

# BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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Vol. 38, No. 1

"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

Sept. 8, 2018

# The Future Is Now

## Day's Buckeyes Win Big In Haskins' Debut

By TIM MOODY  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

There will always be turnover from one season to the next. Ohio State sends handfuls of players to the NFL every season, and members of the coaching staff come and go on an annual basis. Sometimes, though, the turnover is more significant.

Going into 2018, it had been a while since the Buckeyes had a first-time starter at quarterback in week one, and it had been even longer since a head coach not named Urban Meyer roamed the sidelines in a season opener. Both of those streaks were broken Sept. 1 at Ohio Stadium when the No. 5 Buckeyes – led by acting head coach Ryan Day and first-year starting quarterback Dwayne Haskins – trounced Oregon State, 77-31.

Day, of course, is the head coach on a temporary basis. Meyer is suspended for the first three games of the season after mishandling former receivers coach Zach Smith's employment at the university. Haskins, on the other hand, is in his position on a more permanent basis as the heir to J.T. Barrett's quarterback throne.

There were plenty of question marks surrounding the Buckeyes through the offseason. There always will be, especially when there's a new quarterback, and even more so when there's uncertainty surrounding the head coach. On a day of firsts, though, Day and Haskins answered many of those inquiries.

"It was a lot going on for me," Day said in his first postgame press conference as a head coach at any level. "It was the first time going through everything, whether it was in the meetings or going to the skull session, the walk, pregame, going out on the field."

Haskins, for his part, was coy about his performance, simply saying, "Not a bad job," when asked how he did.

That might have been an understatement.

### The Quarterback

Though redshirt freshman Tate Martell had a couple of cameo appearances in the first



SONNY BROCKWAY

**LIKE A VETERAN** – Ohio State sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins (7) threw for 313 yards and five touchdowns against Oregon State in the first start of his career.

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## Buckeye Leaves

BSB's new full-service website, *BuckeyeSports.com*, has 24/7 updates regarding all things Ohio State, including an active Forum where subscribers can chat with BSB staff members and other fans. The Forum also features a live thread during every Ohio State game where staffers and subscribers can share their thoughts, opinions and analysis. We will also be handing out Buckeye Leaves after every game for standout performers, and we encourage subscribers to share their thoughts as well. Here's a sampling of what BSB staff members and subscribers had to say after the Buckeyes opened the season with a resounding 77-31 win over Oregon State:

**Joe Dempsey:** Mike Weber did not take the field with the No. 1 offense to start the game, but the junior running back dominated Oregon State. On a first-quarter carry Weber weaved through the Beaver defense for a 16-yard touchdown, giving the Buckeyes a 14-7 lead. The 5-10, 214-pound tailback found the end zone again on a 49-yard dash, using his deceptive speed to break outside and outrun the defense. The Detroit native did not stop there, catching a 3-yard touchdown on a touch pass and running in another touchdown. Weber racked up a career-high 189 total yards and four touchdowns on 21 touches.

**James Grega:** There are plenty of options on both side of the ball, but I am going to go with Mike Weber, who blistered Oregon State's defense on Saturday. Despite not starting, Weber carried 20 times for 186 yards and three touchdowns, adding a fourth score on a touch pass from Dwayne Haskins.

Despite rotating possessions with J.K. Dobbins, who finished with 74 yards on 15 carries, Weber was able to post a career high in yards and touchdowns while also not playing for much of the fourth quarter. Haskins deserves an honorable mention for his 313-yard, five touchdown performance, the best passing performance of a first-time starter in school history.

**Tim Moody:** He didn't play a down in the second half, but junior defensive end Nick Bosa had already left a huge impression on the field. Bosa finished the game with four tackles, two sacks and two fumbles recovered – including one in the end zone for a touchdown. Bosa was, by far, the best player on the field for either team, and he showed once again why he'll be a top-five pick in the NFL draft next spring.

At this stage of his career, Bosa is better than his older brother, Joey, who is already one of the best linemen in the NFL. That should be a scary thought for the rest of Ohio State's opponents, especially considering how dominant tackle Dre'Mont Jones and end Chase Young were as well.

**Frank Moskowitz:** I would have voted Mike Weber, but because I already knew what he can do, I vote Dwayne Haskins. His play was more of an unknown, and he didn't disappoint.

**Garrett Stepien:** How overlooked is fifth-year senior wide receiver Terry McLaurin? In such a deep receivers rotation, the two-time captain and multiyear starter has been arguably Ohio State's most underrated player on offense.

The 6-1, 205-pounder showed such glimpses against Oregon State as he hauled in four catches for 121 yards and two touchdowns. Those scores set the tone for the Buckeyes as they began both halves of the game.

### BSB Subscribers

Definitely Mike Weber. I knew he would be ready to rumble since he missed the first few games last year. He was dominant today and finished runs the way you'd like a bigger back like him to do.

– Tiffin Buckeye

I'll take Dwayne Haskins. It's the easy choice, but he was just that impressive. 300+ yards and five touchdowns can't be ignored for a first time starter. He was as good as advertised and maybe even better.

– AcrossTheField

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Suspension Not Enough

From what I have read recently in the university's commissioned investigatory report and in national newspapers, Urban Meyer lied to the news media and has acted inappropriately in recent years for an individual in his position. By his word and deed, he has damaged the reputation and prestige of one of the great educational institutions in our country. How can Urban Meyer ever be believed and taken seriously again?

Because of the decision by the board of trustees on Aug. 22 to retain Meyer as the head football coach, the reputation of The Ohio State University has been severely tarnished. As an alumnus, I am very disappointed by the board's recent action, which in my opinion severely damages the OSU brand. Even if Ohio State wins every game this season, the ulcer that has been allowed to fester will remain a source of rankle and irritation within the university community for a generation or two to come.

The biggest dilemma of the university related to the board's decision is how current and prospective students will interpret this decision. What are the possible takeaways for students? Are they embarrassed by the recent events, angered by them or possibly amused? Did the board consider the impact their decision would have on the university's reputation and, ultimately, students' perceptions of truth – a basic tenet in any field of study? In the end, it is the student body that will have the most to lose from the bad press and negative media attention this decision has evoked.

It is not too late for the board of trustees to reflect on the ramifications of their recent decision and reverse course. There is still time for The Ohio State University to regain its rightful place in higher education and restore its vision, core goals and values.

Joseph H. Huber  
Stoughton, Mass.

### Unreasonable Standards?

Having watched the press conference at which the suspensions of Gene Smith and Urban Meyer were announced, I have several thoughts:

• I was disappointed that, with all of the mea culpas being thrown around, no one asked president Michael Drake if there were any failures or shortcomings at his level, at some other administrative level, or at the board of trustees' level. Did all of these people do everything they could have to make sure that they were aware of the actions of their employees,

both at work and in their private lives? For instance, how about Michéle Willis, who was Ohio State's deputy Title IX coordinator for athletics in 2015? She was the first university employee notified by the police about a domestic violence investigation into Zach Smith. She reported to Gene Smith, who notified Meyer. But she apparently did not report it to the compliance department, which is what Gene Smith and Meyer were faulted for not doing. What is her punishment?

• It appears that Urban Meyer followed all required procedures with regard to reporting the actions of Zach Smith, but he was suspended nonetheless because he did not investigate thoroughly enough the "red flags" that Smith's actions raised. The report itself is full of lawyerly hedging language that greatly reduces the justification for finding fault on Meyer's part. For instance: Meyer and Gene Smith "acted in good faith" but did not report Zach Smith's 2015 domestic violence investigation to the compliance department "as we believe they should have." And the compliance function "could have been" in the best position to determine if an internal investigation should be conducted. And relying on law enforcement to act on these allegations "is not, in our view, an adequate response." All of these are pretty thin threads on which to hang two university employees, no matter who they are. If you were in Meyer's position and that happened to you, would you think it was fair?

• Ohio State has approximately 40,000 employees. I would think that since that press conference, every administrator or manager at Ohio State who supervises any employees must be much more nervous. Because now they are responsible not only for the legality of the conduct of the people they supervise, but for the morality of that conduct as well. Here we have the case of an employee who was not arrested for his actions, was not charged with a crime, and was not convicted of a crime. In spite of this, he was fired, and his managers up to the second level above him were disciplined because they did not thoroughly investigate and respond properly to conduct that, while not illegal, the university later deemed to be immoral.

• It seems to me that, in taking this position, the university has set a very dangerous precedent. If a university employee does something in his or her personal life, having nothing to do with his or her employment at the university, and the university later decides that that conduct, while not illegal, does not meet the university's standards of morality, that employee's manager can be disciplined for not taking action against the employee. That is an impossible and unfair standard. The

chair of the Humanities Department is now responsible for the actions of everyone who reports to him or her. The head of the university hospital is answerable for the conduct of everyone who works there. In fact, they are responsible not only for the present conduct of their employees, while on the job and away from work, but they are also responsible for any past misconduct that could have been discovered in a thorough background check when the employee was hired. If that is now the standard to which managers will be held at Ohio State, I would suspect that many of those managers will not be sleeping well from now on.

Terry Walrath  
Hinckley, Ohio

### No Longer A Meyer Fan

May as well get my two cents in.

Prior to the Zach Smith situation, I was as big a fan as anyone of Urban Meyer. Not anymore. I would expect a guy that makes about \$7 million a year to have more than a little bit of common sense.

I lived in Sandusky, Ohio, when Earle Bruce was head coach, so it could be said I was a fan of his, too. Loyalty is one thing, but to jeopardize one's reputation, also that of Ohio State, the football program, etc., is downright stupid. Not dumb, stupid.

From what I've read, Smith was a No. 1 village idiot. ... As far as I'm concerned, all the stuff I've read regarding Meyer, the same goes for him. To put up with Smith's dastardly deeds all these years ...

If I was Meyer, I'd be ashamed to show my face, let alone continue to coach the Buckeyes.

Then I read where all along the way, Meyer kept giving him raises. I could care less if Meyer chooses to stay at OSU. In fact, I'd like to see him pack up and leave Columbus. He is a disgrace to the university.

Rich Foust  
Troy, Ohio

*If you would like to express an opinion concerning Ohio State University sports, please send your letter to BSB Letters, P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, OH 43212, or email it to [bsb@buckeyesports.com](mailto:bsb@buckeyesports.com) for use in BSB. Letters must be signed and include the writer's hometown and a daytime telephone number for verification. Publication priority will be given to those letters that are brief, and we reserve the right to edit letters for publication.*



# Day, Haskins Looked The Part For Buckeyes



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Charter Member

If first impressions are worth anything, Ryan Day will be a head coach in the very near future, Dwayne Haskins will make himself a lot of money someday as an NFL quarterback, and the 2018 Ohio State football team has the chance to become something very special.

For a least one afternoon, no one cared much about Zach Smith's firing or Urban Meyer's suspension as the Buckeyes exerted their offensive muscle to the tune of 721 total yards during a 77-31 manhandling of Oregon State.

Day was in charge of the onslaught, and it's difficult to believe the offense would have performed any better had Meyer been pacing the sideline rather than watching the proceedings from home. The yardage figure was the second-highest total ever in a single game in program history, and the point total matched the best output for a season opener. Ohio State rolled up 776 yards during a 77-10 win against Bowling Green in the 2016 season opener.

Haskins made his debut as the team's starting quarterback, and the sophomore was nearly flawless, begging the question of how any program can lose a four-year starter and owner of a boatload of school and Big Ten records and still feel like it has upgraded the position.

The 6-3, 220-pound sophomore was cucumber-cool in the huddle, under center and in the pocket as he connected on 22 of 30 attempts for 313 yards and five touchdowns. Haskins was also an equal-opportunity distributor, completing passes to seven different receivers, including touchdowns tosses to wide receiver Terry McLaurin, H-back Parris Campbell, tight end Rashod Berry and running back Mike Weber.

Speaking of Weber, the 5-10, 214-pound junior appeared in midseason form as he punished the Oregon State defense with a career-high 186 yards and three touchdowns on 20 carries. That was part of a rushing attack that manufactured 375 yards and five scores against the Beavers.

As much as the Buckeyes appeared to be a well-oiled locomotive in the opener, it's worth mentioning that Oregon State is undertaking a massive rebuild. The Beavers experienced their 11th straight defeat, the longest losing streak for the program since a school-record 15 consecutive losses in 1995-96. And Ohio State's next opponent, Big Ten rival Rutgers, has lost to the Buckeyes by scores of 58-0 and 56-0 the last two years, yielding more than 600 total yards in each contest.

In other words, expect another offensive explosion before the team travels to Dallas on Sept. 15 to take on TCU. The Horned Frogs had a similar offensive outburst to Ohio State in their season opener, rolling to a 55-7 victory against Southern University, a member of the Southwestern Athletic Conference in the Football Championship Subdivision.

Before heading to the Lone Star State, however, the Buckeyes will need a little work on defense. That was about the only thing that didn't cooperate on opening day – that and Mother Nature, who alternated between sun-splashed splendor and an angry lightning storm accompanied by monsoon-like rains that extended halftime some 90 minutes.

Oregon State managed to pile up 392 total yards – an even mix of 196 both on the ground and through the air – and notable breakdowns on the Ohio State defense contributed to big chunks of that yardage.

Junior running back Artavis Pierce, who had never before rushed for more than 73 yards in a single game, broke off touchdown runs of 80 and 78 yards early in the third quarter and finished with 168 yards on just 11 carries. Pierce became the first nonconference

player to eclipse the century mark in rushing against the Buckeyes since Clemson quarterback Tajh Boyd ran for 127 yards during his team's 40-35 win in the 2014 Gator Bowl. No nonconference running back had run for 100 or more yards against Ohio State since Brendan Bigelow of California rambled for 160 yards during OSU's 35-28 win against the Bears in 2012.

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Mark Rea

Of particular concern was Pierce's 80-yard run, which came on Oregon State's first play from scrimmage in the second half. Defensive tackle Antwan Jackson had Pierce dead to rights at the line of scrimmage, but the 5-11, 201-pounder bounced off the would-be tackle and then outraced OSU cornerback Jeffrey Okudah down the sideline.

Joining Pierce in setting a new career best was receiver Trevon Bradford, who gathered in six passes for 104 yards and two touchdowns. Bradford's previous career high was 51 yards, set two years ago when he was a freshman, and he nearly equaled that with a 49-yard touchdown early in the first quarter when he got behind safety Isaiah Pryor and then split safety Jahsen Wint and cornerback Damon Arnette on his way to the end zone.

There were bright spots on the defense, including defensive end Nick Bosa padding his already-impressive resumé with a pair of sacks and two fumble recoveries, including one in the end zone for a touchdown.

All in all, it was a satisfying opener with lots of highlights and just enough correctable mistakes to keep everyone focused on what they need to do to get better. Just what the doctor ordered for a program that needed to shake off a month of discontent and get back to what it does best – play football.

### Enough Is Enough

For the better part of the first half of the 20th century, Major League Baseball was the most popular sport in America, earning the moniker of "The National Pastime."

Baseball's popularity began to erode in the early 1950s but not for the reasons most often promulgated by modern-day experts who believe the game is too slow, too simplistic and too antiquated. Baseball suffered from scandals in other sports, including allegations of point-shaving by college basketball players and academic cheating by members of the college football team at West Point.

Those scandals faded over the years but they have been replaced by countless others – baseball's steroid epidemic, the use of performance-enhancing drugs that brought down such national heroes as three-time Olympic gold medal sprinter Marion Jones and seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong, countless pay-for-play scandals at various universities across the nation, and the sexual deviancies of Jerry Sandusky, Larry Nasser and Richard Strauss.

At some point, as baseball discovered in the 1950s, the escapism and entertainment value of sports is going to be overshadowed by the unseemly events that occur away from the playing field.

I've covered sports in general and Ohio State sports in particular for most of the last 40 years, and I can honestly say I've about had enough.

The latest back-and-forth surrounding the firing of Smith and subsequent suspension of Meyer is baby powder compared to some of the other scandals that have occurred in college football over the few years. But it somehow feels just as bad because it hits so close to home.

For the better part of the last month, we have been subjected to the sordid details of Zach and Courtney Smith's tempestuous marriage. The wife claims she was physically and verbally abused. The husband denies the allegations. What followed was a winding, twisting road of half-truths, a costly investigation that led to the suspension of Meyer and Gene Smith, the university's athletic director, and the resignation of a board of trustees member because he thought the penalties were too lenient.

All the while, Zach and Courtney Smith continue to argue back and forth through their designated media mouthpieces. Zach Smith fired the most recent volley Aug. 30 when he told USA Today, "Urban knew the truth. That's what's lost in all this – the truth. Everything he's said negatively about me, that's all on Ohio State. That's all from the pressure they put on him to keep his job because they are spineless. That's why they fired Jim Tressel. They are absolutely spineless."

Smith went on to dispute much of what was contained in Ohio State's investigative report, including the denial that he had a sexual relationship with a secretary on the football staff. He did not address allegations that he took sexually explicit photos of himself from the White House during the football team's 2015 visit or that he had sex toys mailed to the football office.

The waters in this case have been muddied to such a degree that no one can be totally sure of the facts. One thing, however, I am totally sure of. Meyer taking to Twitter to "clarify" the reasons for why he believes he was suspended does not help matters.

From his demeanor at the Aug. 22 press conference announcing the suspension, anyone watching could tell Meyer didn't agree with the punishment. There was no need to clarify anything by releasing a statement 24 hours before the football team's season opener against Oregon State, a statement the coach claimed was necessary because of "a number of things reported in the media ... that have not been correct."

One of the most famous lines from one of the most famous plays ever written deals with someone who "doth protest too much."

Seeking their own venue to "set the record straight," all the while blaming the media for spreading misinformation, has become an increasingly favorite tactic for those in the public arena. Sometimes, the media does get it wrong. But Meyer's so-called clarification seemingly addressed what Smith told USA Today, not anything the media incorrectly reported.

To my mind, it seems that Smith blames Meyer and Ohio State for his dismissal while Meyer apparently blames Smith and what he told USA Today for the need to clarify the reasons why the head coach was suspended.

In other words, in perhaps what is the perfect sign for the times in which we live, no one is willing to take responsibility for his own actions.

This was an unmitigated mess from the very start, a festering sore that will continue to ooze until all of the parties learn to simply keep their mouths shut. The public relations war has already been lost on all sides. My advice would be to put down your weapons and walk away.





# OHIO STATE INSIDER

## Meyer Visits Buckeyes After Suspension

Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer was handed a three-game suspension Aug. 22 in the wake of a two-week investigation into his handling of domestic abuse allegations against former receivers coach Zach Smith. Meyer had been on paid administrative leave since Aug. 1, meaning he had no contact with his coaching staff or players throughout fall camp.

The day after his suspension was handed down, though, Meyer was allowed to visit the Woody Hayes Athletic Center to meet with the staff and team, an Ohio State spokesperson confirmed to BSB.

Meyer was at the Woody for about 45 minutes Aug. 23 and also had "limited conversations" with members of the program between then and Aug. 25. Those conversations were not in a violation of his suspension because he



TIM MOODY

**BACK IN ACTION** – Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer was set to return to his coaching duties Sept. 3, although he will be suspended for the Rutgers and TCU games.

did not receive the terms of his punishment until Aug. 26.

Those terms – which were delivered to Meyer in a notice from Susan M. Basso, the senior vice president in the Office of Human Resources at Ohio State – prevented Meyer from performing any of his duties as head coach, including attending practices, meetings and other events. He was prohibited from communicating with members of the coaching staff, players, recruits or others within the program as well.

"Dear Urban: As you know, President (Michael) Drake, in consultation with the

board of trustees, determined that you did not take sufficient management action regarding Zach Smith and have not, in the handling of certain matters, upheld the high values of Ohio State," said the notice from Basso, which was obtained by BSB through a public records request. "The resulting disciplinary actions set forth below are designed to be fair, just, and appropriate, and to provide an opportunity to learn from past mistakes to make our program and university stronger and better moving forward."

On Sept. 3, the Monday following Ohio State's season-opening, 77-31 win over Oregon State, Meyer was slated to be reinstated. He will be suspended once again Sept. 8 when the Buckeyes host Rutgers at Ohio Stadium, though, and again on Sept. 15 when Ohio State faces TCU in Arlington, Texas. Those suspensions will each last for 24-hour periods surrounding the games and will have the same terms.

Meyer's notice of his suspension also noted that he'll forgo six weeks of compensation.

Athletic director Gene Smith received a similar notice regarding his suspension, which runs from Aug. 31 through Sept. 16.

Smith will be unpaid during that period. The AD was also present for Meyer's meeting with the team on Aug. 23.

## Board Member Resigns In Wake Of Suspension

After Drake, in consultation with the board of trustees, opted to suspend Meyer for the first three games of the year, trustee Jeffrey Wadsworth handed in his resignation.

In an interview with The New York Times, Wadsworth said that he felt Meyer should have received a more "profound" punishment for his handling of Zach Smith.

"I didn't feel that I'd seen high-integrity behavior," Wadsworth said.

The board had 20 members at the time of the meeting, and Wadsworth said he was the only member who felt a more severe punishment was necessary. He said it became clear early in the process that the conversation was going to center around the length of the suspension, and not a more drastic action, and he ended up leaving the Aug. 22 meeting early. He didn't know the final result until it was announced that evening, and he handed in his resignation shortly after.

"Most people were concerned about whether it was a several-game suspension or not," Wadsworth told The Times.

"To me, there was something altogether wrong about reducing it to a couple of games."

So far, Wadsworth is the only board member to speak publicly about the punishment. After his resignation, the university issued a statement to the Times.

"The president and the board of trustees had a frank and comprehensive discussion last week," the statement said. "A wide variety of perspectives were expressed in reaching a consensus. Mr. Wadsworth has been an exceptionally valuable member of the board. His service to the university is deeply appreciated, and we wish him the very best."

## Courtney Smith Says OSU Lawyer Never Asked Her To Drop Charges

Courtney Smith, the ex-wife of Zach Smith, who was fired July 23, said Aug. 29 that she did not tell police that Ohio State sent a lawyer to her house in 2015 to ask her not to pursue charges of domestic abuse against her then-estranged husband, according to ESPN.

The Columbus Dispatch received a police incident report from Oct. 26, 2015, via an anon-



When you win, say nothing.  
When you lose, say less.  
— Paul Brown

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## FAQ Concerning BuckeyeSports.com

As readership of our new 24/7 website, BuckeyeSports.com, continues to grow we field many questions about how to use or maximize use of the site, free to all Buckeye Sports Bulletin print subscribers. From time to time we will attempt to answer frequently asked questions.

**Q. I check BuckeyeSports.com every day to see the latest headlines. This is very helpful in keeping up with Ohio State sports news, especially during the Urban Meyer investigation. However, I notice that you are always pushing the Forum. Why is that and how do I access the Forum? Can anyone participate or only BSB staff members?**

**A.** We are glad that you are getting your breaking news on the site's front page. The Forum is a great place to share your opinion on that news with members of the BSB staff and other Buckeye fans. The exchanges on various topics can be lively and entertaining. Remember, on the BSB Forum, all opinions are equal.

There are also assorted nuggets posted on the Forum by the staff that can only be found there, especially concerning recruiting, so if you are not going to the Forum you are not getting the full picture each day.

Additionally, BSB readers from around the country frequently see items of interest that the staff doesn't and posts them for everyone's enlightenment. The Forum gives us the added benefit of essentially having correspondents in all 50 states. Our slogan is, "If you see (or hear something), say something."

As for how to access the Forum, once you are logged in just click on the Forum tab at the top of the page and it will take you right there. To see what people are saying about a particular topic, click on the red topic header. To add your two cents, just hit the "add reply" button. To start your own thread (don't be bashful), just hit "new topic."

Most importantly, have fun and keep it civil!

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ymous sender Aug. 29. Among the details in the report, Courtney Smith detailed a history of abuse by Zach Smith. The Dispatch also noted that the report said Courtney Smith told Powell (Ohio) Police that an Ohio State lawyer was sent to her home after a previous incident with the task of "convincing her to drop the charge because it would embarrass OSU if she proceeded with the prosecution."

After the report surfaced, Courtney Smith told ESPN she never said anyone from Ohio State had pressured her to drop the case.

"No way," she said, according to ESPN. "I would have never said that."

Courtney Smith said the other details in the incident report matched up with what she remembered telling Powell Police at the time.

### Polls Delayed For Opening Week

Due to the opening week college football schedule, the Associated Press and coaches polls were delayed following week one of the season, as games featuring No. 25 LSU vs. No. 8 Miami, Fla. (Sept. 2) and No. 19 Florida State vs. No. 20 Virginia Tech (Sept. 3) pushed back the poll announcements to Sept. 4.

Entering the second week of the season, all top-five teams in the AP poll came away with victories. No. 1 Alabama cruised past Louisville, 51-14, No. 2 Clemson bowled over Furman 48-7, No. 3 Georgia shut out Austin Peay, 45-0, and No. 4 Wisconsin rolled Western Kentucky on Aug. 31, 34-3. Ohio State's 77 points were the most of any AP top-25 team in week one of the season.

Other notable top-25 matchups in the first week of the season included No. 12 Notre Dame's 24-17 win over No. 14 Michigan in South Bend, Ind., and No. 9 Auburn's 21-16 victory over No. 6 Washington.

Penn State and Michigan State, ranked No. 10 and No. 11, respectively, both survived major upset scares in their first games of the season.

The Nittany Lions were taken to overtime by Appalachian State at home on Sept. 1 but

ultimately came away with the 45-38 victory in the extra period. A day earlier, Michigan State needed to force a turnover on Utah State's final possession to secure a 38-31 victory in East Lansing, Mich.

However, perhaps the biggest victory for a Big Ten team over the first weekend came from Maryland, which upset No. 23 Texas for the second straight season, this time winning 34-29.

### Burrow Named LSU Starter

Just months after transferring from Ohio State, quarterback Joe Burrow was named the starter at his new school in Baton Rouge, La.

Burrow left Columbus following his spring graduation after apparently losing out to

## 2018 Ohio State Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Result/Time (ET)	TV	Record, Last Result
Sept. 1	OREGON STATE	W, 77-31	ABC	0-1, 77-31 loss at Ohio State
Sept. 8	RUTGERS	3:30 p.m.	BTN	1-0, 35-7 win over Texas State
Sept. 15	vs. TCU#*	8 p.m.	ABC	1-0, 55-7 win over Southern University
Sept. 22	TULANE	TBA	TBA	0-1, 23-17 OT loss to Wake Forest
Sept. 29	at Penn State*	TBA	TBA	1-0, 45-38 OT win over Appalachian State
Oct. 6	INDIANA	3:30 OR 4 p.m.	TBA	1-0, 38-28 win over Florida International
Oct. 13	MINNESOTA	TBA	TBA	1-0, 48-10 win over New Mexico State
Oct. 20	at Purdue*	TBA	TBA	0-1, 31-27 loss to Northwestern
Nov. 3	NEBRASKA	TBA	TBA	0-0, Week 1 game vs. Akron cancelled
Nov. 10	at Michigan State*	TBA	TBA	1-0, 38-31 win over Utah State
Nov. 17	at Maryland	TBA	TBA	1-0, 34-29 win over Texas
Nov. 24	MICHIGAN*	Noon	FOX	0-1, 24-17 loss at Notre Dame
Dec. 1	Big Ten Championship@	8 p.m.	FOX	

\* - 2017-18 bowl team

# - at Arlington, Texas

@ - at Indianapolis

Dwayne Haskins for the starting job at Ohio State. He transferred to LSU and beat out a slew of QB talent, including sophomore Myles Brennan and two other signal callers who opted to transfer, and he was named the starter for the Tigers in the week leading up to their game against Miami (Fla.).

Playing against the Hurricanes on Sept. 2 at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, Burrow made his first collegiate start for the Tigers. The game was ongoing when BSB went to press.

It was the first start of Burrow's collegiate career and the first game action for the Athens, Ohio, native since receiving mop-up duty in Ohio State's 52-14 win over Illinois on Nov. 18, 2017.

The Tigers are set to return to action Sept. 8 at home against Southeastern Louisiana.

### Fickell Gets Win In Rose Bowl

Former Ohio State defensive lineman and assistant coach Luke Fickell experienced plenty of success in his time in Columbus, with some of his best moments coming in the Rose Bowl.

On Sept. 1, he made another positive memory in perhaps the most iconic college football stadium as the head coach for Cincinnati, leading the Bearcats to a 26-17 victory over UCLA, which calls the Rose Bowl home during the regular season.

Coincidentally, 26-17 was the final score of the last game Fickell appeared in at the Rose Bowl, when Ohio State defeated Oregon in the 2010 edition of the Rose Bowl while he was an OSU assistant. Perhaps even more

coincidental is that the win came against Chip Kelly, the former Ducks offensive-minded head coach who is now at the helm of a rebuilding UCLA program after a brief stint as a head coach in the NFL with the Philadelphia Eagles and San Francisco 49ers.

### Barrett, Others Cut From NFL Squads

The final week of the preseason in the NFL preceded the first week of the regular season in college football, and multiple former Buckeyes were cut from their respective professional teams.

The list was led by former Buckeye quarterback J.T. Barrett, who was released by the New Orleans Saints following a preseason in which he saw limited game action behind the likes of Drew Brees, Taysom Hill and Tom Savage. In his final preseason game, Barrett completed 3 of 6 passes for 18 yards and an interception. His future with the Saints was all but decided when New Orleans traded for New York Jets quarterback Teddy Bridgewater just before the final preseason game of the year. Barrett was later signed to the Saints' practice squad on Sept. 2, according to a report from Nick Underhill of the New Orleans Advocate.

Other Buckeyes who found themselves looking for new NFL homes included linebacker Chris Worley, who was waived by the Cincinnati Bengals, and wide receiver DeVier Posey, who was waived by the Baltimore Ravens.

Former Ohio State quarterback turned

Continued On Page 6

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# OHIO STATE INSIDER

Continued From Page 5

wide receiver Braxton Miller was released by the Houston Texans after two seasons with the team, in which he totaled 34 receptions for 261 yards and two scores. Miller had been drafted by the Texans in the third round of the 2016 NFL draft.

John Simon, a former Ohio State defensive end converted to linebacker at the NFL level, was released by the Indianapolis Colts after two seasons with the team. In five NFL seasons with three different teams (Baltimore, Houston, Indianapolis), Simon has tallied 106 career tackles and 13 sacks.

A former national champion at Ohio State, cornerback Doran Grant was released by the Chicago Bears on Sept. 1, despite a solid showing in four preseason games. Grant collected a pair of interceptions in the preseason, including one returned for a touchdown against the Buffalo Bills. Grant has bounced around the league since being drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers in the fourth round of the 2015 NFL draft. He has since made stops in Buffalo, New York (Giants), Jacksonville and Chicago, all as a member of the practice squad or a preseason roster.

Tight end Marcus Baugh and safety Damon Webb were released by the Oakland Raiders and Tennessee Titans, respectively, following the NFL preseason, after both went undrafted in the 2018 draft. Baugh collected just five catches for 19 yards in the preseason with the Raiders while Webb, despite playing

for former Ohio State coaches Mike Vrabel and Kerry Coombs in Tennessee, couldn't crack the final 53-man roster in Nashville.

On Sept. 2, former Buckeye quarterback Cardale Jones was reportedly waived by the Los Angeles Chargers, who he had been with since last season. Jones was originally drafted by Buffalo in the fourth round in 2016 before being traded to the Chargers. He went 13 for 25 for 111 yards with one touchdown in the preseason.

### B1G Releases Future Schedules

The Big Ten conference announced the league schedules for the 2022-25 seasons for every program Aug. 29, with the conference featuring one league game to open each season.

In 2022, Ohio State is set to open the season at home against Notre Dame on Sept. 3 with an open week still left to be determined for week two. On Sept. 17, the Buckeyes are set to play host to Toledo before opening conference play on Sept. 24 against Michigan State in East Lansing. From there, the Buckeyes will play Penn State on the road (Oct. 1), Rutgers (Oct. 8), Iowa (Oct. 15) and Indiana (Oct. 29) at home before traveling to Northwestern on Nov. 5. The Buckeyes will then host Wisconsin on Nov. 12 and travel to Maryland on Nov. 19 before the annual matchup with Michigan at home Nov. 26.

The following season, Ohio State will open the season at Indiana on Sept. 2 before playing three nonconference games, including a road trip to South Bend for a rematch with Notre Dame on Sept. 23. From there, the Buckeyes will play host to Maryland (Oct. 7), Penn State (Oct. 21), Michigan State (Nov. 11) and Minnesota (Nov. 18) while traveling to Purdue (Oct. 14), Wisconsin (Oct. 28), Rutgers (Nov. 4) and Michigan (Nov. 25). Ohio State's two nonconference games outside of the contest against Notre Dame have yet to be announced.

In 2024, Ohio State's lone nonconference game that is scheduled comes against Washington on the road Sept. 7. From there, the Buckeyes will open Big Ten play with a pair of home games against Illinois on Sept. 28 and Rutgers on Oct. 5 before a road game against Nebraska on Oct. 12. Ohio State will play host to Wisconsin (Oct. 26), Indiana (Nov. 16) and Michigan (Nov. 30) while making road trips to Maryland (Nov.



JOSH WINSLOW

**OFFICIAL BUCKEYE – Cornerback Sevyn Banks was one of 15 Ohio State freshmen to lose their black helmet stripes before the season opener.**

2), Penn State (Nov. 9) and Michigan State (Nov. 23).

Finally, Ohio State's 2025 schedule is shaping up to be one of the most challenging in program history.

The Buckeyes are set to open the season Aug. 30 on the road at Texas. The following week remains open. Ohio State is then

set to play host to Washington on Sept. 13 before opening conference play against Indiana on the road Sept. 20. From there the Buckeyes are set to play road contests against Iowa (Sept. 27), Wisconsin (Oct. 11), Rutgers (Oct. 25) and Michigan (Nov. 29) with home games coming against Maryland (Oct. 4), Northwestern (Nov. 1), Penn State (Nov. 15) and Michigan State (Nov. 22).

The Big Ten title game is also set to be held in Indianapolis at Lucas Oil Stadium, at least through the 2025 season.

### 5 More Buckeyes Shed Black Stripes

Prior to Ohio State's blowout win over Oregon State, five freshmen lost their black stripes, officially making them Buckeyes in the eyes of the coaching staff.

Defensive linemen Tyler Friday and Javontae Jean-Baptiste joined cornerback Sevyn Banks in shedding their black stripes on Aug. 27 before linebacker K'Vaughan Pope and cornerback Cameron Brown followed suit on Aug. 29.

Fifteen Buckeyes from the 2018 recruiting class have now lost their black stripes as the five listed above joined cornerback Tyreke Johnson, tight end Jeremy Ruckert, running back Master Teague, defensive end Tyreke Smith, wide receiver Chris Olave, running back Brian Snead, defensive tackle Taron Vincent, linebacker Teradja Mitchell, linebacker Dallas Gant and defensive tackle Tommy Togiai.

Of the 15 who have lost their black stripes, 13 made appearances in the season opener, with only Johnson and Banks not seeing the field. Banks was seen on the sidelines pregame with a brace on his left wrist/hand.

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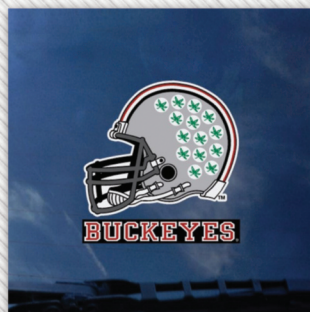


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# Haskins' 1st Start Is Most Prolific In OSU History

Continued From Page 1

half, Haskins, a sophomore from Potomac (Md.) Bullis School, played the majority of the first three quarters for Ohio State. Once he left the field for good, he had already wrapped up the most prolific starting debut in program history.

Haskins finished the game with 22 completions on 30 attempts for 313 yards and five touchdowns. He became the first first-time starter ever to throw for more than 300 yards at Ohio State, and his five scores were the most in a starting debut as well.

"It's been an 11-year dream," Haskins said. "And I was thinking about that yesterday – how far I came just to be here and just to have this opportunity is a blessing. Just take a deep breath and realize that it's finally here but get better and go on to the next week."

In the victory, Haskins become the first Ohio State quarterback to make his first start in the season opener since Barrett topped Navy to kick off the 2014 season – which ended with a national title, for what it's worth.

Against the Beavers, the Buckeyes punted just once, and that came in the second quarter on a drive led by Martell. The only possession led by Haskins that didn't end in a touchdown came in the third quarter when, with Ohio State ahead 56-28, Haskins was pressured on third-and-10 at the Oregon State 19-yard line and he heaved a ball over the middle in the direction of fifth-year senior wide receiver Johnnie Dixon. The pass went over Dixon's head to be intercepted by Shawn Wilson. Interestingly, Haskins ended up forcing a fumble on the ensuing return, but the ball was picked up by Oregon

State's Kaleb Hayes, who returned it all the way to the Ohio State 19.

After the game, Haskins accepted that he made a poor decision there but praised the offense overall.

"The first thing I would say is the interception. I should have thrown that away," he said. "I got hit by a tackle while throwing the ball. Otherwise, great job by the offense today. I'm really proud of everybody."

Start to finish, Haskins' performance was as good as anyone could have hoped – and likely better than most expected, at least outside the doors of the Woody Hayes Athletic Center.

Within the program, though, players such as fifth-year senior wide receiver Parris Campbell – the team's lead captain – already knew what Haskins could do. They saw him do it in practice all season a year ago, and the world saw him perform in crunch time against Michigan.

But Sept. 1 marked the change to a new era at Ohio State – one with Haskins running the show. And what transpired is what

Campbell expected. It was what is expected from every player on the roster.

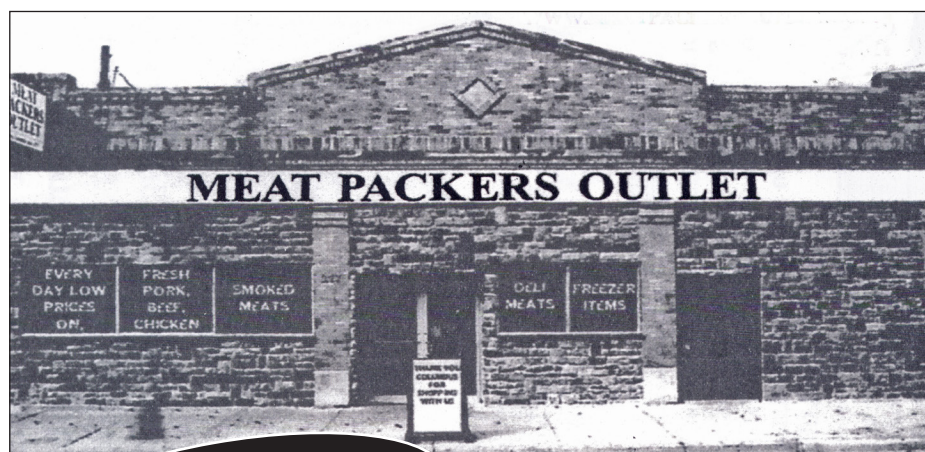
"I think it was definitely what we expected," Campbell said. "The standard on the board here for every player is elite. Obviously, he showed that today and he was elite today. I think my biggest challenge for him was just keep pushing, get better, week-by-week get better and continue to perform."

Fifth-year senior wide receiver Terry McLaurin, another team captain, praised Haskins' poise in his starting debut in addition to his arm talent.

"There were some things back in the spring where he was just young, trying to get a hold on this offense, and he had some ups and downs," McLaurin said. "I came over and talked to him before the game, and he looked as locked in as I have seen him. He didn't flinch today. He was locked into the game plan, and that is a credit to Coach Day."

"His (Haskins') quick release, man, every time I turn around the ball is there. That is really good for me."

All in all, Haskins looked about as far



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from Barrett as two quarterbacks can be. While Barrett – perhaps the fiercest competitor to play a down at Ohio State – simply made plays any way he could, Haskins looked the part of a gunslinger, or a future first-round pick in the NFL draft. Barrett was a runner, willing to go head-to-head with a linebacker. Haskins – while willing – proved the quarterback run doesn't need to be a part of the offense at Ohio State. In fact, it might be even better this way – it's hard to argue with 77 points against a Power-5 opponent, even if the Beavers were 1-11 last season.

That said, if Haskins is called upon to run, he can hold his own. He carried the ball twice against Oregon State, going for 7 yards and 17 yards on two scrambles. When the defense does force him to pull the ball down, Haskins knows what he plans to do.

"Make them pay," he said. "Simple as that."

### The Coach

As Day noted, Sept. 1 marked many firsts for him. More notable than anything, it was his first game as a head coach at any level, and it was Ohio State's first game without Urban Meyer since the Gator Bowl in 2011, when Luke Fickell was still the interim head coach after Jim Tressel stepped down.

At Ohio State, though, things mostly looked the same. Day, who called plays and coached from the sidelines rather than his usual perch in the press box, never once looked out of place. He had some trouble with his whistle before the game – "the whistle, I don't know, they gave me a whistle, it didn't work" – but otherwise filled in seamlessly.

To Day's credit, he was the head man throughout fall camp as well. Meyer was placed on administrative leave Aug. 1, and his suspension began Aug. 22. That meant he had all of preseason camp, plus two weeks of game prep, to jell with the team while awaiting Meyer's return.

That showed against Oregon State, and it helped Day and the Buckeyes avoid the nerves that might be expected in such a situation.

"(I was) not nervous because there was a quiet confidence about this team all along," Day said. "There's a quiet confidence about a lot of guys on our team."

"When you're surrounded with players and coaches that have your back and that you know you've been through some stuff with, you kind of feel good about it."

Day noted that there were three aspects of being head coach that he especially enjoyed. One was the bed check the night before the game. Then there was Skull Session at St. John Arena. Then there was the return to the field for the second half, when many fans returned to the stands after a long weather delay.

"Coming out before the game and seeing the support and going through the line, and just the support that I felt and this team felt walking from the Skull Session to the stadium was really, really cool," he said. "And you could feel it and it was emotional."

Once the Buckeyes took the field, it was clear to some extent that the offense had Day's fingerprints all over it. That would likely have been the case even if Meyer had been around, though. Day was promoted to offensive coordinator in the offseason and given a raise to \$1 million, making him the highest-paid offensive coach in program history and second-highest paid assistant overall (defensive coordinator Greg Schiano is set to make \$1.5 million in 2018).

That's not to say things were the same as they would be if Meyer were around, though. Campbell noted that nobody is quite like the Buckeyes' actual head coach.

"I mean, I don't think you can compare anybody to Coach Meyer," Campbell said. "I

think Coach Meyer is kind of a one-of-a-kind coach. But I think what Coach Day brings is great. He's a juiced up guy; he loves pushing tempo on offense, obviously. I mean, he just gets us going."

Campbell added that Day hasn't acted any different in the role of acting head coach than he did as an assistant.

"Coach Day is just kind of a laid-back guy," Campbell explained. "He doesn't yell or do too much rah-rah stuff like that. I think it was great. I think he managed being head coach-offensive coordinator calling plays very well. Obviously it's a big task when you have to do something like that, but I think he managed it pretty well."

Before long, though, Day will be back in his normal role, and that Meyer guy will be back on the sidelines. At least for practice, that is.

### The Other Coach

Since Meyer was placed on leave at the beginning of the month, he has had very little contact with Day, other coaches or the

players. On Aug. 23, the day after his suspension was handed down, he was allowed in the Woody Hayes Athletic Center to meet with the players and coaches for about 45 minutes. His message that day was still focused on the opener, Campbell said.

"Honestly, his main focus was just us going out and being 1-0," he said of Meyer. "Obviously he wasn't there, so he wanted the team to be focused. He didn't want to let any of the distractions or what was going on get in any of the players' heads and getting in our way. So his main focus was just us being 1-0."

The Akron native also noted that there is a different vibe on the sidelines without Meyer – not necessarily a bad vibe, just different. Meyer, to be fair, is a multi-time national champion, while Day now has a grand total of one game as a head coach under his belt.

"I think there's a different pressure when Coach Meyer is on the field, just because of the high expectations that he holds," Campbell said. "I'm not saying that each

and every coach doesn't hold that exact expectation, it's just that Coach Meyer has a different presence about him, has a different vibe about him."

When the game ended, Meyer's suspension still had more than 24 hours on the clock. He was set to be reinstated the following Monday, Sept. 3, for the week, but his suspension will be in place once again Sept. 8 when the Buckeyes host Rutgers. He'll be held out of action again Sept. 15 when Ohio State faces TCU in Arlington, Texas.

But, even though the coach will be missing a couple more games, Campbell expected Meyer's return to the program to bring a different energy.

"I think it's going to be juiced up," Campbell said. "I think guys are going to be excited to have him back around. I think obviously he's going to be excited to be back around, so he might come in a little aggressive, just because he hasn't been around us in a long time. He just wants to enjoy our presence. So I think it will be fun. I think everyone will be excited."



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# Ohio State Defense Struggles In Blowout Win

Ohio State's offense dominated Oregon State in the season opener Sept. 1 in Columbus. However, the game wasn't without some shortcomings for the Buckeyes.

The Buckeye defense surrendered three touchdowns of 49-yards or more against Oregon State, including touchdown runs of 80 and 78 yards in the second half alone. Ohio State was gashed for 196 rushing yards, despite holding the Beavers to minus-4 rushing yards in the first half.

## GAME NOTEBOOK

James Grega

Much of Oregon State's second-half success had to do with the fact that Nick Bosa and Dre'Mont Jones, who dominated the first half, were benched for the entire second half due to Ohio State's big lead, which stood at 42-14 going into the locker rooms.

The most glaring position group for Ohio State however, was the secondary.

With starting safety Jordan Fuller sidelined with a hamstring injury, both Isaiah Pryor and Jahsen Wint – who had been battling for the starting job opposite Fuller – got the start against the Beavers but struggled early in the blowout victory.

On Oregon State's second possession of the game, backup quarterback Conor Blount, who came on in relief of an injured Jake Luton, completed a pass over the middle to receiver Trevon Bradford for a 49-yard touchdown. Bradford beat Pryor off the line of scrimmage before racing by Wint up the Oregon State sideline for the Beavers' first touchdown of the game.

Just before halftime, Bradford found the end zone again, this time on a corner

route beating Pryor who was in man-to-man coverage. By the time the two teams headed to the locker room, Blount had thrown for 169 yards and the two scores without throwing an interception. Bradford finished the game with six receptions for 104 yards in the loss, while Blount did not play at all in the second half, giving way to third-string signal caller Jack Colletto.

In addition to the safety struggles, sophomore cornerback Jeffrey Okudah was whistled for a pair of pass interference calls on the same drive in the first half, although Oregon State ended up punting later in the possession. He later lost a foot-race up Ohio State's sideline on Oregon State's first play of the second half, as running back Artavis Pierce scooted 80 yards for a score, beating Okudah to the edge.

First-year Buckeye assistant Alex Grinch, who coaches the safeties in addition to coordinating the defense, said after the game that Ohio State's week two opponent, Rutgers, likely won't be intimidated by the Buckeye secondary when they watch film in preparation for the Big Ten opener.

"If you're a Rutgers football team, who we play next week, and you watch Ohio State's defense at this point, I certainly don't think they're intimidated to play us," Grinch said. "That's got to change very quickly."

Bosa, who was on the field for just two touchdowns allowed by the Buckeye defense, added that he doesn't imagine defensive coordinator Greg Schiano will be pleased either when Ohio State returns to practice.

"All you can really think about is how crazy Coach Schiano is going to be this week in practice on the fundamental things and getting those issues fixed," Bosa said. "Because when you play a Big Ten oppo-

nent or someone who is better, those things aren't going to fly."

The absence of Fuller, who participated in team warmups and was dressed for the game, was felt throughout the game in both run and pass situations. The Beavers accumulated 392 yards of offense, 196 each through the air and on the ground, but Grinch said that Fuller's absence doesn't excuse the big plays allowed by the Buckeye defense.

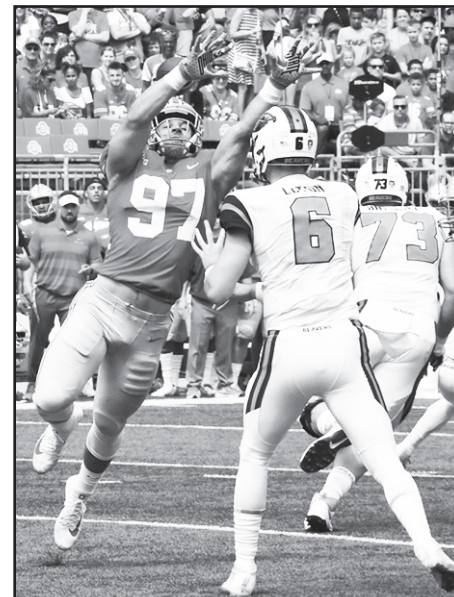
"As you evaluate things, anytime you have an explosive play, it's very easy to earmark a specific position group," Grinch said. "Oftentimes it's more of a collective effort of 11 guys. Sometimes it is one guy, absolutely. Sometimes it's a missed tackle. In 2018, with the offenses that you face, very rarely do you have an opportunity to defend one play on a single down. They can hand the ball off, they can run as a quarterback and there's a pass option off of it."

"So when you do those things, there's not extra guys. Not every defense has – who's the extra? The guy that has that gap needs to take that gap, the guy in a position to make an open-field tackle needs to make it," he continued. "As best you can, you try to layer yourself, but some things offenses do, they kind of get you leveled out. Those plays need to get corrected, and they need to be corrected fast."

### Bosa Dominates 1st Half

Bosa didn't need to play more than a half of football to announce his presence as one of the most dominant forces in college football against the Beavers.

In one half of action, Bosa collected four tackles, two sacks and two fumble recoveries, the second of which he fell on for Ohio State's sixth touchdown of the game after



SONNY BROCKWAY

**DOMINANT DAY** – Ohio State junior defensive end Nick Bosa (97) had two sacks and two fumble recoveries in the first half against Oregon State.

Pete Werner stripped Blount near his own goal line.

It was the first touchdown of Bosa's career, but he added he was more excited about his two sacks than he was the first-half score.

"It's cool. I like to get sacks better, but touchdowns are good too," he said. "Whenever somebody gets pushed back that far, we expect to get points out of it. I think the momentum swung in our direction."

The rest of the defensive line also dominated the Oregon State offensive front. As a team, the Buckeyes collected five sacks and six tackles for loss.



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# Game Analysis

Dre'Mont Jones tallied a pair of first-half sacks while Werner added the fifth for the Buckeyes in the first 30 minutes. Robert Landers added a tackle for loss in the win, as the Ohio State defense played more than 10 defensive linemen in the blowout victory.

## Weber Highlights Rushing Attack

For the 15th straight game, J.K. Dobbins got the start at running back for Ohio State. However, it was Mike Weber who stole the show offensively in the Buckeye backfield.

Weber, who rotated offensive possessions with Dobbins, notched eight carries for 92 yards and a pair of rushing touchdowns in the first half alone, adding a third score on a touch-pass from Dwayne Haskins to put Ohio State up 35-7.

Dobbins was the only scholarship running back who failed to find the end zone against Oregon State, but he did earn 15 carries tallying 74 yards on the ground in just more than a half of football.

Weber, who finished with a career-high 186 yards on 20 carries and four total touchdowns, said the split of carries between him and Dobbins is exactly what he envisioned when he decided to return to Ohio State following the 2017 season.

"That is something that we talk about and think about a lot," Weber said. "It's the reason why I came back, because we knew that we were going to split carries but splitting carries is actually good on the body for both of us. We are both going to eat for the rest of the season, and I can't wait for that to happen."

Despite not finding the end zone and watching Weber steal the show, Dobbins said he was happy for his backfield mate.

"Oh, it was great," Dobbins said. "It's just great to see him doing that. I'm not a selfish guy, so I'm excited for him."

Once Weber and Dobbins were removed from action, Brian Snead and Master Teague got their first game action as Buckeyes and combined to rush for 81 yards on 13 carries, each of the freshmen finding the end zone once.

## McLaurin Posts Career Day

Often forgotten about despite being a fifth-year senior captain, Terry McLaurin posted his best game in his Ohio State career against the Beavers.

The Indianapolis native grabbed four passes for 121 yards and two touchdowns against the Oregon State defense, scoring the first touchdown of each half. His second score, a 75-yard catch-and-run, came on the first play of the second half following a lightning delay.

McLaurin, recognized in front of the team following the game, said he was pleased with his performance and was excited that he could contribute to the big game from the offense, which punted just once.

"The guys were kind of ragging on me because they thought I was going to get caught (on his long TD), but as a leader I just want to come out and give energy to our team," he said. "I got called up in the locker room, but I am not a 'me' guy. I just want to do everything for this offense. Just to be able to come out and play at a very high level, you need that from a fifth-year senior. To be able to do that for our offense and get us off to the right start, that is all I cared about today."

McLaurin's four receptions were third most on the team, as K.J. Hill led all

## What Worked Well

The new offense. Night and day from the days of "J.T. left, J.T. right" with former multiyear starter J.T. Barrett, sophomore Dwayne Haskins had an as-advertised performance. In his debut as Ohio State's starting quarterback, he completed 22 of his 30 passes (73.3 percent) for 313 yards and five touchdowns against Oregon State. What truly stood out, though, was how the Buckeyes operated an entirely different scheme. With just four attempts for 28 yards between quarterbacks Haskins and redshirt freshman Tate Martell, Ohio State's offense approached the rushing attack with a healthy dose of tailback handoffs for junior Mike Weber and sophomore J.K. Dobbins. The two-headed monster combined for 260 yards on 35 carries, with Weber accounting for three rushing touchdowns. On the outside, the Buckeyes spread the wealth to their receivers with 10 players – a running back, two tight ends and seven wideouts – recording at least one catch. From the balanced attack, Ohio State racked up 721 total yards – 346 passing and 375 rushing – as the Buckeyes buried the Beavers.

## What Didn't Work

The back seven. Because of Ohio State's explosion on offense, the Buckeyes' problems on defense did not affect the final outcome. Oregon State broke out for 392 total yards and 31 points thanks to big-play touchdowns by Artavis Pierce, who ripped off runs of 80 and 78 yards as he scampered for 168 yards on 11 car-

ries. Without junior safety Jordan Fuller, who was nursing a hamstring injury, sophomores Jahsen Wint and Isaiah Pryor struggled at times as the Beavers bounced Pierce's runs. Earlier in the game, they both got burned when Oregon State connected for its first touchdown on a crossing pass from Conor Blount to Trevon Bradford, who beat Pryor in coverage and zipped past Wint on the way to a 49-yard catch-and-run. The linebackers – Pete Werner, Baron Browning and Malik Harrison – were also at fault on some of the runs. Ultimately, if not for how explosive and unstoppable Ohio State was on offense, perhaps the Beavers could have made things more interesting. In the future, against better teams, these mistakes could come back to haunt the Buckeyes.

## Play Of The Game

After Ohio State opened the game with a 21-7 first-quarter lead, Weber's second touchdown run truly sparked the blowout. As the Buckeyes pushed their tempo on Oregon State and moved the ball down the field and into Beaver territory, Haskins handed off to Weber on a second-and-10 past midfield at the 49. Weber did the rest when he turned a rush over the left tackle into a 49-yard house call. Getting to the second level and bouncing to the outside, Weber raced for the end zone with a burst of breakaway speed. The score put Ohio State in command of a 28-7 lead with 12:25 left in the second quarter, which eventually led to a commanding 42-14 advantage at halftime.

– Garrett Stepien

Buckeye receivers with six for 82 yards, while Austin Mack hauled in five receptions for 69 yards.

## Martell Earns 1st Playing Time

Highly touted Ohio State quarterback Tate Martell saw his first game action as a Buckeye in the blowout win over Oregon State, stepping in briefly for Haskins in the second quarter before playing the majority of the fourth with the game in hand.

Martell carried the ball twice for 4 yards and completed 3 of 4 passes for 33 yards against the Beavers. Though the redshirt freshman didn't find the end zone in his first snaps as a collegian, acting head coach and quarterbacks coach Ryan Day said he was encouraged with the reps Martell received in the season opener, including a read-option play when Martell pitched the ball late to receiver C.J. Saunders, who gained 8 yards after getting the ball.

"He can do some great things like that," Day said. "His quick, short-area quickness is excellent. In that opportunity he has an option to run it, give it, or actually pitch the ball late or throw it."

"That's what he did there. He's a play-maker. And so as the season goes on he'll have more and more opportunities to show that."

## Inclement Weather Delays 2nd Half

While the Ohio State marching band was performing its 'Queen' themed halftime show, the skies opened over Columbus, dumping multiple inches of rain over the stadium, accompanied by lightning strikes, forcing a delay that lasted more than an hour while the teams remained in the locker room.

The delay was the third Ohio State has experienced in as many seasons. During the 2016 season, contests against Tulsa (home) and Oklahoma (road) were delayed due to lightning in the area. The Buckeyes won both of those games and cruised against Oregon State.

Borland said since the Buckeyes had been in that situation before, there was no panic from the players or coaches.

"It was just a sense of calming," the linebacker said. "We had been there before at Oklahoma two years ago and Tulsa. It wasn't unfamiliar territory for us."

Parris Campbell added that there was a sense of anxiety, but that faded once Ohio State opened the second half with McLaurin's long TD catch.

"I think honestly we were fine," he said. "Obviously, guys were anxious to get back out there, get back on the field. No one likes to play and kind of sit around, get tight, get tense. But I think we handled it very well. Obviously, we came out first play of the drive and we have a touchdown from Terry. So I think we handled it well."

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# Buckeyes Post 77 In Season-Opening Victory

By CRAIG MERZ  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The 129th season of Ohio State football opened Sept. 1 like no other in its storied history in one major regard, but the result was the same as the past 19 season openers when No. 5 Ohio State defeated Oregon State 77-31 at Ohio Stadium.

Ohio State owns the longest current winning streak in openers and has also won 31 consecutive season-opening games at home.

That's where the familiarity ends.

While there have been many instances when the Buckeyes had to replace star players, such as this season with sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins having the unenviable task of taking over for multi-record holder J.T. Barrett, there hasn't been a scenario where the head coach was suspended for the first three games.

After an offseason of uncertainty concerning the performance on the field and a scandal that rocked the athletic department, the Buckeyes steamrolled the Beavers behind five touchdown passes by Haskins and four scores, three of them rushing, from junior back Mike Weber.

Head coach Urban Meyer was not present for the victory. He was issued the suspension Aug. 22 for his handling of former wide receivers coach Zach Smith, who had been fired a month earlier after allegations of domestic violence against his ex-wife were publicly revealed.

Offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Ryan Day was the acting head coach. He was pleased the Buckeyes jumped to a 42-14 halftime lead.

"I'm really proud of the way the guys came out today," said Day, who won his first game as a head coach at any level. "We talked about starting fast in this game. We talked about how we wanted to start fast, play fast. I thought we did that in the first half."

Haskins was 22 for 30 for 313 yards and a third-quarter interception. The yardage and TDs are the most by a Buckeye QB in his first start.

"It's a lot of work put in to get here, to



SONNY BROCKWAY

**BREAKAWAY – Fifth-year senior wide receiver Terry McLaurin had four catches for 121 yards and two touchdowns in Ohio State's 77-31 win.**

get to this moment," Haskins said. "It feels good to have my coaches, my teammates rely on me."

Weber rushed for 186 yards on 20 carries with three TDs plus a touchdown catch.

Ohio State had 375 of its 721 total yards on the ground. The amount is second all-time in OSU history to the 776 total yards vs. Bowling Green in 2016.

Oregon State running back Artavis Pierce had 158 of his 168 yards on TD runs of 80 and 78 yards in the third quarter. Quarterback Conor Blount was 12 for 19 for 169 yards and two touchdowns.

## How It Happened

Ohio State wasted little time getting on the board following a fumble by Beavers

quarterback Jake Luton on their first series.

Junior defensive end Nick Bosa recovered at the Ohio State 43, and the Buckeyes – aided by a 15-yard penalty for grabbing the face mask – used five plays and 1:13 to go the 57 yards. Haskins found senior receiver Terry McLaurin across the middle for 27 yards to the 6 and, after a short run by Dobbins, connected with him again for a 2-yard scoring strike with 11:17 left in the first quarter.

"I'm just glad we won and I was able to give some confidence to Dwayne early and get off to a fast start," McLaurin said.

Oregon State responded even quicker, scoring on its third play after starting at the Beaver 25. Quarterback Conor Blount on his first drive passed 26 yards to Pierce then hit

Trevon Bradford on a slant. Bradford then ran unimpeded for a 49-yard TD to make it 7-7 at the 10:35 mark.

Weber replaced sophomore J.K. Dobbins when the Buckeyes got the ball back, and he had runs of 11 and 16 yards among four carries, the latter for a 14-7 lead with 8:20 to go in the opening stanza.

By the time the Buckeyes had a 21-7 lead with 3:41 left in the first, Haskins had completed 10 of 11 passes for 114 yards. On the third scoring drive, he completed an eight-play, 75-yard march with a roll to the right and a toss to junior tight end Rashod Berry for his second TD pass. Haskins also had a 27-yard completion to junior K.J. Hill to start the drive.

Oregon State failed to take advantage of a fumbled punt return by junior C.J. Saunders that was recovered by Kee Whetzel at the Ohio State 24. The Beavers had to settle for a 43-yard field-goal attempt by Jordan Choukair that he missed.

The Buckeyes made the Beavers pay on their next possession when Weber emphatically finished a 75-yard drive with a 49-yard TD run with 12:25 left in the second quarter to make it 28-7.

Ohio State redshirt freshman QB Tate Martell made his debut with 10:51 left in the second quarter. After he ran for no gain and Dobbins went for 2 yards, Haskins returned on third down and passed 18 yards to Hill and later threw 20 yards to junior Austin Mack, his third completion of 20 or more yards, to put the ball at the Oregon State 8.

Three plays later from the 3, Weber and Dobbins were in the backfield together. Haskins made a touch pass to Weber, who went around the right end, and Haskins had his third TD pass to give the Buckeyes a 35-7 lead.

The Buckeyes increased the margin to 42-7 with 4:30 remaining before halftime thanks to a 65-yard punt by sophomore Drue Chrisman that put the ball on the Oregon State 3. On second-and-7 from the 6, junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones and sophomore linebacker Pete Werner converged on Blount. He fumbled, then Bosa pounced on it at the 1 and fell into the end zone to make it 42-7. Bosa had two sacks and two fumble recoveries in the first half.

"It's always the best feeling when you're not being covered on a blitz," Werner said.

## Worth The Wait

After a 72-minute weather delay at halftime, the game got crazy. The Buckeyes started at their 25, and on the first play, McLaurin took a reception at his own 33 and went the distance for a 49-14 lead.

Oregon State began the ensuing series at the 20, and Artavis Pierce took the handoff on the first snap and ran 80 yards for the score to complete a stretch of two TDs in 19 seconds.

Back came the Buckeyes as fifth-year senior Parris Campbell had an 8-yard TD catch before Pierce shredded the defense for 78-yard TD to make it 56-28. Following a Haskins interception, the Beavers closed the gap to 56-31 on a 23-yard field goal by Choukair with 5:25 left in the third quarter.

Weber made it 63-31 by running in from 4 yards with 14:25 left in the game. Brian Snead had a 2-yard TD run for the Buckeyes with 9:26 left, and fellow true freshman Master Teague had a 33-yard scoring run with 3:50 to go when Day opted to go for it on fourth-and-1.

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# The Numbers Game

## Ohio State 77, Oregon State 31

Sept. 1, 2018 – Ohio Stadium; Columbus, Ohio

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
Oregon State	7	7	17	0	– 31
Ohio State	21	21	14	21	– 77

### First Quarter

**OHIO STATE** – McLaurin, 2 yard pass from Haskins (Nuernberger kick), 11:17; 5 plays, 57 yards, 1:13 TOP.

**OREGON STATE** – Bradford, 49 yard pass from Blount (Choukair kick), 10:35; 3 plays, 75 yards, 0:42 TOP.

**OHIO STATE** – Weber, 16 yard run (Nuernberger kick), 8:20; 8 plays, 65 yards, 2:15 TOP.

**OHIO STATE** – Berry, 6 yard pass from Haskins (Nuernberger kick), 3:41; 8 plays, 75 yards, 2:04 TOP.

### Second Quarter

**OHIO STATE** – Weber, 49 yard run (Nuernberger kick), 12:25; 6 plays, 75 yards, 1:56 TOP.

**OHIO STATE** – Weber, 3 yard pass from Haskins (Nuernberger kick), 7:58; 10 plays, 59 yards, 2:53 TOP.

**OHIO STATE** – Bosa, 0 yard fumble return (Nuernberger kick), 4:30.

**OREGON STATE** – Bradford, 7 yard pass from Blount (Choukair kick), 0:19; 11 plays, 75 yards, 4:11 TOP.

### Third Quarter

**OHIO STATE** – McLaurin, 75 yard pass from Haskins (Nuernberger kick), 14:45; 1 play, 75 yards, 0:15 TOP.

**OREGON STATE** – Pierce, 80 yard run (Choukair kick), 14:26; 1 play, 80 yards, 0:14 TOP.

**OHIO STATE** – Campbell, 8 yard pass from Haskins (Nuernberger kick), 11:55; 10 plays, 75 yards, 2:31 TOP.

**OREGON STATE** – Pierce, 78 yard run (Choukair kick), 11:06; 2 plays, 76 yards, 0:42 TOP.

**OREGON STATE** – Choukair, 23 yard field goal, 5:25; 6 plays, 14 yards, 1:51 TOP.

### Fourth Quarter

**OHIO STATE** – Weber, 4 yard run (Nuernberger kick), 14:25; 11 plays, 79 yards, 5:54 TOP.

**OHIO STATE** – Snead, 2 yard run (Nuernberger kick), 9:26; 8 plays, 46 yards, 3:06 TOP.

**OHIO STATE** – Teague, 33 yard run (Nuernberger kick), 3:50; 7 plays, 71 yards, 3:35 TOP.

**Att.** – 102,169.

**Weather** – 84 degrees, cloudy/rain (72-minute weather delay at halftime); wind, W 9 mph.

### Team Statistics

	OREGON STATE	OHIO STATE
First Downs	15	35
Rushing	6	18
Passing	7	14
Penalty	2	3
Rushing-Yards	39-196	53-375
Passing Yards	196	346
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	14-24-0	25-34-1
Offensive Plays	63	87
Total Net Yards	392	721
Third Down Efficiency	6-16	12-15
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	1-1
Punts-Avg.	6-40.7	1-65.0
Fumbles-Lost	5-2	1-1
Penalties	5-49	6-50
Time of Possession	28:44	31:16

### Individual Statistics

**RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.)** – **OREGON STATE:** Pierce 11-168; Jefferson 8-47; Bradford 3-23; Colletto 4-14; Baylor 2-7; Rogers 2-2; Luton 1-(-5); TEAM 2-(-17); Blount 6-(-43). **OHIO STATE:** Weber 20-186; Dobbins 15-74; Teague 6-56; Snead 7-25; Haskins 2-24; Saunders 0-8; Martell 2-4; TEAM 1-(-2).

**PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD)** – **OREGON STATE:** Blount 12-19-0-169-2; Colletto 1-4-0-2-0; Luton 1-1-0-25-0. **OHIO STATE:** Haskins 22-30-1-313-5; Martell 3-4-0-33-0.

**RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.)** – **OREGON STATE:** Bradford 6-104; Pierce 3-41; Hodgins 2-40; Hernandez 2-6; Jefferson 1-5. **OHIO STATE:** Hill 6-82; Mack 5-69; McLaurin 4-121; Campbell 4-22; Harris 1-15; Ruckert 1-13; Dixon 1-10; Berry 1-6; Olave 1-5; Weber 1-3.

**PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long)** – **OREGON STATE:** Rodriguez 6-40.7-51. **OHIO STATE:** Chrisman 1-65.0-65.

**PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.)** – **OREGON STATE:** None. **OHIO STATE:** McCall 1-26; Saunders 2-5.

**KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.)** – **OREGON STATE:** Flemings 3-49. **OHIO STATE:** McCall 1-21.

**MISSED FIELD GOALS (Yds.)** – **OREGON STATE:** Choukair 43. **OHIO STATE:** None.

**FORCED FUMBLES** – **OREGON STATE:** None. **OHIO STATE:** Werner, Haskins.

**FUMBLE RECOVERIES (No.-Yds.)** – **OREGON STATE:** TEAM 1-0. **OHIO STATE:** Bosa 2-0.

**INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.)** – **OREGON STATE:** Wilson 1-33; Hayes 0-46. **OHIO STATE:** None.

**SACKS (No.-Yds.)** – **OREGON STATE:** None. **OHIO STATE:** Bosa 2.0-21; D. Jones 2.0-16; Werner 1.0-6.

**TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.)** – **OREGON STATE:** Rashed Jr. 1.0-4. **OHIO STATE:** Bosa 2.0-21; D. Jones 2.0-16; Werner 1.0-6; Landers 1.0-5.

**TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.)** – **OREGON STATE:** Williams 7-1-8; Moore 5-3-8; Smith 4-3-7; Willis 3-4-7; Taumoelau 4-1-5; Tufaga 4-1-5; Wilson 4-1-5; Vakameilalo 2-3-5; Whetzel 2-3-5; Hughes-Murray 2-2-4; Rashed Jr. 2-1-3; Hayes 1-2-3; Manning Jr. 1-2-3; Hodgins 2-0-2; Kelsey 2-0-2; Grant 2-0-2; Williams 1-1-2; Kell 1-1-2; Fifita 0-2-2; Aydon 0-2-2; Tago 0-1-1; Soesman 0-1-1; McCartan 0-1-1. **OHIO STATE:** Wint 5-0-5; Werner 4-1-5; Sheffield 4-0-4; Bosa 2-2-4; Browning 1-3-4; Hilliard 3-0-3; D. Jones 3-0-3; Togiai 2-1-3; Harrison 2-1-3; Booker 1-2-3; Wade 1-2-3; Okudah 2-0-2; Arnette 1-1-2; Cornell 1-1-2; Young 1-1-2; Vincent 1-1-2; Pryor 0-2-2; White 0-2-2; Haskins 1-0-1; Prince 1-0-1; Friday 1-0-1; Landers 1-0-1; Jackson 0-1-1; Smith 0-1-1; TEAM 0-1-1; Olave 0-1-1.

**PLAYERS IN THE GAME** – **OREGON STATE:** Offense, Luton, Bradford, Hodgins, Hernandez, Pierce, Houston, Lavaka, Moore, Brandel, Demogerontas, Quitoriano, Choukair. Defense, Wilson, Williams, Rashed Jr., Hayes, Willis, Moore, Tufaga, Hughes-Murray, Fifita, Hodgins, Vakameilalo, Rodriguez. Reserves, Allen, Blount, Colletto, Rogers, Delp, Kelsey, Montibon, Tago, Whetzel, Manning Jr., Flemings, McCartan, Short, Baylor, Robinson, Jefferson, Watson, Grant, Kell, Bush, Smith, Taumoelau, Soesman, Mengis, Andron, Cordasco, Smith, Bodden, Bramscher, Williams, Aydon. **OHIO STATE:** Offense, Munford, Pridgeon, Jordan, Knox, Prince, Farrell, Haskins, Dobbins, Campbell, Mack, McLaurin, Nuernberger. Defense, Bosa, Landers, D. Jones, Cooper, Harrison, Browning, Werner, Sheffield, Arnette, Wint, Pryor, Chrisman. Reserves, Martell, Dixon, Smith, Okudah, Hill, Proctor, Gant, White, Young, Brown, Williamson, Davis, Vincent, Snead, Mitchell, Cornell, Victor, Riep, Harris, K. Jones, Olave, Wade, Weber, McCall, Borland, Teague, Pope, Jean-Baptiste, Hilliard, McCullough, Booker, Hamilton, Friday, Cox, Alabi, Woidke, Donald, Myers, Togiai, Petit-Frere, Taylor, Saunders, Ruckert, Berry, Jackson, Chrisman, Haubeil, Cage.

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# Ohio State Position Battles Clear Up In Opener

By **TIM MOODY**  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

Heading into fall camp, Ohio State had open position battles throughout the offense and defense.

On offense, quarterback Dwayne Haskins had already locked up the job during spring practice, but questions remained regarding who would be blocking for him and who would be starting at tight end. On the defensive side, there were lingering questions at safety and linebacker, while the rotations along the defensive front and at cornerback were up in the air as well.

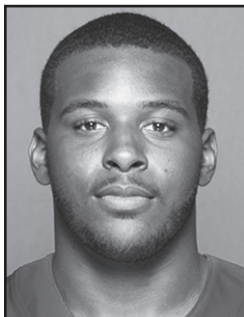
The Buckeyes announced a few starters before the season opener – most notably the majority of the offensive line – while leaving a few spots up in the air for the matchup against Oregon State.

When the Buckeyes took the field for what ended up being a 77-31 blowout win, the depth chart picture became clearer. What follows is a breakdown of how the starting lineup shook out in Ohio State's season opener.

## The Offense

For the most part, Ohio State's offensive lineup was already set heading into the game. The main position battle left over this fall was along the offensive front, where acting head coach Ryan Day named four starters – left

guard Malcolm Pridgeon, center Michael Jordan, right guard Demetrius Knox and right tackle Isaiah Prince – before the opener. There was a question about who would start at left tackle, though, with sophomore Thayer Munford struggling with some minor injury issues in fall camp. Heading into the game, Munford was listed as a co-starter with junior Joshua Alabi.



Thayer Munford

When the first-team offense took the field against the Beavers, though, it was Munford protecting Haskins' blind side, and he played with the first-team offense whenever the top lineup was in the game. The line, which featured two first-time starters and one player – Jordan – making his first start at a new spot along the line, did not allow a sack.

Alabi ended up as the second-team left tackle as the backups on both sides of the ball saw plenty of action. Along with Alabi, fifth-year senior Brady Taylor (LG), redshirt freshman Josh Myers (C), redshirt freshman Wyatt Davis (RG) and freshman Nicholas Petit-Frere (RT) rounded out the second-team line.

At tight end, sophomore Luke Farrell got the start while he rotated regularly with junior Rashod Berry. Freshman Jeremy Ruckert got in the game as well, catching one pass for 13 yards. Berry had a 6-yard touchdown reception while Farrell didn't record a catch.

At running back, co-starters J.K. Dobbins and Mike Weber each got their fair share of touches. Weber finished with 20 carries for

186 yards and three scores while adding a 3-yard touchdown catch. Dobbins had 15 carries for 74 yards while freshmen Brian Snead and Master Teague both added fourth-quarter scores.

## The Defense

As many expected, Ohio State got a dominant performance from the defensive line, led by junior defensive end Nick Bosa and junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones. They were joined in the starting lineup by junior end Jonathon Cooper, who rotated heavily with sophomore Chase Young, and junior tackle Robert Landers.

On the outside, Bosa, Cooper and Young got most of the first-team reps, while junior Jashon Cornell got in the game as well. Notably, freshman defensive end Tyreke Smith saw action early with the first-team offense in the Rushmen package in some passing situations. Freshman defensive end Tyler Friday rotated with the first- and second-team defenses as well.

At tackle, Jones and Landers were the clear first-teamers, but sophomore Haskell Garrett, junior Davon Hamilton and freshmen Taron Vincent and Tommy Togia were involved as well. Sophomore Antwan Jackson and redshirt freshman Jerron Cage rotated with the second-team unit.

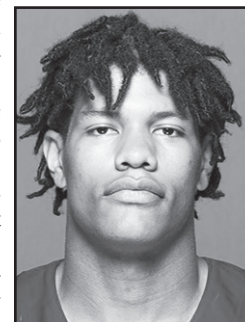
Before the opener, junior Malik Harrison and sophomores Baron Browning and Pete

Werner were named starters at linebacker, and that's what transpired against Oregon State. There was some question as to how much sophomore middle linebacker Tuf Borland would play – or if he would play – after he suffered an Achilles injury in the spring. Borland ended up rotating with the first-team defense, while Browning got most of the reps in the middle.

At cornerback, Damon Arnette and Kendall Sheffield got the start as expected, and sophomore Jeffrey Okudah was heavily involved in the rotation as well. When the second-team defense took the field, redshirt freshman Shaun Wade, sophomore Marcus Williamson and freshman Cameron Brown got the most action at corner.

Perhaps the biggest question for the defense heading into the game came at safety, where Jordan Fuller was guaranteed a starting spot, but sophomores Isaiah Pryor and Jahsen Wint were battling to replace Damon Webb at free safety. The question became even bigger, though, when Fuller was ruled out for the game with a hamstring issue, meaning both Pryor and Wint got the start.

Sophomores Amir Riep and Brendon White rotated in on the back end of the defense when the second-teamers took the field.



Isaiah Pryor

A full projected depth chart for the week-two matchup with Rutgers can be found on page 25.

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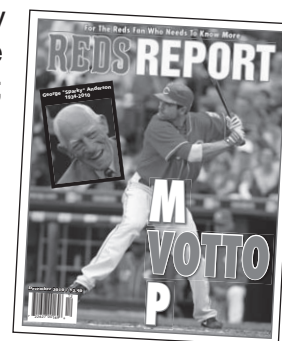


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# BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 77, Oregon State 31

**Ohio State sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins when asked if there was any doubt in his mind that he would be where he is today when he was competing with Joe Burrow to be the starter:** "There was) no doubt in my mind. It wasn't even necessarily about Joe or any other quarterbacks, just knowing that I put the work in to be here and one day it would pay off. And it did."

**Haskins when asked if he feels pressure stepping in for J.T. Barrett:** "Not at all. J.T. had a remarkable career, and my goal is just to do the same thing."

**Ohio State junior defensive end Nick Bosa on if he feels pressure from the expectations on him:** "Definitely a lot of pressure but when you can just go out and have fun like I did today and enjoy who you're doing it with, that is what really matters. When you feel that pressure, you just have to remember what's important."

**Ohio State fifth-year senior receiver Terry McLaurin on the team's depth at wideout:** "There is no excuse not to be in and give 100 percent because you know you have a guy that's just as good that is right behind you coming in. Everybody on the outside might not understand the reasoning behind it, but it makes a big difference for us because when we go tempo like we did today, you can start getting the defense tired when you have a fresh wideout coming in that can run just as fast and run just as good of routes. I think it's a strength of ours."

**Ohio State acting head coach Ryan Day on the**

**team's ability to push the pace:** "We have a lot of depth at receiver. So we're able to play multiple receivers and stay fresh, which I think you could see. Our offensive line is in tremendous shape."

**Day on some of the top performers against Oregon State:** "We brought three guys up in the locker room. (Mike Weber) was one of them. Malcolm Pridgeon was another one. And Terry McLaurin was the third. And those three guys have arguably been three of the best practice players we have. And they had really big days for us today. So that was great."

**Day on scoring 77 points against Oregon State:** "Well, I thought that we played with tempo today. And we were aggressive. I thought we stretched the field horizontally and we stretched it vertically, which is the goal. But I thought the tempo was really good."

**Day when asked if he proved anything to himself:** "Again, I don't think I proved anything to myself. It was just one of those things where you've got to jump into the pool with two feet, just do it. And it was like standing in the tunnel and looking up at Ohio State and the Horseshoe, about to run out with the team and I looked over at (graduate assistant) Quinn (Tempel), and I'm like, 'We really doing this?' He said yeah. And I had a smile on my face and ran out. But, again, when you have those guys behind you and this coaching staff behind you, that's what it is."

**Day on being the interim head coach:** "I've said this before. My job is not to replace Coach (Urban) Meyer. My

job is to just keep this place until he gets back, and I never wanted to replace him. I just want to keep this thing going in the right direction."

**Ohio State co-defensive coordinator and safeties coach Alex Grinch on whether he was upset with the defensive performance or enjoying the win:** "You make sure you enjoy wins. It's hard. And obviously the scoreboard went a certain way today and you can allow yourself to get a little bit naive to that. But there's a much higher expectation than what we played today, and I think every member of the staff would say that. I think every player would say that. But we're not in the business of making excuses, and we've got to come up with solutions. Again, regardless if a young guy made a mistake, OK he's not a young guy anymore. You're playing at Ohio State. We play a lot of young guys. We've obviously got to get some things corrected."

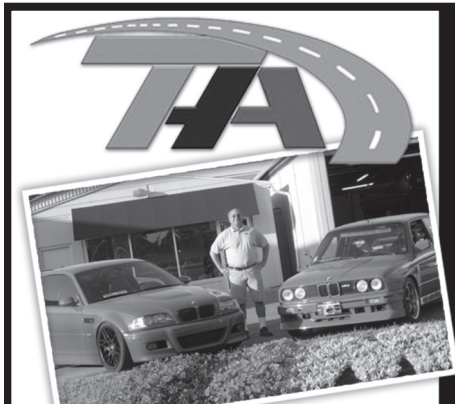
**Ohio State fifth-year senior receiver Parris Campbell on whether the performance was the vision for the offense at its best:** "I think no matter who we play, we always want to execute. As long as we're in the game, starters are in the game, I think the goal is to score as much as we can. And that's not disrespect to any other teams, it's just we want to be clicking on all cylinders at all times, so I think that's always the goal."

**Campbell on what he ate during the long weather delay:** "I had a ham sandwich, Rice Krispie Treat, Gatorades. I was snacking. I was chilling."

**Oregon State head coach Jonathon Smith on the loss to Ohio State:** "Obviously, that's a good football team we were playing. But there's some things we can control and improve on in that game."



Terry McLaurin



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# BSB Subscribers React To Suspension, Reports

By GARRETT STEPIEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

As the Urban Meyer saga swirled throughout the past month and change, Buckeye fans have had their fair share of strong opinions regarding how Ohio State has handled its head football coach and how the media has reported the corresponding developments.

Meyer returned Sept. 3 to the OSU football team for practices, but he remains suspended without pay for the next two games – Sept. 8 vs. Rutgers and Sept. 15 vs. TCU – after the university's independent investigation determined that he mishandled the employment of former wide receivers coach Zach Smith.

Similar to how BSB curated columns from local and national media on Meyer's suspension in the previous print issue, we asked our subscribers for their opinions on the resolution of the Meyer saga and the representation Meyer and Ohio State have received in the media.

**Steve Dalbey in Austin, Texas:** "I thought it was extraordinarily well done. I really did. I just felt they went to extraordinary measures to be fair to Urban, to the school, to the alumni. I just felt we were extraordinarily represented. But I was really unhappy with the way Urban was treated within the press, pretty much everywhere.

"At the same time, I just felt that he's such a great coach and such a great ambassador for the school. He's normally so extraordinarily well prepared for things that I think there was a blind spot that he developed over time, and that blind spot was an Earle Bruce blind spot. He protected Zach far beyond where he should have protected Zach, and that was due to his loyalty, his dedication to his mentor. It was just sad in that respect. I think the press took advantage of that. Anytime you can take someone who is just a leader and denigrate that person, it's easier to do that, and I just felt like ESPN and ESPN's coverage was very one-sided and very unfair.

"But at the same time, I think Urban kind of screwed up in his press conference that he and the university held. I don't think he showed the proper humility. I think he came off as being unjustly treated and certainly didn't show the humility that he should have shown to Courtney (Smith). It just was one of those things where, by looking at it from afar, I just think he felt he was unjustly treated to begin with, unfairly treated to begin with.

"I don't know what his relationship right now is with Gene Smith. Whether or not it's been damaged, I don't know what his relationship is with the president of the university and obviously there are things going on that we're not aware of, but I'm still an Urban champ. I think he's an extraordinary leader of men, and he's certainly done well by our university. I can cut him some slack on this because, primarily, I think it was a blind spot and everything he did was out of love for his mentor, for Earle Bruce. Zach was cut way, way too much slack. As I say, I just think he had developed a blind spot there that's not typically Urban."

**William Saunders in Toledo:** "I still think he's a good coach. Somebody lied and a lot of people think he should be fired and whatever. I don't know. I do believe in second chances. As I look at when they got rid of Jim Tressel, it was less than what (Meyer) did. Jim Tressel didn't do anything and he lost his job. Then the NCAA banned him for four years. I just wondered, maybe (Meyer didn't get fired) because Meyer's a good coach but Tressel was a good coach too.

"I've got mixed feelings, but I'm glad he didn't lose his job because everybody needs a second chance. I had a couple in my life. When you get them, you've got to take advantage of them. But if he gets caught again doing something, he'll probably be gone.

"I think he's a decent person and decent human being. I thought Tressel was too. I think Tressel got hit hard although he didn't do anything wrong. He didn't do anything like lie or cover something up or anything. All he was doing was he didn't report it and then he lost his job. I thought that was kind

of hard. Then he got suspended for four years and couldn't coach. A lot of coaches get to lose their job and take another one the next year or the same year. I don't understand that sometimes. I don't know who does that.

"Media, they're doing their jobs but sometimes I think they add more to it to fit their narrative. They talk about people and they might bring something up that's not even true and hurt the person. They do that. They do that a lot."

**Edward Arbaugh in Zanesville, Ohio:** "First of all, it seems to me like, in today's society, everybody's got to blame somebody else for their troubles. Like with Courtney Smith, it was somebody else's fault. That didn't seem right to me for some reason. But as far as his suspension, I really don't have an opinion on it. It is what it is and we have to get past it. I did read an article in USA Today by Dan Wolken that ripped Ohio State. I tried to email his boss, a woman named Wadsworth, and said, 'Has this guy ever made a racial slur? Has he ever made a homophobic comment? Has he ever been charged with a crime or arrested for a crime? If so, you've got to investigate and fire him.' I guess I didn't see it, but on ESPN, they've been ripping Meyer. But hey, that's what they're getting paid for, right? I guess that's all they can do.

"He's back (Sept. 3) coaching but can't coach in the games. Police investigated the thing (between Zach and Courtney Smith) like, what, nine times? And they didn't arrest anyone. So with that all the other stuff, if that's the case where they're going to suspend Urban, they ought to do something to the president of the university too. It's like when Jim Tressel got fired. The athletic director (Gene Smith) had to have heard something was going on. You're telling me he had no idea that was happening?"

**Steve Graham in Plain City, Ohio:** "My two cents is his inability to remove Zach Smith for the other reasons is really why he deserved to get punished. I think, frankly, the suspension – it was about right. But what is particularly annoying is I don't

know how Ohio State is supposed to investigate beyond what the Powell police does. If the Powell police says there was nothing chargeable that took place up there, how is Urban Meyer or anybody else supposed to take that any further? That was the part of the so-called punishment that I thought was unfair. 'They should have done more.' How could they have done more? When did the athletic department become a jury and a prosecutor and make decisions about if somebody's charged or not?

"There's plenty of reasons to get rid of (Zach Smith) long before they did. For that, I don't have a problem with the punishment. I do have a problem with the punishment for allegations. Who knows what happened? There were probably some things happening, but it sounds like there was bad behavior on both sides. Who knows? Nobody knows. But the fact that the Powell police chose to not pursue things, that's it. The other stuff, that's different. So that's where I stand on it.

"Has he gotten beaten up? Well, everybody jumps to the conclusion that if there's allegations, there had to have been something. If law enforcement said there wasn't anything there, then what's Ohio State supposed to do further? I don't get it. The next morning after the press conference, I turned it on ESPN and the first person I saw was Jalen Rose. That's Mr. Money Bags himself. And he's criticizing this situation when he was taking money to play basketball at Michigan? Give me a break."

**Joanne H. (requested anonymity) in Port Clinton, Ohio:** "I think the media coverage, particularly the national media coverage, has been very unfair. I don't think I need to say anything more than that. It's been almost volatile. And as far as the suspension, I'm not surprised. I don't think they should have done it, but I'm not surprised it was done. I'm grateful he wasn't fired. Knowing Urban Meyer, he just seems like such an honorable, loyal and loving person that I think because of Earle Bruce, he kept Zach Smith on a lot longer than he might have (if Smith were anyone else). And that's what I think."

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# Borland Lives Up To Name In Return From Injury

By CRAIG MERZ  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Some names just fit.

If you're the fastest man on the planet, Usain Bolt is befitting the world record holder and multiple Olympic champion in the sprint events. Will Power conjures the image of someone who can handle the forces that make a race car go 220 miles an hour around an oval speedway and win the Indianapolis 500.

Homer Bush, naturally, was a baseball player who hit 11 round-trippers in his major league career, and old-timers can remember University of Washington quarterback Sonny Sixkiller slinging his way to notoriety with 35 touchdown passes in three seasons for the Huskies.

There's even an American tennis player named, wait for it, Tennys Sandgren.

So, if you happen to know anything about Ohio State third-year sophomore linebacker Tuf Borland, you darn well know he is just that.

Borland, from Bolingbrook, Ill., proved it by making a stirring comeback from an Achilles injury and surgery in the spring that at first appeared to put most of his season in jeopardy. As summer training progressed, it was apparent he would return in the early portion of the schedule, but he shocked many by entering in the second quarter of the 77-31 victory over Oregon State in the Sept. 1 season opener at Ohio Stadium.

"It was something that had been in the works for a while," Borland said. "It was good to get out there and contribute. I feel great. I always had expectations to be back with this team. It's great to be out there."

Count junior defensive end Nick Bosa among those surprised by Borland's return.

"I thought it was a longer recovery time," Bosa said. "I guess it wasn't."

However, senior right tackle Isaiah Prince looked across the line during the fall camp and saw how hard Borland was training.

"I knew Tuf would be back," he said. "He's definitely a hardworking guy. I've seen him in the training room. He's put



JOSH WINSLOW

**QUICK RECOVERY – Sophomore linebacker Tuf Borland played in Ohio State's season opener after injuring his Achilles tendon in the spring.**

in the work, so I'm not surprised by Tuf's return."

Borland was projected as the starting middle linebacker until sustaining the injury during the spring camp. That role went to sophomore Baron Browning against the Beavers.

"It was a normal play, kind of a freak thing," Borland said Aug. 28.

He didn't expect to miss much time.

"When it first happened, I didn't really have any thoughts on it," he said. "I just took it day by day. But the thing that kept me going were the people around this program. Every day I came and saw them working. That really motivated me to get back.

"Thanks to the training staff and coaches, I'm ready to go."

Of course, for anyone who has the competitiveness and intensity to play linebacker at Ohio State to be told to be patient in the recovery was difficult.

"I feel like I've done everything they asked me to," Borland said. "It's really hard for me to sit out and see everybody working and me off to the side. I used it as a motivating factor to try and help this team.

"No doubt it's hard sitting out, being out all spring and the majority of the summer. It's hard, but like I said before, coming in

here and seeing how these guys go about their business has really motivated me and inspired me to get through this."

Borland was a four-star recruit and two-time all-state selection before joining the Buckeyes and redshirting the 2016 season. In 2017, he started as captain of the punt team but by the third game had taken his first defensive snaps vs. Army. He was a part of 12 tackles that day, the most by an OSU freshman in a game since Ryan Shazier had 15 vs. Penn State in 2011.

He wound up starting nine of the final 11 games and finished fourth on the team with 58 tackles (35 solo), 3½ tackles for loss and one sack.

Soon after Borland was injured, head coach Urban Meyer was cautiously optimistic that he would be cleared to play early in the season, not knowing at the time how fanatical Borland was in his rehabilitation to move that timetable up a few weeks to the opener.

"His name is pretty indicative of what kind of kid he is," Meyer said in the spring.

He then likened Borland's recovery to that of former OSU quarterback J.T. Barrett, who underwent surgery on his knee the day after the Michigan game last season and played in the Big Ten title game vs. Wisconsin six days later.

"He's got the same pain threshold as J.T. Barrett," Meyer said. "J.T. Barrett, when the doctors told me after our rivalry game it's going to be several weeks, I kind of laughed as I walked out of the room and said, 'That means he'll be five days.' Same with Tuf

Borland. Well, it's a really tough injury. I'm looking at Tuf, smiling, he winks at me. He's on course to perform this fall."

By the week of the Oregon State game, even associate head coach/defensive coordinator Greg Schiano was telling the media that Borland might take the field against the Beavers.

"It's amazing the way he has rehabbed," Schiano said. "The way that our people in the training room, our medical people, have handled him, the way (sports performance coach) Mick Marotti has handled him and more important than any of that is the way that Tuf is such a committed young man to what he's doing – and he's made incredible progress.

"As a coach and as a father I kind of am hesitant, because that's a serious injury, as you know. But you have to trust the medical people, and if they say he can go – so we'll see by the end of the week we'll figure out what he can and can't do or what he should or shouldn't do. But he's ahead of schedule, well ahead of schedule."

As much as Borland was motivated by those around him during his recovery, his teammates were inspired by him and named him one of the seven captains.

"The captains actually nominated him as the last captain, so we have a lot of respect for Tuf, just how hard he works every day," co-captain Bosa said.

"It's a great honor," Borland said of the captaincy. "Obviously, there's been some great names before me, and there's a great responsibility to uphold that standard that was set before me."



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# Staff, Captains Take Charge In Meyer's Absence

By **TIM MOODY**  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer was placed on paid administrative leave Aug. 1. Two days later, the Buckeyes took the field for the start of fall camp with acting head coach Ryan Day, normally the offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach, running the show.

With Meyer sidelined, the Buckeyes completed all of fall camp without their head coach. He wasn't there leading up to the season opener on Sept. 1 against Oregon State, either, as his suspension – which was announced Aug. 22 – ran through the Sunday after the game.

All in all, though, things weren't much different from normal inside the Woody Hayes Athletic Center this August.

"It really hasn't (been)," said junior safety Jordan Fuller, one of Ohio State's seven team captains, when asked how different practice has been with Day calling the shots. "Our culture is our culture, playing 4-6, A to B every play, and it really hasn't been so much different."

Fuller's comments came the Tuesday before the Buckeyes dispatched the Beavers, 77-31, to open the 2018 campaign, marking the first time any Ohio State players had met with the media since Meyer was placed on leave. Fuller's opinion was shared by various teammates as well.

Sophomore linebacker Tuf Borland, another team captain, noted that the thought



TIM MOODY

**FAST START** – Ohio State acting head coach Ryan Day led the Buckeyes to a 77-31 win in his first game in place of the suspended Urban Meyer.

process all along was to stay focused on the season, blocking out any outside noise. At times, that can be easier said than done, but Borland reiterated that the Buckeyes never lost track ahead of the opener.

"From day one this team has stuck together and been completely focused on week one, being 1-0 and beating Oregon State," Borland said. "We've taken it day by day."

## The Players

When it comes to hitting the field for

practice, the absence of the head coach doesn't drastically change things at Ohio State. Portions of two fall camp practices were open to members of the media, and they looked largely identical to any practice previously seen in the Meyer era – other than the fact that there was one fewer coach wandering around.

During practice, the assistant coaches – not Meyer – are the ones working with the players in a hands-on role. Meyer, essentially the CEO, acts as an overseer, lending

help where it's needed. With him sidelined, the defensive players still worked with the defensive coaches, and the offensive players still worked with the offensive coaches. And strength coach Mickey Marotti still provided the heart and soul for the Buckeyes.

Junior defensive end Nick Bosa said he saw no reason practice would need to feel different without Meyer on the field.

"I don't know what other way it would be," Bosa said. "We have amazing coordinators and amazing position coaches, and they have taken the role in stride. I think that's what Coach (Meyer) would want us to do. Keep everything normal, doing the same routine. Just practice hard and get better."

Fuller noted that, even without Meyer, the goals don't change. The aim in camp is to improve and work toward the season. That was the same in 2018 just as it has been in the past.

"Camp's the same as every year, just trying to get better every day," Fuller said. "I can speak for the safeties – we've definitely come a long way. We've been working hard every day. I'm just really proud of how we've been working as a team and just staying focused and doing our jobs."

## The Coaching Staff

When Meyer was first placed on administrative leave, some were surprised that Day was named acting head coach. He's a rising star in the profession, but the former NFL assistant coach has never been the head of a program at any level. Day even admitted that he was surprised by the decision.

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## OHIO STATE FOOTBALL

"I was very surprised," he said. "It did catch me off guard. It was one of those things where you just wake up the next day and you think, is this really happening? And then you just kind of put one foot in front of the other. I don't think anyone could have expected any of this."

In addition to Day's lack of experience, Ohio State does have two former collegiate head coaches on staff – including one who was an NFL head coach as well.

Defensive coordinator Greg Schiano was the head coach at Rutgers from 2001-11 before joining the Tampa Bay Buccaneers from 2012-13. Offensive coordinator and tight ends coach Kevin Wilson ran the Indiana football program from 2011-16.

When the decision was made to put Day in charge, though, Schiano and the rest of the staff were immediately behind him.

"Ryan is certainly qualified to do this," Schiano said Aug. 27. "Kevin Wilson, myself and the rest of the staff, guys like (defensive line coach) Larry Johnson, have done this a long time. We all said we have to step up. We're missing our leader, we're one down right now, and I think the staff has done that and I think in turn the players have followed our lead."

"We have some great leadership, and all that combined I think is what's going to allow us to be successful."

Day, for his part, admitted that the process has been a whirlwind. For the most part, though, that whirlwind took place behind closed doors. Day didn't make his first public remarks as acting head coach until Aug. 27, five days after Meyer's three-game suspension was announced.

The assistant, who is set to make \$1 million in 2018, second only to Schiano's \$1.5 million, noted that he wasn't taking the program over. Instead, he served and is serving as a caretaker in Meyer's place.

"My goal in this thing was never to replace Coach (Meyer)," Day said. "That's not what I wanted to do. What I wanted to

do is empower the coaches, empower the leaders and just keep this thing moving, and I think we have done that."

Day also noted that he's leaned on Schiano and Wilson a lot as he navigates the head coaching waters for the first time.

"I have so much respect for both of those guys and for the whole staff," Day said. "This is an experienced staff. It's going to be the best staff in America. When you think about Larry Johnson, (linebackers coach) Billy Davis, (co-defensive coordinator) Alex Grinch, when you go through all the guys we have on our staff, it's amazing – a lot of experience, real professionals."

"But like I said before, what Greg and Kevin have done for me is something that I won't forget, and their counsel has been amazing over this stretch and I've learned a lot from them. Obviously they have been in my shoes before, and so it's meant a lot."



Greg Schiano

Greg and Kevin have done for me is something that I won't forget, and their counsel has been amazing over this stretch and I've learned a lot from them. Obviously they have been in my shoes before, and so it's meant a lot."

### A Short Reunion

Meyer's suspension was decided on and handed down on a Wednesday. The next day, he was at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center for about 45 minutes to meet with the coaching staff and address his team – a meeting that was granted as part of the terms of his punishment for mishandling the employment of former wide receivers coach Zach Smith.

Players and coaches refrained from going into detail about what was discussed during Meyer's return to the Woody, but there was one common theme: Everyone was glad to see the head coach after a long absence.

During his paid leave and suspension, Meyer was restricted from contact with anyone in the program, and he was not allowed in the football facilities.

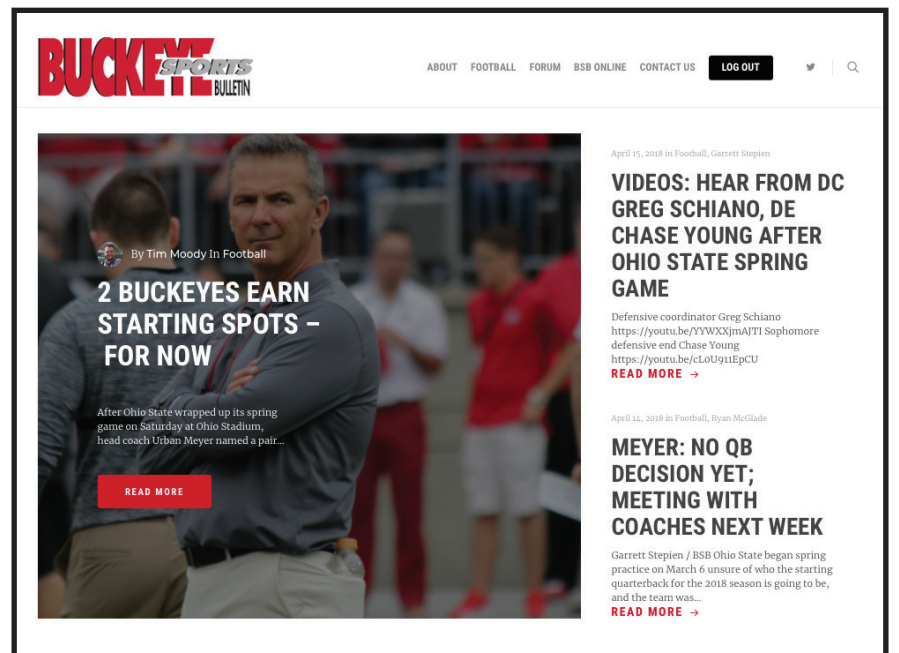
When permissible, though, Schiano said he was glad to have chances to speak to Meyer.

"Well Urban is, before he's my boss, he's a friend," Schiano said. "I've known him for over 20 years. So when I was allowed to, I did communicate. And that's personal. It wasn't about football. It was about him, because I was worried about him. I'll leave it at that."



Urban Meyer

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# 2018 Captains Taking On Added Leadership Roles

By JAMES GREGA  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

As spring practice turned into summer, it appeared to just be another football season at Ohio State in 2018, rife with position battles and even a new quarterback behind center.

Then, everything changed.

Head coach Urban Meyer and athletic director Gene Smith were ultimately suspended in late August following a lengthy investigation into their knowledge and handling of domestic violence allegations against former wide receivers coach Zach Smith, in addition to other issues with his employment at the university.

With Meyer out for all of August and into September – in addition to the first three games – offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Ryan Day was named acting head coach. He announced Ohio State's team captains on Aug. 25, one week before the season opener, an announcement normally taken on by Meyer.

The captains were decided by a player vote, and while seven Buckeyes earned the designation of team captain, Day praised all of Ohio State's veterans for their leadership during the tumultuous time surrounding the program.

"Our culture is strong," he said at his first press conference as acting head coach Aug. 27. "The culture leads at Ohio State. The culture that these leaders here – not only coaches, but the leaders of the program, the kids, especially our captains – have set the example for is what's driven this thing for the past few weeks."

Parris Campbell, Terry McLaurin, Johnnie Dixon, Nick Bosa, Jordan Fuller, Isaiah Prince and Tuf Borland were given



TIM MOODY

**TEAM LEADER – Junior defensive end Nick Bosa was voted a team captain for 2018, an honor his older brother, Joey, never received in Columbus.**

the honor of leading the team as captains in 2018, and they are embracing the added responsibility of leading Ohio State into battle with Meyer absent for the first three games.

"Of course if you're down a man, somebody has got to step up," Fuller said Aug. 28. "So we all took it on ourselves as a team just to maintain the standard that we have at Ohio State and just to keep pushing."

Each player has a unique role in helping lead the 2018 Buckeyes, starting with the trio of receivers.

## Unique Circumstance

Considering some football teams name only two captains per season, having three receivers named captains before the season starts is an unusual scenario to say the least.

Campbell, Dixon and McLaurin are all fifth-year seniors and some of the last remaining players on the current roster from the 2014 national championship team. Campbell and Dixon were the top two vote-getters according to an Ohio State spokesman, despite having fewer than 80 career catches between the two of them over the course of four seasons.

Three receivers being named captains is something co-defensive coordinator Greg Schiano, a 30-year coaching veteran, has never seen before.

"Oftentimes the further you get away from the ball – they're on the edge is a good way to put it – they're out there on the edge and they don't deal with the others very much, they deal with themselves," Schiano said Aug. 27. "You talk to (strength coach Mickey Marotti), they're unbelievable the way they train, the way they carry themselves, and (this honor is) well deserved. ... We have seven great captains. That's not the end of the leadership on this team. We have

a lot of other guys on the team that are great leaders as well."

While all three receivers have been around since 2014, Dixon's story is particularly interesting. After three seasons with chronic knee issues, Dixon was ready to hang up his cleats following the 2016 campaign. After speaking with Campbell and other teammates in the months following a 31-0 loss to Clemson, Dixon decided to give football one last try. His resilience paid off, as he caught 18 passes for 422 yards and led the team with eight touchdown receptions in 2017.

Being named captain after four years of dealing with injuries was gratifying for Dixon.

"For me, it's just nothing short of a blessing," he said. "It just shows you that not giving up sometimes leads to good things. I just want that to be a story and an inspiration to other people that might be going through some tough times. Don't give up, fight through and (see) what it has for you at the end of it."

## Besting Older Brother

Before he even played a snap as a college junior, Nick Bosa had accomplished something his older brother, Joey, never did at Ohio State. He was named a team captain.

One of three defensive captains, Bosa enters his third, and likely final, season at Ohio State as one of the leaders of a team trying to get through a two-month stretch that has been surrounded with controversy. Add in a brutally hot month of August that engulfed fall camp, and Bosa said the Buckeyes were itching for an opportunity to take the field again.

"It's a grind," Bosa said Aug. 28. "It is always tough. After camp is over, you just want to play a game. Last week was just another week of practice. You just have to keep motivating guys and keep grinding because it's tough to go through each practice and have no reward at the end of the week."

While one game is out of the way, Ohio State still has two more games to play before Meyer can return to the sidelines on game day, and Bosa is one of the players the Buckeyes are leaning on to keep the attention away from any and all distractions. He said prior to playing Oregon State that he is focusing his leadership efforts on things that are off the field, rather than in the trenches.

"Definitely more off the field," he said of

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## Ohio State's 2018 Team Captains

Name	Pos.	Yr.	Hometown/High School
Tuf Borland	LB	So.	Bolingbrook, Ill./Bolingbrook
Nick Bosa	DE	Jr.	Fort Lauderdale, Fla./St. Thomas Aquinas
Parris Campbell	WR	5th-Sr.	Akron, Ohio/St. Vincent-St. Mary
Johnnie Dixon	WR	5th-Sr.	West Palm Beach, Fla./Dwyer
Jordan Fuller	S	Jr.	Norwood, N.J./Old Tappan
Terry McLaurin	WR	5th-Sr.	Indianapolis, Ind./Cathedral
Isaiah Prince	OT	Sr.	Greenbelt, Md./Eleanor Roosevelt

leading. "Just making sure guys are living right and realizing how special this team can be and not thinking that just because Coach isn't here right now that we are going to take the year off. We have to just keep our head down, focus on game one and this season."

In addition to the captains, Bosa said Ohio State has also benefited from the leadership provided by the assistant coaches, who have helped keep the focus on football.

"We have amazing coordinators and amazing position coaches, and they have taken the leadership role in stride," he said. "I think that's what Coach (Meyer) would want us to do. Keep everything normal, doing the same routine. Just practice hard and get better."

## Fuller's New Role

This time last season, Fuller was battling with Erick Smith for the safety position opposite Damon Webb.

Fuller not only won that position midway through the season but flourished in Ohio State's defensive backfield, collecting 70 total tackles, good for second on the team.

As he enters his junior season, Fuller is expected to be one of the best defensive backs in the Big Ten and a leader in the Buckeye secondary after being named a team captain and the leading vote-getter among defensive players.

Despite receiving third-team All-Big Ten honors and Academic All-Big Ten honors in his Ohio State career, Fuller said being named a team captain is the best award or honor he has received in his football career.

"I was at a loss for words. I'm just blessed to be a part of this team and have the teammates I have," Fuller said Aug. 28. "I try to put my heart and soul into everything I do and I guess that was noticed. I'm eternally grateful, that's the biggest honor I've had my whole career."

Because of the veteran influences that surround the Ohio State program both on the roster and on the coaching staff, Fuller said that keeping the focus on the field has yet to become an issue because of the culture built over the years.

"Everybody here has just a great work ethic, and it's really not hard to get guys to work," he said. "A lot of guys are really self-motivated to begin with, so it's really not that tough of a job."

This season, Fuller is the elder statesman at safety while Isaiah Pryor and Jahsen Wint continue to battle for the position left vacant by Webb. Fuller missed the season opener with a hamstring issue, so both Pryor and Wint got the start in week one.

Regardless of who wins the job opposite him in the secondary, Fuller said he is confident in not only his ability to lead but also perform on the field.

"They've both progressed greatly this whole camp," Fuller said. "I'm really excited for both of their years. It's a tight competition. But I'm more than good, whoever is playing – more than good."

## Prince Crowned Captain



Isaiah Prince

Two years ago, it would have been hard to imagine Isaiah Prince being named a captain. After struggling mightily as a pass protector in 2016, Prince bounced back in a big way a year later, on his way to being named third-team All-Big Ten as a junior.

Now entering his third season as a starter, Prince is a team captain, and much like when he relied on veterans such as Jamarco Jones

when things were hard for him, he is now the one whom players are looking up to.

Prince believes that Ohio State's culture and brotherhood have created an atmosphere where multiple players can act as leaders, not just team captains.

"To me, this is nothing out of the ordinary," Prince said of being named a captain. "This is something I have been prepared for, and something Coach (Meyer) has prepared us for. There's a bunch of great leaders on the team, a bunch of older guys on the team, and we have been through a lot and we know how to stick together and get ready for the season."

Now a senior, Prince will remain at his right tackle position in 2018, anchoring an offensive line that returns Demetrius Knox and Michael Jordan to the starting lineup.

## Tuf As Nails

Ohio State's assumed starting middle linebacker, Tuf Borland, suffered an Achilles injury during spring camp, an injury that would normally cost an athlete an entire season.

Borland however, is preparing as if he is going to play early and often in 2018 despite that setback. It is that resiliency, among other things, that led to him being named a team captain in 2018.

"The job that our people in the training room and our medical people have handled him, the way Coach Mick has handled him and more important than any of that is the way that Tuf is such a committed young man to what he's doing," Schiano said of Borland. "And he's made incredible progress."

Borland was listed as a second-stringer at middle linebacker in Ohio State's first depth chart of the season but is expected to return to a more prominent role as he continues to progress from the injury.

You can read more about Borland, his new role on the team and his rehab on page 17.

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# Freshmen Poised For Rotational Roles In '18

By **TIM MOODY**  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

A year ago, Ohio State opened the season on the road against Indiana with a true freshman in the starting lineup.

That freshman, running back J.K. Dobbins, went on to have the most prolific debut season for a back in program history. That production likely won't be matched, or even challenged, by any of Ohio State's first-year players in 2018.

The Buckeyes signed 26 players – 25 freshmen and a third-year sophomore junior college transfer – in a 2018 recruiting class that finished ranked second in the nation. On paper, it might be the most talented recruiting class in program history, and many of the players will have a chance to contribute early.

Various freshmen had a chance to see the field in Ohio State's season-opening, 77-31 win over Oregon State on Sept. 1 at Ohio Stadium. In fact, 16 of the 26 freshmen made their way into the participation report after the game.

After seeing those debuts, we took a look ahead at the projected impact each member of Ohio State's 2018 recruiting class will have this season, keeping in mind that players can appear in up to four games this year without burning their redshirts. We graded each player on a Playing Time Possibility scale of 1 to 10. A 1 would mean the player will likely redshirt and probably not even appear in a game. A 5 represents limited playing time

throughout the year, and a 10 would be a player expected to start at some point this season.

The players are listed in alphabetical order by last name.

**WR Kamryn Babb (6-1, 189), St. Louis Christian Brothers College** – When he signed, there was some question surrounding Babb's health after he tore his ACL during his senior year in high school. He enrolled in the summer, though, and was healthy enough to make an impression on his teammates early. But then, Babb once again tore his ACL during summer workouts, meaning he'll miss the season. **PTP: 1**

**QB Matthew Baldwin (6-3, 200), Austin (Texas) Lake Travis** – Like Babb, Baldwin suffered an ACL injury during his senior year, and his setback came late in the season. He enrolled early but was limited throughout spring camp. Baldwin was limited this fall as well as he recovers from his surgery, and heading into the opener, acting head coach Ryan Day said the signal caller was still a couple of weeks away from being fully healthy. A year on the sidelines might be in store, since practice reps will be limited with the season under way. **PTP: 1**

**CB Sevyn Banks (6-1, 190), Orlando (Fla.) Jones** – Banks enrolled early and was a standout in spring practice. He had a notable performance in the spring game

and entered training camp as one of the top freshmen on the team. When the Buckeyes arrived for the season opener, though, Banks had a brace on his left wrist, and he didn't dress for the game. His status going forward is up in the air, but he might still be in line for a role on special teams. **PTP: 2**

**CB Cameron Brown (6-1, 175), St. Louis Christian Brothers College** – Recruited as a wide receiver, Brown switched to defense as soon as he got on campus. The position change didn't have much of a negative effect, though, considering that Brown shed his black stripe before the season opener and became the first freshman cornerback to see the field this season. He saw reps with the second-team defense, along with redshirt freshman Shaun Wade and sophomore Marcus Williamson, against Oregon State and will likely see limited playing time going forward. **PTP: 3**

**DE Tyler Friday (6-3, 262), Ramsey (N.J.) Don Bosco Prep** – Long expected to be a Michigan commit, Friday surprised many when he chose the Buckeyes. That decision paid off quickly, though, as he saw extensive playing time in the season opener and finds himself firmly in the second-team rotation at defensive end, providing valuable depth for the Buckeyes. **PTP: 5**

**LB Dallas Gant (6-3, 215), Toledo St. John's Jesuit** – A naturally athletic linebacker, Gant drew rave reviews from the coaching staff as soon as he arrived on campus in January. He was pegged by Urban Meyer as a freshman who would play, and he should have a big role on special teams by the end of the season. **PTP: 4**

**H-B Jaelen Gill (6-1, 182), Westerville (Ohio) South** – Gill is one of the most naturally talented players in this class, but the roster isn't kind to him from a playing time perspective. Ohio State already has fifth-year senior Parris Campbell, junior K.J. Hill, junior C.J. Saunders and sophomore Demario McCall at H-back, meaning Gill – who still needs some polishing as a

receiver – will struggle to get game reps. **PTP: 2**

**S Marcus Hooker (6-0, 185), New Castle, Pa.** – Because of his older brother, Malik, there are high expectations for Hooker at Ohio State, but he faces an uphill battle to make an impression as a freshman. He was suspended for the opener after a legal incident in the offseason, plus he's been out of practice with an injury. Hooker might have to wait a year or two to truly make his impact – which is exactly what Malik did before becoming a first-round pick. **PTP: 1**

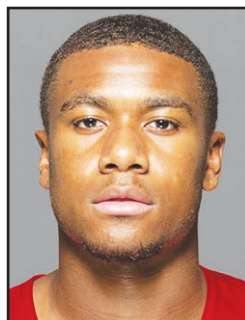
**DE Javontae Jean-Baptiste (6-5, 215), Oradell (N.J.) Bergen Catholic** – After being a late addition to the 2018 class, Jean-Baptiste did enough in fall camp to shed his black helmet stripe after settling at defensive end. Physically, he has a lot of room to grow, though, and a year for development – perhaps with a few reps here and there – could be beneficial. **PTP: 1**

**CB Tyreke Johnson (6-1, 190), Jacksonville (Fla.) Trinity Christian Academy** – As a five-star prospect, Johnson arrived in Columbus with high expectations. He's physically advanced for his age and has the talent to make an impact, especially on special teams as a freshman. He didn't play in the opener, but expect to see Johnson on the field sometime this season. **PTP: 4**

**OL Matthew Jones (6-4, 305), Brooklyn (N.Y.) Erasmus Hall** – Offensive line is always one of the toughest positions for freshmen, and Jones doesn't need to make an impact this season. Look for him to take a redshirt year before making his way onto the two-deep in 2019. **PTP: 1**

**LB Teradja Mitchell (6-2, 235), Virginia Beach (Va.) Bishop Sullivan Catholic** – Mitchell didn't make a big impression in the opener, but he's physically advanced and extremely talented. He might not have a spot with the first-team defense, but he can make an impact as a depth player and on special teams. **PTP: 3**

**WR Chris Olave (6-1, 170), San Marcos (Calif.) Mission Hills** – Not the most hyped recruit in the class, Olave blew people away in fall camp. He's already on the two-deep as a backup at the Z-receiver spot,



Cameron Brown

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TIM MOODY

**EARLY IMPRESSION** – Freshman defensive tackle Tommy Togiai (72) saw extended playing time in his collegiate debut.

and he's an injury away from being a key part of the rotation. He could be the deep threat Ohio State has been searching for since Devin Smith graduated. **PTP: 6**

**OT Nicholas Petit-Frere (6-6, 272), Tampa (Fla.) Berkeley Prep** – As a freshman tackle, Petit-Frere is ahead of the curve. He was Ohio State's highest-rated recruit in the class, and he's already firmly on the depth chart as the No. 2 right tackle behind senior Isaiah Prince. He'll mainly play with the backups this year, but he should be ready if called upon later in the season. **PTP: 4**

**LB K'Vaughan Pope (6-2, 210), Dinwiddie (Va.) County** – Though Pope

has the talent to play, the Ohio State linebackers are deep. He'll have to make an impression on special teams in order to see much of the field this season, but that's a possibility. **PTP: 2**

**S Josh Proctor (6-2, 190), Owasso, Okla.** – After the opener, it was clear that safety is a question mark for Ohio State other than Jordan Fuller, who missed the game with a hamstring issue. Proctor saw time on special teams against Oregon State, but if the issues continue, he could be fighting for a starting spot by the end of the year. **PTP: 8**

**TE Jeremy Ruckert (6-6, 240), Lindenhurst, N.Y.** – Against Oregon State, it was clear that Luke Farrell and Rashod

Berry were Ohio State's top two tight ends. That said, Ruckert saw the field a lot and had a catch for 13 yards. If he develops as a blocker, he could be starting by the end of the year. **PTP: 8**

**DE Tyreke Smith (6-3, 260), Cleveland Heights** – Barring injury, Smith won't start for Ohio State in 2018. However, he was on the field early against Oregon State in Ohio State's Rushmen package, meaning he's already left a huge impression on defensive line coach Larry Johnson. Expect Smith's reps to only increase as the season goes on. **PTP: 9**

**WR L'Christian Smith (6-6, 205), Huber Heights (Ohio) Wayne** – While Smith is physically impressive for a freshman, he has a lot of polishing to do as a receiver. He didn't play against Oregon State, and while he could still play in a few games and keep his redshirt, he doesn't look poised for a big role this year. **PTP: 1**

**RB Brian Snead (5-11, 200), Seffner (Fla.) Armwood** – Dobbins and junior Mike Weber are the workhorses at running back, but Snead has already made an impact. As soon as the second-team offense was on the field, Snead was with them, and he finished with seven carries for 25 yards and a touchdown. He'll play this year and be a key player in 2019. **PTP: 6**

**RB Master Teague (5-11, 215), Murfreesboro (Tenn.) Blackman** – You could probably just copy the paragraph on Snead in order to describe Teague's potential impact. The duo are listed as co-backups at running back, and Teague scored a touchdown as well on an impressive 33-yard run on fourth-and-1. He finished the opener with six carries for 56 yards, bested by only Weber (186) and Dobbins (74). **PTP: 6**

**DT Tommy Togiai (6-2, 300), Pocatello (Idaho) Highland** – Togiai was the only freshman to lose his black stripe in spring camp, and he immediately made an impact in the opener. He's already established himself as a key player in the rotation along the defensive front – he had three tackles against the Beavers – and his role should only increase going forward. **PTP: 8**

**DT Taron Vincent (6-2, 285), Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy** – Yes, you could probably copy and paste the paragraph above this one, too. Vincent, like Togiai, is already a clear piece of the rotation after he tallied two tackles in his debut. The future is bright for Ohio State at defensive tackle. **PTP: 8**

**DE Alex Williams (6-7, 250), Pickerington (Ohio) North** – Physically, Williams is one of the most impressive freshmen on the team. He went through warm-ups before the opener, but he was in street clothes on the sideline. Ohio State is pretty deep at defensive end, so Williams could take a year to refine his technique. **PTP: 1**

**OT Max Wray (6-7, 305), Franklin, Tenn.** – Like Jones, Wray doesn't need to make an impact as a freshman, meaning Ohio State can afford to redshirt him and give him time to develop. If he takes strides as the season goes on, he could be a candidate to provide depth late in the year, using the new redshirt rule to keep his year of eligibility. **PTP: 1**

**BONUS – DT Antwan Jackson (6-2, 293), Brenham (Texas) Blinn College** – Jackson had some injury issues in the offseason, but he made his debut against Oregon State with one tackle. He struggled at times, though, and finds himself outside the main rotation at defensive tackle. **PTP: 3**

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# Ash, RU Bracing For BIG Test At Ohio State

By GARRETT STEPIEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Since Rutgers joined the Big Ten four years ago, its fortunes have taken a turn for the worse each time the schedule brought forth Ohio State.

Between two head coaches since 2014, Kyle Flood (2014-15) and Chris Ash (2016-17), the Scarlet Knights have suffered similar results over their four matchups as the Buckeyes have run up a 219-24 tab in the head-to-head series.

Over the past two years, Ash's first on the job after he left his post as co-defensive coordinator at OSU, RU has not posted a single point on its way to a 114-0 deficit in back-to-back shutouts.

Unlike the previous seasons, when Rutgers faced Ohio State in the midst of its Big Ten gantlet with other powerhouse programs from the East Division and around the conference, the Scarlet Knights get the Buckeyes in week two.

RU opened the campaign on a high note in its 35-7 victory against Texas State, but an immediate wake-up call comes in Columbus for Ash and company.

When BSB spoke with Ash at Big Ten Media Days in Chicago, the third-year head coach was blunt about how he and his team would approach the early test at OSU.

"They're a good team," Ash said July 23. "Good players, good program. I don't care if you play them week one or week 12 - they're a good team with good players, good coaches, and it's always going to be a challenge.

"I don't care if you're Rutgers or another program in the Big Ten. Everyone who plays Ohio State - you better show up and give your best because they're a good team, they've got talented players and, usually, they play hard.

"It's always going to be a challenge when you play a program like that. It's been that way for a number of years, and it's probably not going to change."

After Ash and Rutgers took steps in the right direction with a 4-8 record (3-6 Big Ten) in 2017, improving upon a 2-10 (0-9) mark in 2016, the rebuild continues with several fresh faces in key roles.

Freshman quarterback Artur Sitkowski (6-5, 224) is among the most notable new Scarlet

Knights. A four-star recruit out of Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy but born and raised in Old Bridge, N.J., Sitkowski flipped from Miami (Fla.) to become RU's marquee signee for the 2018 class. He enrolled early for spring camp and ran with his opportunity to take over an offense that has been embattled in recent years, injecting energy and promise into the unit.

As a first-year starter set to make a road debut in the Big Ten before 100,000-plus fans in Ohio Stadium, Sitkowski needs to rely on others in Rutgers' offense for help.

The handful of players includes fellow newcomers such as Boston College graduate transfer Jonathan Hilliman (6-0, 225) and freshman Isaih Pacheco (5-11, 210), who are expected to give Sitkowski an immediate boost with sophomore Raheem Blackshear (5-9, 192) set to return as the Scarlet Knights boast running backs with versatile skill sets.

Hilliman, who initially committed to RU as a four-star recruit from Jersey City (N.J.) St. Peter's Prep in the 2014 class before he flipped to BC, took 612 totes for 2,238 yards and 26 touchdowns in four years with the Eagles. He added 29 receptions for 195 yards and two scores. He transferred to his home-state school after Boston College saw AJ Dillon emerge among the best running backs in the country as a freshman with 300 carries for 1,589 yards and 14 touchdowns in 2017.

On the defensive side of the ball, Rutgers looks to one-time Ohio State signee Tre Avery, formerly known as Kareem Felder, for depth in the secondary. Avery (5-10, 181) signed with Ash and the Buckeyes in OSU's 2016 class but transferred to Toledo before the fall and then to RU, where the cornerback sat out the 2017 season. After the changes, Avery approaches his collegiate debut with sophomore eligibility.

## Rutgers Roots

As the carousel of offensive coordinators took a turn for the ninth time in as many years, John McNulty returned to Rutgers for another stint in the position. McNulty worked multiple jobs in the NFL from 2009-17, most recently with the San Diego Chargers as their tight ends coach for the last two seasons. He made his return to the Scarlet Knights after an initial stint from 2004-08 under Greg Schiano, Ohio State's third-year defensive coordinator, who was RU's head coach from 2001-11.

In McNulty's first year as offensive coordinator in 2007, he engineered one of the most prolific units Rutgers has seen. He helped the Scarlet Knights become the first program in FBS history with a 3,000-yard passer (Mike Teel), 2,000-yard rusher (Ray Rice) and two 1,000-yard receivers (Kenny Britt and Tiquan Underwood) in the same season. Ash hired McNulty in January to replace Jerry Kill, who retired following just one year on the job due to health concerns after he suffered multiple seizures from his ongoing battle with epilepsy.

Ash attempted to overhaul the Rutgers offense initially with a power-spread approach, a scheme similar to that of the Buckeyes and head coach Urban Meyer, but struggles over the past two years led the Scarlet Knights to reassess. McNulty moves RU back to a pro-style offense as it searches for consistency and continuity going forward. Rutgers ranked 129th out of 130 FBS teams in total offense last season with just 263 yards per game while the Scarlet Knights also averaged only 18.0 points per contest.

"You've got to get into the 30s in college football now to think you have a chance to win the game," McNulty said. "Maybe you can slug it out with someone or you're going to try to run

## Get To Know ... Rutgers

### About Rutgers

- **2018 Record:** 1-0.
- **Team Information:** Offensive Formation - Multiple; Defensive Formation - 4-3; Starters Returning - Offense 7, Defense 8, Specialists 1.
- **Head Coach:** Chris Ash, third year, 7-18 (all at Rutgers).
- **Series History:** Fifth meeting; Ohio State leads, 4-0.
- **School Facts:** Location - New Brunswick, N.J.; Enrollment - 69,000; Nickname - Scarlet Knights; Color - Scarlet; Conference - Big Ten (East Division); Stadium - HighPoint.com Stadium (Surface, FieldTurf; Capacity, 52,454).

### Top Offensive Players

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Isaih Pacheco	11	76	6.9	0	28
Raheem Blackshear	12	62	5.2	1	11
Jonathan Hilliman	15	60	4.0	2	15

Passing	Comp.-Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT
Artur Sitkowski	20-30	66.7	205	1-3

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Raheem Blackshear	7	56	8.0	1	17
Bo Melton	4	57	14.2	0	24
Jerome Washington	2	32	16.0	0	29

### Team Offensive Stats

Points Per Game - 35.0  
Rushing Yards Per Game - 218.0  
Passing Yards Per Game - 205.0  
Total Offense Avg. Per Game - 423.0

### 2018 Schedule

Date	Opponent	Result/Time (ET)
Sept. 1	TEXAS STATE	W, 35-7
<b>Sept. 8</b>	<b>at Ohio State</b>	<b>3:30 p.m.</b>
Sept. 15	at Kansas	Noon
Sept. 22	BUFFALO	TBA
Sept. 29	INDIANA	TBA
Oct. 6	ILLINOIS	TBA
Oct. 13	at Maryland	Noon
Oct. 20	NORTHWESTERN	Noon
Nov. 3	at Wisconsin	TBA
Nov. 10	MICHIGAN	TBA
Nov. 17	PENN STATE	TBA
Nov. 24	at Michigan State	TBA

### Top Defensive Players

Def. Leaders	Solo	Ast.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Trevor Morris	1	8	9	0.5-0	-
Isaiah Wharton	2	4	6	1.0-4	-
Deonte Roberts	1	5	6	1.0-1	-
Damon Hayes	2	2	4	-	-
Elorm Lumor	3	1	4	2.0-8	1.0-6
Julius Turner	2	1	3	2.0-8	-
T. Maddox-Williams	0	3	3	-	-
Rashawn Battle	1	2	3	0.5-3	-

Interceptions	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Blessuan Austin	1	-5	-5.0	0	0

### Team Defensive Stats

Points Per Game Allowed - 7.0  
Rushing Yards Per Game Allowed - 69.0  
Passing Yards Per Game Allowed - 100.0  
Total Offense Avg. Per Game Allowed - 169.0

the clock, but the reality is you've got to score. The only way to score is to get some big plays. I hope we have a lot of 14-play drives, but I just know the reality is that you've got to strike down the field and operate at different tempos to get (defenses) off balance.

"When you hit a big play, you've got to get up on the ball and try to hit another one. I just think (the big play) is essential to scoring. I don't think we're going to just throw a bunch of 5-yard routes and hit some 4-yard runs and try to score. I think we want to advance the ball in chunks.

"That's the way it was last time I was here. We were able to do that and have some productive wideouts along with some productive backs. It all comes off the run game, but that's an essential part of our offense. We've got to have the guys go get it, too, but guys have to be able to throw it accurately down the field."

## Players To Watch

Although questions remain on offense, Rutgers' defense projects as possibly its best since Ash took over.

The strengths start in the secondary, where the Scarlet Knights are deep with several multi-year starters. The fifth-year senior cornerback duo of Blessuan Austin (6-1, 195) and Isaiah Wharton (6-1, 203) opens its fourth straight season as RU's starters, followed by Avery as the next man up. At safety, fifth-year senior Saquan Hampton (6-1, 209) leads the way while Damon Hayes (6-1, 202) is also in line to start after the junior converted from cornerback with "NFL potential" in Ash's mind. As he fights through a nagging quad injury, fifth-year senior Kiy Hester (6-0, 208) opens the campaign as a backup to Hayes but rounds out the defensive backfield with his 19 career starts.

Rutgers returns two-deep depth at the three linebacker positions. Sophomore Tyreek Maddox-Williams (6-0, 220) gets the nod at Will while seniors Deonte Roberts (6-1, 235) and Trevor Morris (6-1, 228) are third-year starters at Mike and Sam, respectively. The sophomore duo of Olakunle Fatukasi (6-1, 228) and Tyshon Fogg (6-1, 240) bring valuable depth to the Scarlet Knights' rotation, which expects to fea-

ture them plenty after they played immediately on defense and special teams as true freshmen in 2017.

RU's biggest concerns come in the trenches. Without much depth, Rutgers projects to trot out a defensive line of fifth-year senior defensive end Kevin Wilkins (6-2, 304), sophomore nose tackle Julius Turner (6-0, 282), senior defensive tackle Jon Bateky (6-3, 298) and sophomore defensive end Elorm Lumor (6-3, 246). Wilkins and Bateky return the bulk of the Scarlet Knights' starting experience with eight games apiece in 2017, but Wilkins enters only his second season at defensive end after he slid out from defensive tackle last year. Lumor was largely a backup to former multiyear starter Kemoko Turay, whom the Indianapolis Colts drafted in the second round. Lumor started three games last year, while Turner appeared in all 12 of RU's contests but did not record a start.

An underclassman-laden receivers group with versatile skill sets joins Sitkowski and the running backs. However, fifth-year senior tight end Jerome Washington (6-4, 256) was Rutgers' top receiver last season with 29 catches for 280 yards and a touchdown. Redshirt freshman Shameen Jones (6-1, 185) and sophomore Bo Melton (5-11, 192) make up the outside, while speedy sophomore Hunter Hayek (5-9, 180) toes the slot. Despite being listed as Hayek's backup, Eddie Lewis (6-0, 182) could make an immediate impact as a freshman after he joined the Scarlet Knights following his prep year at New Berlin (N.Y.) Milford Academy.

Along the offensive line, RU boasts a third-year starter and NFL prospect in fifth-year senior left tackle Tariq Cole (6-6, 317). Beyond him, however, is where things could get shaky. Sophomore left guard Mike Londsorf (6-6, 302) is a first-year starter. Sophomore center Mike Maietti (6-1, 292) returns some starting experience, but only after he took over at the position for junior Jonah Jackson (6-4, 305), who has since moved from center to right guard. Junior right tackle Kamaal Seymour (6-6, 309) is a third-year starter, but he has continued to struggle with consistency over the course of his transition from defensive tackle, a switch he made during fall camp in 2016.

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# Ohio State vs. Rutgers

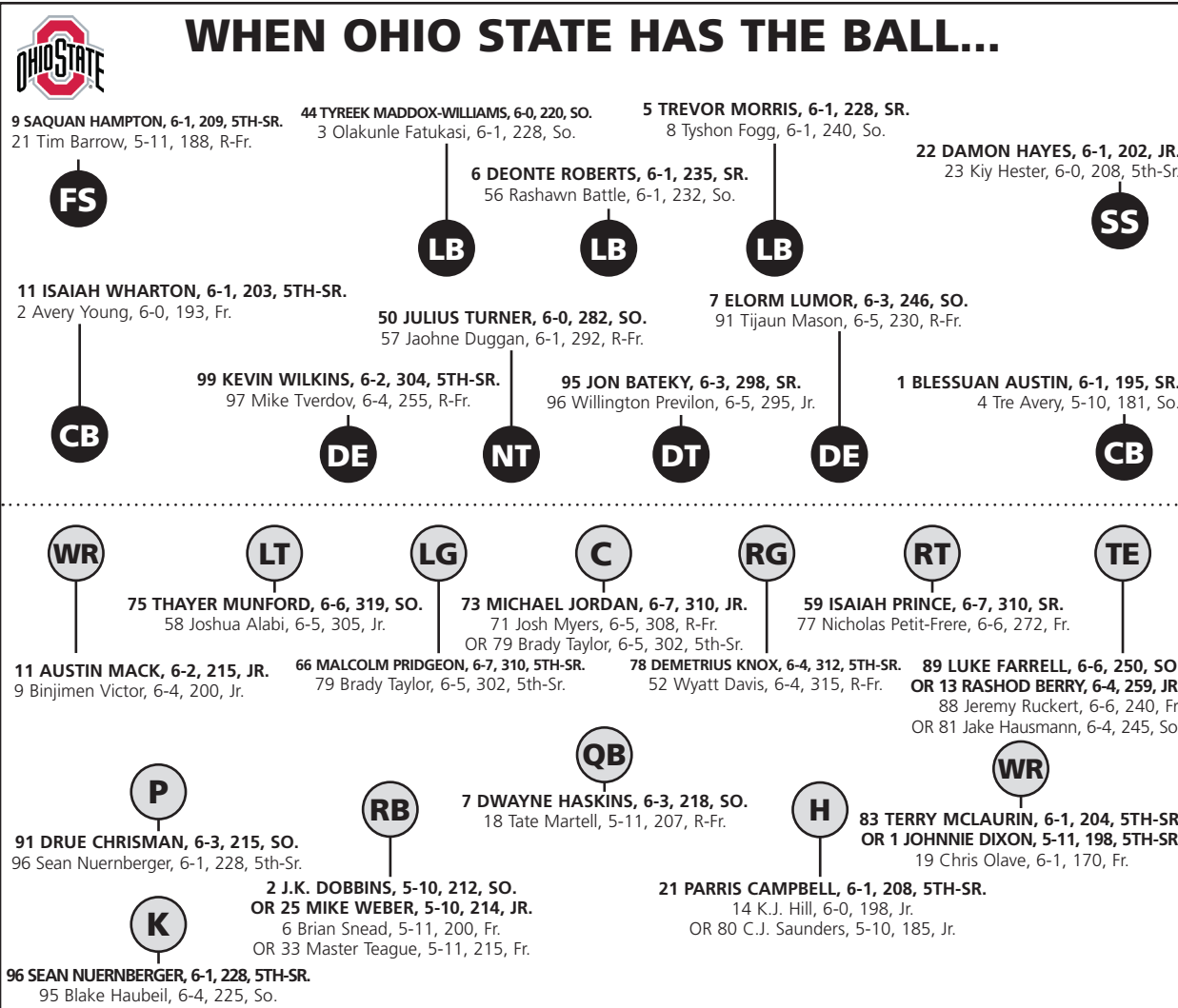
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## Projected Depth Charts

## How We See It

### WHEN OHIO STATE HAS THE BALL...



### OHIO STATE RUSH OFFENSE vs. RUTGERS RUSH DEFENSE

Let's face it, Rutgers will not have an answer for Ohio State's ground game that can turn to J.K. Dobbins or Mike Weber. But the Scarlet Knights should not feel bad. If the Buckeyes can run the ball as well as they did against Oregon State in the Sept. 1 season opener (375 yards), then few teams will be able to stop the one-two punch. Weber continued to show the breakaway speed that emerged late in the 2017 season. He ran for 186 yards on 20 totes vs. Oregon State, including a 49-yard score. Dobbins did a lot of running inside the tackles and produced 74 yards on 15 carries. Ohio State's offensive line is still a work in progress, but Rutgers' D-line was not very good last season and wasn't really tested against Texas State in a 35-7 win. The Scarlet Knights allowed 69 yards on 31 attempts. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### RUTGERS RUSH OFFENSE vs. OHIO STATE RUSH DEFENSE

The Scarlet Knights will feature sophomore back Raheem Blackshear, who finished second on the team with 705 all-purpose yards last season. He is the leading returning rusher, but Rutgers has added Boston College transfer Jon Hilliman to provide some power running to complement Blackshear's speed. Hilliman rushed for 60 yards on 15 carries with two scores and Blackshear added 62 yards on 12 carries with a TD in the first game. Ohio State's defense was a disappointment vs. the Beavers, especially in the third quarter when Artavis Pierce had TD runs of 80 and 78 yards on consecutive series. To be fair, the backups played most of the second half for the Buckeyes, but there were too many missed assignments and tackles for a team the quality of OSU. The good news is all the problems are fixable, and with depth at most every position, if someone isn't up to the high standards, there's always a replacement. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### OHIO STATE PASS OFFENSE vs. RUTGERS PASS DEFENSE

Buckeye fans longing for a vertical game now that J.T. Barrett has graduated got mixed results from Dwayne Haskins in his first start. Yes, he passed for 313 yards and five TDs, but he never really aired it out. He didn't need to. However, his ability to throw a tight pass to the flats and hit receivers in stride was refreshing. There are so many options for him that it's scary what the offense can do. Playing with tempo also suits Haskins. The one negative from the opener was his third-quarter interception, but overall, he showed poise and maturity. Texas State managed just 100 yards on 10 of 25 passing against Rutgers. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### RUTGERS PASS OFFENSE vs. OHIO STATE PASS DEFENSE

Haskins is young, but Rutgers QB Artur Sitkowski is even more inexperienced. He last week became the first true freshman quarterback to start a season opener for Rutgers since 2001. He was 20 of 30 for 205 yards and a TD but had three picks in his debut. That was a cakewalk compared to what the Buckeyes should offer with the likes of a D-line that has Nick Bosa, Chase Young and others. OSU got scorched several times by Oregon State because safety Jordan Fuller did not play due to a hamstring injury. The Beavers had 196 yards passing, a figure that won't go unnoticed by the Ohio State staff. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### SPECIAL TEAMS

OSU punter Drue Chrisman was used only one time vs. Oregon State, but it proved to be a dandy. His 65-yarder pinned the Beavers at their 3 and led to a fumble recovery and score by Bosa. Kicker Sean Nuernberger was reliable, if not a bit tired, per usual. Adam Korsak averaged 39.3 yards on three punts with a long of 47 for Rutgers, and Blackshear had a kick return of 21 yards and has the potential to be a threat. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

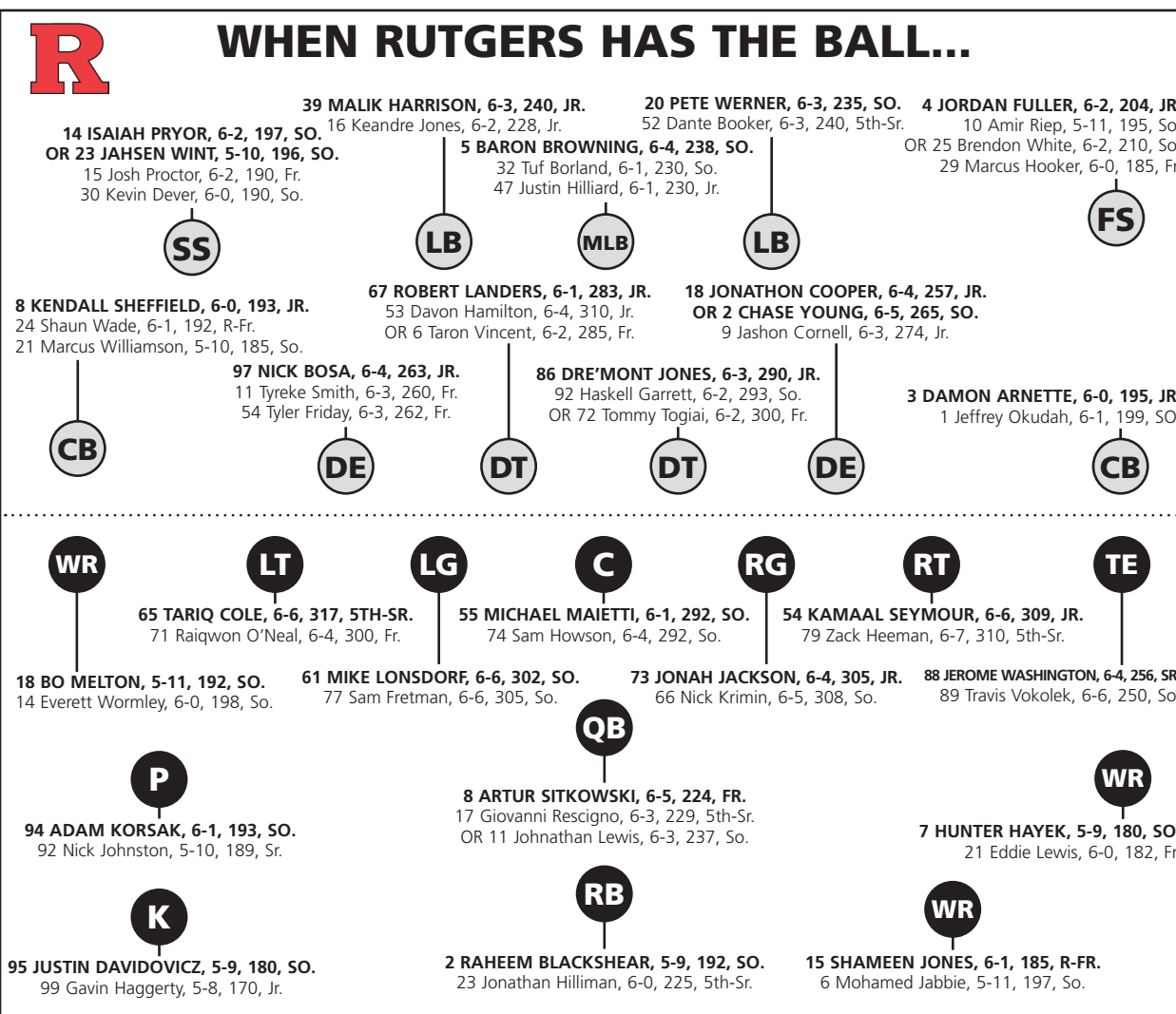
### INTANGIBLES

Rutgers under former OSU assistant Chris Ash has lost the past two games to the Buckeyes 58-0 in 2016 and 56-0 at home last season. He's trying to turn the program into something good, but it will take time and the Buckeyes will not offer a reprieve. There's much for OSU to work on in its second game, but the return of suspended head coach Urban Meyer to training on Sept. 3 (he will not be allowed to coach the Rutgers game) will provide a big motivating factor to eliminate the mistakes in front of the boss during the week of the game. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### PREDICTION

Ohio State can't afford to look ahead to the game at TCU on Sept. 15, and Rutgers will present more of a challenge than Oregon State. Still, the Buckeyes are eager to play with chips on their shoulders and will not take prisoners. **OHIO STATE 56, RUTGERS 14**

### WHEN RUTGERS HAS THE BALL...





# Raw, Athletic OT Allen Among OSU's Top Targets

By GARRETT STEPIEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

When Jonathan Allen gave football a try as a junior at Dayton Dunbar in 2017, he had no idea what to expect.

Despite his athleticism, Allen initially balked at the idea of becoming a two-sport athlete by way of the gridiron. Originally a punishing post player on his high school basketball squad, Allen eventually gave in to then-head coach Darran Powell's overtures.

About a year later, it's fair to say the reluctant decision completely changed Allen's life. After his first season of football, Allen racked up nearly 20 offers from Division I schools. Among them, eight Big Ten programs got involved, including Ohio State.

After multiple trips back and forth on Interstate 70 from Dayton to Columbus, Allen broke through May 3 when the Buckeyes extended a scholarship offer. Since then, OSU has remained heavily involved with the massive offensive lineman.

"It's been crazy," Allen told BSB. "I tell everyone – I never expected it to be like this in football. I didn't even want to play at first. But now, it's kind of like a crazy thing to think about looking back on how things have changed."

Allen debuted for his senior campaign with the Wolverines on Aug. 25 at Huber Heights (Ohio) Wayne, where Dunbar dropped a 35-0 dud against Columbus DeSales in the Backyard Blitz, a season-opening showcase on a neutral-site field.

From the sidelines of Heidkamp Stadium, Allen broke down the latest as he navigates his blossoming recruitment. Up to a solid physical frame of 6-6 and 315 pounds, Allen attacked his first full offseason in the weight room at Dunbar.

"I started to focus more in on football, less on other sports and stuff like that," Allen said. "I just got into the weight room and hit it hard. I know I'm a little behind, so I had to catch back up.

"My kickbacks have gotten better, my strength on the line and my time coming off the ball. It's all gotten better. I've become faster and more agile, too."

Wolverines head coach Corey Freed comes from the high school football scene in Texas, where the game might as well be religion. Freed is focused on developing Allen to his full potential – the same way he did as a coach at Waco and McGregor high schools in the Lone Star State.

"The word that comes to mind is just raw," Freed told BSB. "It's his second year playing football. The growth that he makes week to week in the game is just really a pleasure to watch. For him, he's going to continue to get better. Any team that gets him at the next level is going to be able to look at him two or three years down the road and say, 'Man, we got a steal of a kid, wherever he was.' He's going to grow so much in his potential and knowledge of the game. Once he gets all that technique down, the technique he needs to be successful, he's going to take off.

"But right now, we're getting in the weight room and we're introducing him to a lot of the technical aspects of the lift that I'm trying to get him to learn and really instill in him. The in-season and offseason (growth) will really be crucial for him to reach the next stage of his potential."

After the May offer from OSU, Allen returned to campus for two June visits. On Ohio State's suggestion, he first camped with the Buckeyes on June 8 and competed under offensive line coach Greg Studrawa's tutelage.

"Coach Stud is great," Allen said. "He's a very aggressive coach. He doesn't like to get beat. Every time I'm there, at the camps, he'd put me first, like, 'Hey, Jon, you're next, you're next.' He showed me that he'll be on me every play, every practice, every snap of the ball."

Allen came back to Ohio State on June 16, camping until a pulled hamstring sidelined him for the rest of the day. Still, he got to build his bond with the Buckeye coaches and hang around the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, as one of the few campers allowed to tour inside the facilities throughout the afternoon.

"It was great," Allen said of OSU. "The coaches seem that they love me. They told

## Get To Know: Jonathan Allen



**High School** – Dayton Dunbar

**Position** – Offensive Tackle

**Height, Weight** – 6-6, 315 pounds

**Rankings** – Allen is rated as a three-star prospect, the No. 43 offensive tackle and No. 490 overall player in the 247Sports composite.

**Player Evaluation** – "Jonathan Allen put himself on the recruiting radar last season as a junior at Dayton Dunbar, as college coaches took notice of his size and footwork. Allen credits his footwork to his basketball playing days, and when combined with his length it's easy to see why he has accumulated nearly 20 offers at this point in time."  
– 247Sports

me, 'It's all fun and games up here (at camp), but when it's time to grind, we grind.'"

As he sorts through his laundry list of offers, Allen has identified Ohio State as one of the favorites. Although no dates were in mind when Allen spoke with BSB, he expressed his

hopes to make trips to several schools before he comes closer to a commitment decision.

"I don't know when, exactly," Allen said. "But I want to get to somewhere like UC (Cincinnati), Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio State. Just no definites."

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# Ohio State Loses '19 Commit, Hosts '20 Targets

As the August dead period came to a close Sept. 1, Ohio State welcomed plenty of prospects in the 2019, 2020 and 2021 recruiting classes at Ohio Stadium, where the Buckeyes pummeled Oregon State for a 77-31 victory to open the season.

## RECRUITING OUTLOOK Garrett Stepien

With the evaluation period in play until Nov. 24, the recruiting trail is about to heat up. Although Ohio State lost a commitment from its 2019 group before the opener, movement with targets in that cycle as well as the 2020 class could result in good news for the Buckeyes when interaction between coaches and recruits increases.

The Buckeyes remained near the top of the 247Sports composite team rankings for both cycles. Although Ohio State slipped outside of the top 10 nationally at No. 12 with 14 commitments for the 2019 class, the Buckeyes boasted the country's No. 3 group for the 2020 cycle with six pledges.

What follows is a recap of the Buckeyes' recruiting efforts since BSB last went to press. Despite a significant decommitment, new offers and recent visitors have Ohio State trending in the right direction as the Buckeyes regroup.

To keep in the loop on Ohio State recruiting, stay tuned with BSB's 24/7 full-service website, [BuckeyeSports.com](http://BuckeyeSports.com), a free service for Buckeye Sports Bulletin print subscribers. Members can sign up by emailing their name and address to [subscriptions@buckeyesports.com](mailto:subscriptions@buckeyesports.com) to receive simple instructions on how to access the website.

### 4-Star LB Patterson Decommits From OSU

Two days after Ohio State announced its three-game suspension of head coach Urban Meyer, the Buckeyes lost a commitment Aug. 24 when Nashville (Tenn.) Christ Presbyterian Academy four-star linebacker Kane Patterson dropped from the 2019 recruiting class.

First reported by Brent Dougherty of 104.5 The Zone in Nashville, Patterson's decommitment brings Ohio State's number of pledges down to 14 for the current cycle. The possibility of Patterson decommitting was reportedly brewing for weeks, with factors such as proximity to home and a newer offer playing a role. He leaves the Buckeyes without much depth at his position.

Outside of Patterson, Ohio State's only other linebacker commitment is Lexington, Ohio, four-star Cade Stover. While the No. 140 overall prospect, No. 9 outside linebacker and No. 4 player in Ohio remains solid to the Buckeyes, Stover (6-5, 235) could very well grow into a defensive end at the next level. Patterson (6-1, 225), who

## 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
Jordan Battle	S	6-1	187	★★★★	Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas
Steele Chambers	ATH	6-2	215	★★★★	Roswell (Ga.) Blessed Trinity Catholic
Cormontae Hamilton	TE	6-2	263	★★★	Memphis (Tenn.) Whitehaven
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.
Dwan Mathis	QB	6-4	197	★★★★	Oak Park, Mich.
Harry Miller	C	6-4	310	★★★★★	Buford, Ga.
Doug Nester	OT	6-5½	295	★★★★	Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley
Noah Potter	DE	6-5	250	★★★★	Mentor, Ohio
Bryson Shaw	S	6-2	175	★★★	Potomac (Md.) Bullis School
Cade Stover	OLB	6-5	235	★★★★	Lexington, Ohio
Garrett Wilson	WR	6-0½	181	★★★★★	Austin (Texas) Lake Travis
Craig Young	ATH	6-4	200	★★★	Fort Wayne (Ind.) Wayne

Players in the class of 2020 who has issued verbal commitments to play football at Ohio State. (Star ratings reflect 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Lejond Cavazos	S	6-0	186	★★★★	Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy
Darvon Hubbard	RB	6-0	200	★★★★	Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral
Paris Johnson	OT	6-7	285	★★★★★	Cincinnati St. Xavier
Jack Miller	QB	6-4	210	★★★★	Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral
Jake Wray	OT	6-5	290	★★★★	Marietta, Ga.
Luke Wypler	OL	6-3½	285	★★★★	Montvale (N.J.) St. Joseph Regional

had pledged to Ohio State on July 9 over three SEC finalists, represented a true linebacker commitment for the Buckeyes.

As the 247Sports composite's No. 199 overall prospect, No. 9 inside linebacker and No. 7 player in Tennessee, Patterson's recruitment reopened with several Southern schools in play. Alabama, Tennessee and Texas A&M were origi-

nally in contention with Ohio State, but Patterson's offer from Clemson on Aug. 5 put the Tigers in a promising place before he makes his commitment decision at a later date.

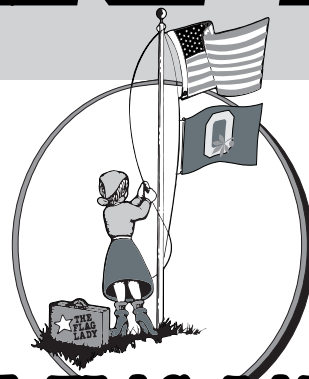
### Relationships Keep Recruits Solid To Ohio State

Despite the departure of Patterson, for

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# ASK AN ANALYST

## With CBS Sports Network's Tom Lemming

Over the past two months, Ohio State overcame initial recruiting challenges and locked up its quarterbacks of the future as Oak Park, Mich., 2019 four-star Dwan Mathis and Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral 2020 four-star Jack Miller committed to the Buckeyes.

After how much OSU struggled to get a signal caller locked up, how big was it for head coach Urban Meyer and the staff to get these two on board for the next two cycles?

"I've seen both of them. Miller (6-4, 210), he still has another year but I met him. This kid is phenomenal. He's not your normal Ohio State quarterback – he fits into, I thought, more of a pro-style offense – but he's athletic, he's tall and he moves well. But I thought he was easily one of the top three kids in the 2020 class.

"I went and saw Dwan (6-6, 205) twice because, since I'm in Chicago, I go see him a lot. Dwan's another tall, very athletic quarterback. He's the kind of guy that Ohio State makes into a Heisman candidate. He's not a polished guy yet – he has room to grow – but that's the kind of guy they polish. With his athletic ability, he's got that rip-like arm. He's going to be fantastic after he redshirts and plays behind somebody for a year or two.

"They're both big, big-time guys. At Ohio State, you expect them to get those types of guys. But these two especially are huge."

**Ohio State gained early momentum in the 2020 recruiting class with Marietta, Ga., four-star offensive tackle Jake Wray, Bradenton (Fla.) IMG**

Academy four-star Lejond Cavazos, Cincinnati St. Xavier five-star offensive tackle Paris Johnson, Miller, Montvale (N.J.) St. Joseph Regional four-star offensive guard Luke Wypler and Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral four-star running back Darvon Hubbard. How important are those six commitments so soon in the next cycle?

"I just think, nowadays, it's so important because of the early signing period. When guys get things over with so fast – a year ago, remember, Alabama got caught short-handed because they were used to having the No. 1 class almost seven or eight years in a row. What happened was they got caught with their pants down because they didn't realize that first signing period was going to sign 80 percent of the guys – because they were so good at stealing guys at the end. They couldn't do that that much. So it's super important. It gives you that extra push for the next year. I think it's very important to get going.

"Miller is probably going to be a five-star quarterback. Wray is a four-plus guy. Lejond's dad has been calling me since he was a seventh-grader in Texas. Darvon is a very good running back, overshadowed a bit by Miller, but I also liked him. I thought he was the best running back in the state (of Arizona), even though he's only going to be a junior. It goes on for Ohio State with the rest of the guys like Johnson and Wypler. So they've gotten off to a good start so far. Everybody they've gotten is a big-time recruit.

"Miller was the most important. Quarterbacks bring in running backs, wide receivers and offensive linemen. I'm

sure Miller was talking to Paris, working on guys and they all build up their relationships. I've seen quarterbacks dominate recruiting classes for their teams."

Ohio State started its season Sept. 1 against Oregon State at Ohio Stadium, where the Buckeyes hosted plenty of prospects – committed and uncommitted – for the 2019 and 2020 classes as the recruiting calendar shifted to the evaluation period from Sept. 1-Nov. 24. Lewis Center (Ohio) Olentangy Orange 2019 five-star defensive end Zach Harrison, however, was not among them. In your estimation, the longer he waits, how worried should the Buckeyes be with Penn State and Michigan involved?

"I recently talked to him, and as I ask every kid, he said his dream school was Ohio State. Ohio State's not going to be beaten when it comes to giving a recruit attention, either. Sometimes they overlook kids in Ohio because they've become focused on national prospects, but not when it comes to a kid like Zach Harrison. They're going to give him a lot of attention. I think they're going to get him.

"Penn State, they've become a real threat to Michigan and Ohio State because head coach James Franklin is a great recruiter – not a good one, but a great one. He's up there with Urban, James Franklin. Jim Harbaugh, with all the nonsense and stuff, he's also a good recruiter. So you've got the three best recruiters in the Midwest banging heads. But in the long run, I think once Urban's back and coaching, Harrison will still end up with Ohio State."

the most part the Buckeyes weathered the storm of Meyer's leave and subsequent suspension.

At the forefront of Ohio State's recruiting efforts in Meyer's absence, acting head coach Ryan Day credited the staff's relationships with commitments and their families.

When the Buckeyes ended their media blackout Aug. 27, Day discussed the issue further during a game-week press conference prior to the opener against Oregon State.

"I think anytime you're dealing with recruiting, it goes back to relationships," Day said. "The relationships that the coaches here have built are strong. Also the quality of the young men that we're bringing in here and the culture of those kids is as strong as anyplace I've ever been, and the support has been strong from those recruiting classes.

"I can't get into specifics or people, but we have probably talked on a daily basis with all of the kids. The communication has been, 'Hey, listen. You can ask questions, but we may not have the answers to them. But ask the hard questions.'

"So there's been open communication with all of them, and because of that they have all stuck together. I know that they all communicate with each other, and so that's been a positive."

### 5-Star Miller, Mother Stand By Meyer

Buford, Ga., 2019 five-star Ohio State commit Harry Miller, a center, and his mother, Kristina, showed public support for Meyer on Aug. 25 through a series of tweets and statements. In the

wake of a university investigation involving Meyer's handling of domestic abuse allegations against former wide receivers coach Zach Smith, Kristina Miller revealed her story as a survivor of abuse when she stood by Meyer in a statement.

"If I thought for one second that Urban Meyer would not only condone that kind of behavior, but turn a blind eye to it, as he's been accused of doing, he most certainly would not be a dear friend and you could bet our son would not be spending the next four years of his life with him ... he doesn't and he didn't," a part of Kristina Miller's statement read. "His biggest fault was in trying to help someone (Zach Smith) who obviously had too many problems, some never proven and

many unknown, a choice now I imagine he deeply regrets. I know this man well, he is imperfectly human, but not malicious or unkind. If you ask anyone who truly knows him, they will tell you the same."

Other mothers, such as Stacey Wray, the mother of Ohio State freshman offensive tackle Max Wray and Marietta, Ga., 2020 four-star offensive tackle commit Jake Wray, took to Twitter after Kristina Miller.

"I too would not trust my boy – let alone both boys – to a program if I didn't believe in the leadership TOP to bottom," a part of Stacey Wray's tweet read. "I'm proud to be

Continued On Page 30



Harry Miller

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# 5-Star Harrison Still Considering OSU, PSU, U-M

Continued From Page 29

a #BuckeyeMom and it's an honor to call Coach Meyer a friend."

Harry Miller (6-4, 300), who announced his commitment June 10, remains solid to the Buckeyes and Meyer despite previously reported pushes from other schools. As the 247Sports composite's No. 33 overall prospect, No. 2 center and No. 7 player in Georgia, Miller is the second-highest-rated recruit in Ohio State's 2019 class. Austin (Texas) Lake Travis five-star wide receiver commitment Garrett Wilson (6-0½, 181) is the Buckeyes' top-rated pledge as the 247Sports composite's No. 14 overall prospect, No. 2 wide receiver and No. 2 player in Texas.

## 5-Star DE Harrison Still Mulling Decision

Lewis Center (Ohio) Olentangy Orange 2019 five-star defensive end Zach Harrison remains uncommitted as he considers Michigan, Ohio State and Penn State among his three finalists.

Harrison (6-5½, 243) is the 247Sports composite's No. 4 overall prospect, No. 3 weak-side defensive end and No. 1 player in Ohio. On the outskirts of Columbus in Lewis Center, Harrison has plenty of attention as the Buckeyes' top target – regardless of class – in their own back yard.

After he postponed a previously planned decision, originally set for his birthday on Aug. 14, BSB caught up with Harrison after his high school team's season opener Aug. 24. Harrison has no new decision date in mind as he continues to weigh the three among his finalists.

"It's just that I like all the schools," Harrison told BSB. "It's different things about each school. But through this, I call all the coaches, all the players and I'm picking the best of the best."

While the Buckeyes were without Meyer, Harrison said Ohio State's investigation and its subsequent suspension of the head coach has no bearing on how he navigates his recruitment.

"I haven't really been worried about

## A Look Back At Recruiting From The Pages Of BSB

### 30 Years Ago – 1988

As Ohio State worked on its 1989 recruiting class, the Buckeyes were in some contact with an in-state product who was posting gaudy numbers in high school.

Portsmouth, Ohio, running back Troy Parker went off for a career-high 237 yards and three touchdowns. He hoped it might spark more interest from OSU.

"I've been looking at Michigan State quite a bit," Parker said. "They must have sent me 15 or 16 letters about the university so far. But I would also be very interested in Ohio State. I would be very interested in them. But, so far, I haven't heard much from them. I'm hoping to hear more from them now that the new coaching staff has settled in."

Parker's performance caught national prep recruiting expert Tom Lemming's attention.

"Most teams have a list of kids they keep in contact with, but every once in a while, one slips through that no one sees," Lemming said. "Parker may fit into that category."

### 25 Years Ago – 1993

While Ohio State reportedly did not express much interest due to academic concerns, an Ohio prospect of note committed elsewhere. Union City (Ohio) Mississinawa Valley running back Curtis Enis issued a verbal pledge to Penn State over offers from Michigan and Indiana. Enis garnered some attention after he rushed for 1,846 yards as a junior and earned a second straight All-Ohio honor, but he was carrying a 2.80 grade-point average and had yet to achieve a minimum ACT score necessary for freshman eligibility.

### 20 Years Ago – 1998

Ohio State kept a top talent home in Columbus when Upper Arlington (Ohio) High School running back Jesse Kline committed to

the Buckeyes. The 6-2, 215-pounder gave OSU its 12th pledge of the 1999 recruiting class. He chose Ohio State over finalists Michigan and Notre Dame.

"The main thing for Ohio State was the people and the coaching staff," Kline said. "I just felt like these guys would help me to become the person I could be and the best football player I could be. I just had the best feeling at OSU with the coaches and football team."

### 15 Years Ago – 2003

Defensive back Jamario O'Neal, Ohio State's first commitment in the 2005 class, transferred from Mansfield (Ohio) Senior to Cleveland Glenville after legal troubles surfaced. O'Neal was sentenced to 60 days in the Richland (Ohio) County Juvenile Detention Center and 50 hours of community service after he admitted to charges of aiding and theft and criminal damaging.

The story took another twist when The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer reported that Glenville head coach Ted Ginn Sr. was in the process of gaining legal guardianship of O'Neal. Ginn Sr.'s son, Ted Ginn Jr., was also committed to the Buckeyes but as a member of the 2004 class.

### 10 Years Ago – 2008

After an 18½-hour drive from Florida to Columbus, five-star running back Jaamal Berry (5-11, 193) became Ohio State's 25th commitment for the 2009 class on his visit to campus. The Miami Palmetto product pledged to the Buckeyes over offers from LSU, Michigan, Florida and Ole Miss, among others. He was rated the No. 5 running back in the country.

"I told Coach (Jim) Tressel in his office and in front of my mom because it's her birthday,"

that," Harrison said. "I'm just going to let it play out however it's going to play out."

## 4-Star OSU Commit Chooses All-Star Game

For the past three years, Ohio State has been well represented in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl. As the game goes through a slight name variation to simply the All-American Bowl, the Buckeyes appear to be on pace for another strong showing when

the 2019 contest takes place Jan. 5 in San Antonio at 2 p.m. on NBC.

Roswell (Ga.) Blessed Trinity Catholic four-star athlete Steele Chambers, who committed April 18 to Ohio State, became the latest future Buckeye to announce his plans to play in the All-American Bowl. Chambers (6-2, 215) shared his decision Aug. 25 on Twitter.

"Officially committed to the 2019 All-American Bowl," part of Chambers' tweet read.

As the 247Sports composite's No. 245 overall prospect, No. 16 athlete and No. 29 player in Georgia, Chambers is a marquee member of Ohio State's 2019 recruiting class. He chose the Buckeyes over offers from Alabama and Clemson, among other powerhouse programs.

Chambers follows Wayne (N.J.) DePaul Catholic four-star athlete Ronnie Hickman, Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley four-star offensive tackle Doug Nester, Wilson and Miller as the fifth member of Ohio State's 2019 recruiting class to commit to the game. Last year,

Berry told BSB on Aug. 31. "I thought that would be a good time."

### Five Years Ago – 2013

On top of a 2014 class that had already included Dontre Wilson, Jalin Marshall and Ezekiel Elliott, Ohio State gained another playmaker commitment for the 2015 class when the Buckeyes grabbed Canton (Ohio) McKinley four-star running back Eric Glover-Williams on Aug. 25.

As the No. 9 running back in the nation and the No. 4 player in Ohio, the 5-10, 165-pounder's pledge was seen to be a key addition to head football coach Urban Meyer's class.

"Being the first commit to the 2015 class was big to Coach Meyer, so it was big to me as well," Glover-Williams said. "It's a place where I can feel comfortable, and I love everything about Ohio State. Coach Meyer is building a championship team at Ohio State, and I have to be a part of it."

### One Year Ago – 2017

Adding to what was, at the time, the No. 1 recruiting class in the country, Ohio State got richer when four-star athlete L'Christian "Blue" Smith committed Aug. 27 to the Buckeyes. The 6-6, 206-pounder from Huber Heights (Ohio) Wayne gave OSU its initial wide receiver pledge as the third in-state commit and the 17th overall member of the 2018 recruiting class. Smith chose Ohio State over Kentucky.

"I just woke up one morning thinking, 'I'm missing an opportunity here. This is an opportunity that not many people get. This is not setting me up just for football and my future, but just a man making good money after I play, after I graduate,'" Smith said. "It sets you up for better opportunities at Ohio State."

the Buckeyes boasted nine pledges who had accepted invitations.

## 2020 4-Star WR Receives Offer

Despite the dead period, which prohibits face-to-face contact but allows written communication between coaches and recruits, Ohio State remained active on the trail with an Aug. 23 offer to Powder Springs (Ga.) McEachern 2020 four-star wide receiver Javon Baker.

The 6-1, 175-pounder hauled in his latest scholarship offer from the Buckeyes to add to a double-digit list of options. Baker boasts offers from Florida State, Alabama and Clemson since June 7.

Baker is ranked in the 247Sports composite as the No. 115 overall prospect, No. 21 wide receiver and No. 13 player in Georgia for the 2020 recruiting class.

## OSU Offers Teammate Of 2019 Commit

Among the abundance of prospects on campus Sept. 1 for its season opener at



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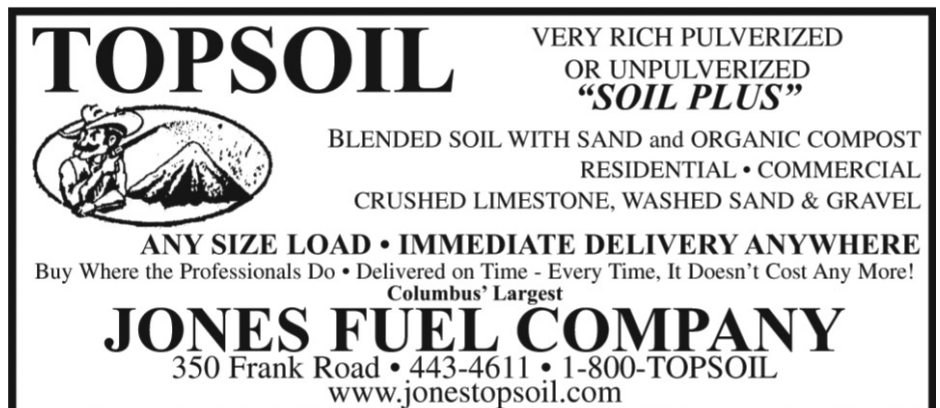
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Ohio Stadium, Ohio State hosted 2019 commitments Nester and Fort Wayne (Ind.) Wayne three-star athlete Craig Young.

Nester, who was the first pledge for the Buckeyes' 2019 class on Aug. 6 of last year, made his latest trip back to Columbus after he visited the weekend of April 14 for the spring game. On his return, he brought a few high school teammates from Spring Valley. In fact, one of them left with a scholarship on the table in 2021 offensive tackle Wyatt Milum.

Milum (6-7, 245) already holds offers from Penn State, Virginia Tech, Louisville and Marshall in addition to the Buckeyes.

**4-Star DT Cuts List, Includes Buckeyes**

As Ohio State selectively sifts through the 2019 class and targets prospects at defensive tackle, a position in which the Buckeyes boast depth after they signed three recruits for the 2018 cycle, a recent offer is moving forward with a future in Columbus still in play.

Salt Lake City (Utah) East four-star defensive tackle Siaka Ika included Ohio State in his top eight on Aug. 31. He released the trimmed list through Twitter, naming the Buckeyes among others in consideration. Alabama, LSU, Ole Miss, Oregon, USC, Utah and Washington rounded out the list.

Ika (6-3, 351) reported an offer from Ohio State on Aug. 1. He competed against a pair of future Buckeyes in Nester and Miller at The Opening Finals. The Dallas Cowboys hosted the June 30-July 3 showcase at their practice facility, The Star, in Frisco, Texas.

The weekend of June 22-24 at USC, Ika took the first of his five official visits. He has his second official visit penciled in for Oct. 13 at LSU, while the other three remain to be seen. Ika is ranked the 247Sports composite's No. 160 overall prospect, No. 11 defensive tackle and No. 1 player in Utah.

**Michigan 2020 WR Duo Visits Columbus**

Among the notable targets in attendance Sept. 1 for Ohio State's season opener against Oregon State, the Buckeyes hosted a pair of 2020 wide receivers from Michigan in Bay City Central three-star Devell Washington and Detroit King four-star Rashawn Williams.

Washington (6-4, 210) was offered by the Buckeyes on June 25 after he impressed in front of the staff during his camp performance at Friday Night Lights on June 22. Williams, on the other hand, has held an Ohio State offer since June 17 of last year and remains a top target for the next cycle.

While the two trekked separately down to Columbus, they connected during their respective visits. In fact, Washington told BSB, they sat together at the 'Shoe as the Buckeyes routed the Beavers.

"Yeah, that's my dude, that's my dude," Washington said. "We sat next to each other the whole time. We've gotten really close. I can see myself playing with him, oh yeah."

Washington, who made his first visit to Ohio State since Friday Night Lights, envisioned what it would be like to line up with Williams in the Buckeyes' new-and-improved offense. As Dwayne Haskins spread the ball to various receivers and recorded five touchdown passes in the sophomore quarterback's first career start, Washington was impressed.

"Pretty much everybody played,"

Washington said of the wide receiver rotation. "I was looking at that. It was like literally everyone played. Everyone touched the ball."

"Man, it was like I was in heaven. Man, I would literally take a bubble screen and run it down the sidelines if I were in that offense. Haskins, he sure can throw the ball."

Washington spoke with acting head coach Ryan Day and area recruiter Taver Johnson after the game. Beforehand, Washington was one of the first recruits shown around on the field, led out of the tunnel with his family by director of play-

er personnel Mark Pantoni. Afterward, Washington caught up with Brian Hartline, with whom Washington has developed a strong bond in the short time Hartline has served as interim wide receivers coach.

"The way he explains the game, it's like he literally fixes things for me," Washington said of Hartline. "When I go out to my games on Friday nights, I take what I learned from him. Verbally, I can process what he's trying to tell me. He doesn't even have to show me. That's how good he is."

Williams, who previously visited Ohio State on July 27 and met Hartline in person, echoed those sentiments.

"I wasn't really in contact with him before, but me and him, we connected once I got down there," Williams said of Hartline. "He's a cool guy. He's very energetic. Everything about him is positive. There isn't really anything anybody would say about him that is negative to me. He has NFL experience, so he knows what it takes to get to the NFL and he won't expect anything less from his players."

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# 3 Big Ten Schools Name Freshman Starting QBs

Starting a true freshman at quarterback in college football is usually a sign of a program entering a rebuilding stage, or the result of an injury to a starter. In the case of three Big Ten teams this year, the former is what rings true.

## BIG TEN NOTES James Grega

Minnesota, Nebraska and Rutgers all named true freshman starting quarterbacks prior to their first games of the season as all three programs are in the middle of major program rebuilds.

The Golden Gophers were the first of the

three teams to name a starting quarterback, when P.J. Fleck announced on Aug. 20 that Zach Annexstad would take the first snaps of the season at quarterback. Annexstad, a Minnesota native and Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy product, told the Twin Cities Pioneer Press that he was elated about the opportunity to start for the Gophers, but that he didn't exactly show it when Fleck first told him.

"(Fleck) told me and I just said, 'All right, yes sir,'" Annexstad said. "I don't know how he thought I was going to react, but I was pretty excited on the inside."

"The main thing is I'm just trying to – I'm working to tune out the outside noise because I just want to stay locked in. We have a game coming up real quick in a couple of days, and I'm just trying to stay locked in for my teammates."

In his first start as Minnesota's quarter-

back, Annexstad completed 16 of 33 passes for 220 yards and two scores in a 48-10 win over New Mexico State on Aug. 30.

The next rookie quarterback to get the starting nod in the Big Ten was Artur Sitkowski at Rutgers.

Sitkowski beat out senior and team captain Gio Rescigno for the starting job, and while the QB was named the starter before taking a snap in a college game, head coach Chris Ash said he doesn't classify Sitkowski as a freshman because of the experience he earned by enrolling early and participating in spring camp.

"They're really not freshmen when they do that," Ash said. "When you combine the early enrollment, all the training they're getting year-round at that position, the game has changed. It really has. All those things combined, it has led to more young guys having an opportunity to compete and potentially play."

In his first game as a starter, Sitkowski completed 20 of 30 passes for 205 yards and one TD with three interceptions in a 35-7 win over Texas State.

The final freshman to earn a starting job was Adrian Martinez at Nebraska.

Perhaps the least surprising of the three first-year quarterbacks to win a starting spot, Martinez beat out redshirt freshman Tristan Gebbia for the job, which resulted in Gebbia transferring to Oregon State.

Martinez's debut was delayed, however, when Nebraska's game against Akron was canceled due to severe weather. Martinez would have become the first true freshman to start a game at Nebraska.

### U-M's Black Out With Injury

Michigan wide receiver Tarik Black missed the majority of the 2017 season with a broken left foot and is now expected to miss significant time in 2018 after breaking his right foot in fall camp.

Black, who was a four-star prospect in the 2017 class, hauled in 11 catches for 149 yards and a touchdown in three games last year before his season was cut short. Because of the amount of time he missed, he was granted a medical redshirt.

Wolverine head coach Jim Harbaugh

## BIG 2018 Standings

### East Division

	Conf.			All		
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
Indiana	-	-	-	1	0	1.000
Maryland	-	-	-	1	0	1.000
Michigan State	-	-	-	1	0	1.000
<b>Ohio State</b>	-	-	-	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1.000</b>
Penn State	-	-	-	1	0	1.000
Rutgers	-	-	-	1	0	1.000
Michigan	-	-	-	0	1	.000

### West Division

	Conf.			All		
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
Northwestern	1	0	1.000	1	0	1.000
Illinois	-	-	-	1	0	1.000
Iowa	-	-	-	1	0	1.000
Minnesota	-	-	-	1	0	1.000
Wisconsin	-	-	-	1	0	1.000
Nebraska	-	-	-	-	-	-
Purdue	0	1	.000	0	1	.000

### Aug. 30 Scores

Minnesota 48, New Mexico State 10  
Northwestern 31, Purdue 27

### Aug. 31 Scores

Michigan State 38, Utah State 31  
Wisconsin 34, Western Kentucky 3

### Sept. 1 Scores

**Ohio State 77, Oregon State 31**  
Maryland 34, Texas 29  
Illinois 31, Kent State 24  
Rutgers 35, Texas State 7  
Penn State 45, Appalachian State 38 (OT)  
Iowa 33, Northern Illinois 7  
Indiana 38, Florida International 28  
Notre Dame 24, Michigan 17  
Akron at Nebraska, Cancelled

### Sept. 8 Games

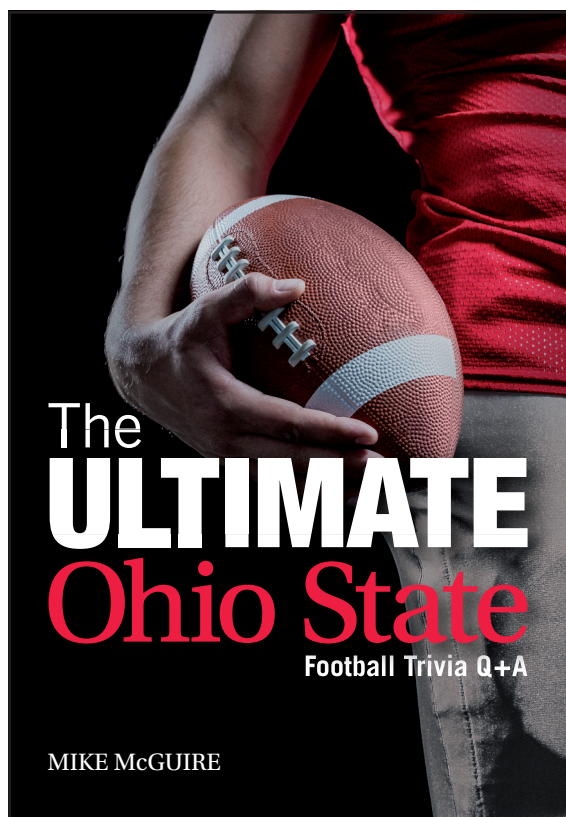
New Mexico at Wisconsin, Noon (BTN)  
Western Michigan at Michigan, Noon (FS1)  
Duke at Northwestern, Noon (ESPN)  
Eastern Michigan at Purdue, Noon (BTN)  
**Rutgers at Ohio State, 3:30 p.m. (BTN)**  
Colorado at Nebraska, 3:30 p.m. (ABC)  
Iowa State at Iowa, 5 p.m. (FOX)  
Maryland at Bowling Green, 6 p.m. (ESPN+)  
Virginia at Indiana, 7:30 p.m. (BTN)  
Western Illinois at Illinois, 7:30 p.m. (BTN)  
Fresno State at Minnesota, 7:30 p.m. (FS1)  
Penn State at Pittsburgh, 8 p.m. (ABC)  
Michigan St. at Arizona St., 10:45 p.m. (ESPN)



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wouldn't rule out the possibility of Black returning at some point during the 2018 season but added that the 6-3, 215-pound receiver will be out for "some weeks."

"Both feet will be fixed," Harbaugh said. "You only have two feet. He'll have them both fixed. No doubt the best is yet to come for Tarik Black."

### George Jr. Transfers (Again)

Michigan quarterback Jeff George Jr., the son of longtime NFL signal caller Jeff George, announced his transfer from Michigan to Pittsburgh on Aug. 27 before ever suiting up for the Wolverines.

George Jr. transferred to Michigan from Illinois in the spring but lost a quarterback battle to Ole Miss transfer Shea Patterson.

In two seasons at Illinois, George appeared in 12 games, throwing for 1,743 yards and 11 touchdowns to 15 interceptions. He has already enrolled in classes at Pitt, but the NCAA has not yet ruled on whether the graduate transfer will be eligible to play this season. Regardless, George will have one season left to play in 2019, if he so chooses.

### Wisconsin WRs Suspended

Wisconsin's top returning wide receiver, Quintez Cephus, was suspended by the program indefinitely following charges of sexual



## BIG TEN NOTES

assault stemming from an incident in the spring.

Cephus, who caught 30 passes for 501 yards and six touchdowns last season, faces second- and third-degree sexual assault charges, both of which are felonies and punishable with up to 40 years in prison. Cephus has denied all wrongdoing.

In addition, Cephus' teammate, roommate and fellow wide receiver Danny Davis was suspended for Wisconsin's first two games of the 2018 season for his alleged involvement in the incident. He was not charged with any wrongdoing but was mentioned in the criminal complaint that accused Cephus of the assault.

"Based on the information I have available to me at this time, I have decided to suspend Danny Davis for the first two games of the season," head coach Paul Chryst said in a statement Aug. 22. "Should further information become available that warrants a re-evaluation of the length of the suspension, I will assess that information. We have a high standard of conduct within our football program, and we cannot accept behavior that is not consistent with that standard."

The Badgers opened the season with a

34-3 win over Western Kentucky on Aug. 31 and are set to take on New Mexico on Sept. 8.

### Dawkins Leaves IU

Quarterback Brandon Dawkins, who transferred to Indiana from Arizona in the spring, announced he was leaving the Hoosier program, citing mental health concerns in an Instagram post Aug. 29.

"The most important thing to me though has been the joy that the game always brought me," Dawkins wrote. "Over the last couple years I lost touch with that joy. I respect and love the game, but I have lost touch with it. I am not too proud to admit that I needed help."

"I am grateful for the sports psychology team at both Arizona and Indiana for helping me at some of the lowest points in my life. The game has (been) getting me depressed and hurting my well-being."

Dawkins was the starting quarterback for Arizona in 2016 and into 2017 before getting beat out by Khalil Tate early in the 2017 season. In 22 career games for the Wildcats, he threw for 2,418 yards, added another 1,582 on the ground and compiled 31 total touchdowns.

Peyton Ramsey beat Dawkins out for the starting quarterback job this fall, a decision that was announced by head coach Tom Allen a week prior to Dawkins' announcement.

### Ferentz Passes Fry

Iowa's methodical victory over Northern Illinois on Sept. 1 wasn't one that was going to turn many heads on paper, but the victory was a special one for longtime Hawkeye head coach Kirk Ferentz.

The 33-7 win over the Huskies gave Ferentz his 144th victory as the head man at Iowa, pushing him past Hayden Fry as the winningest head coach in program history.

The win was an emotional one for Ferentz, who teared up following the game, leading to his players following suit.

"Quarterbacks, running backs, tight ends – the whole nine yards. Everybody was crying," starting left tackle Levi Paulsen told the Des Moines Register. "I think everybody realizes that the University of Iowa is a special place. The culture that Coach Ferentz has (built) and sustained over time is just second to none."

The Hawkeyes carried just a 3-0 lead into

halftime before scoring 30 straight points in the second half. The Huskies added a late touchdown to avoid the shutout.


### B1G Players Of The Week

Outside of Ohio State's offensive explosion against Oregon State, there were plenty of other standout performances in the Big Ten during week one of the college football season.

Purdue's Rondale Moore particularly impressed in his first college football game ever, as the freshman wide receiver carried the ball twice for 79 yards and a touchdown while adding 11 receptions for 109 yards and another score in a 31-27 loss to Northwestern on Aug. 30. Moore finished the game with 313 all-purpose yards, setting a new school record in the process.

In the same game, Wildcat running back Jeremy Larkin carried 26 times for 143 yards and a pair of scores in his first game as Northwestern's premier back.

Reigning Big Ten Freshman of the Year Jonathan Taylor continued his torrid pace on the ground, rushing for 145 yards and two touchdowns on 18 carries in a 34-3 rout of Western Kentucky on Aug. 31.



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# OSU's Woods Easing Into Leadership Role

For the majority of the offseason, Ohio State head coach Chris Holtmann and his staff were desperate to find a graduate-transfer point guard who could step in right away to play a prominent role on the floor in 2018-19.

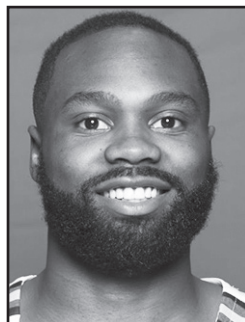
## COURT REPORT James Grega

The loss of Andrew Dakich to graduation left Ohio State with only one true point guard on the roster in C.J. Jackson, and while Duane Washington and Luther Muhammad were added as part of the 2018 recruiting class, there was a noticeable void in both

leadership and depth at the position. So when Holtmann landed Keyshawn Woods from Wake Forest for his final season of college basketball, it was, needless to say, a big deal.

Woods chose Ohio State over a handful of other schools, mainly because of his prior relationship with Holtmann and his staff. He had previously been recruited to play at Gardner-Webb when Holtmann was the head coach there from 2010-13 but ultimately chose to play at Charlotte, committing in August of 2013.

Woods spent just one year at Charlotte before transferring to Wake Forest, where he played two seasons and averaged 12.2 points per game. Holtmann had attempted to recruit Woods to Butler



Keyshawn Woods

following his lone season at Charlotte but was once again unsuccessful.

After dealing with injuries and starting just five of 28 games played last season, Woods decided to again transfer schools for his final year.

"Originally I wanted to go somewhere where I could get healthy and somewhere I could play and be a big factor," Woods said Aug. 29. "Also, a team that has an opportunity to go to the tournament. Coach Holt has been recruiting me for a while now. He recruited me out of high school, he recruited me when he was at Butler, and so I already had a relationship with him. The way they do things and how the coaches are really family-oriented and the guys are really close, that drew me to OSU.

"All of (the coaches) have a common goal for each of us," he added. "They really work towards making sure we reach our goals, and that right there is what stuck with me."

For Holtmann, the third time was the charm for landing Woods, and the graduate transfer has already made an impact, helping the Buckeyes to a perfect 3-0 finish on their August trip to Spain.

Holtmann said while there are things he is still learning about Woods, he has already been impressed with the way point guard can create for himself and others with the ball in his hands.

"It's a different relationship when you're coaching him on a day-to-day basis,"

Holtmann explained. "What we are trying to learn is who he is in critical moments of a game.. He's a guy that I want to stay aggressive and stay assertive. We could play him at a variety of positions this year. I think he will be one of our leading playmakers this year because of his willingness to move the ball."

Woods added that the coaching staff has made the extra effort to get to know him as a player more by watching extra film with him, something he is excited about. As a graduate senior, Woods added that one of the other things that attracted him to Ohio State was how Holtmann's staff helped Keita Bates-Diop develop into a Big Ten Player of the Year in just one season.

"The way they transformed and helped Keita and (Jae'Sean Tate), that helped," Woods said. "We are still trying to figure each other out. They talk to me every day and ask me how I am doing and ask me if I need anything. When it comes to our workouts, they are on point with everything. I watch a lot of film with them. They ask me where I am comfortable at."

Once he becomes comfortable and settles into his role, Woods will likely be asked to accept a larger leadership role with the Buckeyes.

Initially, Holtmann said he wanted Woods to ease into an advisory role as a new addition to the roster. However, as he continues to get acclimated, Woods said he is beginning to accept a more traditional leadership role as one of the most experienced players on the roster.

"Coming in, C.J. has been here, Joey (Lane) has been here. This summer, I just

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## OSU Basketball Verbal Commitments

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

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
DJ Carton	PG	6-1	189	★★★★★	Bettendorf, Iowa
Alonzo Gaffney	SF	6-9	190	★★★★	Wolfeboro (N.H.) Brewster Academy

kind of sat back and was watching how they do things, how people are, and just evaluating a lot," Woods said. "Coach Holt told me as time goes on, I am going to need to be a voice. He is just letting me get acclimated and see how everybody does everything and how each player is. Pretty soon, I think a leadership role will be pretty huge."

### Daunting Schedule

Ohio State's leadership, whether it comes from Woods or elsewhere, will likely be tested early and often in the 2018-19 season.

The Buckeyes open the regular season with a road game against Cincinnati (Nov. 7), a team that won 30 games last season. Holtmann's squad is also set to travel to

Creighton (Nov. 15) to take on a Blue Jay team that also made the NCAA Tournament last season and won 21 games.

Add in a home game against Syracuse (Nov. 28) and a neutral-site contest against UCLA (Dec. 22) in Chicago, and Ohio State's nonconference slate – sandwiched around conference games against Minnesota (Dec. 2) and Illinois (Dec. 5) – is challenging, especially for a young team.

Ohio State features four true freshmen and three sophomores, as the Buckeyes have six newcomers overall to the team this season. The Buckeyes' nonconference slate is daunting, but Woods, who played two seasons in the rugged ACC, has plenty of experience to bring to the table.

"It is going to be really important because we start with Cincinnati and they are always tough," Woods said. "I have never played them, but I know how they play. We just have to keep very poised. As an older guy and a vet that has been through it, and been in the ACC and played a lot of tough teams, you just have to make sure you stay poised from freshmen to upperclassmen."

Jackson and Woods will be the only seniors on the roster this season who will play significant minutes, with Lane, a former walk-on, being the only other four-year player for Ohio State. Holtmann said there is no denying the Buckeyes will lean on their veterans early in the season.

"It's going to be critical," the coach said. "I've (coached) at Cincinnati and at Creighton, and we also have some really challenging home games. But those two early road tests are going to be environments that will be as challenging as anywhere in the country. To have those in the opening weeks of the season, we are really going to rely on our veteran guys. It's a significant challenge."

Ohio State's full nonconference slate also

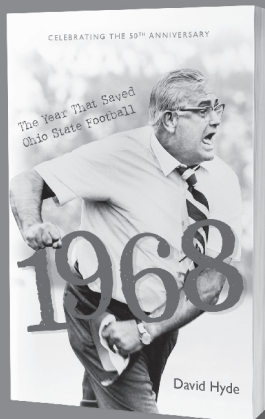
features home games against Purdue-Fort Wayne (Nov. 11), South Carolina State (Nov. 18), Samford (Nov. 20), Cleveland State (Nov. 23), Bucknell (Dec. 15), Youngstown State (Dec. 18) and High Point University (Dec. 29).

### Final Push for Liddell

The top remaining target for Ohio State in the 2019 recruiting class, EJ Liddell made his official visit to Columbus for the football team's 77-31 win over Oregon State. He spent the weekend on campus and was joined by two potential future classmates.

Alonzo Gaffney and DJ Carton, Ohio State's two commits in the 2019 class, made the trip to Columbus to spend time with Liddell as part of a pitch to bring the Illinois native to Ohio. The four-star forward out of Belleville, Ill., listed Ohio State, Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin and Kansas State as his final five schools on Aug. 13 and is expected to make his decision before the end of October.

Ohio State is the first of Liddell's five scheduled official visits with trips to Missouri (Sept. 7), Kansas State (Sept. 28), Wisconsin (Oct. 5) and Illinois (Oct. 12) to follow.



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# BUCKEYE BRIEFS

## Men's Soccer Gets Off To Slow Start

The Ohio State men's soccer team opened the 2018 campaign Aug. 24, and while the Buckeyes played in front of a home crowd of almost 2,000 people, the home team failed to find the back of the net.

The Buckeyes dropped their first game of the season, 2-0, to Furman after Ohio State managed just one shot on goal in the first half against the Paladins.

Furman scored in the seventh minute and again in the 54th minute. Buckeye goalkeeper Parker Siegfried managed four saves on the day, but it wasn't enough to get the victory as Ohio State tallied just seven shots, four of which were saved by Furman goalkeeper Ben Hale.

Two days later, on Aug. 26, the Buckeyes rebounded with a 1-0 win over Hofstra in Columbus, the first win of the Brian Maisonneuve era at Ohio State. The lone goal of the game was scored by midfielder Jake Scheper, who found the back of the net in the 65th minute of play.

The Buckeyes outshot Hofstra 18-8 on the day, pulling the team to 1-1 on the season.

"It's a great feeling," Maisonneuve said after the game. "We've been building the whole time and we still have some work to do, but like I told the boys, it's a process. They went out there today in tough conditions vs. a good Hofstra team and created a lot of chances. We could have had another one or two so I thought overall it was a good performance. To get the first win at home is fantastic."

Unfortunately for Ohio State, the Buckeyes couldn't keep the momentum going, as they dropped their third contest of the season on

a neutral field in Dayton, 1-0, to Marshall on Aug. 31.

The Thundering Herd struck in the second minute of action and held that lead for the remainder of the game, holding Ohio State to 12 shots, while Marshall goalkeeper Paulo Pita made five saves in the victory.

The fourth game of the campaign also ended in defeat, as Ohio State dropped another 1-0 contest, this time to UW-Milwaukee, also played in Dayton on Sept. 2.

Ohio State and UW-Milwaukee played to a scoreless tie until the 16th minute when Ohio State's Mitch Bergman buried a header into the back of the net. However, the goal was waved off due to an offside call, leaving the game scoreless.

The Panthers broke the tie in the 31st minute when Evan Conway deflected a cross into the net from 12 yards out. The Buckeyes failed to answer, falling to 1-3 on the season.

## Women's Soccer Wins 3 Straight

The women's soccer team got off to a rough start in 2018 but quickly righted the ship in its second week of action.

After dropping a pair of 2-0 losses to Duke and North Carolina, the Buckeyes rattled off three straight shutout victories against Florida, Morehead State and Notre Dame, outscoring the three opponents by a combined score of 10-0.

The first win of the season came Aug. 24 in Gainesville, Fla., as the Buckeyes took down the Gators, 1-0. After a scoreless first half, Ohio State got on the scoreboard in the 56th minute when forward Kayla Fischer slipped a shot by

the Florida goalkeeper from 6 yards out to give the Buckeyes the lead for good, despite the Gators outshooting Ohio State 13-9.

After a matchup with Duquesne scheduled for Aug. 26 in Columbus was canceled due to inclement weather, Ohio State returned to action Aug. 30 and plastered Morehead State, 8-0, at home.

Ohio State outshot the Eagles 37-0 as five different Buckeyes scored, including freshman Emaly Vatne, who put together a hat trick for OSU, finding the back of the net in the 41st, 68th and 73rd minutes. It was the 15th hat trick in school history.

"This is all really exciting," Vatne said. "I was happy to score my first goals at home, but this was a really good result for us as a team. It was good to have our home opener finally. This result is great, but we're looking forward to our next opponent."

Fischer, Marissa Birzon and Talani Barnett each scored once for Ohio State in the victory while Alyssa Baumbick scored twice.

The Buckeyes kept the positive momentum going Sept. 2, when Ohio State collected a 1-0 win over Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., to push itself over the .500 mark at 3-2.

The game remained scoreless until the 80th minute when freshman Blair Cowan scored her first career goal from 10 yards out on a cross from Izzy Rodriguez.

Ohio State is set to return to the pitch Sept. 7 against Florida Gulf Coast in Columbus, with kickoff set for 5 p.m.

## Women's Volleyball Win 5 Of 6 To Open 2018

The women's volleyball team opened

the 2018 season with a strong 5-1 start in late August and into early September, collecting wins over Albany, Ohio, Texas A&M, Southern Mississippi and Samford, with the lone loss coming at the hands of Ole Miss.

The Buckeyes opened the campaign with a 3-1 victory over Albany on Aug. 24 at St. John Arena, kicking off the final year of women's volleyball in the historic gym. Ohio State is scheduled to move into the new Covelli Arena when it is completed next season.

Ohio State's 3-1 win over Albany came in blowout fashion with the lone set defeat appearing to be more of an anomaly. The Buckeyes took the win 25-17, 21-25, 25-16, 25-13 with only one lead change outside of the second set.

Ohio State's Lauren Witte led all players with 20.5 points and 19 kills while Vanja Bukilic contributed 15.0 in the victory. As a team, the Buckeyes collected eight blocks and 54 kills.

The Buckeyes returned to the court the next day and made quick work of in-state opponent Ohio University, 3-0 (25-14, 25-22, 25-11).

Again it was Witte (15.0 points) and Bukilic (11.5 points) leading the way for the Buckeyes, who held the Bobcats to a .148 attacking percentage. No player on Ohio's roster scored more than 7.5 points with Ohio State improving its record to 2-0 on the season.

The final game of Ohio State's home-stand came against Texas A&M on Aug. 25, resulting in another 3-0 (25-19, 25-16, 25-20) Buckeye victory.

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## From The Pages Of BSB

### 35 Years Ago – 1983

At the start of practice prior to the season, three football players did not pass their physical exams.

Starting defensive back Kelvin Bell became the latest, joining offensive linemen Dan Bachorski and Tom Glancy. Bell was unable to record a passing time in either the 880-meter or 12-minute runs, which were both prerequisites for the workout.

### 30 Years Ago – 1988

Before the season, the NCAA introduced 34 rule changes to college football. They included allowing multiple timeouts to be used between downs, banning late substitutions for kicking teams to create confusions, keeping the ball alive on failed point-after attempts such as blocked kicks where defensive players could advance the ball for scoring two-point touchdowns, determining forward progress on the sidelines where a player crosses instead of where he lands, and using multiple timeouts consecutively to "ice" a prospective field-goal kicker.

### 25 Years Ago – 1993

Ohio State routed Rice for a 34-7 win in its season opener, but the Buckeyes were without a pair of senior offensive linemen due to disciplinary action handed down by the NCAA. Jason Winrow and Rod Smith missed the game after serving one-game suspensions after being cited for making long-distance telephone calls and charging them to an unauthorized third party.

They charged calls to multiple different university numbers, notably athletic department lines. The calls came to light when an Ohio State political science administrator discovered unauthorized calls on a department number, subsequently reporting the observation to superiors. Smith charged \$507.39 in calls, while Winrow's total came out to \$149.76.

"The minute we found out about it, we turned ourselves (to the NCAA)," said head coach John Cooper. "We don't like it, but these players know the rules. They have to pay the price."

### 20 Years Ago – 1998

Several football players were in danger of failing to qualify

academically before Ohio State's season, needing to lift their grade-point averages to 2.0. The trio of starters and All-America candidates of linebacker Andy Katzenmoyer, safety Damon Moore and guard Rob Murphy were at the forefront of the news in addition to defensive end James Cotton and defensive tackle Clinton Wayne. As they finished up their second term of summer classes, the handful of Buckeyes missed multiple practices. Fall camp was set to end Aug. 28 before OSU opened its season Sept. 5 against West Virginia.

"I know a lot of people are worried, but I'm going to take care of business and I'm going to be out there Sept. 5," said Katzenmoyer, who was the reigning Butkus Award winner. "I had a lot of personal problems in winter and spring, which caused my grades to go down. But I'm just doing what I've got to do. I screwed up in the winter and the spring, so now I've got to put my time in."

### 15 Years Ago – 2003

Ohio State officials did not disclose all of the involved players' names, but they confirmed on Aug. 20 that 10 football players had violated NCAA rules, leaving those Buckeyes ineligible for the previous six days.

The group, which reportedly included two-way star Chris Gamble, got flagged after it signed autographs in May while working during an Ohio Health Care Association convention at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. OSU athletic director Andy Geiger said the university ruled the players immediately ineligible Aug. 14 when the infractions were reported. They were reinstated Aug. 20.

The players received an hourly wage at a convention booth reportedly operated by NCS HealthCare. Geiger called the incident a glitch.

### 10 Years Ago – 2008

One day before the first game of his eighth season, head football coach Jim Tressel received a revised contract from the university. In the amended contract, Tressel became the highest-paid head coach in the Big Ten. Tressel surpassed Iowa's Kirk Ferentz, who was making \$3 million annually, with a raise to

\$3.5 million for the next year. He also would receive annual increases of 3-4 percent during the remainder of the term. Tressel was under contract until Jan. 31, 2013.

"Because of our overwhelming regard for Coach Tressel's contributions to Ohio State and our football program, we made a commitment toward keeping him No. 1 in the Big Ten and among the top ranks of coaches nationally, and this revision achieves that goal," said athletic director Gene Smith.

### Five Years Ago – 2013

After head football coach Urban Meyer delayed the team vote until Aug. 26, five days before the Aug. 31 season opener against Buffalo, Ohio State announced eight team captains on Aug. 27. They were left tackle Jack Mewhort, center Corey Linsley, backup quarterback Kenny Guiton, wide receiver Corey "Philly" Brown, safeties Christian Bryant and C.J. Barnett, starting quarterback Braxton Miller and linebacker Ryan Shazier.

"There's more than just a couple that stand out," Meyer said. "It's not my decision, it's the players' decision – they vote on it. I wanted to give as much time as we could. I just wanted to take our time to do it right."

### One Year Ago – 2017

Before the Buckeyes began their campaign, Ohio State announced that the football team would donate \$10,000 to the American Red Cross for disaster relief efforts in Texas after Hurricane Harvey tore through Houston.

In the Aug. 31 season opener, OSU and Indiana sported "Houston Strong" helmet decals. The Buckeyes eventually took a 49-21 victory at Memorial Stadium in Bloomington, Ind.

Among the numerous Texans on its roster, Ohio State freshman running back J.K. Dobbins made a notable debut in honor of his home state when he took 29 totes for 181 yards.

"I kind of thought of it as motivation for me because I'm probably the only positive thing going on in my town right now, so I just thought of it as bringing my city up," Dobbins said after the game. "That's why I came out here and played as hard as I could."

Ohio State's Mia Grunze led all scorers with 16.0 points and 13 kills while Adria Powell added 13.5 points and 10 kills. The Buckeyes tallied nine blocks to the Aggies' two.

The Buckeyes then took to the road to take part in the Rebel Invitational in Oxford, Miss., hosted by Ole Miss. Ohio State opened against Southern Miss and came away with a 3-2 (21-25, 25-20, 23-25, 27-25, 15-9) victory over the Golden Eagles on Aug. 31.

Southern Miss was paced by Kellie Garraway, who led all scorers with 23.0 points. Ohio State was able to fight back from 2-1 set deficit to win the final two frames and take the match to stay perfect on the season.

Grunze and Bukilic each contributed 16.5 points in the victory to lead the Buckeyes, who posted 66 kills.

Ohio State's first loss of the season came later that same day to the host Rebels, 3-2, (27-29, 25-17, 25-14, 22-25, 15-13) as the Buckeyes were held to just a .153 attacking percentage. Rebel Emily Stroup led all scorers with 24.5 points on 23 kills, handing Ohio State the defeat.

The Buckeyes recovered in the final game of the invitational, collecting a 3-0 (28-26, 25-19, 25-16) win over Samford on Sept. 1.

Witte and Bukilic led Ohio State with 17.0 and 12.5 points respectively, combining for 23 of the Buckeyes' 49 kills in the win, pushing the team's record to 5-1. OSU is set to return to the court Sept. 7 against Princeton on the road.

### Field Hockey Drops 2 Of 3

Ohio State's field hockey team opened the 2018 season by splitting the first two games of the campaign, both by 3-2 margins, before dropping a heartbreaking 2-1 contest to No. 25 Maine to fall below .500 to start the season.

The Buckeyes began the new year with a 3-2 loss at the hands of Delaware in Columbus on Aug. 24.

Delaware outshot the Buckeyes 18-7 in

the season opener, finding the back of the net twice in the first half, carrying a 2-1 lead into halftime. The Buckeyes tied the contest in the 52nd minute thanks to a goal from Esther Clotet, but a Delaware goal in the 66th minute proved to be the deciding play in the game.

Ohio State rebounded with a 3-2 victory over Louisville on the road Aug. 26, with all three goals unanswered in a comeback win.

Trailing 2-0 in the second half, Ohio State received goals from Courtney Daniels and Sammy Stone in regulation to send the game to overtime before Clotet sent everyone home with a goal in the 72nd minute, giving the Buckeyes their first win of the new season.

The No. 24 Buckeyes then took to Boston on Sept. 1 for a neutral-site contest against No. 25 Maine but fell 2-1 in overtime to the Bears.

After a scoreless first half, Maine got on the board first with a goal in the 53rd minute. Ohio State didn't take long to respond as Jessica Hourihane scored on an assist from Daniels to knot the score in the 55th minute.

In overtime, however, it was Maine getting the golden goal when Libby Riedl slipped a shot by Ohio State goalkeeper Aaliyah Hernandez to send the Buckeyes home with the loss.

The Buckeyes were set to return to the field Sept. 3 to play Boston University before taking on Ball State at home on Sept. 7.

### Women's XC Wins As Men Place 6th

The Ohio State cross country team traveled to Highland Heights, Ky., on Sept. 1, and half the squad came away with a first-place showing.

The women's team finished in first place out of 10 teams in the competition, while the men came in sixth. All five of the scorers on the men's side finished within 26 seconds of each other.

"The men's race was a challenge," head coach Khadevis Robinson said. "I think we let some things out of our control bother us. We will get better. The women did what we

expected. We felt we should have run stronger, and we should only get stronger."

The women, ranked 29th in the nation, finished with 68 team points, led by a fifth-place finish from junior Lainey Studebaker (17:54.4). Ohio State also got a 10th-place finish from senior Emily Stoodley (18:15.5).

The men, on the other hand, checked in with 132 points. They were led by junior Aaron Wood, who placed 16th in a time of 15:48.0, which represented a personal best.

The cross country team is next scheduled to race in the Golden Eagle Invitational on Sept. 8 in Cookeville, Tenn.

### Wrestling Team Adds Staff Members

Ohio State head wrestling coach Tom Ryan announced the addition of two staff members Aug. 29, bringing on Anthony Ralph and former Buckeye wrestler Bo Jordan.

Ralph, who had served as a volunteer assistant for the last two seasons, was promoted to director of recruiting & operations while Jordan stepped into Ralph's former duties as a volunteer assistant.

"Anthony has been instrumental in our recruiting success," Ryan said. "We are really fortunate that our administration and the university has supported us in transitioning Coach Ralph from on the mat into a director of recruiting & operations role that will allow him to concentrate and put forth full-time focus on recruiting and operations."

Jordan finished up his collegiate career last season at Ohio State, having collected 89 career victories. A four-time All-American, Jordan also earned Big Ten champion honors during his Buckeye career and was also an NCAA finalist.

"Bo comes from a rich coaching background obviously, the Jordan family. We don't lose him after graduation. That's key. One of the great wrestling careers in Ohio State history," Ryan said. "We're looking forward to keeping Bo in the room. We want men

that can lead. Bo brings that example to the room."

Ohio State also added Riley Ross and Ryan Mantel to their support staff. Ross and Mantel will serve as director of wrestling sports science and performance and assistant director of operations, respectively.

*In order to better introduce BSB readers to Ohio State's Olympic sports teams and athletes, we will be shifting to more feature-oriented coverage of the various squads going forward. Buckeye Sports Bulletin will provide a roundup of all the games, matches and meets involving OSU's teams each Monday on our BuckeyeSports.com website, free to all print subscribers.*

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# BUCKEYE SCOREBOARD

## FOOTBALL (1-0)

**Sept. 1** OREGON STATE, W 77-31; **8** RUTGERS, 3:30 p.m.; **15** vs. TCU at Arlington, Texas, 8 p.m.; **22** TULANE, TBA; **29** at Penn State, TBA.

**Oct. 6** INDIANA (Homecoming), 3:30 OR 4 p.m.; **13** MINNESOTA, TBA; **20** at Purdue, TBA.

**Nov. 3** NEBRASKA, TBA; **10** at Michigan State, TBA; **17** at Maryland, TBA; **24** MICHIGAN, Noon.

**Dec. 1** Big Ten Championship Game at Indianapolis, 8 p.m.

## CROSS COUNTRY

**Sept. 1** Queen City Invitational at Highland Heights, Ky., Men: 6th/10; Women: 1st/10; **8** Golden Eagle Invitational at Cookeville, Tenn.; **15** Commodore Classic at Nashville, Tenn.;

**29** Loyola Lakefront Invitational at Chicago.

**Oct. 13** Pre-Nationals at Madison, Wis.; **28** Big Ten Championships at Lincoln, Neb.

**Nov. 9** NCAA Regionals at Terre Haute, Ind.; **17** NCAA Championships at Madison, Wis.

## FIELD HOCKEY

### (1-2)

**Aug. 17** at Ohio (exhibition); **20** MICHIGAN (exhibition); **24** (9) DELAWARE, L 3-2; **26** at (8) Louisville, W 3-2 (OT).

**Sept. 1** vs. (25) Maine at Boston, L 2-1 (OT); **3** at Boston University, 1 p.m.; **7** BALL STATE, 4 p.m.; **9** LEHIGH, 1 p.m.; **14** PENN STATE, 4 p.m.; **16** MIAMI (OHIO), 1 p.m.; **21** at Maryland, 1 p.m.; **23** at Rutgers, 1

p.m.; **28** INDIANA, 4 p.m.; **30** IOWA, Noon.

**Oct. 5** at Northwestern, 3 p.m.; **7** OHIO, 1 p.m.; **12** JAMES MADISON, 4 p.m.; **14** at Kent State, Noon; **19** MICHIGAN STATE, 3 p.m.; **21** MICHIGAN, Noon.

## MEN'S SOCCER

### (1-3)

**Aug. 24** WOLSTEIN CLASSIC vs. FURMAN, L 2-0; **26** WOLSTEIN CLASSIC vs. HOFSTRA, W 1-0; **31** Dayton Classic vs. Marshall, L 1-0.

**Sept. 2** Dayton Classic vs. Milwaukee, L 1-0; **7** USF, 7:30 p.m.; **11** BOWLING GREEN, 7 p.m.; **16** at Penn State, 1 p.m.; **21** NORTHWESTERN, 7:30 p.m.; **25** at Michigan, 7 p.m.; **30** RUTGERS, Noon.

**Oct. 5** CLEVELAND STATE, 7 p.m.; **8** at Syracuse, 7 p.m.; **12** MICHIGAN

STATE, 5 p.m.; **16** KENTUCKY, 7 p.m.; **19** at Maryland, 7 p.m.; **24** INDIANA, 7 p.m.; **28** at Wisconsin, 4 p.m.

## WOMEN'S SOCCER

### (3-2)

**Aug. 9** at Indiana (exhibition); **12** PITTSBURGH (exhibition); **16** at (3) Duke, L 2-0; **19** at (6) North Carolina, L 2-0; **24** at Florida, W 1-0; **26** DUQUESNE, Cancelled; **30** MOREHEAD STATE, W 8-0.

**Sept. 2** at Notre Dame, W 1-0; **7** FLORIDA GULF COAST, 5 p.m.; **14** at Penn State, 6 p.m.; **20** at Illinois, 8 p.m.; **23** at Northwestern, 1 p.m.; **27** IOWA, 7 p.m.; **30** NEBRASKA, 2:30 p.m.

**Oct. 5** at Michigan, 7 p.m.; **7** at Michigan State, 1 p.m.; **12** RUTGERS, 7:30 p.m.; **14** MARYLAND, 2 p.m.; **18** at Purdue, 6 p.m.; **21** WISCONSIN, 2 p.m.

## WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

### (5-1)

**Aug. 24** ALBANY, W 3-1; **25** OHIO, W 3-0; TEXAS A&M, W 3-0; **31** vs. Southern Miss at Oxford, Miss., W 3-2; at Ole Miss, L 3-2.

**Sept. 1** vs. Samford at Oxford, Miss., W 3-0; **7** vs. Princeton at Towson, Md., 4 p.m.; **8** vs. Missouri at Towson, Md., 11 a.m.; at Towson, 4:30 p.m.; **14** vs. Evansville at Dayton, 3 p.m.; **15** vs. Tennessee at Dayton, 10:30 a.m.; at Dayton, 7 p.m.; **19** at Wisconsin, 7 p.m.; **22** PENN STATE, TBA; **26** INDIANA, 7 p.m.; **29** at Maryland, 7 p.m.

**Oct. 5** at Rutgers, 7 p.m.; **6** at Penn State, 7 p.m.; **12** MICHIGAN, 7 p.m.; **14** MICHIGAN STATE, 1 p.m.; **19** at Indiana, 7 p.m.; **20** at Purdue, 7 p.m.; **24** NEBRASKA, 7 p.m.; **28** at Northwestern, 2 p.m.

**Nov. 2** ILLINOIS, 7 p.m.; **4** NORTHWESTERN, 1 p.m.; **7** at Michigan State, 7 p.m.; **10** MARYLAND, 7 p.m.; **16** WISCONSIN, 7 p.m.; **17** MINNESOTA, 7 p.m.; **23** at Nebraska, 8 p.m.; **24** at Iowa, 8 p.m.



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- OCT 6 - INDIANA
- OCT 13 - MINNESOTA
- OCT 20 - AT PURDUE
- OCT 27 - BYE WEEK
- NOV 3 - NEBRASKA
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# Buckeye Quarterback Haskins Passes 1st Test

If there were any questions regarding the potential of Dwayne Haskins as a difference maker at the quarterback position, those concerns went out the window Sept. 1 after his performance in his first start as the Buckeyes' signal caller.

## COACH'S CORNER With Bill Conley

Even though the Oregon State defense was one of the weakest OSU will see this year, the offensive efficiency under Haskins was something to build upon. His command of the offensive unit, excellent decision making and poise under pressure were impressive in the season opener.

Along with breaking both the total passing yards and touchdown records for a first-time starting quarterback, Haskins proved you don't have to be a runner at the position to put up big numbers in terms of both yardage and points. Several times he kept drives alive with precision passes to his host of talented receivers. Only once did he make a rookie mistake by throwing late across the middle in the red zone which ended up in the hands of a Beaver defender. The rest of his performance was near perfect and very impressive.

It's true he will have to go up against better coverage units and a more intensive pass rush as the season progresses, but no one can deny Dwayne Haskins' debut as a starter was a huge success.

### Well-Balanced Attack

One of the advantages of a more pro-style attack like the Buckeyes displayed this weekend is the fact that offensive production can be more balanced. Of the more than 700 total yards the Buckeyes amassed against Oregon State, it was within 30 yards of being an even split between the run and the pass.

The offensive coaching staff knows the squad is deep in skilled athletes and the more you can highlight their talents, the tougher it is for opponents to focus in on stopping a single running or passing threat. Six different skill players scored touchdowns against the Beavers. That's impressive, but the fact that those scores came between running backs, wide receivers and tight ends demonstrates the offense has a lot of weapons at its disposal.

Explosive as well as versatile makes up the early trademark of the 2018 Buckeye offense. Of the 10 offensive scoring drives, seven were under 10 plays, including a one-play, 75-yard pass from Haskins to Terry McLaurin in the third quarter. A 49-yard scamper by a healthy Mike Weber demonstrated the ability of the offense to also strike quickly via the run. Blitz is a term usually associated with defensive football. It means a sudden, intense and damaging attack. It was the Ohio State offense that led to the destruction of any hopes the Oregon State team had of pulling an upset victory over the Buckeyes.

Hats off to an offensive line that did a stellar job of protecting Haskins along with opening up holes the Queen Mary could have maneuvered through in the season opener. The Ohio State line is impressive in both stature and

mobility. Led by Michael Jordan at center, the line completely dominated the Oregon State defensive front. The Buckeyes tallied 35 first downs, and a large part of the credit goes to the offensive line, which seems much improved from last season. If the offensive line shows it can perform at such a high level against Big Ten defensive fronts, the Buckeye scoring machine will be hard to stop.

### Defensive Concerns

As rosy as things look on the offensive side of the football, there is reason to be apprehensive about the defensive performance in the season opener. The traditionally stout Silver Bullets gave up 31 points and 392 yards to a team that was 112th and 113th in the nation among Division I teams in those categories last year. Perhaps the most troubling statistic for the defense was the fact the Oregon State offense broke three plays of 49 yards or more, including an 80-yard run by speedy halfback Artavis Pierce in the third quarter.

The Beavers offensive coaching staff had a very solid game plan of trying to keep the Buckeye defense off balance with misdirection plays, short passes and screens. The Oregon State play selection took advantage of a defense that was young in terms of experience at linebacker and a secondary that was trying to come together as a unit. Broken assignments and missed tackles, along with poor support and pursuit angles to the football, led to defensive breakdowns which are very uncommon for the Buckeyes.

Even though Ohio State had superior athleticism and speed on the defensive side of the football compared to the Oregon State offensive talent, the Beavers exposed some areas future offensive units will explore against the Buckeyes down the road. Granted, the Ohio State defense has plenty of things in the playbook it will be using in later games, but there is plenty of work that has to be done regarding responsibilities and execution of the basics. Odds are the Buckeye defensive unit has the talent and will come together and mature quickly with game experience.

The bright spot defensively for the Buckeyes, to no one's surprise, was the performance of the defensive front. Defensive end Nick Bosa and tackle Dre'Mont Jones owned the Oregon State offensive line. The Buckeye defense, led by Bosa and Jones, recorded five

sacks and numerous pressures on Beaver quarterbacks. The attempt by Oregon State to slow down the rush with those screens and short passes had some success, but there was never any doubt who owned the line of scrimmage. The defensive touchdown by Bosa, the first of his collegiate career, is an indication of what's in store for opposing offensive linemen.

### Where Did The KR Go?

Throughout the past few decades the NCAA has made rule changes that have had a major effect on special teams play. These changes included no blocking below the waist on any type of kick or punt return, penalties and even being tossed out for targeting or launching when bringing down a return, and the disallowing of the wedge kickoff return.

These and other rule changes have good intentions for player safety, but this year's rule change allowing for fair catches on kickoff returns inside the 25-yard line has practically eliminated the return altogether.

The kickoff return is one of the most exciting plays in football. Safety is of major importance, that's for certain, but in all the years of playing and coaching I can't recall a major injury on kickoff returns. I'm sure there have been some, but there are plenty of restrictions already in place to make this particular part of the game as safe as possible without taking away one of the most game-changing aspects of the sport.

I'm sure my concern will fall on deaf ears, and there is a good chance the return itself will be eliminated along with both the kickoff and kickoff return strategies that go with it. There were 18 kickoffs in the Oregon State game, and only four were returned. Some were kicked out of the end zone and couldn't be brought back, but there were many that would have been returned under the original rules of the game. Creative and sound special teams play has always been important to the success of any football team. The NCAA has taken a major part of the game away, and an old ball coach like me doesn't appreciate it.

*Known as one of the top recruiters in college football, Bill Conley is a national championship-winning coach and player at Ohio State who suited up for Woody Hayes and spent 17 years on the staffs of Earle Bruce, John Cooper and Jim Tressel.*

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# New-Look, Haskins-Led Offense Easy On The Eyes

This new Buckeyes offense where the quarterback throws and the running backs run is going to be fun to watch. Not that the old way failed.

Each of Urban Meyer's first six teams at Ohio State rank among the top 13 teams in OSU history for scoring, including first, second, fourth and fifth for points per game.

## EXNER POINT Rich Exner

But the potential is so much greater this year because of what could be Ohio State's best passing game in years, decades or maybe even ever – in combination with a very solid crop of running backs.

Yes, we've seen only one start from Dwayne Haskins, and two of his five touch-down passes were of the cheap, short-pitch, almost-handoff variety. But even setting aside the stat line that said Haskins completed 73.3 percent of his passes for 313 yards and five TD passes, there was ample evidence presented to the 100,000-plus jurors in Ohio Stadium and the many others watching on TV.

Haskins throws accurately.

Haskins throws with velocity.

Haskins makes quick decisions.

Haskins throws to open receivers when they are open.

Haskins, when the receivers are not yet open, throws to open spots on the field and lets receivers run to those openings.

Anything else?

Oh yes, that sometimes suspect Ohio State receiving corps from time to time over the years suddenly looks really good when Haskins is at quarterback. The receivers are impressive when they get the ball in space, on the move and in just the right place to keep advancing the football downfield.

One other quarterback stat does stand out from the opener. Haskins carried the football twice for a total of 24 yards. J.T. Barrett averaged 12 carries per game last season.

The last time a Buckeye starting quarterback had so few carries was on Sept. 9, 2015, when Cardale Jones carried twice for 11 yards. But he shared QB duties that day with Barrett, who ran three times for 18 yards.

I'm not opposed to a quarterback running, if he's your best threat at running the football. But I much prefer a pass-first quar-

terback, especially when others are capable of handling the running duties.

### Two 1,000-Yard Backs?

There's little reason to ask Haskins to run the ball much this year, with two veterans of 1,000-yard rushing seasons lined up behind him at different times.

A now healthy Mike Weber (he was limited much of last season) looked better than ever, using a combination of moves and speed to roll up 186 yards on just 20 carries against Oregon State. Saying Weber looked better than ever is saying something. Remember, he ran for 1,096 yards as a redshirt freshman in 2016 then added 626 as a sophomore last season even while being limited by injuries.

But Weber didn't even start against Oregon State. J.K. Dobbins, coming off a 1,403-yard freshman season, was the starter. Dobbins ran 15 times for 74 yards against the Beavers.

In a 14-game season, it takes just over 71 yards a game to reach 1,000 yards.

Could OSU have two 1,000-yard runners this season – for just the third time in school history?

I think so.

In fact, I expect it. One reason is the talent. The other reason is that the quarterback won't be taking carries away from the running backs.

### Championship-Caliber Offense

It's clear, even through just one game, that Ohio State has the type of offense that can carry its share of the load for a national championship team. Passing, running and depth – the talent is high and runs deep on the offense.

The defense? Well, we're going to have to see substantial improvement.

Thirty-one points are too many points to give up to Oregon State, which is coming off a one-win season in 2017 and hasn't had a winning record since 2013.

The defensive backs looked slow at times. Their tackling was so-so, as was their pass coverage overall on the day. The linebacker group didn't stand out, either good or bad. This group was average.

There is talent is on the roster to do better. Time will tell if they come through.

However, no such questions linger about the defensive line.

### Standout DL

For as good as Haskins looks at quarterback and the talent OSU has at running back with the Weber-Dobbins combo, the

best part of the 2018 Buckeyes looks like the defensive line.

Nick Bosa is his same-old unblockable self at one defensive end for Ohio State. Chase Young could well end up being nearly as good at the other end. And there is plenty of other talent to go around.

One particularly impressive play came on a third down late in the first quarter against Oregon State.

Bosa overpowered the left side of the Oregon State offensive line to get the sack. Young got there at about the same time from the other side. And Dre'Mont Jones wasn't far away coming up the middle. Ohio State rushed just three, and three different Buckeyes could easily have gotten the sack.

Defensive line play like that will make it easier for the linebackers and defensive backs behind them. Ohio State won't have to blitz as much, leaving more defenders back, and the backfield won't have to sustain the pass coverage as long.

Oh yeah, there was a bonus. One of the two fumbles Bosa recovered was for a touchdown.

### Problems Up North

The scoreboard read Notre Dame 24, Michigan 17. But in watching the game, it didn't seem that close. Notre Dame jumped on Michigan for a 14-0 first-quarter lead, and Michigan never really seemed within reach.

It's going to be interesting to see how chapter four in the Jim Harbaugh era at Michigan plays out. He's now 28-12 as the Michigan coach. Meyer was 39-3 one game into his fourth season at Ohio State, with a

national title. Meyer was 73-8 in his first six seasons at Ohio State.

But Harbaugh and Michigan do have an opportunity to get things straightened out. Michigan's next opponent ranked in the preseason top 25 isn't until Wisconsin on October 13.

### Problems Out East

It was a win, but Penn State must still be trying to figure out what happened in its escape from Appalachian State, needing to go to overtime before beating the Mountaineers at home.

Appalachian State scored 28 fourth-quarter points (including 21 straight) to take the lead, 38-31, with under two minutes to go. Penn State had to rally just to get the game into overtime.

### Positives Out East

While OSU division rival Michigan lost and both Michigan State and Penn State struggled to victories against lesser opponents, Maryland scored an impressive win – knocking off No. 23 Texas, 34-29.

It was a double-dip for Maryland, which had won a wild 51-41 game to Texas a year ago as well.

It will be interesting to see just how good Maryland is. The Terps have struggled since joining the Big Ten, posting just one winning season (7-6 in 2014). Maryland has gone 3-9, 6-7 and 4-8 the last three seasons. The Terrapins are also still without head coach DJ Durkin, who is on administrative leave amid a university investigation into the football culture at the school.

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# Day Provides Different Vibe, Same Results For OSU

Yes, it was just Oregon State, a team that went 1-11 last season. Yes, the Ohio State defense gave up 31 points and looked generally underwhelming in the back seven.

But what the Buckeyes and acting head coach Ryan Day did Sept. 1 – beating the Beavers, 77-31, at Ohio Stadium – shouldn't be discounted, especially after a tumultuous August in Columbus.

## MOODY MUSINGS Tim Moody, Editor

There was certainly an elephant in the room in the form of a missing person at the Horseshoe for the opener. Ohio State's normal head coach – you might have heard of him, a guy named Urban Meyer – was suspended. He'll be suspended for week two against Rutgers and week three against TCU as well, although he otherwise was slated to resume his normal coaching duties Sept. 3.

I've written more than enough in regard to my thoughts on Meyer's suspension, so in this space I'll focus on Meyer the coach, especially in comparison to Day.

During the postgame press conference, there was a mad scramble for interviews with defensive end Nick Bosa and quarterback Dwayne Haskins – for good reason – that left me in a fortunate position to have fifth-year senior Parris Campbell to myself, or at least in

a small group, for a few minutes. That's rare in a postgame press conference, especially when it comes to a player who has become the team's most important leader off the field.

Campbell was open and honest when it came to both Day and Meyer. He noted that nobody can truly compare to Ohio State's head coach, who is 73-8 in six seasons at Ohio State – even if Day got off to a resounding start in 2018.

"I think Coach Meyer is kind of a one-of-a-kind coach," Campbell told me. "But I think the energy that Coach Day brings is great. He's a juiced up guy. He loves pushing tempo on offense, obviously. I mean, he just gets us going."

Day certainly did get Ohio State going against the Beavers. As I said above, you can't argue with 77 points, no matter the opponent.

That said, one thing Campbell said stood out above anything else after he was asked how game day was different without Meyer.

"I think there's a different pressure when Coach Meyer is on the field, just because of the high expectations that he holds," Campbell said. "I'm not saying that each and every coach doesn't hold that exact expectation, it's just that Coach Meyer has a different presence about him, has a different vibe about him. So I think that was the main thing that was different."

That's a vibe that has been earned over the course of a head coaching career that dates back to 2001. He's won at every stop – Bowling Green, Utah, Florida and Ohio

State – on his way to a 177-31 overall record and an 11-3 clip in bowl games so far. Meyer has three national titles and six conference championships as a head coach. He's become a larger-than-life figure in college football, which has certainly contributed to the fierce reaction to his transgressions regarding Zach Smith in some parts of the country.

Compare that to Day, who is a rising star in the coaching industry but has never been a full-time head coach. He's 1-0 leading a program, and it's not even his program – not yet, at least.

For now, Day is the head coach in an interim capacity. Next year, he'll likely be leading a program of his own – he already turned down one SEC head coaching job last season, and his stock is only going to rise after likely starting the season 3-0 before Meyer's return.

As acting head coach, Day can get the best out of his players, just as Meyer does. But there's a difference. The players want to perform for Day, but when Meyer is there, they know that they don't have any other choice. That's the difference, but for now, both vibes have the same result.

Ohio State isn't done winning this season, and the Buckeyes will continue being one of the best teams in the nation under Meyer and – perhaps sometime down the line – Day.

And, since I brought up Campbell earlier, I think it's worth pointing out again how important he is to the team. He has taken over J.T. Barrett's role as lead motivator among the players, and he was the one to give the pregame speech before the season opener.

"The message was go out and show the world the chip on the shoulder that we have," sophomore running back J.K. Dobbins said.

That's certainly what the Buckeyes did.

### On Haskins

I'll be the first to admit that, based on what I was able to see with my own eyes, I would have picked Joe Burrow to be Ohio State's starting quarterback this season. I thought he had nearly the same physical tools as Haskins but was a better runner and more experienced decision-maker.

I still fully expect Burrow to be a star – as I wrote this, he was a few hours away from his debut as LSU's starting quarterback – but it's safe to say that against Oregon State, Haskins showed why the coaching staff picked him. He had the most prolific first start in program history – 313 passing yards, five passing touchdowns – and might have been even more impressive than those numbers show.

Haskins is, quite simply, the best passing quarterback I have seen at Ohio State. The Buckeyes have never had a signal caller like him, and that should pay dividends throughout the rest of the year. He has a rocket arm, a quick release and the right attitude – he's willing to throw receivers open, and he's willing to let his teammates make a play on the ball. Those are things Barrett never did, and in my opinion, that's what held him back more than anything else.

Haskins is a gunslinger, but he's so talented that he might even avoid some of the negatives that that term often brings.

He did throw one interception in a bad spot – he never should have let that ball go under pressure, leading to a pick at the 1-yard line – but it was actually pretty close to being a touchdown. Had the receiver been a taller player such as Austin Mack or Binjimen Victor, rather than Johnnie Dixon, then it likely would have been caught for six. But it wasn't, and it was still a bad decision.

I'd expect more touchdowns than bad choices the rest of the way, though. Haskins sure looks like a guy who could be a first-round pick in the NFL draft in either of the next two years.

### A Stat To Know

It will be rare for me to focus on specific statistics in this space, but I've always liked the phrase, "If you see something, say something," and last night, I saw a stat – pointed out by our own Garrett Stepien on Twitter – that our subscribers certainly need to know.

Over his past 18 games at Michigan, head coach Jim Harbaugh has led the Wolverines to a 9-9 record, including their week-one loss to Notre Dame on the road. That's nine losses in 18 games. Meyer, as mentioned above, has just eight losses in 81 games as Ohio State's head coach.

Michigan fans are seemingly convinced that Harbaugh is the savior for a program that hasn't been back to its full potential in more than a decade, but he simply hasn't proved that on the field just yet. Not even close.

Now I have to ask, how much job security does Harbaugh have in Ann Arbor? It can't be much at this point. At least, it shouldn't be.

### Join The Conversation

Perhaps the best resource on our new full-service website, BuckeyeSports.com, is the BSB Forum. Subscribers can go there to interact with BSB staffers – we all post regularly – as well as other fans. We can answer questions, provide some inside information, and simply take part in good conversation about Ohio State football.

That Forum will be actively manned by the BSB staff on game days as well. We have a live thread running throughout the game with our own analysis, and I really encourage our subscribers to take part. The conversations can be fun, and we would love to hear your analysis of the Buckeyes as well.

The Forum – and the website in general – is free to all BSB print subscribers. For sign-up information regarding BuckeyeSports.com, see page 5.



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# Buckeyes Impress In 1st Look After Unusual Camp

## THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

Wasn't it nice to finally watch some Ohio State football, instead of another episode of OSU's version of the Jerry Springer show? I am always eager for the start of Buckeye football season, but I was ready for that first kickoff even more so this year.

One of the occupational hazards of having a job at Buckeye Sports Bulletin is the fact that virtually everyone you bump into or speak to on the phone wants to talk Buckeye football. Do you want to know something funny? In the month of August, prime time for people wanting to talk about Buckeye football, I don't think I fielded one question about the team.

Oh, I fielded questions. But it's been all about Zach-gate and Urban Meyer's role in it and his ultimate punishment. What's even funnier is the fact that preseason practice was locked up so tight that I wouldn't have been very good at answering people's questions about the team anyway.

Now we can all talk somewhat intelligently about the Buckeyes. Isn't it refreshing?

My big question heading into the Oregon State game was the same as yours. How was Dwayne Haskins going to look as the starting quarterback? Sure he was brilliant in relief of J.T. Barrett in last season's Michigan game, but being the starter is a whole different animal.

On Haskins' first pass of the game, a crisp toss to Terry McLaurin for 27 yards, it was clear that there was a new sheriff in town. Two plays later there was an equally crisp pass to McLaurin for a 2-yard touchdown. It's not that Barrett couldn't have completed those passes, as McLaurin was wide open on both plays. There was just a certain zip on the passes that was not generally present when Barrett took to the air and a decisiveness from the new field general when he went back to pass that I also think was missing.

That zip was there for most of the afternoon as Haskins went 22 of 30 for 313 yards and five touchdowns, the latter two figures high-water marks for a first-time starter at Ohio State. Sure there was that interception in the third quarter. I think we will see things like that from time to time this season as Haskins grows into the position. But there is no denying his Cardale Jones-like arm, though we didn't really see the long ball in this outing.

That will come. But the long ball doesn't have to be overabundant on a Meyer-built team. There should be a wealth of receivers who can take a short- or medium-range pass and turn it into a big play with their speed and athleticism. We saw that on McLaurin's second score of the day, a play on which he took a nice pass from Haskins and turned on the jets for a 75-yard jaunt, Haskins' longest completion of the game. I was very impressed with the fact that two Oregon State defenders had solid angles on McLaurin on the play, but he scored regardless.

When Meyer arrived in Columbus, he famously called the receivers he inherited a "clown show." He has recruited his own athletes over the years, but last year in particular, I didn't find the wideouts much better than the previously criticized circus performers.

It was so nice in the 77-31 win over the Beavers to see so many receivers open so much of the time. Was Haskins throwing them open, not a Barrett strong suit, or were they getting open on their own? Or was it a combination? There were a lot of them getting open, not just McLaurin. In all, Haskins hit seven different receivers before yielding to Tate Martell, led by K.J. Hill with six receptions for 82 yards, Austin Mack with five for 69 and McLaurin with his four catches for a game-high 121-yards and the two scores.

Couple that passing with a strong rushing attack led by Mike Weber (186 yards) and J.K. Dobbins (74 yards), and Haskins and Martell were able to lead Ohio State to a balanced 375 yards rushing and 346 yards passing for 721 total yards. That was the second highest total in school history to the 776 run up against Bowling Green in 2016.

I know the Beavers are not Penn State or Michigan, but they are not BG either. (No offense, Bowling Green. I have a special place in my heart for you, my first sports journalism employer.) I was pretty impressed.

I was struck by something new (and also former) Rutgers offensive coordinator John McNulty said in the preview of the upcoming game with the Scarlet Knights found elsewhere in this paper.

"The only way to score is to get some big plays," McNulty said, talking about the Knights, but also offense in general. "I hope we have a lot of 14-play drives, but I just know the reality is that you've got to strike down the field and operate at different tempos to get (defenses) off balance.

"When you hit a big play, you've got to get up on the ball and try to hit another one. I just think (the big play) is essential to scoring. I don't think we're going to just throw a bunch of 5-yard routes and hit some 4-yard runs and try to score. I think we want to advance the ball in chunks."

McNulty's vision is kind of what we were promised when Meyer arrived back in 2012. But when the team evolved into a club that featured "J.T. left and J.T. right," the big play became less of a factor. Barrett was a terrific runner but he didn't have the real breakaway capabilities of a quarterback such as Braxton Miller, and he didn't have the arm to pick up chunks of yardage through the air unless his receivers caught it and ran. J.T. was a great QB, a great leader and a winner, but not necessarily the guy to operate a big-play offense – not that he didn't do it at times.

We know Ohio State has two big-play running backs in Dobbins and Weber. Perhaps now, with Haskins at the aerial controls, the team can also feature the bevy of receivers on the club who, for whatever reasons, have underachieved and the Buckeyes can rack up the video game-type yardage that the fans love and opposing defensive coordinators hate.

And I don't want to forget the offensive line. No offense can run up over 700 yards and 70 points – seven points were scored by the defense – on such a balanced attack without strong play from the big uglies, and this was a real area for concern heading into the season. I was especially pleased to see that acting head coach Ryan Day had special praise for guard Malcolm Pridgeon, a lineman who came to Columbus from the JUCO ranks to much fanfare but had accomplished little to date. I am excited to finally see what Pridgeon (6-7, 310) can do in his final season.

Of course the Buckeyes are going to need all the help they can get from the offense if the defense is going to be giving up 31 points per game as they did against the Beavers. I am going to need to watch another game or so to figure out what was wrong with the defense, assuming it doesn't improve in the next game with Rutgers.

One thing that struck me in the opener, especially on the lengthy runs by Artavis Pierce early in the third quarter, was the lack of speed displayed by members of the Ohio State secondary. I don't know how fast Pierce is, but he was leaving Buckeye defenders in the dust. As I alluded to previously, Meyer recruits for speed. If you have earned a spot in the Buckeye defensive backfield, you have the jets. I worry that the Ohio State defenders were either confused or not putting in the effort, neither thing good. Or maybe Pierce and the Beavers are just that fast. It's something I will be watching, and I know the coaching staff will be, too.

One defender who lived up to his billing – and it was pretty lofty billing to live up to – was Nick Bosa. The junior all-everything defensive end was a human highlight film in the first half against Oregon State, with four tackles, including two sacks, and two fumble recoveries, one for a touchdown. The way to win postseason awards is to get lots of exposure on "SportsCenter," and I have a feeling that, barring injury, Bosa is going to be a mainstay on ESPN's flagship show – and other shows – this season.

On another defense line note, we had heard rumblings that Dre'Mont Jones was going to add pressure on the quarterback from his tackle position this season, and the 6-3, 286-pounder didn't disappoint with two sacks of his own.

### Special Teams Notes

Will we recognize football in 10 years? This fair catch on kickoffs rule is about the stupidest rule I have seen in some time, and that's among a lot recent changes I don't like. Talk about watering down one of the most exciting plays in football. Nothing can turn a game like a long kick return, and a big hit on coverage can ignite a team and its fans.

This change in rules could have a unique and unintended effect on Meyer's Buckeyes. It has been a tradition under the coach for younger players to earn their playing time by performing well on special teams. The rules makers are limiting a stage upon which young Buckeyes can audition.

On another special teams note, why does it seem like Meyer's Buckeyes continue to struggle on punt returns? Fan favorite C.J. Saunders looked uncomfortable on punt returns against Oregon State and coughed up the ball on one of his attempts, giving the Beavers possession at the Buckeye 24.

On the positive side, Demario McCall later returned a punt 26 yards to give Ohio State good field position at the Beaver 46, setting up the Buckeyes' 10th touchdown. I thought McCall, who also returned a kickoff 21 yards, was going to be Ohio State's primary return man. McCall's kick return equaled the longest of the game and was one of only four returns on 18 kickoffs during the contest.

### Springer Show Continued

OK, what's a column without some mention of the Zach and Urban controversy.

I remain surprised at how many of you are so surprised at the bashing that Ohio State has been taking nationally over what rival fans and most pundits perceive as a slap on the wrist – if that – for Meyer. The only thing that would have satisfied the masses would have been a firing,

forfeiture of games, a reduction in scholarships, a bowl ban and, possibly, a prison sentence for the three-time national championship coach – and I don't mean at Club Fed. And that punishment would have led to weeks more of gleeful discourse.

This national hysteria is actually a validation of the status of the Ohio State program. There is a reason that Maryland, involved in a scandal of a far more serious nature than Ohio State, is flying under the sports radio radar. No one cares about Maryland football. Buckeye football is a big deal, and so is Meyer.

When will this all go away, I am frequently asked. When a new scandal involving a college or pro team of note comes along to replace it. There's a lot of air time and Internet space to be filled, and Meyer and Ohio State are the hot topic right now. If the story fades a little bit, it will heat back up when Meyer takes the sidelines against Tulane on Sept. 22.

As for the many Buckeyes fans I have spoken to, it seems like 80 percent think Meyer's punishment was proper and just. Another 10 percent are adamant that Meyer did nothing wrong and did not deserve any punishment. The remaining 10 percent are equally adamant that Meyer should have been fired, as he is a disgrace to Ohio State.

One thing I have thought about quite a bit recently involves a central figure in this whole mess who is not present to tell his side of the story (please put the mobile devices down, participants) – Earle Bruce.

I can't help but wonder if things might have been different if Earle had been around and in good health over the past few years. Would he have told Meyer, his protégé, to cut Zach Smith loose sooner? Would he have told Smith, his grandson, to straighten up and tend to his job and family? Would he have done nothing because he felt it was none of his business? We will never know, but I doubt things could have been worse if he were around to offer his perspective and advice.

I know this: No one loved Ohio State football more than Earle Bruce, and I am sure he would be mortified with what is going on today.

### In-Game Participation

While you might not think about it, during a Buckeye game is a great time to hop on the BuckeyeSports.com Forum. The Buckeye Sports Bulletin crew is on the Forum throughout the game offering their analysis of the contest and reporting on injuries and offering other updates. When I got bored during the rain delay I jumped on and put my two cents in.

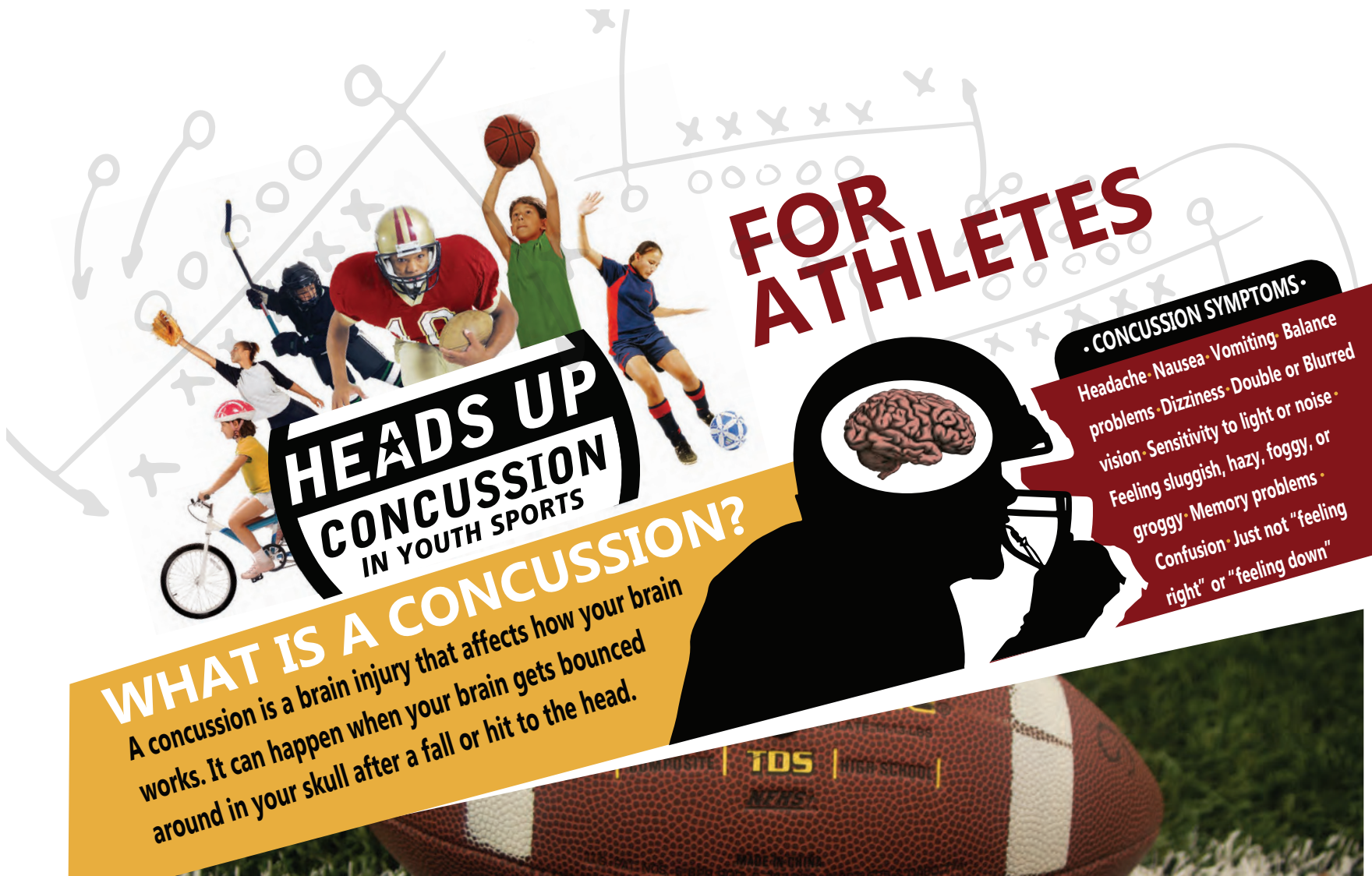
The Forum is a key component of BuckeyeSports.com, which is free to all Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers. If you are not already enjoying this added benefit you can find simple sign-up instructions on page 5 of this issue.

### Is 1st-Class Mail For You?

We had varied reports on the timely delivery of our big Football Preview Issue. Some people from outside Ohio – including Indiana, traditionally our worst mail delivery state – had swift arrival of their BSB while others, including readers in Ohio, had painfully slow delivery.

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**WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?**  
 A concussion is a brain injury that affects how your brain works. It can happen when your brain gets bounced around in your skull after a fall or hit to the head.

**WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?**

**REPORT IT.** Tell your coach, parent, and athletic trainer if you think you or one of your teammates may have a concussion. It's up to you to report your symptoms. Your coach and team are relying on you. Plus, you won't play your best if you are not feeling well.

**GET CHECKED OUT.** If you think you have a concussion, do not return to play on the day of the injury. Only a health care provider can tell if you have a concussion and when it is OK to return to school and play. The sooner you get checked out, the sooner you may be able to safely return to play.

**GIVE YOUR BRAIN TIME TO HEAL.** A concussion can make everyday activities, such as going to school, harder. You may need extra help getting back to your normal activities. Be sure to update your parents and doctor about how you are feeling.

**WHY SHOULD I TELL MY COACH & PARENTS ABOUT MY SYMPTOMS?**

Playing or practicing with a concussion is dangerous and can lead to a longer recovery.

While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have another concussion. This can put you at risk for a more serious injury to your brain and can even be fatal.

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