSU to have so many of the alumni back on campus when top recruits are around?

"It's definitely a good recruiting tool, but they're not allowed to talk to the players. If they do, it's a violation. But the players know they're there. Every school does that. I was down at Alabama and it was like a who's who, and it's a smart thing to do. Here's what the kids look for. A majority of the top 100 look for the same things. They look for great facilities, and the Buckeyes have some of the best. They look for who has put players in the NFL, and they've got a lot in the NFL. The third one is how good-looking the girls are on campus. Those are the three things, and that's the honest thing. A good number of them talk academics, but I don't see them all jumping to Harvard and Yale.

"Ohio State's got it all. They're one of the biggest, most-populated campuses in the country. Ohio State's got everything going for it, and they've got one of the elite coaches obviously – one of the top three coaches in the country – so they've got everything going. Having former players there means that the players buy into the program. Everything kind of points to Ohio State having another great year (in the class of 2019). Last year (in the class of 2018) was a phenomenal year. With the way they recruit, they can lose assistant coaches. As long as they don't lose Urban Meyer, they're going to always have a great class."

Speaking of Meyer, he recently had his contract extended through the end of the 2022 season. How important is that right now for Ohio State's recruiting?

"I think that's real big since (Clemson head coach) Dabo Swinney called him an old man. Clemson's one of the schools you've got to compete with – that's how the offensive tackle, Jackson Carman, went there from Ohio. I do think that (former Penn State head coach) Joe Paterno had to fight that for a long time – the last 20 years – and he kept staying on. Everybody used to use, 'Paterno's going to be retiring,' and 'He's not going to be there for four years.' They used that for the last 25 years of Paterno, and he stayed there. So I think when you've got a contract extension, they can no longer use that against you. Even if (Meyer) doesn't stay that long – at least that's what it looks like to the players. That's very smart."

OSU Football Verbal Commitments

Players in the class of 2019 who have issued verbal commitments to play football at Ohio State. (Star ratings reflect 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Ronnie Hickman	ATH	6-1	200	★★★★	Wayne (N.J.) DePaul Catholic
Ryan Jacoby	OT	6-5	270	★★★	Mentor, Ohio
Sampson James	RB	6-1	211	★★★★	Avon, Ind.
Doug Nester	OT	6-5½	295	★★★★	Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley

Wilson; and Avon (Conn.) Old Farms four-star athlete Marquis Wilson.

Only three ended up making the trip – Miller, Nester and Garrett Wilson.

The NCAA passed a new rule last year that allows prospects entering their senior years to take spring official visits.

With the advent of spring officials, Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer said during the Big Ten teleconference on April 11 that he would prefer OSU to host prospects on such visits only if they intend to make a college decision in the spring or early summer rather than extend their recruitments late into the winter.

"We don't want to have people visit that aren't going to decide until December, or even next January," Meyer said. "We're being very selective. It's going to be interesting, though. This is all new for everybody."

"We've got two (official visitors, excluding Nester) coming in, a couple coming in this weekend, and then we have more lined up. We'll have more time to really concentrate on that after the spring game, but it's going to be interesting. I think timing's going to be of the essence. If you're going to make an early decision, we'll consider an early visit."

While unfamiliar with hosting official visitors in the spring, Meyer said there are a few perks to conducting officials in April compared to doing so in the regular season.

"It's much different," he said. "For example, the worst part of official visits during the fall is Sunday because you're getting ready for the next game. Obviously, we don't have that issue (in the spring). So there will

be much more time spent with our official visitors."

Miller (6-4, 310) garnered an offer from Ohio State last June and took at least two unofficial visits to OSU before his official. Slotted as the No. 53 player regardless of position and the second-best center, Miller also has obtained offers from Clemson, Georgia, Michigan, Notre Dame, Stanford and others.

Garrett Wilson (6-0, 185) spent time chatting with former Ohio State wide receiver Michael Thomas while on his official. This was Wilson's second trip to Columbus in roughly three weeks, as he took an unofficial visit to OSU the weekend of March 23.

On March 31, Wilson tweeted that he would take an official visit to Texas the week after his OSU trip and announce his commitment shortly thereafter. The No. 46 overall prospect and No. 6 wideout was high school teammates with 2018 Ohio State quarterback signee Matthew Baldwin as the duo led Lake Travis to the state championship game last season. Wilson, who collected an offer from the Buckeyes in December, has long been familiar with Ohio State, though, as he lived in nearby Dublin when he was younger.

Pair Of 2019 Prospects Include OSU In Top 5

Ohio State made the cut for two recruits from the 2019 haul who released their top five choices during the second weekend of April.

Malvern (Pa.) Prep three-star linebacker Keith Maguire announced April 14 that the Buckeyes made his top list alongside

Alabama, Clemson, North Carolina and Notre Dame. The 6-2, 215-pound Maguire visited Ohio State on March 23 for the first time. He obtained an offer from Ohio State on Feb. 7, which was National Signing Day for the 2018 cycle.

Maguire is the No. 430 overall prospect, No. 27 outside linebacker and No. 6 player in Pennsylvania.

Also including the Scarlet and Gray among his five options was Waterbury (Conn.) St. Thomas More four-star defensive back Tyler Rudolph, who unfurled his list on April 15. Joining Ohio State were Clemson, Florida, Michigan and Penn State.

Rudolph (6-1, 205) acquired an offer from the Buckeyes on Feb. 2 but has yet to visit their campus. Ohio State offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Ryan Day, however, visited the recruit in late January.

Rudolph checks in at No. 324 nationally and is classified as the No. 26 safety in the 247Sports composite, which also ranks him the third-best player in Connecticut.

Beamon Impressed With Unofficial Visit To OSU

Hakeem Beamon, a 2019 four-star defensive tackle from Chesterfield (Va.) Lloyd C. Bird, saw Ohio State's campus and football facilities for the first time while on an unofficial visit April 1 and 2.

He told BSB he liked what he saw during his time in Columbus.

"I got to meet the coaches," he said. "The coaches are good people. I got to meet the D-line coach (Larry Johnson), and that was really great. I met some of the players, and I heard what they have to say. I went around campus. It was really good."

One of the Ohio State players Beamon met was sophomore defensive end Chase Young. Beamon, who stands at 6-3 and weighs 245 pounds, said he was blown away by the stature of the 6-5, 265-pound Young.

"I'm thinking I'm big and tall, but that dude is huge," the recruit said of Young. "He said he lost weight, but that dude still

is huge. I'm going to go ahead and say it, I was watching him practice, he's going to be a first-rounder in the top five or top 10 (of the NFL draft) easily. It's not just how he looks. I watched his technique and his technique is great – and he's only a sophomore. He's going to give people problems this year and next year and the next year after that if he decides he wants to stay."

As Beamon alluded to, he was able to watch one of the Buckeyes' spring practices. He said he mainly observed the defensive linemen practice and admired how organized Johnson was. He also noted that he was intrigued that OSU constantly runs videos on the monitors throughout the Woody Hayes Athletic Center of one-on-one battles the players go through in practice.

"Coach Johnson is very detailed," Beamon said. "They do a lot of one-on-ones. It's so crazy because it makes you want to compete there. There's TVs everywhere, and they're just showing the one-on-ones that happen. So say you're just walking around and you lost your one-on-one, that's on TV. That's going to make you go harder the next day because you don't want to be embarrassed."

Beamon, the No. 319 prospect in America and No. 21 defensive tackle, committed to North Carolina in June. He then decommitted from the Tar Heels on March 19 and said he wanted to reevaluate his options.

"I was just thinking about how I could really get coached by the best coaches," he said. "UNC is not a bad school, but I've got to invest in myself at the end of the day. I just thought the best move for me was to reopen my recruitment."

Since the calendar turned to 2018, Beamon, the No. 7 player in the state of Virginia, has received offers from schools such as Maryland, Penn State, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia, along with Ohio State.

In terms of places he has visited through-

Continued On Page 20

OSU Continues Handing Out National Offers

Continued From Page 19

out his recruitment, not just in 2018, Beamon has been to both Alabama and Penn State at least twice and South Carolina once. He said he plans to attend a summer camp at OSU and officially visit the Buckeyes at some point as well.

When asked how Ohio State stacks up to the other programs he is considering, Beamon said, "Definitely top two. I basically have three to four schools. I would say Ohio State and 'Bama are the top two. I'm now talking to Penn State a lot and South Carolina.

"It's exciting but it's exhausting because I'm just trying to focus on school and next football season. It's all good, though."

Read what Beamon had to say about his interactions with Johnson while on his visit in the April 10 electronic issue of BSB Quickly, which can be found on BuckeyeSports.com. For signup information regarding BSB's new full-service website, free to all print subscribers, see page 5.

Buckeyes Offer Prospects From Multiple Classes

Ohio State has continued to hand out offers since BSB last went to press, including four recruits from different classes.

The Buckeyes issued one to 2019 Honolulu St. Louis five-star defensive tackle Faatui Tuitele while he was visiting Ohio State for the first time on April 6. OSU joins Tuitele's long list of scholarship offers that also includes California, Clemson, Georgia,

A Look Back At Recruiting From The Pages Of BSB

25 Years Ago – 1993

Timiko Payton, a 6-1, 265-pound defensive lineman from Alliance, Ohio, visited Illinois and considered Louisville, Michigan State and Penn State before deciding Ohio State was where he could be most successful.

"Ohio State had a good recruiting class last year, and we could get real good in the next few years," Payton said. "The other schools didn't seem as strong.

"Plus, I really liked the place, the players, the facilities, the coaches, and it's close to home. The players were really nice, and they all seemed like they really wanted to get to the Rose Bowl before graduation. I felt like I wanted to help them get there."

20 Years Ago – 1998

Clyde, Ohio, lineman Tim Anderson had recently received a scholarship offer from Ohio State. The 6-4, 275-pound Anderson played both defensive end and offensive tackle for his high school squad. He tallied 80 tackles as a junior.

"It sounds like (Ohio State) likes him as a defensive lineman," Clyde head coach Bob Bishop said of Anderson. "They also like him as an offensive lineman, although he may not have that type of size. I know they're pretty impressed with his defensive skills."

15 Years Ago – 2003

Akron Buchtel running back Antonio

Penn State, South Carolina, Tennessee, UCLA, USC, Washington, Wisconsin and others.

Tuitele, the No. 25 overall prospect and second best at his position, told 247Sports

Pittman became the third member of OSU's 2004 recruiting class April 1 when he issued a verbal commitment to the Buckeyes.

Pittman (5-11, 195) had been offered a scholarship by OSU a day earlier. It didn't take him long to pull the trigger and commit.

"I got the news yesterday," Pittman told BSB, referring to the Ohio State offer. "My coaches came and got me out of lunch and told me about it. I went home and talked it over with my mom. She was like, 'If you're going to commit, you may as well go ahead and do it now.' We thought that was the best thing to do, so I committed today."

10 Years Ago – 2008

The most unlikely of potential player pickups became a possibility for Ohio State when Pickerington (Ohio) North product Justin Boren announced he was leaving the Michigan football program.

"Ohio State would be a good fit for Justin, and that's why he's not at Michigan anymore – because Michigan is not the right fit for him," Boren's father, Mike, told The Columbus Dispatch. "I have not talked to Ohio State, and I'm not sure about their situation. But would he go to Ohio State? Yes."

Five Years Ago – 2013

After senior linebackers Zach Boren and Etienne Sabino left Ohio State following the

2012 season, the Scarlet and Gray earned much-needed depth at the linebacker position when the program received verbal commitments from in-state prospects Sam Hubbard of Cincinnati Moeller and Kyle Berger of Cleveland St. Ignatius.

Hubbard (6-6, 221) issued his pledge to Ohio State during an April 5 unofficial visit, and the 6-2, 215-pound Berger declared three days later.

Hubbard said his mind was made up on that trip to Columbus.

"I visited Ohio State the first time two weeks ago," he said. "I didn't really tell anyone, but I was kind of sold from the get-go and knew Ohio State was the place I wanted to be."

One Year Ago – 2017

During the final week of March, Taron Vincent visited Ohio State, and that trip was enough for the Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy defensive tackle to commit to the Buckeyes on April 2.

"It was just the relationship I have with the coaching staff and how they talked with me and my parents about my plan and how they're going to develop me as a man and player," Vincent (6-1, 290) said for why he chose OSU over Florida State. "They're just a blue-collar program. They accepted me with open arms, welcomed me to the family, and I know they care about me."

he thinks very highly of Meyer and his program.

"Urban Meyer, he's the man over there," Tuitele (6-4, 299) said. "He's a great coach and person. He teaches morals and he cares more about the person than the player. Also, when I talk to Ohio State, their defensive line coach Larry Johnson from there, we've been in contact."

Ohio State has never had a scholarship player from Hawaii, although current Buckeye sophomore defensive tackle Haskell Garrett spent some time at St. Louis early in his high school career before joining Bishop Gorman in Las Vegas.

Another recruit who visited the Buckeyes on April 6 and received an offer from them was 2021 Pickerington (Ohio) North tight end/defensive end Jack Sawyer. In addition to Ohio State, Sawyer (6-5, 200) holds offers from Cincinnati, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Michigan State, Penn State and Pittsburgh. His former high school teammate, Alex Williams, signed with OSU's 2018 recruiting class.

Two days after offering Tuitele and Sawyer, Ohio State did the same with 2021 Belleville, Mich., defensive end/offensive guard Damon Payne. The 6-4, 255-pound Payne is now closing in on offers from 20 programs, some of which include Alabama, Auburn, Florida State, Georgia, Michigan, Penn State and USC.

The Buckeyes are beginning to make their presence known at Belleville, as Payne is the third recruit from said high school who has been offered by them. The other two are 2019 four-star wide receiver/corner Julian Barnett, who is committed to Michigan State, and 2019 five-star offensive lineman Devontae Dobbs.

Similar to Belleville, Ohio State has become very familiar with Brooklyn (N.Y.) Erasmus Hall. In 2014, the Buckeyes landed H-back Curtis Samuel from the school. Two years later, they added safety Jahsen Wint

late in the process after he decommitted from Temple. This past cycle, they secured a pledge from offensive lineman Matthew Jones, who enrolled early and participated in the spring game.

Meyer and his staff apparently identified their next target from the New York powerhouse when they offered 2021 defensive end Jahzion Harris on April 13. Syracuse is the only other institution to offer the 6-4, 198-pounder. Harris attended one of Ohio State's camps last summer.

2019 QB Targets Commit Elsewhere

The Buckeyes have yet to land a commitment from a quarterback in the 2019 class, and their choices have seemingly decreased by two.

Allen, Texas, four-star signal caller Grant Tisdale took to Twitter on April 6 to declare his commitment to Ole Miss while Monroe (N.C.) Sun Valley four-star Sam Howell pledged to Florida State three days later.

Tisdale (6-1, 204) secured an Ohio State offer last May. He then worked out at one of OSU's camps in June. He is the No. 317 prospect in America and No. 8 dual-threat quarterback.

Howell (6-1, 217) was offered by the Buckeyes on Jan. 12. They then hosted him on a two-day visit in mid-March. He is the country's No. 152 prospect and the No. 4 pro-style quarterback.

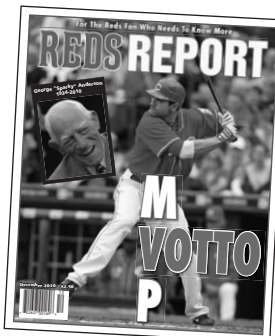
San Bernardino (Calif.) Cajon four-star Jayden Daniels, Houston St. Pius X four-star Grant Gunnell and Eugene (Ore.) Sheldon four-star Michael Johnson Jr. are three of the few remaining 2019 quarterbacks OSU has offered who are still uncommitted. Daniels (6-3, 170) is the No. 99 recruit in the nation and No. 2 dual-threat QB. Gunnell (6-6, 222) is the No. 54 overall prospect and No. 2 pro-style QB. Johnson (6-4, 190) comes in at No. 181 nationally and No. 4 among dual-threats.

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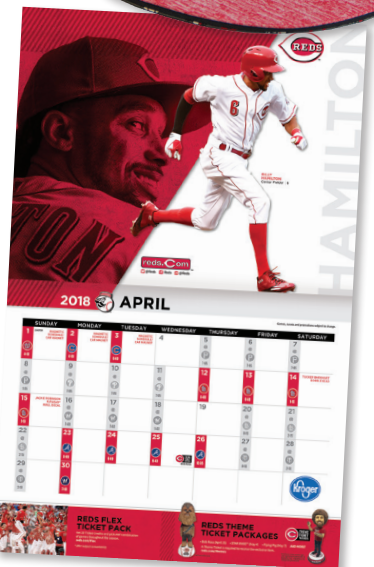
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Buckeyes Building A New Recruiting Pipeline

By GARRETT STEPIEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Ohio State already reeled in one four-star prospect from Murfreesboro (Tenn.) Blackman when it signed running back Master Teague in the class of 2018, and the Buckeyes could bring in two more blue-chip recruits from the school with the 2019 cycle picking up steam.

The four-star duo of wide receiver Trey Knox and cornerback Adonis Otey are next in line at Blackman, where OSU popped up last year and found a diamond in the rough and signed Teague to its talented tailbacks crop.

Before the 5-11, 210-pound Teague completed his first spring on campus as an early enrollee at Ohio State, Blackman head coach Kit Hartsfield

and members of his staff made the six-hour drive north from Murfreesboro to Columbus for spring practice on April 6.

At the same time, Knox traveled separately with his father and uncle for his latest trip to Ohio's capital, watching practice and sitting in on meetings before capping the unofficial visit catching up with head coach Urban Meyer and wide receivers coach Zach Smith.



Trey Knox

Ever since Knox received his offer from the Buckeyes on Oct. 29, 2016, when he took an unofficial visit for their 24-20 win over Northwestern, the ties have continued to grow.

"As far as Trey's concerned in his visit, it was just kind of rekindling the relationship," Hartsfield said. "It's been a long relationship. It started a few years ago when they offered him at the Northwestern game. He's very comfortable there. It's like a family to him. He

knows everyone in the building, from the front secretary to the custodian.

"He's been there so many times. So he almost kind of feels a part of (the program) when he's there. He enjoyed himself. But it sounds like they had a great trip, they loved it and I think he's pretty open that they're one of the front-runners."

Ranked nationally in the 247Sports composite as the No. 174 overall player, No. 29 wide receiver and No. 6 player in Tennessee, Knox has OSU among his top choices. After offers from Notre Dame (Jan. 12) and Arkansas (Jan. 21), followed by subsequent unofficial visits to see the Fighting Irish (Jan. 27) and the Razorbacks (Feb. 25), Knox's latest experience at Ohio State keeps the Buckeyes heavily involved for his services.

"I think deep down (Knox) wants to make a commitment before the season, but he does want to take some visits and some official visits," Hartsfield said. "So it just depends on if he can get any (official visits) in this spring or not. I think he plans to take his official at Ohio State for the Michigan game (on Nov. 24). So if he wanted to wait that long, he could, but he doesn't really want to wait that long to make a decision - I don't think. So we'll see. He wants to do it early, but I don't know if he'll get to it as soon as he wants to."

While Teague was more of a late-blooming recruit, OSU got in on Knox early with an eye on his development for down the road. Hartsfield compared the 6-4, 206-pounder's game at the next level to a former Ohio State wide receiver now tearing up the NFL and starring with the New Orleans Saints.

"His physical presence is what stands out the most," Hartsfield said of Knox, who is academically in line to enroll early next spring wherever he ends up. "He plays football the way it's supposed to be played, even though he's a wide-out. He's a big, physical kid. He's 6-4, 206."

"For an Ohio State fan's sake, he would be a Michael Thomas type of player. Same measurable, but he's already got the measurable that Thomas left with. He will show up with those measurements.

"He's got more skill than people think. He's faster than people think. We haven't had the ability to showcase his ability because of a lack of passing game, but he's going to have a big senior season. He's very physical, but people overlook his ability to stretch the field. In time,

though, he'll be able to prove that. When the lights come on, he's ready to go."

On the opposite side of the ball, Otey competes in one-on-one drills against Knox every day at Blackman's practices. The 6-1, 170-pound Otey has the prototypical physicality to match what the Buckeyes want in their cornerbacks and corresponding press-man coverage on defense.

"Adonis is a big, long corner," Hartsfield said. "He's 6-1, long arms. He looks like the guys (Ohio State) sticks out there on the corner. He's got a lot of offers, and it just got to the point where if Ohio State wanted in, they had to get in now."

The Buckeyes joined a string of programs involved with Otey when they offered on Feb. 27. Otey, who originally committed to Tennessee before he reopened his recruitment last July, recently added offers from Michigan (Feb. 26) and Florida State (March 10) in addition to OSU.

With a double-digit list now nearing 20 scholarship offers, Otey honed his skills in a breakout junior year in 2017, leading powerhouse programs such as Alabama and Oklahoma to take notice when they offered after the season.

"Adonis has always been long, but his body's been filling out more and things like that," Hartsfield said. "So that's why his (offer from Ohio State) was a little later, but his style of play is a physical corner. He likes to get up there and challenge himself."

The 247Sports composite rates Otey the No. 312 overall player, No. 29 cornerback and No. 15 player in Tennessee.

"I say one of the greatest things I like about him is that's really one of the only things he's worried about is locking someone down," Hartsfield said of Otey. "It's not about being worried getting the ball and returning punts and stuff. His passion is (locking someone down) itself."

Whether Knox and Otey join Teague at Ohio State remains to be seen, but the Buckeyes sit well with each of the two.

From Teague's past process to the current recruitments of Knox and Otey, Meyer and his staff have taken an honest approach to building relationships with Blackman and its prized prospects.

"The difference with them and a lot of others is their relentlessness of recruiting," Hartsfield said of Ohio State. "They sacrifice that time to keep building those relationships and bringing guys in."



Adonis Otey

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Multiple B1G Schools Cancel Spring Football Events

Michigan, Northwestern and Wisconsin all canceled the spring football events they had scheduled over the weekend of April 14 due to weather concerns with thunderstorms in the forecast.

BIG TEN NOTES Garrett Stepien

While the show went on April 14 for Ohio State in its annual intrasquad scrimmage at Ohio Stadium, where the Buckeyes sold out a limited capacity of about 79,000 because of ongoing construction at the venue, those three other Big Ten programs elected not to partake in their events.

The Badgers originally planned for their spring game to take place April 13 at Camp Randall Stadium in Madison, Wis., before a strong chance of heavy rain and thunderstorms for that afternoon and evening forced athletic director Barry Alvarez to make a move.

"The safety of our student-athletes and fans is our utmost priority," Alvarez said in a statement April 10. "The weather forecast has been pretty consistent in calling for a good chance of rain and thunderstorms on Friday. We thought it was best to make the call early to give the numerous groups involved in the game, including our team, our fans, our media partners and staff, notice of the cancellation as soon as possible."

Instead, Alvarez and head coach Paul Chryst changed the football team's plans for the spring game to a closed practice at its indoor facility, the McClain Center. Originally, the Badger Sports Kids' Fair was supposed to take place inside the facility from 4:40-6:30 p.m.

"It's certainly disappointing for our fans who wanted a chance to see our team and for our players who always look forward to playing in Camp Randall," Chryst said in a statement April 10. "Unfortunately some things are beyond your control."

The Wolverines did the same in an announcement April 11 for their spring game on April 14. Athletic director Warde Manuel cited concern for the fans, players and coaches at Michigan Stadium due to a projected high percentage of precipitation and thunderstorms.

"We want to ensure the safety of our fans as well as the student-athletes and staff," Manuel said. "We also wanted to provide as much notice in advance for fans and the families of our players that were considering attending."

Head coach Jim Harbaugh echoed those sentiments but expressed disappointment in not being able to showcase the team's progress to Michigan fans.

"We are disappointed for our fans and players' families that this opportunity to see our team compete at Michigan Stadium will not be possible due to weather concerns," Harbaugh said. "We made a decision that was in the best interest of our fans, student-athletes and volunteer staff needed to organize this event."

While the Wolverines had a few spring practices left before the start of final exams, the Wildcats are off until training camp in the fall.

On April 11, Northwestern canceled the open practice it planned for April 14 at Ryan Field in Evanston, Ill. The Wildcats moved

practice indoors to Trienens Hall, which has no indoor seating, next to Ryan Field. Northwestern head coach Pat Fitzgerald said the new facility, Ryan Fieldhouse, would be an indoor option for the fans in the future. It seats about 1,800.

Prior to the official announcement, Fitzgerald was blunt to reporters earlier in the week about the possibility of canceling the fans' first look at the team.

"I hate to break it to everyone, but our priority is us – to get the football team better and improving," Fitzgerald said. "Maybe fans won't like me because of it, but there's a safety component to this, and if the weather looks inclement, we're not going to change the schedule to sell a hot dog or two."

While others elected to cancel entirely, Minnesota moved its spring game up to April 12 at TCF Bank Stadium in Minneapolis. From fan experience to team development, head coach P.J. Fleck was adamant about why the Golden Gophers needed to make the adjustment.

"The spring game is a reward for our players and fans, so cancelling it was not an option," Fleck said April 10. "Moving the game from Saturday to Thursday enables us to keep it outside at TCF Bank Stadium so fans can watch our team. It will also provide a safe environment for everyone involved and will allow for our coaching staff to evaluate players in a game-like setting. We recognize that some of our fans, especially those with families, were planning to come to the game on Saturday, so we will schedule a fan event with our team that allows for them to connect with our student-athletes later this year."

Indiana Gets Transfer From Arizona

With the addition of graduate-transfer quarterback Brandon Dawkins at Indiana, the Hoosiers have an intriguing option for their offense in 2018.

Dawkins (6-3, 210), who was the starter for Arizona throughout the majority of the 2016 season and the start of the 2017 campaign before Khalil Tate broke out for the Wildcats, told ESPN.com that he chose Indiana over Florida Atlantic and a handful of other Football Bowl Subdivision programs.

"I didn't see a better fit for me," Dawkins said. "I could have committed there two weeks ago (on the visit to campus). There were other schools, but at the end of the day, Indiana definitely showed that they're interested and they wanted me. They made that clear and apparent. I really respect that about them. They weren't going to dance around. They genuinely wanted me."

Over the course of 23 games with the Wildcats, Dawkins completed 188 of his 334 passes (56.3 percent) for 2,414 yards and 15 touchdowns to 12 interceptions. He did most of his damage on the ground, though, where he attempted 232 rushes for 1,582 yards and 20 touchdowns.

Dawkins graduates from Arizona in May, joining the Hoosiers afterward with immediate eligibility. He enters Indiana's quarterback room as the favorite in competition with sophomore Peyton Ramsey (6-2, 210), redshirt freshman Nick Tronti (6-2, 205) and incoming freshman Michael Penix Jr. (6-3, 185).

"A big thing for them is fitting the system to their quarterback," Dawkins said. "That's huge. If the fit isn't right, you can't just force it. Obviously, I'm going to be learning a

whole new system, but they're not going to make me do things I'm not comfortable doing. They know my skills and talents and assets. They're going to push me, and I'm ready to give it my all."

Nebraska Grants Former Blue-Chip QB Release

The Nebraska football team is down a quarterback. After Patrick O'Brien (6-4, 230) was not seen at Nebraska practice on April 12, head coach Scott Frost told the Omaha World Herald that the third-year sophomore had been granted his release and planned to transfer elsewhere.

"He's done everything we've asked him to," Frost said. "He's a great kid. He wants to find an offense that fits his skill set."

Former head coach Mike Riley, whom the Huskers fired at the end of the 2017 season after three years, originally recruited O'Brien to Nebraska. The San Juan Capistrano, Calif., native redshirted his first year in 2016 and sat behind Tanner Lee in 2017. After Lee left the Huskers early for the NFL draft, O'Brien entered the spring in the mix to compete for the starting job but reportedly saw a decrease in snaps over the course of camp.

Wherever he transfers, O'Brien will have to sit out the 2018 season due to NCAA rules, with two years of eligibility left in 2019 and 2020. As the backup in 2017, O'Brien completed 18 of his 30 passes (60 percent) for 192 yards and one interception in four games off the bench.

Talented Forward Transferring From Northwestern

What was once seen as a possible program-changing commitment turned into a disappointing departure after the Northwestern men's basketball team announced that it had granted Rapolas Ivanauskas his release.

The 6-9, 230-pound forward will remain enrolled at the university until the end of the spring semester. He has three years of eligibility remaining after completing his redshirt freshman campaign in 2017-18, limited to a reserve role with 3.7 points in 11.0 minutes through his first three games of action before undergoing a season-ending shoulder surgery on Dec. 8.

"We wish Rapolas nothing but the best in his future endeavors," head coach Chris Collins said. "Though he has been extremely unlucky with injuries during his two years in Evanston, we're hopeful that he'll still be able to go on and have a great playing career. We thank him for all he has done to represent our program."

Ivanauskas is a Barrington, Ill., native who came to Northwestern as a consensus four-star recruit in the class of 2016 from Wolfeboro (N.H.) Brewster Academy. He initially chose the Wildcats over UCLA, Virginia, Wisconsin, Purdue and Michigan.

WNBA's Lindsay Whalen Will Play And Coach

Minnesota announced on April 12 the hire of Lindsay Whalen as head women's basketball coach. After starring for the Golden Gophers from 2000-04, Whalen makes her coaching debut in a return to her alma mater, but she does so with a twist.

Whalen, who began her professional career in 2004, will remain active in the WNBA with the Minnesota Lynx as a part

of the agreement to become head coach of the Gophers. In February, she retired from international competition with Team USA after playing for the team since 2002.

With the WNBA regular season running from May through August and the NCAA schedule starting in October, Whalen is able to pull double duty.

"I have so many special memories at the University of Minnesota," Whalen said. "I can't tell you how excited I am to have the opportunity to make more. Becoming the head coach here at the U and being a Gopher again is a dream come true."

"At every level, basketball has given me so much. I've learned from so many great players, coaches and mentors, and now I have a chance to share that knowledge and help shape the new generation of Gopher stars. I'm ready to get started."

Whalen, 35, was a three-time All-American with the Gophers. As she replaces Marlene Stollings, who left to become the head coach at Texas Tech,

Whalen also enters her ninth season with the Lynx.

Athletic director Mark Coyle explained the decision to hire Whalen despite the continuation of her playing career.

"People talk about the 'it' factor, and that is always difficult to define, but everyone who has ever spent time around Lindsay Whalen knows she has it," Coyle said. "She has excelled at everything she has ever done in her life because she's unflappable, determined and has a legendary work ethic. She's played for some of the top coaches in the world, she's competed at the highest levels the sport has to offer, and I know she will be a great head coach for our women's basketball program."

AD Resigns After Long Leave Of Absence

Following a six-month sabbatical that started on Oct. 16, Kevin Anderson resigned on April 13 from his post as the Maryland athletic director.

"I'm grateful for all that Kevin has done to support our student-athletes to be successful in the classroom, on the field or court, and in life," university president Wallace Loh said in a statement. "I wish him every success in his future endeavors. I know he'll inspire many more student-athletes for years to come."

Under the direction of Anderson since his hire in 2010, the Terrapins won six national championships. He also oversaw UMD's move to the Big Ten.

"It has been a sincere privilege to work with so many talented coaches, administrators and student-athletes who have proudly represented Maryland athletically, academically and in the community," Anderson said. "We were outstanding members of the ACC and continued to thrive in a seamless transition to the Big Ten."

After he announced his paid leave of absence in the fall "to work on student-athlete leadership development," multiple reports indicated Anderson was not expected to return.

Until the hire of a new athletic director with a national search in the coming weeks, executive athletic director Damon Evans will continue to lead the department in the interim. Evans has been the interim athletic director for the past six months.



Patrick O'Brien

OSU Recognizes Record 692 Scholar-Athletes

By GARRETT STEPIEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

At the Ohio State Scholar-Athlete Dinner on April 9 in the Archie M. Griffin Ballroom inside the Ohio Union, the university honored a record number of Buckeyes for their academic achievements.

Only a year removed from the school-record 626 Scholar-Athletes recognized in 2017, OSU eclipsed the mark by a good measure for 2018 with 692 honored. Among the Scholar-Athlete total, an eight-year high of 40 football players were included.

On the evening of the banquet, which followed the team's 12th practice of spring camp earlier in the day, junior long snapper Liam McCullough and fifth-year senior kicker Sean Nuernberger headlined the handful of Buckeyes in attendance for the football program.

"It's fantastic - I love coming to this event every year," McCullough, a finance major and three-time Scholar-Athlete, told BSB. "It's really awesome to not only get recognized for your academic achievements, on top of your athletic achievements, but also to meet the donors and interact with people from other sports and get a chance to sit down and talk with and meet with the people who fund your scholarship. It's a really humbling experience."



Liam McCullough

At the dinner, Ohio State announced its finalists for the Big Ten Medal of Honor, which is in its 104th year of recognizing academic and athletic excellence by Scholar-Athlete seniors. The list of women Buckeyes includes Irina Andrianova (pistol), Liz Li (women's swimming), Kelsey Mitchell (basketball), Monica Velazquez-Stiak (synchronized swimming) and Nikki Walts (soccer). The male finalists are Drew Cheezum (rifle), Sean Melton (gymnastics), Kyle Snyder (wrestling), Nicolas Szerszen (volleyball) and Mikael Torpegaard (tennis). OSU is set to announce the winners of the award on April 24 at the second-annual Scarlet and Graymies.

The Big Ten Medal of Honor highlighted an abundance of awards and honors mentioned among Ohio State's hundreds of Scholar-Athletes. After athletic director Gene Smith gave his opening remarks, the ceremony began with the Corwin A. Fergus Memorial Award, which is presented to male and female student-athletes boasting athletic and academic achievements - a minimum 3.00 GPA - with positive qualities of character, citizenship and potential for success in a graduate or professional program. Scholars included senior women's ice hockey forward Lauren Spring, senior women's rower Helen Sudhoff, senior women's tennis player Ferny Angeles Paz and senior men's

lacrosse defenseman Freddy Freibott. Since 1967, OSU awarded the honor in the name of former football player Corwin A. Fergus (1912-14), who graduated from the Ohio State School of Law and enjoyed a successful career in business. Each winner of the award receives a \$5,000 postgraduate scholarship, renewable for three years, for graduate studies or professional programs at OSU.

On top of being named a Fergus scholar, Spring received the Leann Grimes-Davidge Award, which is given to a female student-athlete in tribute to the former Ohio State women's tennis player (1974-78) who won four state and Big Ten titles. After graduating from OSU summa cum laude, Grimes-Davidge attained her master's degree from Miami (Ohio) where she became the head women's tennis coach.

The M/I Homes Foundation Award, which spotlights the top women's academic and athletic achievers with an emphasis on community contributions in civic and on-campus organizations, has been active at Ohio State since 1976. With a \$5,000 scholarship for postgraduate studies at the university, the award was given to fifth-year senior women's basketball guard Linnæ Harper and Li.

Senior softball utility player Rebecca Gavin won the Pierce Phoenix Award - given to a student-athlete with academic, athletic and personal growth via perseverance and hard work. The award is used to attend graduate or professional school at Ohio State and preferably is given to someone planning to enroll in the Fisher College of Business.

The John Dana Cole Fund, started in 1966 by a gift from John D. Cole through the Development Fund, awarded its scholarship to senior synchronized swimmer Quinn Connor. The recipient is considered a student-athlete with promise of success in his or her field who demonstrated academic achievement with a minimum GPA of 3.00.

In the Woody and Anne Hayes Scholarship Fund, activated in 1979 to provide additional financial aid or postgraduate assistance for one or more athletes with proven academic achievement (3.00 GPA minimum) and leadership qualities, five Buckeyes were

honored. The group included Angeles Paz, Gavin, Velazquez-Stiak, senior women's rower Hannah Gottschalk and senior men's soccer forward Nathan Kohl.

The Varsity O Scholarship Award, presenting a one-time stipend of \$4,000 to a Scholar-Athlete for postgraduate studies at Ohio State, was distributed to Freibott and senior women's swimmer Elizabeth Auckley.

What follows is a full list of the 692 Scholar-Athletes honored at the 51st annual banquet. Four- and five-time honorees are indicated accordingly.

BASEBALL - Jacob Barnwell, Jr.; Dominic Canzone, So.; Mathew Carpenter, Jr.; Brady Cherry, Jr.; Bo Coolen Sr.; Connor Curlis, Jr.; Francis Dingler, Fr.; Lucas Duermit, Fr.; Ryan Feltner, Jr.; Andrew Fishel, Jr.; Kobie Foppe, Sr.; Aaron Hughes, Fr.; Jonathan Jahn, So.; Malik Jones, Jr.; Seth Kinker, Sr.; Seth Lonsway, Fr.; Andrew Magno, So.; Kyle Michalik, Sr.; Adam Niemeyer, Sr. (5th); Nate Romans, Sr.; Jacob Ruby, Fr.; Scott Seymour, So.; Jacob Vance, So.; Noah West, So.; Ridge Winand, Sr.; Austin Woodby, Sr.

MEN'S BASKETBALL - Andrew Dakich, Gr.; Connor Fulton, Fr.; Danny Hummer, Jr.; Musa Jallow, Fr.; Joey Lane, Jr.; Micah Potter, So.; Jae'Sean Tate, Gr.; Kaleb Wesson, Fr.; Kyle Young, Fr.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL - Karlie Cronin, Jr.; Asia Doss, Sr. (4th); Linnæ Harper, Gr.; Savitha Jayaraman, So.; Stephanie Mavunga, Gr.; Kelsey Mitchell, Sr. (4th); Makayla Waterman, Sr.

CHEER - Justin Baker, Sr. (4th); Grant Burks, Sr.; Brennan Burt, Sr.; Clayton Cuddington, Gr.; Natalie Cyberski, Fr.; Dominic DiCarlo, Sr.; Lauren Eusano, Fr.; Alexis Fye, Jr.; Joshua Harris, Sr.; Natalie Hyde, Sr.; Aubrey Jenkins, Jr.; Richard Johnson, Jr.; Katelin Kreinbrink, Fr.; Taylor Kuhn, So.; James Kunzler, P.S.; Jordan Lukens, Jr.; Carter Marsch, Sr.; Mackenzie Packard, Sr. (4th); Joseph Pearl, Sr.; Journey Ramey, Sr. (4th); Martin Renemans, Gr.; Austin Sandlin, Sr. (4th); Alyssa Schaefer, Jr.; Alexis Schillig, Sr.; Darren Smith, Jr.; Morgan Snyder, Sr.; Trevor Steyn, Jr.; Nathan Vale, Sr.;

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Michaela Wilson, Sr.; Joel Windle, Sr.; Maria Wisman, So.

MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY – Steven Bauers, So.; Paul Bete, Jr.; Kevin Blank, Sr.; Noah Corbett, So.; Luke Landis, Jr.; Mitchell Leitch, Sr. (4th); Jacob Mandel, Sr. (4th); Peter Rosbrook Hayden, Fr.; Evan Stifel, Sr.; Aaron Wood, So.

WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY – Brittany Atkinson, Jr.; Aziza Ayoub, Fr.; Courtney Clody, Sr. (4th); Christine Frederick, Sr.; Erin Gyurke, Sr. (4th); Sarah Kanney, Jr.; Devon Leahy, So.; Abigail Nichols, So.; Jessica Passwater, Jr.; Julianna Rizk, Jr.; Vanessa Robinson, Jr.; Lillian Saniel-Banrey, Jr.; Olivia Smith, Sr. (4th); Kacee Soehnen, Fr.; Kalee Soehnen, Fr.; Emily Stoodley, Jr.; Lainey Studebaker, So.; Grace Thomas, So.; Anne Ubbing, So.; Claire Wiles, Jr.; Madison Woods, Jr.

DANCE – Julianna Applestein, Fr.; Valerie Celentano, So.; Madison Creps, Sr. (4th); Emerson Delaney, Fr.; Kathleen Devine, Jr.; Olivia Gutentag, So.; Ashley Handley, So.; Alyssa Jacobs, So.; Morgan Kamins, Sr. (4th); Kendall Kropp, Fr.; Kate Light, Fr.; Alexa Miehs, So.; Adriana Pierleoni, Jr.; Allison Ramsey, Fr.; Maggie Reinhardt, Jr.; Chandler Riley, So.; Megan Schmidt, So.; Madeline Smith, Fr.; Mia Snaidauf, Fr.; Sarah Zink, Sr. (4th).

DIVING – Genevieve Angerame, Fr.; Alexis Barker, Fr.; Joseph Canova, Fr.; Quinlan DeVal, So.; Alexandra House, Fr.; Ginger Lingard, Fr.; Camryn McPherson, Fr.; Jacob Siler, Fr.; Lara Tarvit, So.; Clay White, Sr. (4th).

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Gaffney, Ohio's Top Prospect, Picks Buckeyes

When Chris Holtmann was introduced as the 14th head coach in Ohio State men's basketball history on June 12, he wasn't shy about his intentions regarding in-state recruiting.

COURT REPORT Ryan McGlade

"We are going to work extremely hard as a staff to close the borders and dominate the state of Ohio in recruiting," he said.

Consider the first step of that mission complete.

On April 10, Alonzo Gaffney, the top-rated player from the Buckeye State in the 2019 recruiting class, announced via Twitter he had verbally committed to OSU. The five-star power forward who preps at Garfield Heights selected the Scarlet and Gray over such schools as Georgetown, Michigan State and North Carolina.

The pledge from Gaffney, the No. 18 overall prospect and third-best power forward in the 247Sports composite, comes on the heels of a remarkable 2017-18 season for Ohio State. Holtmann took over a program that went 17-15 the year prior and turned it into a 25-9 team that finished second in the Big Ten and advanced to the second round of the NCAA Tournament. Holtmann was named the 2018 Big Ten Coach of the Year for his work while for-

mer OSU forward Keita Bates-Diop, who led the Buckeyes with 19.8 points and 8.7 rebounds per game this past winter after having season-ending surgery on his leg in January 2017, was given the nod as the 2018 Big Ten Player of the Year.

Gaffney (6-9, 190) told BSB that the confluence of what took place this past season for Ohio State and proximity contributed to his college decision.

"The reason I chose Ohio State is because I want to stay at home," the Cleveland-area native said. "That was a big part of the reason. The way Coach Holtmann and his coaching staff brought the Ohio State basketball program back to life, that was a really big part of my decision also. His first year there, he got Big Ten Coach of the Year, and what he did with Keita Bates-Diop was a big part of my decision."

Ohio State announced the hiring of Holtmann on June 9. Exactly seven weeks later on July 28, the new staff offered Gaffney, who played at Cleveland Villa Angela-St. Joseph as a freshman and sophomore. Holtmann and his assistants, however, contacted Gaffney well before the offer, leaving a lasting impression with the prospect.

"With them offering me so early and me being one of their first calls, it showed how much they cared about me and how much they were watching me," Gaffney said. "I

felt like a priority with them, which was another reason why my decision was very clear. I felt like they needed me more than a want. These other schools, they wanted me to play for their program. Ohio State made me feel like a big priority, which was very special to me."

Garfield Heights head coach Sonny Johnson told BSB that it was critical the new OSU coaches reached out to Gaffney so quickly.

"It was huge because (Ohio State) has missed out on a lot of kids early," said Johnson, whose nephew, Meechie Johnson, just completed his freshman season at Garfield Heights and already holds an Ohio State offer. "Most of these kids want to go to Ohio State, but this coaching staff was doing an outstanding job recruiting kids early. They've already got early offers out there on freshmen and sophomores in the state of Ohio, which goes a long way."

Gaffney admitted that it was tough to separate one institution from the other early in the process. Fortunately for him, his father, Kevin – who played for the University of Cincinnati in the 1980s – is well versed in recruiting. Kevin told BSB that he gave Alonzo's cell phone number to college coaches early last summer so his son could get a taste of what recruiting is like with coaches constantly calling him. After Alonzo experienced this for some

time, Kevin said he was curious to know how his son felt about all of the attention.

"After a while," Kevin said, "I asked him, 'Do you like all of these coaches calling you?' He was like, 'No.' I was like, 'I wanted you to feel this because it's an experience I think every kid should go through. Once you go through something, you get better at it anyway.'"

When Garfield Heights' season started, Kevin said he changed Alonzo's number and told coaches, even Ohio State's, to go through him in order to get in touch with his son. Upon the conclusion of Garfield Heights' season, Kevin said he asked Alonzo whom he wanted to have his number.

"One of the schools was Ohio State, and then Georgetown," Kevin said. "He was leaning toward Michigan State early on, but that kind of died off. Even though (North Carolina head coach) Roy Williams came up a few times to see him and stuff like that, I knew deep down in his heart it was Ohio State."

Kevin said Ohio State coaches, including Holtmann and assistant Ryan Pedon, went to northeast Ohio seven times since being hired in June to see Alonzo. The most recent visit was one to the Gaffney home during the first week of April. There, Holtmann and Pedon explained their vision of how a talented player such as Alonzo could impact Ohio State basketball, the recruit said.

"(The coaches talked about) some big things like me being an Ohio guy and how they want to build their program around



Alonzo Gaffney

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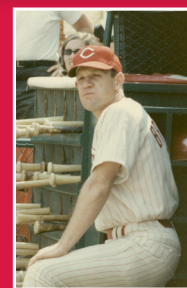


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OSU Basketball Verbal Commitments

Player in the class of 2019 who has issued a verbal commitment to play basketball at Ohio State. (Star ratings reflect 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Alonzo Gaffney	PF	6-9	190	★★★★★	Cleveland Garfield Heights

Ohio guys and how special it could be for me to go to Ohio State – not only basketball-wise, but academics,” Alonzo said. “They talked about the bonds I could make with people and how past players still have homes in Columbus to this day and how special that place is.”

Kevin said that in-home visit sealed the deal.

“With me going through my basketball experience, as a kid, I didn’t know what questions to ask a coach and things of that nature,” he said. “I knew what to ask (Holtmann). I really tried to cover all the bases, and he answered almost everything really well. Coming out of all of that, I started feeling really comfortable around the man. Alonzo felt the same way. It’s almost like it was a no-brainer.”

Kevin pointed out that Alonzo was recruited by former Ohio State head coach Thad Matta and his staff. Alonzo visited OSU while Matta was still at the helm but wasn’t too enthusiastic about the Buckeyes, his father said.

Once Holtmann arrived from Butler, Alonzo visited Columbus three times – once in September, then on Oct. 28 for the Ohio State-Penn State football game, followed by a Feb. 10 trip to watch the basketball Buckeyes beat Iowa, 82-64.

Kevin said Alonzo’s feelings toward Ohio State began to adjust during the last two trips to OSU’s campus.

“We were down there when Thad Matta was there, and Alonzo wasn’t feeling Ohio State then,” Kevin said. “He probably was feeling Cincinnati more than Ohio State at the time. After that second and third visit, Ohio State grew on him, the coaching staff grew on him, and they made him feel something that was special.”

Gaffney, who also plays for the All-Ohio AAU team, said he decided to commit in April, roughly seven months prior to the early signing period in November, so he can do his part to help Ohio State assemble an exceptional 2019 recruiting haul.

“I wanted to commit so early because I really don’t want to keep the program waiting where they recruit other guys and they feel like I’m not coming,” he said. “This summer with AAU is going to be really big for me to meet other guys and be able to land Ohio State more high-caliber players.”

Justin Ahrens, a 2018 Ohio State signee who played high school basketball at Versailles, Ohio, told BSB that Gaffney’s commitment can certainly provide the Buckeyes some momentum in the 2019 cycle. After all, Ohio State is one of just three schools with a five-star pledge in the high school junior class, according to the 247Sports composite. Kentucky (Ashton Hagans, No. 8 overall) and Duke (Joey Baker, No. 21) are the other two.

“With Alonzo being the first commitment in the 2019 class, that’s just going to help other kids build around him and help build that class and make it even stronger,” Ahrens said. “Everybody is going to want to be jumping on this train because it’s going to be taking off fast and it’s going to be fun.”

“He’s the type of team player we’re really trying to build this team around. Coach Holtmann wants guys in the program who will listen to the coach, do anything for this team to win for the name on the front of the jersey, not the name on the back, representing his home state and bringing Ohio State basketball back to the top.”

Kevin concurred with Ahrens, saying Alonzo can help return Ohio State basketball to national relevance on a consistent basis.

“They’ve been down for a couple years as far as the men’s basketball program,” Kevin said of the Buckeyes, “but it’s a Big Ten school, it’s The Ohio State, the state school. They’re trying to get that basketball program back on track, and I think that he could be a big part of that.”

Buckeyes Nab Florida State Point Guard Transfer

Two days prior to Gaffney committing to Ohio State, former Florida State point guard CJ Walker took to Twitter on April 8 to announce he would be transferring to OSU.

Walker, who was granted his release from Florida State on March 27, must sit out the 2018-19 season due to NCAA transfer rules. He’ll then have two years to play for the Buckeyes.



CJ Walker

A four-star product of Indianapolis Arsenal Tech, Walker was the No. 113 overall prospect in the 2016 recruiting class, according to the 247Sports composite. He was a target of Holtmann and his staff while they were at Butler but ended up committing to Purdue before decommitting and then signing with Florida State.

He spent two years with the Seminoles, becoming the starting point guard this past season when he averaged 8.0 points and 2.4 assists. FSU made it to the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament before losing to Michigan.

Walker (6-1, 195) shot 35.5 percent (39 of 110) from the three-point line, 41.2 percent (94 of 228) from the field and 73.2 percent (52 of 71) from the free-throw line in 2017-18. He started 34 of 35 games, but his playing time diminished down the stretch due to the emergence of fellow sophomore guard Trent Forrest.

After averaging 25.4 minutes and 9.0 points through the first 28 games this past season, Walker averaged just 14.6 minutes and 3.7 points in his final seven contests. He announced three days after the loss to Michigan that he would be leaving Florida State.

Walker could succeed C.J. Jackson, who will be a senior next season, as OSU’s starting point guard in 2019-20.

Holtmann credited his three assistants for being able to pull off two commitments in two days.

“I had a lot of faith in Ryan, Mike (Schrage) and Terry (Johnson) with how diligent they were going to be in their efforts,” Holtmann said April 10. “You never know if it’s going to look like this, but I did have confidence that our staff could have some success. We’ll see if we can continue to have some success in 2019.”

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Buckeyes Aiming To Build Off Frozen Four Run

Ohio State reached a stature unmatched in the 55-year history of the hockey program when it finished the season third in both major polls.

IN THE CREASE Craig Merz

"When you sit back and reflect on what just happened, it's truly special and amazing," coach Steve Rohlik said. "I give so much credit to our guys and our staff."

Now comes the even harder part: surpassing those lofty levels in the 2018-19 season. The task may be a little easier if Rohlik's comments to BSB on April 11 come to fruition.

He said he expects the "Big Three" – juniors Mason Jobst and Dakota Joshua and sophomore Tanner Laczynski – to return next season to spearhead one of the most potent offenses in the nation.

All three may have opportunities to turn pro with Laczynski (Philadelphia Flyers) and Joshua (Toronto Maple Leafs) being draft picks.

"I've got a pretty good feeling they're coming back," Rohlik said. "They understand what this place can continue to do for them, what a special time it is here and we're bringing back a decent team. I feel good about it. We'll see when the final decisions come out."

If he's right, then three of the top four scorers from the 2016-17 season would

return, with only current senior Matthew Weis missing. The Buckeyes finished 10th in the NCAA with 3.2 goals per game.

Laczynski led the Buckeyes with 47 points on 17 goals and 30 points. Jobst was next with 43 points (21-22) and Joshua fourth with 26 points (15-11). Of note, Laczynski (2018) and Jobst (2017) are second-team All-Americans.

Laczynski, a sixth-round pick in the 2016 NHL draft, has drawn the most conjecture whether he would leave school early. He impressed the Flyers' brass at the NCAA Midwest Regional in Allentown, Pa., last month and has compiled 79 points (27-52) in 75 career games with the Buckeyes.

The Flyers like his size (6-1, 191) and skills but are looking for him to improve his skating. Philadelphia has stocked its system with draft picks and seems in no hurry to rush Laczynski.

Rohlik noted that staying at OSU (26-10-5) another season has its benefits.

A recent study on stateofhockey.com found that of the 311 former college players who played at least one game in the NHL this season, 32 percent spent all four years in school and 70 percent played at least three seasons for their program.

"That's an unbelievable stat," Rohlik said. "(The Flyers) understand that, and Tanner understands that. Stats are showing for a guy like Tanner, play one more year, get closer to your degree (Laczynski is a two-time Ohio State Scholar-Athlete and an Academic All-Big Ten selection), continue to develop and be that much closer to playing in the NHL.

"That's what Tanner's looking at, Philly's looking at."

Joshua, who was chosen by Toronto in

the fifth round in 2014, is in a similar situation despite having already played three seasons for the Buckeyes.

The Maple Leafs also have a lot of young players throughout their organization and can afford to wait on Joshua if desired. Joshua is a 6-2, 200-pound power forward who has been inconsistent but stepped up in the postseason when Weis was lost to a shoulder injury.

Joshua was named to the All-Midwest Regional team and has 32 goals and 46 assists for 78 points in 96 career games.

He acknowledged after the loss to Minnesota Duluth that the possibility of players turning pro before their eligibility expires is a fact of life in college hockey.

"We're all a family here," he said. "After we get back and really have a chance to digest things and see what everybody's best option is, we'll go from there. Everybody lives their own life, and at the end of the day, everybody has to choose the best route for themselves."

Jobst is in a different situation than Joshua and Laczynski. He is undrafted and as such an unrestricted free agent. He's also 24 and has to consider that the clock is ticking on his pro career. Obviously his size (5-8, 185) will come into question, but not his desire.

On the positive side, any team that signs him gets a mature, polished leader who is a two-way player who excels on the power play and penalty kill. He has 128 points (52-76) in 114 games.

"He'll be able to walk into a contract where he's going to be in a pretty good situation," Rohlik said. "He can dictate his contract, which is pretty special."

Going Deep

In addition to losing Weis, who was third in scoring this season with 37 points (12-25), other departing seniors are forwards Christian Lampasso (10-6-16), Kevin Miller (8-4-12) and Luke Stork (0-8-8), and defensemen Matt Joyaux (2-8-10) and Janik Moser (2-2-4).

Yet, the Buckeyes are in a reload, not rebuild, mode.

"We're going to have, I think, the 'Big Three' coming back," Rohlik said. "We're going to have tremendous depth up front. That's what I've always built on. When we're at our best we have depth."

One of the keys will be junior Freddy Gerard, who went from 14 points (4-10) his first two seasons to 24 points (12-12) as a junior.

Another is the return of junior Miguel Fidler, who took a medical redshirt after missing the 2017-18 season when he underwent surgery for an upper-body injury. He has 17 points (7-10) in 54 games. He is a 2014 fifth-round pick of the Florida Panthers.

"It's like we're getting a new player who obviously has experience, has been here and knows what's going on," Rohlik said.

Defensively, the Buckeyes are going to be strong again, starting with junior goaltender Sean Romeo, who was 22-10-5 with a 2.06 goals-against average, a .927 save percentage and two shutouts in his first season with the Buckeyes after transferring from Maine.

Freshman backup Tommy Nappier (4-0-0, 1.33, .956 and one shutout) made the Big Ten's all-freshman team.

"His skills are unbelievable," Rohlik said of Nappier. "He can be an elite goaltender."

The experienced defensive corps is led by juniors Sasha Larocque, Tommy Parran and sophomores Wyatt Ege, Matt Miller and Gordi Myer.

Besides Nappier, Austin Pooley (2-3-5 in 41 games) was the only other freshman to make much of a contribution. Rohlik said there will be opportunities next season.

"I need all the freshmen to take another step," he said.

The incoming freshman class of seven is expected to add a couple more defensemen in the coming weeks.

"We don't need those guys to come in here and carry the mail," Rohlik said. "We need those guys to come in and be part of our depth."

Best Wishes

Departing senior Lampasso on what this season meant to him: "It's really cool to see that the whole school was getting behind the hockey program, and I'm super interested and super excited to see what the next group of guys coming in will do. I'm just happy to put my brick in the wall for the program while getting it to where it is now. I hope seeing that Ohio State is a Frozen Four-bound team, and that we had a chance to win it, the fan base and Buckeye Nation can look at it and see that we're legit."

Honors

As noted earlier, Laczynski was named a CCM/AHCA Second-Team West All-American by the American Hockey Coaches Association on April 6. ... Romeo was the recipient of the Elite 90 award by the NCAA which honors the student-athlete with the highest cumulative grade-point average participating at the finals site for each of the NCAA's championships. OSU's Jacyn Reeves earned the same award at the Women's Frozen Four in March. ... Rohlik, the Big Ten Coach of the Year this season, was runner-up to Notre Dame's Jeff Jackson for the CCM/AHCA Division I Men's Coach of the Year award.

By The Numbers

Earning the third spot in the USCHO and USA Today/USA Hockey Magazine polls enabled the Buckeyes to have their highest finishes in each in program history. ... OSU was first nationally in penalty kill (.894), third in scoring defense (2.07) and sixth in power play (.239). The goals-against average is a program record, breaking the mark of 2.21 by the 2002-03 team. ... Ohio State was the fourth NCAA school in history to send teams to the men's and women's Frozen Fours in the same season. The others are Boston College (2007, '12, '16), Minnesota (2002, '04-05, '12, '14) and Wisconsin (2006).

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Comeback Falls Short In National Semifinal

By CRAIG MERZ
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Ohio State tempted fate again and paid dearly for another slow start when Minnesota Duluth scored two quick goals then held on to defeat the Buckeyes 2-1 in a Frozen Four semifinal on April 5 at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul, Minn.

A similar slow start occurred in the March 17 Big Ten championship game when Notre Dame opened a 2-0 lead in the first 15 minutes. Although the Buckeyes eventually rallied, they lost 3-2 in overtime.

The Buckeyes seemed to have remedied the problem the following weekend at the NCAA Midwest Regional by dominating Princeton 4-2 and Denver 5-1. In each game Ohio State opened the scoring to run its record when getting the first goal to a gaudy 19-0-3 this season to advance to the Frozen Four for the second time in program history.

"We might have done that one other time this season, and that was in the Big Ten championship game against Notre Dame," OSU coach Steve Rohlik said of UMD's lead. "You've got to tip your cap to Duluth, but our guys felt we were on our heels right away."

"I couldn't have predicted that. We probably had the best last 10 days of practice that we've had on and off (the ice) and really felt like we were focused and ready to go. But you get smacked in the face like that early, it wakes you up."

The Bulldogs – the runner-up to NCAA champion Denver in 2017 – took advantage of the jittery Buckeyes from the onset and scored twice in the first 3:04 of the game. That proved to be enough, even though OSU sophomore Tanner Laczynski scored with 10:33 left in the third period.

"Starting off the first four minutes like that is pretty tough and tough to bounce back from," said OSU junior defenseman Tommy Parran. "Coach told us to settle down and reset our minds and go back to basics and just grind shift by shift and try to get better from there. I think we did a pretty good job of that."

UMD's 2-1 victory advanced the Bulldogs to the April 7 title game vs. Notre Dame. Minnesota Duluth again was victorious 2-1 to earn its second championship, having won in the same building seven years earlier.

It's of little consolation to the Buckeyes (26-10-5) that they lost to the titleholder, especially considering how they responded to that early deficit. UMD outshot Ohio State 17-4 in the first period, and if not for junior goaltender Sean Romeo, who settled down after yielding those two quick goals, it could have been a Buckeye bashing in the national spotlight the program has coveted.

"That's a tough way to start a hockey game against a really good hockey team,"

Rohlik said. "We dug ourselves a hole. But I couldn't be more proud of my group. They never quit, like they have all year, right through the end. I'm just proud of our university, proud to be on a big stage like this and really proud of my guys."

Louie Roehl and Jared Thomas had goals for the Bulldogs (24-16-3). OSU outshot UMD 16-11 the final two periods, but Hunter Shepard stopped 19 of 20 Buckeye shots in the game. Romeo made 26 saves.

The game and the other semifinal, a 4-3 Notre Dame win over Michigan in an all-Big Ten tilt, drew 18,026 to the home of the NHL's Minnesota Wild.

The Bulldogs for the second straight time ended the Buckeyes' season. In the first round of the 2017 West Regional, UMD took a 2-0 lead in the second period. OSU drew even at 2-2 but lost in overtime in the Buckeyes' first NCAA tournament appearance in nine years.

"I'm definitely pretty upset, and if you look around the room everybody is pretty upset about it," Parran said. "They know we deserve better and we should have been better."

This year they went further than any Buckeye team since 1998 when OSU also lost in the Frozen Four semifinal.

"The last few seasons we've gotten to the point we want to be at, but you've just got to find a way when you get to those points to have a different ending, whether it's coming out and starting better, digging deeper or finding more in you," junior forward Dakota Joshua said. "I guess Minnesota Duluth seems to be the hindrance in our seasons the last two, but there's not much to say other than you have got to show up every game. Every big game is going to be a close one, that's usually how it goes. The last two years we just happened to fall on the wrong side of things."

The Beginning Of The End

Ohio State had allowed just over two goals per game this season, so imagine the Buckeyes' surprise when they looked at the scoreboard and saw a deuce posted for the Bulldogs before most fans had settled into their seats.

The first goal was aided by, from the UMD standpoint, Parran having to drop his broken stick. Matt Anderson's attempted shot went past Parran to Roehl at the far post for a 1-0 lead just 1:53 into the game.

"I don't know if it was the shot that broke it or a slash, but my stick broke in half as the puck was coming to the net and I missed the short out and they had a guy come in on the back end," Parran said.

Romeo tried to anticipate Roehl's shot but it was too late.

"I actually don't remember how the puck got over because I remember going down and the next thing I knew the guy backdoor had

it, and I tried to slide over but wasn't in time," Romeo said. "They kind of held us in our zone, and when you get zone time like that it's hard to get the puck out and we paid for it."

Thomas scored on a breakaway at 3:04 with what would be the winner.

"It was a huge start for us," he said. "I mean that's been our key all along. When we've had success, we've had fast starts."

OSU kept the Bulldogs from adding more, but the Ohio State offense was stymied for most of the game.

"They did a really good job with their sticks and blocking shots," said OSU junior captain Mason Jobst. "Obviously, it wasn't the start we wanted. And they just did a good job of clearing out the front of the net."



Laczynski gave the Buckeyes life with his power-play goal in the third period at 9:27. His 17th goal was assisted by Joshua and Wyatt Ege. Ege, a sophomore defenseman, broke his stick on a shot, but Joshua maintained possession in the zone and Laczynski picked up the loose puck.

"I definitely think the response as a whole was pretty (good)," junior forward Freddy Gerard said. "We have a tendency of going down early in these big games and we have got to climb our way back, but we always find a way to pull ourselves together. I think Sean, after his start, stood on his head again like he has all year, and that says a lot about his character and who he is."

Romeo was pulled for an extra attacker with about two minutes left, but Ohio State could not pull off another comeback.

Minn. Duluth 2, Ohio St. 1

April 5, 2018
Xcel Energy Center, St. Paul, Minn.

	1	2	3	F
	2	0	0	2
	0	0	1	1

Scoring

First Period: UMD: Roehl (Anderson, Mackay), 1:53. UMD: Thomas (Kuhlman), 3:04.

Second Period: No scoring.

Third Period: OSU: Laczynski (Joshua, Ege), 9:27 (PP).

SOG: UMD 28, OSU 20. **PIM:** UMD 5-10, OSU 3-6. **PP:** UMD 0-2, OSU 1-4. **Goaltenders (Saves):** UMD: Shepard (19); OSU: Romeo (26). **Att.:** N/A. **Records:** UMD 24-16-3; OSU 26-10-5.

"It's a heartbreaker, for sure," Joshua said. "We felt like we just ran out of time there at the end as everybody in the building was on their feet."

"That's the second time that I feel we let Duluth off the hook in the last two seasons. It's a terrible feeling, and I hate that we have to go through it again."

The game ended the OSU careers of seniors Matt Joyaux, Christian Lampasso, Kevin Miller, Janik Moser, Luke Stork and Matthew Weis, who was injured and did not play.



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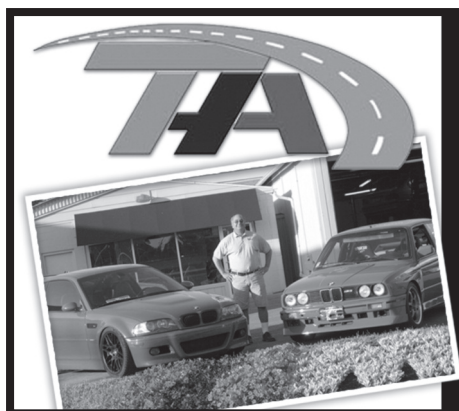
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Muzerall Brings Women's Hockey To New Heights

By CRAIG MERZ
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Nadine Muzerall was hired to mend the broken women's hockey program. She's done it so thoroughly and quickly that HGTV might want to consider giving her a fixer-upper show.

In March, Muzerall, in the second season of a five-year contract, took Ohio State to a level unimaginable 18 months earlier when she rescued the Buckeyes following the firing of the previous two head coaches over a two-year period because of scandals.

The Canadian came to Columbus from Minnesota, where all she did was win for the Golden Gophers, first as a player then as an assistant coach. She returned to the Minneapolis campus last month with her new team, one that two seasons ago won 10 games, for the Buckeyes' first Frozen Four appearance. OSU had never qualified for the NCAA tournament until this season.

Although Ohio State (24-11-4) lost 1-0 in overtime to eventual champion Clarkson in the national semifinal on March 16, the bar had been raised for the Buckeyes.

When asked after the game if she could see OSU being a regular at the Frozen Four with such elite programs as Clarkson, Minnesota and Wisconsin, she didn't hesitate, "Well, that's why I was hired. That's the ultimate goal. I know for myself in particular I have high standards and high goals that I

put on myself and I try to push on the athletes as well."

That's "Coach Muzz" being her usual blunt self.

"I don't think the better team won, and it's unfortunate because (my team) played their hearts out, and that's sports," was Muzerall's assessment of the Clarkson game.

She was miffed that an OSU goal by Jincy Dunne after a faceoff win in the second period was negated by an interference call.

"I saw our player box somebody out. She was stronger and bigger," Muzerall said. "We had a nice shot from our All-American defenseman. It was a hell of a shot, a ripper.

"I'm not going to sit here and argue with it. I thought it was a very nice shot and a very nice faceoff by our team that we executed and worked on in practice."

Touché.

That drive and edginess is a carryover from her playing days when she helped Minnesota win the 2000 NCAA title with three goals and an assist in two Frozen Four games. This coming after she tripped on the ice, banged her head and was stretched out during practice the day before the semifinals.

Muzerall was also an assistant when the Golden Gophers won four more national championships, and she later became the first

women's hockey player to be inducted into Minnesota's Athletics Hall of Fame.

Those credentials and her work with Hockey Canada were exactly what OSU executive associate athletic director Diana Sabau was looking for when she found herself in need of a new coach five weeks before the start of the 2016-17 season.

To say the women's hockey program was a mess would be an understatement. Nate Handrahan resigned before he could be fired after the 2014-15 season over violating university policies of sexual harassment, inappropriate conduct and retaliation in regard to his players. Then Jenny Potter was fired in August 2016 for NCAA recruiting violations.

Muzerall was hired Sept. 10, 2016, after a search committee process that included being interviewed by Dunne and forward Lauren Spring, who were preparing for their third coach in as many years. As much as they were grilling her, Muzerall was assessing what was in store if she took the job.

"The questions they asked and, honestly, the looks on their faces, they looked broken," she told BSB in September 2016. "With that, I know what it takes as a player and I know how hard I can push my athletes from a coaching perspective. I'm going to use that to my advantage, and hopefully great things come from it.

"I know I can change this program for the better. I can bring some structure and stability."

The results on the ice were noticeable – from 10-25-1 the previous season to 14-18-1 in her first campaign to the school-record 24 wins this season – but other differences were more subtle to outsiders.

"It starts with these athletes believing in the process," she said. "When I came I knew we had to shake things up and change the culture. The girls really wanted that. They really bought into everything the coaching staff was presenting to them."

She gave the players tough love but also understood their role as student-athletes still maturing and finding their ways.



Nadine Muzerall

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"We're young girls," freshman forward Emma Maltais said. "Sometimes we lose sight of how to handle ourselves. Coach Muzz does a great job keeping us in line. At times it does get hard. It means we're a family and we all come together in the end."

Muzerall is also fiercely loyal to her players. She got more charter flights, improved the nutrition and strength training programs and encouraged her players to spend the summer in Columbus and work out together. She also increased the recruiting budget.

One of her biggest investments didn't involve money, but time. She sets aside blocks of hours each week for individual conferences to discuss anything a player wants, not necessarily hockey, to understand her state of mind. She also emphasized the need to hit the books, and the results have paid off.

The women's hockey team was recognized at the April 9 OSU Scholar-Athlete dinner for the most improved grade-point average among teams with large rosters, and 22 of 24 players made the Scholar-Athlete list.

Spring was named one of the recipients of the Corwin A. Fergus Memorial Award for demonstrating positive qualities of character and citizenship and showing potential for success in a graduate or professional program. The senior also won the Leann Grimes-Davidge Award, which is bestowed on a female athlete who reflects Grimes-Davidge's outstanding qualities of athletic performance, scholarship, character, campus or community involvement and leadership.

In addition, junior forward Jacyn Reeves on March 15 was awarded the Elite 90 award, which is presented by the NCAA to the player with the highest cumulative GPA participating at the Frozen Four.

Muzerall developed what she called a "cultural playbook" for the players that includes four pillars: grateful, sacrifice, relentless and honor.

"She's allowed us girls to buy into something really special here," Maltais said. "She set the pillars for our team. She's an easy person to follow when it comes to being a player for her."

Even when the coach gently reinforces her beliefs with a sledgehammer. One of Muzerall's tenets is that there be no alcohol consumption by the players during the season.

With that, her words to the team as the scoreless game against Clarkson progressed were simple, "I told them 'Cash in your chips, this is why we have a dry season. You're more fit,' and as you can see as the game went on, we got stronger."

Muzerall was named the Western Collegiate Hockey Association Coach of the Year for 2017-18, one of several honors that went to the Buckeyes in their historic season.

- Dunne was chosen for the American Hockey Coaches Association All-American Second Team. She was also picked for the WCHA's first team.

- Maltais was tabbed the WCHA Rookie of the Year as well as a first-team conference selection.

- Also on the All-WCHA squad are junior goaltender Kassidy Sauve (second team) and freshman forward Tatum Skaggs (third team).

Despite the heartbreaking loss to Clarkson, Muzerall praised her team's resolve.

"It doesn't dictate who they are as individuals," she said. "They grew into young women this year. I'm very proud of them, and they just happen to be hell of a hockey players at the same time."

Buckeyes Sweep PSU Amid 4-Game Win Streak

By JOE DEMPSEY
Special To Buckeye Sports Bulletin

The Ohio State baseball team topped Ohio University, 4-0, at home April 10 before traveling to State College, Pa., for a three-game set with Penn State.

Against the Nittany Lions, the Buckeyes came up with a 1-0 win on April 13 before sweeping an April 14 doubleheader. Ohio State won the first game, 5-1, before trouncing Penn State, 19-8, in the second.

The wins over Ohio (15-15) and Penn State (7-22, 1-11 Big Ten) helped the Buckeyes improve to 24-10 overall and 6-3 in conference play.

OSU 4, Ohio 0

Jake Vance got the weekday start and delivered with a career-high six strikeouts while allowing only three hits and one walk in 5½ innings, improving to 3-1. Noah McGowan drove in two runs to help lead the Buckeyes to the 4-0 victory against the Bobcats.

Ohio State failed to score through four innings but strung a few hits together in the fifth to take the lead. With two outs and the bases loaded McGowan singled through the left side to score Dominic Canzone and Jacob Barnwell. Then Conner Pohl drove in Kobie Foppe with a single to right center, giving the Buckeyes a 3-0 advantage.

Barnwell notched an RBI on a fielder's choice that scored Brady Cherry in the sixth inning to extend the Buckeye lead to 4-0.

OSU 1, Penn State 0

Behind a stellar performance from its pitching staff and a costly Nittany Lion miscue, Ohio State defeated Penn State, 1-0, in front of 1,214 fans at Lubrano Park to open the three-game series.

"Our pitching staff was strong tonight and we've won a lot of games with our bats this year, and it's great to have two wins in a row now due to our arms," head coach Greg Beals said. "It's important for a baseball team to prove they can win games in different ways. We are starting to show that."

Neither team scored until the top of the fifth when Canzone crossed the plate after Penn State starting pitcher Justin Hagenman tossed a failed pickoff attempt to first base. With two outs and two strikes on McGowan, Hagenman attempted to pick off Foppe at first with Canzone on second. The errant throw allowed Canzone to score from second before McGowan struck out to end the frame.

Ohio State starter Connor Curlis pitched 4⅓ scoreless innings, giving up four hits and four walks with two strikeouts in a no decision.

Although the Nittany Lions had eight hits to the Buckeyes' six, timely defense and pitching led the visitors to victory.

"I liked how we played defensively, and we turned a couple double plays," Beals said. "Overall, the defense supported the pitching staff. It was a big win on opening night, and (Penn State) had a great outing on the mound. We handled it and found a way to win."

Ohio State turned critical double plays

in the second and third innings to keep the Nittany Lions off the board.

Kyle Michalik improved to 1-1 with the win, tossing two-thirds of an inning and allowing one hit with one strikeout. Thomas Waning threw a scoreless two-thirds of an inning as well. Seth Kinker closed out the final three innings, allowing three hits and striking out two while picking up his eighth save of the season.

Penn State applied some pressure to Kinker in the bottom of the ninth with runners on second and third and two outs. Kinker got Ryan Sloniger to fly out to Dillon Dinger in the gap in left center to end the game. The freshman Dinger made his second start in center field after coming in as a catcher.

OSU 5, Penn State 1

Ohio State scored first on an exciting trip around the base paths by Barnwell in the third. The Buckeyes' catcher hit a single to right center then advanced to second on a throwing error by the center fielder. Barnwell then scored from second on a throwing error by the pitcher, traveling the full 360 feet around the diamond to give his team a 1-0 lead.



Greg Beals

The Buckeyes added to their lead in the fourth starting with back-to-back solo home runs by Cherry and Dinger.

Noah West ripped an RBI double to score Barnwell, and West scored when Canzone reached on a fielding error by Penn State left fielder Braxton Giavedoni, making it 5-0.

Sloniger led off the bottom of the eighth with a triple and Giavedoni drove him in with a single, but that run was all Penn State could muster.

Ohio State starter Ryan Feltner improved to 4-2, tossing six scoreless innings and scattering five hits and three walks with five strikeouts. Freshman reliever Griffan Smith allowed the lone run in two innings on two hits and one walk with one strikeout. Michalik finished the game with one scoreless inning and struck out one.

Dinger went 2 for 4 with the homer, one run scored and an RBI. Barnwell also hit 2 for 4 and scored two runs. West went 2 for 4 with one run scored, one RBI and two doubles.

OSU 19, Penn State 8

The Buckeyes picked up their first conference series sweep of the year by winning the finale of a doubleheader that had originally been scheduled to be played over two days before a poor weather forecast prompted a schedule change.

The Buckeyes wasted no time getting on the board in the 19-8 win as they put up four runs in the top of the first. McGowan hit an RBI double to score Canzone. Pohl drove in Foppe with an RBI groundout. Then Tyler Cowles hit a two-out, two-run home run that plated McGowan.

Penn State struck back in the bottom of the second when Shea Sbranti hit a three-run home run to cut the lead to 4-3.

Ohio State battled back in the top of the third with a two-run single by Cowles, scoring McGowan and Pohl. Cherry knocked in Dinger on a single to left, and Cowles

scored on a passed ball, extending the Buckeyes' lead to 8-3.

Parker Hendershot answered for the Nittany Lions in the bottom of the third with a two-run single up the middle, cutting the deficit to 8-5.

Canzone scored on a wild pitch in the top half of the fourth inning that included one passed ball, two wild pitches and three Buckeyes being hit by pitches. Pohl hit a two-run homer that scored Foppe and made it 11-5.

Foppe had a sacrifice fly in the fifth that brought in West from third and pushed the lead to 12-5.

In the seventh Canzone laced a double to right that scored Barnwell from second base. Foppe then hit another sacrifice fly to plate West and extended the lead to 14-5.

Malik Jones had an infield single that brought in Bo Coolen from third to get the Buckeyes on the board in the eighth inning. West then picked up an RBI by getting hit by a pitch with the bases loaded. Canzone then drove a sacrifice fly to left field to score Nate Romans and give Ohio State a 17-5 advantage.

Tommy Gibson drove in a run for the Nittany Lions with an RBI groundout that plated Hendershot in the bottom of the eighth.

Jones picked up another RBI for the Buckeyes on an infield single to bring in McGowan in the ninth. West drew a bases-loaded walk to score Dinger and put Ohio State up 19-6.

Kris Kremer ripped an RBI triple for

the Nittany Lions in the bottom of the ninth. Then Mason Nadeau picked up an RBI on a groundout to cut the deficit to 19-8, but the comeback effort stalled out.

Cowles had a big day at the plate for the Scarlet and Gray, going 2 for 3 with two runs scored and four RBI. Canzone went 3 for 5 with two runs scored and two RBI, and Dinger went 3 for 5 with three runs scored.

Pohl hit 1 for 4 with two runs scored and three RBI while extending his hitting streak to 14 games. Foppe went 1 for 1 with two walks, two runs scored and two RBI as he extended his hitting streak to nine games.

Iowa Action Recapped In BSB Quickly

Before returning home to face the Bobcats, Ohio State traveled to Iowa City, Iowa, for a doubleheader on April 7 before the series finale on April 8, coming away with one win from the three.

On April 7, the Buckeyes topped Iowa, 2-1, before falling 9-5 in the second contest of the day. The following day, Ohio State fell to the Hawkeyes, 2-1, giving Iowa the series victory.

The series at Iowa was recapped in the April 10 edition of the electronic BSB Quickly, which can be accessed on BuckeyeSports.com. For signup information regarding BuckeyeSports.com, BSB's full-service website which is free to all print subscribers, see page 5.

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BUCKEYE BRIEFS

Men's Tennis Extends Win Streak To 12

The Ohio State men's tennis team topped No. 6 Illinois and Northwestern on April 14 and 15, respectively, to extend its winning streak to 12 matches. The victories, which came by 4-0 and 7-0 margins in Columbus, brought the No. 3 Buckeyes to 24-2 overall and 9-0 in Big Ten play.

Against the Fighting Illini (16-6, 7-1 Big Ten), Ohio State picked up a quick doubles point before taking the first three singles matches to polish off the victory.

The match started on the outdoor courts for doubles, where Ohio State's pairing of junior Hunter Tubert and fifth-year senior Matt Mendez beat Alex Brown and Caleb Chakravarthi, 6-2, before sophomore JJ Wolf and junior Martin Joyce dispatched Illinois' Aleks Vukic and Aron Hiltzik by the same score. In singles, which were played partially indoors after rainy weather set in, Ohio State picked up a ranked win when No. 4 senior Mikael Torpegaard defeated No. 15 Vukic (6-1, 6-2) to set the tone.

Following Torpegaard's win, OSU's No. 98 freshman John McNally topped Hiltzik (6-3, 6-2) and No. 90 Joyce beat Chakravarthi, 6-3, 6-4, to close out the match.

Against Northwestern (9-14, 4-5), Ohio State won the doubles point again before sweeping the six singles matches. In doubles, Joyce and Wolf topped Dominik Stary and Ben Vandixhorn, 6-2, while the No. 70 duo of Torpegaard and McNally dispatched Jason Seidman and Nick Brookes, 6-4, for the point.

Moving to singles, No. 40 Wolf, McNally, Torpegaard, freshman Tim Seibert, Joyce and No. 68 sophomore Kyle Seelig won their matches in order to complete the shutout victory on Senior Day.

After the match, Torpegaard, Mendez and fellow senior Riley Reist were honored as their home careers came to an end.

Women's Tennis Sweeps Indiana Road Trip

The Ohio State women's tennis team traveled to the Hoosier State and came away with two road wins. The Buckeyes were in Bloomington, Ind., on April 13 and topped Indiana, 6-1, before going to West Lafayette,

Ind., and dispatching Purdue, 5-2, two days later. The victories moved the Buckeyes to 12-6 on the season and 6-3 in conference competition.

Against Indiana (15-9, 2-6), the Buckeyes won the doubles point before going 5-1 in singles. In doubles, the No. 30 duo of red-shirt freshman Shiori Fukuda and senior Anna Sanford topped IU's Natalie Whalen and Olga Zavarotnaya, 6-1, before freshman Mary Beth Hurley and senior Olivia Sneed beat Madison Appel and Michelle McKamey, 6-2.

Moving to singles, No. 119 Sneed picked up the first win with a 6-1, 7-5 victory over Whalen. After that, No. 54 Sanford beat Appel (6-4, 6-3), No. 105 Fukuda beat Caitlin Bernard (7-5, 6-1), sophomore Danielle Wolf topped McKamey (6-5, 7-5) and Hurley defeated Zavarotnaya (6-1, 6-7 (7-5), 1-0 (10-7)). The Buckeyes lost their only match of the day in the finale when Indiana's Xiwei Cai dispatched redshirt freshman Maria Tyrina (5-7, 6-3, 1-0 (11-9)).

Two days later, the Buckeyes picked up another win in a tightly-contested match against Purdue (12-9, 5-4). The teams split the first two doubles matches before Ohio State clinched the opening point when Hurley and Sneed defeated Ena Babic and Zala Dovnik, 6-4.

Purdue quickly tied the match when Seira Shimizu topped OSU's Tyrina, 6-2, 6-0. The Buckeyes bounced back with wins from Hurley over Dovnik (6-2, 6-1) and Wolf over Caitlin Calkins (3-6, 6-1, 6-0) to move ahead, 3-1.

The Boilermakers closed the gap to one when unranked Silvia Ambrosio defeated Sanford (1-6, 7-5, 7-5), but the Buckeyes took the final two matches to clinch the victory as Fukuda beat Babic (6-3, 3-6, 7-6) and Sneed topped Alex Sabe (6-7, 6-2, 6-3).

Men's Golf Finishes 14th In Rain-Shortened Invitational

Playing at the Boilermaker Invitational at Birk Boilermaker-Kampen Course in West Lafayette on April 14, the Ohio State men's golf team came away with a 14th-place finish out of 17 teams after the April 15 final round was canceled due to rain.

Despite weather concerns, the teams were able to complete 36 holes on the first – and last

– day of the tournament, with Ohio State logging a 22-over score of 598. The Buckeyes' top finisher was junior Will Voetsch, who tallied a two-round score of 2-over par 146 after posting a 2-under 70 in the second round to tie for 20th.

Kent State and Northwestern tied for first in the invitational with identical plus-3 scores of 579. UCF's Bobby Bai finished on top of the individual leaderboard with a minus-5 total of 139 after a second-round 69.

Women's Golf Takes 7th In Lady Buckeye Invitational

Like the men's team, the Ohio State women's golf team saw its April 15 final round canceled after two rounds of the Lady Buckeye Invitational were played on April 14 in Columbus.

The Buckeyes had a plus-22 score of 598 to finish seventh out of 14 teams in the tournament, which was played at OSU's Scarlet Course. Illinois finished first with a 3-over score of 579. Kent State's Pinnipa Panthong and Illinois' Grace Park tied for first in the individual standings with minus-3 scores of 141.

Junior Jaclyn Lee was Ohio State's top finisher in a tie for 13th with a two-round total of plus-4 148. Junior Niki Schroeder (T-20th; plus-5 149) and freshman Alanis Sakuma (T-25th; plus-6 150) finished in the top 25 as well.

Men's Volleyball Blasts Hawks In MIVA Quarters

In the Midwestern Intercollegiate Volleyball Association tournament quarterfinals, the Ohio State men's volleyball team cruised past Quincy with a straight-sets victory on April 14 at St. John Arena in Columbus.

The top-seeded Buckeyes (21-5) continued their momentum from a strong end to the regular season, sweeping the eighth-seeded Hawks (12-19) in three sets (25-22, 25-18, 25-12).

In its hammering of the Hawks, OSU was led by Nicholas Szerszen's 14 kills and five aces. The senior outside hitter is four terminations away from setting the all-time record in program history, sitting at 1,599 kills behind Steve Potter (1992-95) and his career total of 1,602. Szerszen already set the school marks for aces (226) and points (1,934) during his four years with the Scarlet and Gray.

Senior outside hitter Maxime Hervoir complemented Szerszen with eight kills and four digs, while junior setter Sanil Thomas dished out 27 assists and five digs.

Ohio State controlled the tempo of the match, jumping out to an 18-11 advantage in the first set before holding off a late run by Quincy for the 25-22 result. In the second stanza, the Buckeyes buckled down on defense and limited the Hawks to an attacking rate of .087 before pulling away with the 25-18 score. OSU polished off the sweep in the third set, where it placed an exclamation point on the match victory with 13 kills and three blocks en route to running away with the 25-12 final.

With wins in 10 of its past 11 matches, Ohio State looks to keep the momentum rolling in the semifinals against No. 4 seed Lewis (19-10) on April 18 at 7 p.m. at St. John Arena. If the Buckeyes beat the Flyers, OSU faces the victor of No. 3 seed Ball State and No. 2 seed Loyola-Chicago on April 21 in the MIVA championship in Columbus.

Men's Lax Edges U-M For Upset

When thunderstorms in the forecast for April 14 forced a schedule shuffle for Ohio State between the spring football game's afternoon start and the men's lacrosse team's morning matchup with Michigan, the Buckeyes had their Big Ten battle bumped up to April 13.

Despite the date and time change late in the week, OSU showed up for its prime-time tilt with the No. 20 Wolverines and notched an 8-5 upset before 2,751 under the lights at Ohio Stadium.

After a five-game losing streak dipped Ohio State below the .500 mark, the Buckeyes evened their record back to 6-6 overall and 1-2 in conference play with their climb back into the win column. OSU's victory over U-M (7-5, 0-3 Big Ten) served as its seventh straight since the rivalry became an annual occurrence in the 2011-12 season, and head coach Nick Myers noted the importance of it for the seniors.

"To send a deserving senior class out with another win over our rivals is what I'm so proud of," Myers said. "This is a Big Ten win, and those are hard to come by. I know this team has a lot of confidence and knows there's a lot more out there for us."

Sophomore attackman/midfielder Tre LeClaire led Ohio State with three goals, followed by five other Buckeyes on the board with one score each. Freshman attackman Colby Smith, junior attackman Jack Jasinski, freshman midfielder Jackson Reid, junior attackman Gale Thorpe and sophomore attackman Lukas Buckley rounded out the goal production for OSU.

Ohio State dictated control of the contest as it edged Michigan in shots (44-23), ground-balls (23-17) and faceoffs (10-7). The 44 shots were a season-high mark for the Buckeyes' offense, while sophomore goalie Josh Kirson snagged seven saves and yielded five goals to pace the defense.

"We had a great week of practice," said senior defenseman Erik Evans. "I'm proud of the way the guys came out firing both offensively and defensively. I think we're starting to put things together, and I love the way we battled today."

After taking a 3-3 tie into halftime, OSU broke out in the third quarter on a 4-1 run. Buckley got Ohio State on the board at the 10:05 mark, followed by LeClaire's second score of the game at the 4:55 point. Thorpe added another goal for the Buckeyes at the 4:01 mark before LeClaire capped his hat trick with 2:34 left in the period. The Wolverines scored with three seconds left in the stanza to cut OSU's edge to 7-4 before they traded goals in the fourth quarter for the 8-5 final, sending the seniors out with an unblemished record in the U-M rivalry.

Women's Lax Skid Grows To 4

After a 10-8 loss to Bucknell in a midweek matchup, the Ohio State women's lacrosse team was unable to bounce back over the weekend in a 20-5 defeat against No. 2 Maryland.

On a four-game skid, the Buckeyes fell to 5-9 overall and 1-4 in conference play between the back-to-back losses to the Bison (3-10) and the Terrapins (14-1, 4-0 Big Ten).

OSU got off on the wrong foot April 11 against Bucknell before a crowd of 250 on a neutral site at Pittsburgh Mount Lebanon. Ohio State fell behind early for a 2-0 deficit, but the Buckeyes answered with three straight goals for a 3-2 lead. After scores from junior attacker McKayla Conti (23:47), sophomore midfielder Liza Hernandez (23:27) and junior midfielder Baley Parrott (22:41), Bucknell rattled off three goals of its own for a 5-3 lead at halftime.

The Bison kept control in the second half, notching two scores in the opening 3:15. Hernandez added another goal at the 26:12 mark, but Bucknell scored another pair to put OSU in a 9-4 hole. Ohio State's four-score comeback effort, highlighted by Parrott's second goal of the game with 5:57 left followed by



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senior attacker Molly Wood's tally 49 seconds later to make it 9-8, was too little, too late. The Bison held on, adding a goal with 3:46 left for the 10-8 final.

Bucknell beat the Buckeyes in shots (29-24), groundballs (18-15) and draw controls (14-6).

On Senior Day on April 15 before a crowd of 756 at Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium in Columbus, OSU faced a steep challenge in No. 2 UMD. Maryland opened the first half on a 3-0 run before Conti put Ohio State on the board at the 17:36 mark. Hernandez chipped in the second score for the Buckeyes at the 16:01 point, but the Terrapins struck for seven straight goals on their way to an 8-2 run, amounting to an 11-4 lead at halftime. UMD continued the onslaught in the second half, outscoring OSU by a 9-1 margin for the 20-5 final. Hernandez led Ohio State with three goals, followed by scores from Conti and senior attacker Lauren Sherry. Maryland edged the Buckeyes across the board in shots (33-25), groundballs (10-7) and draw controls (18-9).

Softball Splits Week With PSU, NW

After the Ohio State softball team swept Penn State in a midweek doubleheader, the Buckeyes fell twice at Northwestern over the weekend for a split in Big Ten action.

OSU (26-10, 7-6) began the week with two wins over PSU (6-28, 2-9) before a crowd of 525 at Buckeye Field in Columbus on April 11. Ohio State belted three home runs and nine extra-base hits in the games, highlighted by senior center fielder Taylor White's .714 batting average (5 for 7) with three runs and two RBIs in the leadoff spot.

In the opener, Ohio State pounded the Nittany Lions for a 9-1 victory in six innings. Senior righthander Shelby McCombs went the distance for the Buckeyes with nine strikeouts to three walks and one earned run on four hits. Highlighted by multi-hit performances with two each from White, freshman utility player Niki Carver and McCombs, OSU tallied nine hits as a team.

Ohio State carried its momentum into the nightcap with a 7-4 victory over Penn State. Junior righthanders Morgan Ray and Katya Duvall combined to yield four runs on 11 hits and six strikeouts to four walks in 6½ innings before McCombs closed the seventh for the final two outs. After a 3-2 deficit through three, the Buckeyes busted things open in the fourth with a three-run inning, highlighted by senior first baseman Ashley Goodwin's two-run blast for a 5-3 lead. OSU, which laced 11 hits, tacked on two runs in the bottom of the sixth following a one-run fifth for PSU, taking the 7-4 final.

When Ohio State went to Northwestern for a three-game series April 13-15, rain shortened the weekend to two contests, with no games played on April 14. The Buckeyes were unable to come away with wins in either, dropping back-to-back games at Drysdale Field in Evanston, Ill., by eight runs in six innings. After a 10-2 defeat in the opener April 13, OSU fell in a 14-6 final April 15.

The Wildcats (25-13, 8-5) hopped all over McCombs in game one, knocking her out after seven hits and five runs (four earned) in 4½ innings of work. Duvall allowed three runs in one inning in relief before Ray allowed two runs while recording the final two outs in the seventh. Northwestern tallied eight hits, while Ohio State struggled at the plate with five knocks. Goodwin had two to lead the Buckeyes, who were shut out aside from scoring their only two runs in the fourth on McCombs' two-run blast to left for a 2-2 tie. The Wildcats broke it open with a three-run fifth and buried the Buckeyes with a five-run sixth for the eight-run mercy rule.

Ohio State was unable to regroup two days

later in another six-inning, eight-run defeat. McCombs took the circle again, lasting four innings after five hits and nine runs (five earned) and seven walks to five strikeouts. Ray closed out the final 1½ innings but struggled as well with five runs (three earned) and four walks to one strikeout. After the Buckeyes jumped out to a 4-1 lead in the first, Northwestern chipped away with two runs in the second and three in the third for a 6-4 edge. OSU battled back with two runs in the fourth for a 6-6 tie, but the Wildcats answered in the bottom half with two of their own for an 8-6 advantage, followed by six runs over the fifth and sixth innings to polish off the 14-6 final.

Track Team Competes At Tennessee Relays

In three days of action at the Tennessee Relays from April 12-14 in Knoxville, Tenn., the Ohio State track and field team walked away from the 15-school competition with a long list of placements inside the top three of their respective events.

On day one of the meet, sophomore Alexis

Pyles placed fourth out of 14 finishers in the women's heptathlon with a score of 4,923 points. Pyles added multiple top-three finishes at second in the 200-meter dash (24.99 seconds), second in the long jump (5.87 meters), third in the 100-meter hurdles (14.19 seconds) and fourth in the 800-meter run (2:29.97).

The second day of competition featured second-place finishes on the men's and women's sides in the 400-meter dash, highlighted by a pair of Buckeyes in freshman Andre Jeff's time of 46.92 seconds and senior Maggie Barrie's readout of 52.88 seconds.

As a freshman in two premier sprinting events, Eric Harrison Jr. turned heads with a second-place finish in the 200-meter dash (20.70 seconds) and a third-place result in the 100-meter dash (10.32 seconds).

In the 3,000-meter steeplechase, junior Sarah Kanney raced to a time of 10:54.77 for the title. On the men's side of distance events, sophomore Aaron Wood led the way with a readout of 14:45.72 for second place in the 5,000-meter run.

When it moved to the field, OSU's stand-

outs included junior Sarah Stanley's second-place finish in the women's javelin after a throw of 42.23 meters. As for the men, Ohio State received a pair of third-place finishes from senior Zach Bazile's leap of 7.79 meters in the triple jump and senior Nicholas Demaline's distance of 19.62 meters in the shot put.

The field events continued on day three. DaJuan Seward (16.05 meters) was third in the men's triple jump, senior Cole Gorski (5.30 meters) finished second in the men's pole vault and sophomore Chance Ehrmsberger (54.01 meters) placed fourth in the men's discus throw.

Ohio State also completed the final day of competition with a range of relay events. The first-place finish on a time of 3:27.82 in the 1,600-meter run by junior Kyle McKinney, freshman Paul Bete, Jeff and freshman Tavonte Mott highlighted OSU's success. Seward, senior Jerry Jackson, freshman Joseph Cooper Jr. and senior Duan Asemota logged a time of 1:25.44 for third place in the men's 4x200-meter relay. Asemota, Bazile, Harrison Jr. and junior Nick Gray came in second place in the men's 4x100-meter relay with a readout of 39.31 seconds.

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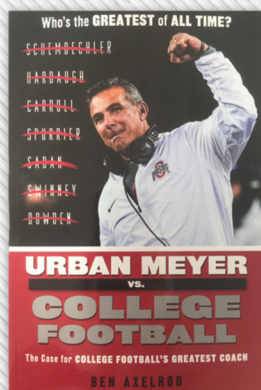
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OSU Still Hasn't Answered Its Biggest Question

The spring game provided clarity – Ohio State is set at quarterback. The Buckeyes have a quarterback who can lead them to a national championship. In fact, they have two – eventually maybe even three.

EXNER POINT
Rich Exner

The question of ability is settled. But there lingers another question: Just who will that quarterback be? My vote goes to Joe Burrow. I understand others would say Dwayne Haskins. I wouldn't dispute that too strongly.

Few people, if anyone, would say Tate Martell is ready yet. But he too showed he is capable of running the offense.

I don't recall a time when Ohio State has had so much game-ready talent at quarterback.

Yes, that includes 2015, when undefeated QB starter and national champion Cardale Jones was battling with the former starter, J.T. Barrett, for the regular job.

Yes, that includes 1996 and 1997 when Joe Germaine and Stanley Jackson each had back-to-back 1,000-plus-yard passing seasons and won a Rose Bowl.

And yes, that includes 1982, the year-of the five-way battle among talented quarterbacks to replace Art Schlichter. From that group, Mike Tomczak went on to become a three-year starter at OSU, Jim Karsatos became a two-year starter after Tomczak, Brent Offenbecher got his chance as a starter briefly when Tomczak was benched, and Scott Woolf became a Division III All-American at Mount Union.

But I think this group is better. Burrow

and Haskins both offer something Ohio State has been missing – accurate arms.

Are they leaders yet in the J.T. Barrett category? Of course not. But there also is no reason to believe that either or both won't grow into being a "coach on the field" as well.

Of course, I haven't seen these players on the practice field like OSU's coaches. But when we've all had the limited opportunities to see Burrow and Haskins play, they have demonstrated both composure and talent.

Burrow is the better runner. Haskins probably has a stronger arm. Martell is the most dynamic on his feet but the least developed as a passer.

Final numbers from the spring game: Burrow, 15 of 22 for 238 yards, two touchdowns and no interceptions; Haskins, 9 of 19 for 120 yards, two touchdowns and no interceptions; Martell, 5 of 16 for 28 yards, no touchdowns and one interception (plus 69 yards rushing).

How many Big Ten teams would like to have the runner-up in this quarterback battle as their starter next season? Ten, 11, 12 other Big Ten teams?

Half the league might be willing to trade their apparent starter for Martell.

Ohio State is in good hands at quarterback. That bodes well for the coming season.

Spring Game Points

I find it hard to believe that Demario McCall really weighs as much as the 193 pounds listed by Ohio State, but few defenders will get a good enough hold on him to judge for themselves.

Elusive is the best way to describe McCall. And if the spring game is any indication, Urban Meyer plans to find ways to get McCall the ball in the open field this coming season, McCall's third at Ohio State.

That's a great idea. In space, the guy gets open and avoids tacklers.

Consider these stats in limited action over his first two seasons – 22.5 yards per reception and 6.0 yards per carry.

His 42-yard TD reception from Burrow was a great way to wrap up the spring game, coming on the final play of a game in which he caught a game-high 11 passes for a game-high 165 yards.

Freshman Master Teague is a brute at running back. He ran for 73 yards on 14 carries in a game of touch football most of the day. I'm guessing he would have had 100-plus yards if the spring game was a game of tackle football.

No doubt, Teague deserved his press clippings, which included being tabbed a four-star prospect. The guy has passed the look test in his first performance in Ohio Stadium.

Earlier, we noted the depth Ohio State has at quarterback. The same is true at running back, where the freshman Teague will have to find playing time while competing with two returnees who have already had 1,000-yard rushing seasons at Ohio State – Mike Weber and J.K. Dobbins.

The game of touch football, from a fan's point of view, was disappointing. There was no real way to get a sense of the talent on defense. And would-be long runs by Martell, Teague and others were stopped short by light touches on the back.

But, given the potential for injury, it's difficult to question Meyer's decision on this.

The worst performance of the day was by the Big Ten Network. BTN missed the entire first offensive series of the game and never went back to show what happened. Then BTN missed a fourth-quarter TD pass, showing just the end of the play.

Credit the weather and the decision by Meyer to skip a halftime break for upping the entertainment value for the announced crowd of 47,803. Skipping a halftime break packed in the action and kept the flow going. Sometimes in the past, the second half of spring games became so boring and long and many fans left early.

This wasn't the biggest OSU spring game crowd. But it was still an amazing turnout, I was reminded in tuning in briefly for the Maryland spring game later that day.

There appeared to be maybe a few hundred – perhaps 1,000 or so – fans in the stands for the Maryland game. One side was completely empty. Fans were spread out sparsely on the home side of the stadium.

Now that the spring game is out of the way, the countdown is on for Sept. 1, the day of the opener in Ohio Stadium against Oregon State.



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Starting QB Will Be Deserving No Matter What

Another Ohio State spring practice is in the books, and it doesn't appear that fans are any closer to having answers to their questions.

THE FACTS MAN Mike Wachsman

The most pressing, of course, centers around the quarterback position. Holdovers Dwayne Haskins and Joe Burrow did their level best to take the job, while freshman Tate Martell showed some brilliance in running the football. It's safe to say that it's a two-man race, but whether or not there will be a definitive starter divulged to the public remains to be seen.

OSU coach Urban Meyer didn't appear to be in any real hurry following the Buckeyes' spring game on April 14.

"We're going to have to make some decisions," he said. "Those decisions have not been made."

That could cause some anxious moments, for fans and players alike.

Fans want to know that someone has taken the job and will head into fall camp with the position in hand. They know that having a battle continue into the season would be a detriment to the team, because when you have two quarterbacks you really have none.

The players involved want to know, for reasons not only centered on improvement, but on their immediate future.

Burrow is in an especially tricky spot. He graduates in May and has two years of eligibility remaining. Should he get the OSU job, he would obviously stick around in Columbus. But if Haskins gets the nod, Burrow would likely – and rightly – look at his options, which include transferring.

"That would be a discussion in the meetings we have," Burrow said after the game. "I'm not sure yet. I'm happy with how I played and how the situation was handled this spring."

For what it's worth, Burrow appeared to outplay Haskins in the spring game, though not by a ton. And that means Haskins could get the job, because you have to "knock out the champ" to gain supremacy, and having a slight edge is not a knockout.

Burrow looked good on the long ball, including a 42-yarder to Demario McCall on the final play of the scrimmage. Burrow appeared to have command of the offense,

which is a big thing for Meyer. The coach wants to have the ultimate trust in his quarterback – wants to know that in crunch time he can be counted on.

Haskins had his moments, too, including a beautiful back-shoulder 43-yard strike to Binjimen Victor, quite possibly the prettiest pass of the day by anyone. The coverage was there, but Haskins threaded the needle.

Martell had been touted as the wild card and was reportedly close. But after seeing his problems throwing the football, it's safe to say that his role in 2018 will be limited, likely to short-yardage and red-zone packages. He does have speed and elusiveness handling the football, and if his passing improves he could legitimately be in the mix down the road.

Although Meyer wasn't ready to declare a winner in the quarterback derby, he feels the Buckeyes as a whole are progressing nicely.

"I'm pretty pleased with where we are at," Meyer said. "We're not where we were last year. That was a veteran team."

There really isn't any secret formula to decide a starter, though Meyer says a number of things will go into the decision, with leadership being the top component.

As for the rest of it? "Data is second," he said. "It's something that helps you, and it's also factual."

There is also a little bit of "feel," that nebulous thing that you just know.

"Thirty years of gut (feeling)," Meyer added. "That will be part of it too."

However things shake out, the quarterback position appears to be in good hands. But until a winner is announced, fans have reason to be just a bit apprehensive.

Young Stars On Display

It's pretty easy to see why many believe the Buckeyes will once again be in the thick of the hunt for a College Football Playoff berth, despite having questions at quarterback.

There's a crazy amount of talent on hand in Columbus, and a lot of it showed in the spring game. It should be noted, however, that nothing can be gleaned from a single scrimmage, even if it mirrored (sort of) game conditions.

A few performances stood out over others, but it should be noted that these were not the only solid players on the day. These were the most notable, at least to these bespectacled eyes:

DE Chase Young – Will be a beast, especially as teams focus on stopping Nick Bosa. His speed off the edge is jaw-drop-

ping, and if he can amass a collection of pass-rush moves, he will be close to unstoppable.

WR Binjimen Victor – Looks to have his body control down pat, making some excellent catches. He was able to reach over defenders to snag several passes and looks stronger than he did last year.

LB Baron Browning – Difficult for a defender to stand out in this "touch football" format, but the sophomore was around the ball a lot. He flowed straight ahead very well, and his side-to-side quickness was also good.

H-Back Demario McCall – It's nice that OSU is looking to get the speedster involved. McCall is what they thought Dontre Wilson was going to be, only with actual ability and availability. He could be a real playmaker in 2018, and it appears that he will be used quite a bit. You do wonder a little whether he will cut into Parris Campbell's workload, but maybe the coaches can get creative and put both on the field at the same time.

RB Master Teague – He has a great name, is a physical runner and seems to love contact. It wouldn't be a shock if he takes third-team honors in a crowded, talented backfield. Teague was especially effective putting his shoulder down and initiating contact.

CB Marcus Williamson – Sort of a forgotten player, he was good in coverage and seemed to at least make the coaches take notice. The corner jobs look to belong to Kendall Sheffield and Damon Arnette, with Jeffrey Okudah and Shaun Wade waiting to pounce. But Williamson is not going to go away, and he played well enough to keep himself on the coaches' radar.

Ready To Shine

Victor has everything coaches could want in a receiver – talent, size and an innate ability to go up and get the football. He could be the next big star from the OSU receiving corps, but it isn't quite etched in stone yet.

"He's one of the most talented receivers we've ever had," Meyer said. "But he's still got a ways to go."

Victor grabbed five passes for 91 yards

and score, and he said that his arrival is going according to plan.

"I felt I needed to make plays today," the junior-to-be said. "Coming into the spring game I felt like what I really wanted to focus on was separation, and that's what I did. I thought I had a pretty solid day. It could have been better. There were a lot of coaching points where I'll watch film and make corrections."

Victor isn't the only talented receiver the Buckeyes have, but he's the one who looks most like a star-in-waiting – sort of like Michael Thomas did early in his career. There are a couple of things that need some tinkering, though.

"Consistency – that's been up and down," Victor said. "I've got to keep maintaining and stay focused on having consistency through the whole fall camp."

Glad To Be Home

It was cool to see a host of former players on the sideline, even if it was just an exhibition.

Most notable was the presence of Ryan Shazier, who suffered a serious spinal injury late in the NFL season. He was standing on his own and received a thunderous ovation from the fans in attendance.

He still feels a part of the Buckeye program and hinted that he wouldn't have missed the opportunity to return to Columbus.

"Me and Coach Meyer talk often," he said. "He asked me if I was feeling up to it, if I would be able to be (an honorary) coach, and I felt it was an honor to just be here. I just couldn't say no."

Malcolm Jenkins, fresh off a Super Bowl title with the Philadelphia Eagles, also served as a coach for the game, but it was Shazier who got the bulk of the attention – something he's been used to ever since the injury.

"It's been outstanding support," he said. "I still get letters to this day. It's so much mail that I can't even read it all. I'm just thankful to everybody for all the support and all the prayers. I just want to say thank you to everybody because I wouldn't be able to be doing so well if it wasn't for all the support."

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OSU Spring Game Format Should Be Re-Evaluated

Without a doubt, the Ohio State spring game is among the best spring football events in the nation. The Buckeyes were the first school to crack the 100,000 mark in spring game attendance, and the annual scrimmage always draws a huge crowd – regardless of the weather forecast, as we saw April 14 at Ohio Stadium.

MOODY MUSINGS Tim Moody, Editor

With all that in mind, though, I can't help but wonder how much better the event could be if the football team actually, you know, played football in front of their faithful fans.

For the second year in a row, fans were treated to a glorified two-hand touch game – at least in the early stages – before the starters spent the majority of the game on the sidelines. All of that makes sense, to some extent, and head coach Urban Meyer was sure to point out that the health of the players comes first in the spring – and he's absolutely right.

"Obviously nowadays with the health of players I think we're doing it the right way," Meyer said after the game. "I know you sometimes get criticized because you

start the first three or four sets of the scrimmage with just two-hand tag and it's just too critical, too fragile right now – that's the way it is."

It would be crazy to risk injuries, especially to veteran players who will be key components to the 2018 team, and there's no reason for surefire starters to go through the motions in the spring game for more than a series or two.

That's all fine, but there's still a lot Ohio State could have done to put a much more entertaining brand of football on the field.

First off, set the rosters and let those two teams play each other.

The school didn't release a full participation chart for the spring game, but there were obviously many players swapping back and forth. In fact, all three quarterbacks ended up playing for both teams, switching out on a series-by-series – or oftentimes play-by-play – rotation. It would have been much more entertaining for the fans to see a Joe Burrow-led team take on a Dwayne Haskins-led team, with Tate Martell rotating in during the second half or in special sets.

Instead, what we got was a simple 11-on-11 practice session, with no real winner or loser since players were all over the field.

An actual game between two teams would be better for the fans and players, and it would give the coaching staff a

perfectly fine look at everyone on the field. They've had all spring to evaluate, so running a more structured scrimmage in the spring game wouldn't take away from anything.

And if you are going to play two-hand touch, why not make it a little more interesting? Instead of playing until someone arbitrarily blows a whistle because a player might have gotten a hand on the ball carrier, give them flags to wear during the non-tackling portion of the scrimmage. That would allow the defenders to go harder, and it would allow the playmakers on offense to show what they can really do.

The way Ohio State played in the spring game basically prevented big plays, even though there were numerous occasions when a player – most notably Martell – was called down despite breaking away on what would have been a sure touchdown in a live game. If the event is largely for the fans, then limiting the big plays takes away from the excitement.

Ohio Stadium was pretty dead during the spring game this year, and that could have been easily fixed without endangering the players.

On Quarterbacks

For the third year in a row, Burrow was the best quarterback on the field for Ohio State's spring game. Yes, I know it's just a scrimmage, but spring practice counts – this is what the coaches can base their decision on, not garbage time against Bowling Green or Maryland in the last couple of seasons.

Don't get me wrong, Haskins impressed as well, showing off his rocket arm and making some throws that not many other athletes can pull off. His touchdown to Jaylen Harris in the corner of the end zone was particularly impressive, but he didn't do anything to tell me he's a better option than Burrow, and I've felt the same way every time I've seen either quarterback on the field.

Haskins takes shots down the field on a

regular basis, which is a good thing, but it seems like he often throws it out there for his receiver to make a play, even if it's not a true 50-50 ball. If he starts for Ohio State, the Buckeyes will win a ton of games and he'll do very well, but he'll also make costly turnovers in unnecessary situations.

Burrow, on the other hand, threw downfield just as well as Haskins in the scrimmage, and he looked more accurate doing it. He can make all the throws, even if his arm isn't as strong, and he simply guides the offense better than Haskins. He completes a higher percentage of passes, he's a better runner and he's a year older.

For me, Burrow should be the starter, but it will probably be Haskins because of the extra dimension brought by physical talents.

As far as Martell goes, he showed off an incredible skill set in the spring game and proved why he needs to be on the field this fall. He also proved that he's nowhere near ready to be the starting quarterback, and his passing ability has a long way to go.

That said, Martell will be part of this offense, and he's a difference maker with the ball in his hands.

On The Web

As many of you already know, BSB has completely overhauled its web presence, and we're better suited than ever before to give our subscribers the best coverage of Ohio State available.

We are no longer affiliated with Scout.com. Instead, we've overhauled BuckeyeSports.com to include daily features, analysis and breaking news stories in addition to a brand-new forum, where the BSB staff and subscribers can come together to discuss everything Buckeye.

I, for one, am really excited about the changes, and I'm thrilled with the response from our readers so far. We're now giving subscribers instant access to all the news they need in a format that's more attractive and easier to navigate than ever before.

The forum on BuckeyeSports.com will be a big part of the experience, so we encourage all of our readers to get involved. In the first few days of the website, we had a few issues on the forum that were preventing readers from posting their comments or starting new topics, but those have all been remedied. So, if you ran into problems when you first tried, don't worry, you'll be good to go next time you're on the forum.

When you do log on, make sure to edit your profile so that you'll have a personalized display name to post with on the forum, rather than just seeing your posts show up under your record number, which is your username for the website.

In just the first few days of the forum, we've had exclusive recruiting information in regard to some of the football team's top targets as well as five-star power forward Alonzo Gaffney, Ohio's top basketball player in the 2019 class and Chris Holtmann's first commit for the next recruiting cycle.

Subscribers can expect to continue to see that kind of inside access as we strive to bring you the best recruiting coverage around.

The new site already has a ton of great content, and there will be plenty more to come to give you your Buckeye fix – even though the season is still a few months away.

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QB Competition Looks As Close As Advertised

When Urban Meyer said all spring that none of his quarterbacks had separated himself from the others, I wondered if that was just coach-speak. Coaches don't like to give up too much to the media and public, and they also like to encourage competition by claiming that position battles are still open.

After watching the spring game, however, I was left wondering if Meyer wasn't being perfectly candid. All three QBs had their moments. None from the group of Dwayne Haskins, Joe Burrow and Tate Martell, however, appeared to step up and grab the job. On the positive side, Ohio State's quarterback room – at least for now – is loaded.

I am sure Meyer and his staff have seen a lot more in practice than we as media and fans were able to see in the spring game, given such factors in the game as split squads, key players sitting out, and most importantly, the constantly changing rules – especially the one that made much of the scrimmage a touch football game. It's also hard to evaluate what a quarterback is going to do in Meyer's offense when the signal callers are off limits as far as contact goes.

Here's my quick take on what I saw from the quarterbacks:

If you are looking for a rifle arm, Haskins has the edge over the other two, no questions asked.

He displayed it on a 25-yard TD pass to Jaylen Harris in the second quarter and a 43-yarder to Binjimen Victor that set up another score in the third period. For Haskins to really excel, the Buckeyes are going to have to develop a receiver willing to go up and get the 50-50 balls, a la Devin Smith, because Haskins is going to put it out there. Maybe Harris or Victor can fill that role, as they showed a willingness to mix it up with DBs during the exhibition.

Haskins did nothing to hurt his status during the spring game.

Burrow, on the other hand, probably helped his standing the most during the scrimmage. He may not possess a howitzer, but he showed the ability to throw the long ball, leaving the crowd with the final impression with a 42-yard TD bomb to Demario McCall on the game's last play after connecting with McCall earlier for 50 yards and another score. Both Haskins and Burrow appear stronger going deep than J.T. Barrett, the man they hope to replace.

In addition to the long throws, Burrow connected on a variety of other passes, finishing the day a combined 15 of 22 (68.2 percent) for both squads, good for 238 yards and the pair of scores to McCall. That is consistent with his passing line in real games, where he is 29 of 39 (74.4 percent) for 287 yards and two scores without a pick in his mop-up appearances as a redshirt freshman and sophomore.

While the conventional wisdom after the spring game is that there was no separation among the quarterbacks, that may not actually be true. Martell seemed to lose ground on the veteran QBs with his 5-for-16 passing performance for just 28 yards with the game's only interception. But in fairness to the redshirt freshman, if the scrimmage had not been a touch football game, he might have been the star of the day. His dazzling running ability was on full display, and even with the patty-cake format, he was credited with 69 yards and a touchdown on 11 carries. And if you go back and look, you will see that his passing line was affected by several drops.

Martell has that breakaway ability that is more reminiscent of Braxton Miller than Barrett, who was a more than competent runner, but not a threat to go all the way every time he touched the ball. Let's face it, in Martell's favor, Meyer loves his quarterbacks to run the

THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

football. The QBs – led by Barrett's 165 carries – ran 192 times last year, and in Meyer's first two years in Columbus – with the dynamic Miller at the helm – the QBs averaged 232 carries, including 236 in the penalty-shortened 12-game 2012 season.

Just some random thoughts, purely my own, on who might ultimately get the nod at QB.

Let's say Burrow and Haskins are equal. Burrow is set to graduate this spring – a feather in his cap as it demonstrates work ethic and organizational skills. As any Buckeye fan knows, that would make him eligible to transfer and play at another school right away. Haskins has less flexibility.

Would Meyer and staff be better off giving the starting position to Burrow, which might leave a better chance of keeping Haskins, making the Buckeyes as strong as possible in the quarterback room?

If Haskins gets the nod, is there any chance that Burrow would stay?

You can take a look at two of Ohio State's national championship teams and see that you have to have quarterbacks in waiting.

The Buckeyes needed Ron Maciejowski – a QB who could have started at most schools but caddied for Rex Kern all three of his years – to win the national championship in 1968. They even got a lift from former starter Bill Long, who lost his job to Kern but helped the Buckeyes defeat a powerful Purdue team in one of the biggest games of the season.

And let's not forget 2014. Miller, the reigning two-time Big Ten Silver Football winner as conference MVP, was injured just days before the start of the season. Barrett stepped in as the starter and got the Buckeyes to the brink of the postseason before suffering a season-ending injury in the Michigan game. Next man up. Cardale Jones led the Buckeyes on their magical three-game run to the national championship.

So just because you don't win the starting job doesn't mean you won't end up playing or contributing – maybe even contributing to a championship.

As fans, we like to think that there is no place greater than Ohio State and wonder why anyone, even someone on the bench, would want to go anywhere else. We hope Burrow – or any of the QBs – would stay, but Burrow has to do what is best for him, and between his growth as a quarterback and progress toward graduation, he has earned the right to make that choice.

Do you ever wonder if the quarterback situation would be different if Haskins had not threaded the needle to Austin Mack for that key completion against Michigan? If Brandon Watson had swatted the ball away or, worse yet, intercepted it, would we be having the same conversation right now? Watson and fellow DB Tyree Kinnel were that close to possibly altering the course of OSU football history.

There was more than one play to Haskins' performance in the Big House, however. Two plays later he rushed 22 yards to the U-M 1-yard line to set up the go-ahead score, and he was 6-of-7 passing for 94 yards for the game without an interception. Still, the bullet to Mack is the play we remember and the play that, in the eyes of many Buckeye fans, gives Haskins the edge in the QB battle.

Here's a final thought. I believe that, with

things appearing to be this close, the coaching staff would rather have the battle continue over the summer and into fall camp. Burrow's situation, however, forces their hand.

I suspect that other staffs would be less sympathetic to Burrow's plight.

Spring Game Notes

Speaking of Burrow, he was involved in a fantasy football special in the second quarter of the spring game. He threw a pass that apparently bounced off of another player back to him, which he caught and advanced 3 yards. He got credit for both a completion and a reception on the same play. The play showed good field awareness on the part of the quarterback.

- We already knew that the quarterback room was loaded. We got a reminder that there is no shortage of running backs either. The team features two 1,000-yard runners in J.K. Dobbins and Mike Weber, who barely played in the scrimmage and really didn't need to as the coaches already know what each of them can do.

We did get a look at freshman early-enrollee Master Teague, who put on a bruising demonstration with 14 carries for 73 yards, a total which would surely have been higher if the action had been live. I'm not sure where Teague might get carries, with the presence of Weber and Dobbins, but for a player who looked like a bit of an afterthought during recruiting, it was a solid day.

And speaking of bruising running, Antonio Williams had a couple of powerful runs once tackling started, including his 9-yard run followed by a bullish 3-yard touchdown at the end of the second quarter. Williams, a 5-11, 208-pound junior-to-be, finished the game with five carries for 47 yards and is yet another back in front of Teague.

And speaking of Weber, the knock on him during his big freshman season was he couldn't pull off the long run, frequently getting caught from behind. As he got healthier in his sophomore season last year, he started to show more breakaway speed, and on his only touch of the spring game he took off for 63 yards on what surely would have been a TD in live action.

And all this talk of running backs doesn't even take into account Demario McCall, who may have been the breakout star of the spring game. Although all of his yards – all 165 of them – came on receptions, he started his OSU career as a running back and has carried 63 times for 381 yards and a 6.0 average with four touchdowns in his brief career. After his receiving performance in the spring game, he is looking more and more like an H-back, but he, too, should get his carries and still could end up as a running back.

It's an abundance of riches at that position.

- In what proved to be a fairly dull affair, I think I was most entertained by the battle, throughout the afternoon, between Harris and cornerback Marcus Williamson. These two really went at it, and little separated them on any pass to Harris. The receiver may have won the battle with his three catches for 39 yards and the highlight-reel touchdown, but Williamson may have won the war with his blanket coverage.

Frankly, I knew little about either of the players coming into the game, and it is just one more example of how much talent Meyer con-

tinues to stockpile. Players graduate or go on to the pros, and there is always someone else, frequently someone you had forgotten about or never really paid that much attention to, there to replace them.

At the least, Meyer and his staff have to give Harris and Williamson A's for spring-game effort.

BSB Goes 24/7

I have a saying about Buckeye Sports Bulletin in this instant news world in which we now live. If Urban Meyer were to resign today, you would read about it next week in BSB – in two weeks if you live in Indiana (those of you who live in the Hoosier State, our worst mail state, sadly get the joke).

Well having to wait for your Buckeye news is no longer necessary. We have recently revamped our website, BuckeyeSports.com, and you will now be able to access Buckeye sports news as it happens, along with all sorts of other timely features and a few bells and whistles such as videos, photo galleries, rosters, schedules and more. And it's all free with your BSB print subscription and only available to BSB subscribers.

BuckeyeSports.com is the perfect complement to your Buckeye Sports Bulletin and even more so as we approach our monthly summer publishing schedule. You will no longer have to wait 30 days or more for news and features from all of your favorite Buckeye Sports Bulletin writers.

One of the most exciting new features of all is the addition of the BSB Forum. This will allow you to communicate with BSB staff members, guest experts and other Buckeye Sports Bulletin readers. The Forum is where the action is as everyone has the ability to contribute news or opinions and share their love of the Buckeyes. This is especially useful for those Buckeyes who live out of state and are unable to speak to other Buckeyes on a regular basis. Now you can communicate with those who share your passion anytime.

Again, this exciting new service is free with your subscription. If you have already signed up to read the electronic BSB Quickly, you are signed up for BuckeyeSports.com. You will have the same user name and password and sign in the same way, though the login boxes are in a slightly different place.

If you have not already signed up for our electronic offerings, simply email your name, address and preferred email address to subscriptions@buckeyesports.com and we will send you back simple instructions on how to access the site. Once you are signed up, jump in and play around. You'll get the hang of it pretty quickly, as I did and I am no Bill Gates. Don't forget to put your two cents' worth in on the Forum. And watch, because sometimes the Forum is where you will find the breaking news. If you hear something, say something. The Forum gives BSB correspondents all over the country!

Hats off to Blufftonbuck, who waded through some of the early glitches to become the Forum's first poster. Don't forget to register your Forum name. Otherwise your posts will be listed under your BSB record number – not very descriptive. Just go to "edit profile" on the Forum page. You can even add your picture if you so desire.

The last edition of BSB Quickly will be posted on April 24. But remember, the new BuckeyeSports.com will be even better and always up-to-date.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call as at (614) 486-2202 during regular business hours.



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