



## Finding A Way To Win



PHOTOS BY TIM MOODY

**LEAVING IT LATE** – Wide receiver K.J. Hill (14, above) scored Ohio State's winning touchdown in the fourth quarter against Penn State on a pass from quarterback Dwayne Haskins (below).



### Championship Hopes On Track After Another Comeback Victory

By **TIM MOODY**  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

Back in 2016, Ohio State had the ball in the fourth quarter with a chance to win or tie the game on the road against Penn State. The Buckeyes couldn't get in gear, losing to the Nittany Lions, 24-21.

On Sept. 29, Ohio State had a similar chance. But this time the odds were stacked against the Buckeyes even more – they had 96 yards to go, and a field goal wasn't an option. This time, though, the whiteout crowd at Beaver Stadium didn't have a chance to rush the field, because it was the No. 4 Buckeyes celebrating in delirium after a 27-26 win over ninth-ranked Penn State.

"It's kind of hard to prepare for moments like that," said sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins, who made the first road start of his career. "We do a lot with (strength coach Mickey Marotti) in conditioning and lifting and we try to simulate those hard moments, but all we just said was, 'Love each other and whatever happens, happens. Put it all on the line for one another.' And we did that."

Haskins was there in 2016 as a freshman, but he wasn't part of the game plan during his redshirt season. On that day – Oct. 22, 2016, to be exact – it was the Buckeyes who held control in the first half before eventually going ahead, 21-7, by the end of the third quarter.

Then the Nittany Lions scored 17 straight points to take a three-point advantage, giving the ball back to Ohio State and quarterback J.T. Barrett on their own 11-yard line with 4:21 on the clock.

The Buckeyes managed a pair of first downs on that drive, but Barrett then threw incomplete twice – including a ball off wide receiver James Clark's hands – and was sacked twice, giving the ball back to Penn State with a chance to simply kneel down to bleed the final 1:02 off the clock.

What Ohio State needed, it turns out, was a young quarterback from Maryland and an even longer field to traverse. Or that's what worked this year, at least, after Penn State controlled most of the game.

At halftime, it was the Nittany Lions ahead, 13-7, after they racked up 293 total yards to Ohio State's 93. The Buckeyes came out firing in the second half, going on a 13-play, 75-yard drive to take the lead, but Penn State scored the game's next 13 points to take a 26-14 lead with eight minutes left.

"The first half was awful in a lot of ways," head coach Urban Meyer said after the game. "Give credit to our opponent because that's a hell of a team we just played. (Offensive coordinators Ryan Day and Kevin Wilson) did an excellent job making adjustments and started protecting him (Haskins) and keeping him upright, and when he's upright, he's very good. And our guys made plays, man."

Continued On Page 8

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# FAN FORUM

## Buckeye Leaves

*BSB's 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'll 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 Ohio State rallied from a 12-point deficit in the fourth quarter to top Penn State, 27-26, to improve to 5-0 on the season and 2-0 in Big Ten play.*

**James Grega:** Binjimen Victor made just two catches in the win over Penn State, but his second catch was game-defining, and perhaps a career-defining play for the junior wide receiver, as he immediately breathed life into an Ohio State team that had looked down and out in the fourth quarter.

His 47-yard touchdown reception was difficult enough to make, let alone in that setting, against that defense. I have always been an advocate of Victor as one of Ohio State's top receivers, but for whatever reason, he had never been able to make the plays to get on the field consistently enough.

Now that should have changed. Big-time players make big-time plays in big-time games, and Victor did just that.

**Tim Moody:** Nick Bosa is Ohio State's best player, but he wasn't with the team in Happy Valley for their thrilling win. No problem, though, because a defensive end was still the Buckeyes' best player against Penn State.

Sophomore Chase Young, making just the second start of his career, was disruptive from start to finish, making six total tackles with two sacks, three tackles for loss and two pass breakups – including one on a key fourth-down attempt. When the Nittany Lions faced a fourth down with 5 yards to go on their last possession of the game, it was Young who made the tackle for a

2-yard loss, allowing the Buckeyes to kneel down to run out the clock.

Young came up big on the biggest stage, and that's a great sign for Ohio State going forward.

**Garrett Stepien:** When Nick Bosa went down with a core muscle injury Sept. 15 in Ohio State's 40-28 victory against TCU, Chase Young needed to step up. Young did his job with two tackles Sept. 22 in the Buckeyes' 49-6 rout of Tulane, but he needed to do even more as the "Rushmen" along the defensive line took on an offensive juggernaut at Penn State – the No. 1 scoring offense in the country.

The box score credited Young with two sacks, and the sophomore defensive end's performance went beyond the numbers. Young's two pass breakups – a third-down swat in the third quarter and a fourth-down swat in the fourth quarter – halted the Nittany Lions' momentum on two potential scoring drives. Those were nothing compared to what he had up his sleeve on PSU's final drive of the game, though, when he stepped up with his fourth-quarter tackle for loss – a tackle of Miles Sanders on fourth-and-5 for a 2-yard loss – to force Penn State's turnover on downs and begin OSU's celebration in Happy Valley.

**Frank Moskowitz:** In a game like that there are always going to be multiple players of the game. You can't win a big one with just one person. I am going to choose one on offense, defense and special teams. On offense, I'll go with K.J. Hill, one of the underrated players on the club, who caught six passes, including the winning touchdown.

On defense, it has to be Chase Young, who was disruptive the entire evening, especially when it mattered most.

On special teams, Drue Chrisman, no doubt. You could make a case that he was the team's MVP on this night, as he single-handedly kept his team in the game during that brutal first half.

And I'm going to throw in Dwayne Haskins, just because.

### BSB Subscribers

Chase Young. Dominant, and was honestly held

on every other snap. Top-three draft pick in 2020. Honorable mention is Drue Chrisman. He kept us in the game in the first half.

– Blufftonbuck

I've got two. Our defense was lights out most of the game and really kept us in it and Drue Chrisman kept flipping the field. He was a real difference maker.

– Tiffin Buckeye

I can still barely even think straight, but I think I have to go with Binjimen Victor. It was impressive that he even caught the ball on that touchdown in that situation, but to then turn it into a score was somewhat ridiculous. I was starting to think we might never see that kind of play from him, but I'm sure glad he proved me wrong!

– AcrossTheField

One of the great joys of being an Ohio State fan is seeing the next star player emerge. Against Penn State, Chase Young came of age and lived up to the recruiting hype. He was in the Penn State backfield all night long and made plays despite being held on the majority of snaps. He showed heart and toughness all the way to the end, making the game-winning tackle to preserve the victory. Our next star has arrived. Chase Young is the player of the game and we can all imagine it is the first of many.

– GNilly97

J.K. Dobbins. This guy can do it all. Run, catch passes and run, drag people along and run. His roar at the end of the TCU game typifies who he is! A worthy replacement for Zeke!

– AnthonyBuckeye

Binjimen stole the show for me. I loved his fancy footwork – amazing running. He scored when we needed it most. It was great how he stepped up.

– PeyoteBuck

Chase Young. A Bosa-like performance just when we needed it. Outstanding. Also a shoutout to Penn State for not running Trace McSorley on the fourth-and-5. Thanks!

– mrbigbux

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Some Observations

1. A win is a win, no matter how ugly!
2. Let's pump the brakes a bit before anointing our quarterback as the next Manning or Brady, he showed against Penn State that he has a long way to go before he's an NFL first-round pick. That is unless he'll be facing Tulane every Sunday at the next level. He had more than a few ugly throws in that first half but did play much better in the second half.
3. In that first half, our offensive line and wide receivers took a major step back to the last two years – can't block anyone, dropped passes, poor routes and no separation. They too played much better in the second half, but we can't play a whole half like that and expect wins against good teams.
4. Our linebackers are horrible and it's my opinion that this falls on our linebackers coach. They always seem to be out of position, taking very poor angles, too many big plays. Again, against better teams this will be a loss (remember Oklahoma and Iowa last year?).
5. Last, when are we going to figure out how to convert on fourth-and-1? How about this, put our 6-3, 218-pound QB under center with two additional linemen behind him and push! It's legal! Our head coach makes millions and our OC makes \$1 million a year – wake up before a failure to convert costs us a game.

Peter M. Carusone  
West Middlesex, Pa.

### Another Classic

Whenever a football team plays in a highly-contested game as the latest Penn State-Ohio State contest was, the players from both teams will have great emotional memories of how the game unfolded.

We Buckeye fans were also taken on an emotional roller-coaster ride. What we saw unfolding in the last eight minutes of a "whiteout performance" was a Buckeye football team determined to win. They weren't going to be denied and humiliated once again. This win will become another Buckeye classic for fans, players, coaches and any future player with aspirations of being a Buckeye.

Nelson Bell  
Toledo

*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 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.*

Read BSB online! [www.BuckeyeSports.com](http://www.BuckeyeSports.com)



Buckeye Sports Bulletin (USPS 705-690, ISSN 0883-6833.) is published 24 times a year (weekly September through November, biweekly mid-March through May and January through early March and monthly June through August and December) by:

Columbus Sports Publications  
1350 W. Fifth Ave., Suite 30  
P.O. Box 12453  
Columbus, Ohio 43212  
(614) 486-2202  
bsb@buckeyesports.com

Periodical class postage paid at Columbus, Ohio, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Buckeye Sports Bulletin, P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio 43212. Subscription rates: \$99.95/year.

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## 2018-19 PUBLICATION SCHEDULE (VOL. 38)

No. 1	Sept. 8	No. 13	Dec. 15
No. 2	Sept. 15	No. 14	Jan. 19
No. 3	Sept. 22	No. 15	Feb. 2
No. 4	Sept. 29	No. 16	Feb. 16
No. 5	Oct. 6	No. 17	March 9
No. 6	Oct. 13	No. 18	March 23
No. 7	Oct. 20	No. 19	April 6
No. 8	Nov. 3	No. 20	April 20
No. 9	Nov. 10	No. 21	May
No. 10	Nov. 17	No. 22	June
No. 11	Nov. 24	No. 23	July
No. 12	Dec. 1	No. 24	August

The next issue (Oct. 13 cover date) will be mailed Oct. 9.

Buckeye Sports Bulletin is a privately owned newspaper and is not affiliated directly or indirectly with The Ohio State University.



Charter Member

# Ohio State Has A Lot Of Room To Improve

An axiom almost as old as football itself states that good teams find ways to win.

I'll confess that after watching Ohio State look bothered and bewildered if not downright bewitched for more than three quarters at Penn State, I'm not sure just how good the No. 3 team in the nation really is right now.

But the Buckeyes most indeed found a way to steal a 27-26 victory and, for the second year in a row against the Nittany Lions, wiped out a fourth-quarter deficit that most likely left Penn State head coach James Franklin with the same empty feeling he had in Columbus last year when his team allowed an 11-point lead to evaporate in the final minutes.

The cold, hard fact is that Ohio State should never have been in position to come from 12 points behind with 8:00 remaining in the fourth quarter. The Buckeyes victimized themselves as much as their opponents did, playing most of the first three quarters tighter than the proverbial new shoe.

Sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins, such a cool customer during his record-setting pace of the season's first four games, was reduced by a withering Penn State pass rush to a jittery, wide-eyed, misfiring shadow of his normal self. Not that his receivers were helping him any with several dropped first-half passes, including one that turned into an interception. Haskins managed to throw for only 62 yards in the first half with 26 of those coming on a screen pass that running back J.K. Dobbins turned into his team's first touchdown with 1:50 to go until halftime.

Meanwhile, the vaunted OSU defense was missing tackles and blowing assignments while Nittany Lions quarterback Trace McSorley looked like a first-team All-American. McSorley accounted for a ridiculous 461 yards of total offense, including 175 on the ground – not only the second-most rushing yards for a Penn State quarterback in a single game, but the most ever yielded by Ohio State in program history to an opposing quarterback.

And yet, somehow, by some divine intervention that descended upon the record Beaver Stadium crowd of 110,889 frenzied fans, it was the Buckeyes – outplayed and outcoached for much of the night – who came away with the win.

As remarkable as was last year's Superman impression by J.T. Barrett, who helped erase that 11-point deficit late in the fourth quarter for an electrifying 39-38 win in front of an Ohio Stadium crowd of 109,302, this year's victory might have been even more improbable.

There was no home crowd off which to feed. There was no fifth-year quarterback at the controls. Pretty much everything the Buckeyes had tried offensively had been stymied, and three defensive starters – defensive end Nick Bosa, strong safety Isaiah Pryor and cornerback Damon Arnette – were ultimately sidelined for various reasons.

What happened during those final eight minutes that reversed what had occurred during the previous 52? Ohio State finally figured out what it needed to do while Penn State (specifically Franklin) was fatally indecisive at crunch time.

To that point in the game, Haskins' normally pinpoint-accurate right arm had repeatedly betrayed him, and the sophomore QB had completed only 16 of 31 attempts for 137 yards, hardly Heisman-worthy numbers. Then, as if he had simply flipped some switch, Haskins led the Buckeyes on quick-strike touchdown drives of 75 and 96 yards, completing 6 of 8 passes along the way for 133 yards and two scores.

Obviously, Haskins had help. Binjimen

Victor, J.K. Dobbins and Ryan Day each played key roles as did the Ohio State offensive line, which finally held up its end of the bargain protection-wise.

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Mark Rea

After taking that 26-14 lead with eight minutes remaining, Penn State went into a sort of prevent defense, a strategy it paid for dearly when Victor threaded his way through the Nittany Lions for a 47-yard touchdown that cut OSU's deficit to 26-21 with 6:42 to play.

Victor leaped high to snare a pass that was slightly behind him, taking the ball away from Lions fifth-year senior cornerback Amani Oruwariye and quickly eluding the would-be tackle of fellow corner Tariq Castro-Fields. Picking up downfield blocks from Parris Campbell and Rashod Berry – both of which appeared to be holds that were allowed by an officiating crew that seemingly called everything else all night – Victor glided into the end zone to give the Buckeyes some life.

Then when the defense finally contained McSorley enough on Penn State's next possession to force a punt, OSU and Haskins had a chance – albeit from 96 yards away.

Day, who had for whatever reason been reluctant to that point in dialing up plays to counteract Penn State's hard-charging defense, had the perfect call on first down, a screen pass that Dobbins took 35 yards to immediately push the Nittany Lions back on their heels.

Then on third-and-3, the Buckeyes – who had been running almost exclusively to the left all night with only middling results – changed things up when Mike Weber burst to his right for an 11-yard gain. That was followed by a bubble screen to Campbell that was worth 14 yards, and three plays later, Haskins flipped a receiver screen to K.J. Hill, who motored into the end zone from 24 yards out to give Ohio State its final lead of the night at 27-26.

## What Was That?

After a failed two-point conversion on the part of the Buckeyes, McSorley still had 2:03 worth of clock and all three timeouts to mount a comeback. And it appeared that he would do precisely that, especially when tight end Pat Freiermuth gathered in a 27-yard pass on first down to quickly push his team into OSU territory.

But the Nittany Lions bogged down from there and faced a fourth-and-5 at the Ohio State 43-yard line with 1:22 remaining.

Franklin called a timeout to go over his options which was followed by a defensive timeout from the Buckeyes. Then Franklin called another timeout, hoping to counteract the alignment he had just seen. But the best he could evidently come up with was giving McSorley a read-pass option, a play that was blown up when OSU defensive end Chase Young threw Penn State running back Miles Sanders for a 2-yard loss.

Ohio State had its comeback victory, and Franklin was left to take responsibility for what had transpired during those two timeouts.

"We obviously didn't make the right call in that situation and that's on me, nobody else," said the emotion-filled Penn State head coach. "We didn't make the right call and obviously it didn't work. We have called something simi-

lar like that in other situations and it broke for a big play. But that's on me."

It was refreshing to hear a big-time coach own up to a mistake, especially one such as Franklin, who sometimes comes off as a guy who thinks he had a hand in inventing the game. After all, he wasn't alone in making head-scratching decisions from the sideline.

After having a linebacker spy on McSorley for much of the early part of the game, OSU defensive coordinator Greg Schiano inexplicably called off that strategy during much of the second half when the Penn State quarterback repeatedly got loose for big gains.

Likewise, Day turned in a rather uneven play-calling performance, none more glaring than midway through the third quarter when he completely destroyed his own team's momentum by calling for Hill to take a snap in the Wildcat formation – something opposing defenses caught on to about a decade ago.

The Buckeyes were protecting a 14-13 lead and driving with a first down at the Penn State 16, but after Hill took the direct snap and was thrown for a 3-yard loss, things quickly unraveled. OSU finally had to settle for a 33-yard field goal from Sean Nuernberger, which was wiped out by a face-mask penalty. Nuernberger's subsequent attempt from 48 yards sailed wide to the right.

Still, it's hard to argue with the end result. It wasn't pretty at times and it certainly wasn't easy. But as Woody Hayes famously said, "Anything easy ain't worth a damn."

## The Numbers Game

- McSorley's 461 yards of total offense was a single-game record for Penn State, but it wasn't close to being a record for an Ohio State opponent. Illinois quarterback Dave Wilson accounted for 585 total yards (621 through the air and minus-36 on the ground) during his team's 49-42 loss to the Buckeyes in 1981.

- McSorley's 175 rushing yards rank second in a single game by a Penn State quarterback only to Eugene "Shorty" Miller, who ran for 250 yards during a 49-0 win against Carnegie Tech during the 1913 season opener.

- If I were giving out game balls, one of them would most definitely go to punter Drue Chrisman. While the OSU offense was sputtering, the sophomore continually flipped field position in his team's favor. Chrisman averaged 47.9 yards on nine punts against Penn State and pinned the Nittany Lions inside their own 20-yard line on three of those attempts.

- The Buckeyes surrendered a 93-yard pass play from McSorley to speedster KJ Hamler in the second quarter, the longest reception by an opponent in program history. It erased the previous record of 90 yards, set in 1962 by Illinois and equaled by Purdue in 1994.

- Ohio State has now allowed four scoring plays of 78 or more yards this season, including two 93-yard touchdowns. In addition to Hamler's record-setting reception, TCU running back Darius Anderson scored on a 93-yard run, the longest running touchdown by an OSU opponent in program history. The previous record had been held since 1960 by Larry Ferguson of Iowa, who ran for a 90-yard touchdown during his team's 35-12 win against the Buckeyes that year.

- You don't have to go back that far to find the last time the Buckeyes had a 96-yard touchdown drive. It came during last year's Big Ten Championship Game against Wisconsin when OSU went 96 yards in just four plays for its first touchdown during an eventual 27-21 victory.





### Ohio State Rises To 3rd In AP Poll

People typically notice when a team beats a top-10 opponent, and that was certainly the case for Ohio State after the Buckeyes dispatched Penn State, 27-26, on the road Sept. 29.

The Buckeyes ranked fourth in the Associated Press top 25 heading into the game, and rose to third after the victory, jumping Clemson (No. 4) in the process. Penn State fell from ninth to 11th after losing to Ohio State, while the Buckeyes received one first-place vote in the poll.

Alabama was No. 1 once again after receiving 58 first-place votes, while Georgia remained at second. Clemson received the remaining top vote while LSU rounded out the top five. Notre Dame rose to sixth while Oklahoma (No. 7), Auburn (No. 8), West Virginia (No. 9) and Washington (No. 10) completed the top 10. Auburn and

Washington are the only top 10 teams with a loss on their record.

Michigan fell one spot to 15th after beating Northwestern by three points in week five while Wisconsin was No. 16 and Michigan State was 20th to round out the Big Ten's representation. Iowa (34) was the only other team from the conference to receive any votes.

In the coaches poll, Ohio State rose to third as well, receiving one first-place vote. Alabama (61 first-place votes) and Georgia ranked ahead of the Buckeyes while Clemson (2) was fourth and Oklahoma completed the top five. In order, LSU, Notre Dame, West Virginia, Auburn and Washington rounded out the top 10, with Penn State 11th in the coaches poll as well.

In the coaches vote, Wisconsin was 12th and Michigan (No. 16) and Michigan State (No. 19) remained in the top 20. Iowa (23) and Maryland (14) also received votes in the poll.

### Homecoming Kickoff Set For 4 p.m.

Ohio State hosts Indiana for homecoming Oct. 6 at 4 p.m. on FOX, the Big Ten announced Sept. 24. The midafternoon kickoff marks the Buckeyes' third straight at the Horseshoe, following 3:30 p.m. kickoffs Sept. 8 vs. Rutgers and Sept. 22 vs. Tulane.

Aaron Goldsmith, Brady Quinn and Bruce Feldman will call the game for FOX.

Off to a strong start, the Hoosiers enter with a 4-1 overall mark and 1-1 record in Big Ten play. IU's only loss of the early season came Sept. 22 against Michigan State in a 35-21 defeat. Indiana rebounded the following weekend at Rutgers with a 24-17 win over the Scarlet Knights.

On homecoming in 2017, OSU played Maryland to the tune of a 62-14 shellacking Oct. 7.

## 2018 Ohio State Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Result/Time (ET)	TV	Record, Last Result
Sept. 1	OREGON STATE	W, 77-31	ABC	1-4, 52-24 loss at Arizona State
Sept. 8	RUTGERS	W, 52-3	BTN	1-4, 24-17 loss to Indiana
Sept. 15	vs. TCU#	W, 40-28	ABC	3-2, 17-14 win over Iowa State
Sept. 22	TULANE	W, 49-6	BTN	2-3, 40-24 win over Memphis
Sept. 29	at Penn State*	W, 27-26	ABC	4-1, 27-26 loss to Ohio State
Oct. 6	INDIANA	4 p.m.	FOX	4-1, 24-17 win at Rutgers
Oct. 13	MINNESOTA	TBA	TBA	3-1, off week
Oct. 20	at Purdue*	TBA	TBA	2-3, 42-28 win at Nebraska
Nov. 3	NEBRASKA	TBA	TBA	0-4, 42-28 loss to Purdue
Nov. 10	at Michigan State*	TBA	TBA	3-1, 31-20 win over Central Michigan
Nov. 17	at Maryland	TBA	TBA	3-1, off week
Nov. 24	MICHIGAN*	Noon	FOX	4-1, 20-17 win at Northwestern
Dec. 1	Big Ten Championship@	8 p.m.	FOX	

\* - 2017-18 bowl team

# - at Arlington, Texas (AT&T Stadium)

@ - at Indianapolis (Lucas Oil Stadium)

### Bosa To Be Evaluated In November

Head coach Urban Meyer said Sept. 24 that Ohio State would be without junior defensive end Nick Bosa for a few more weeks.

According to Bosa's parents, John and Cheryl, the Buckeyes are without the defensive lineman until at least November when he is expected to be re-evaluated by his doctor after surgery to repair a core muscle injury. Meyer said OSU expects Nick Bosa back but no decision on the 6-4, 263-pounder's return will be made until the evaluation.

As first reported by The Athletic's Ari Wasserman, John Bosa clarified the rehabilitation timetable, saying his son had surgery Sept. 20 in Philadelphia. John Bosa said Nick is expected to make a full recovery from the injury but will need to be reassessed in November by core muscle specialist Dr. William Meyers of the Vincera Institute, who performed the procedure.

Meyer said Bosa expressed a desire to return at some point if possible. Bosa is project-

ed to be one of the top picks in the 2019 NFL draft.

"We've already had those discussions a little bit," Meyer said on Sept. 24. "But that's down the road when he becomes healthy again. You can't ask for a better family and people. I don't want to paraphrase John and Cheryl Bosa, but as they said, we trust our children to this program. And we will continue to do so. And so those conversations will be had. Not that you treat anybody different than another player. I want to make sure that's clear. But that's a real conversation that we're going to have."

On multiple occasions through the first few weeks of the season, Nick Bosa has stated his strong desire to win a national championship at Ohio State. Before the Sept. 1 opener against Oregon State, he described the Buckeyes' team for 2018 as perhaps its most talented squad since 2014.

At the end of the 2014 campaign, OSU claimed the inaugural College Football Playoff title with his older brother, Joey. The elder Bosa

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## Postal Problems Continue

Buckeye Sports Bulletin's postal problems remain ongoing as BSB publisher Frank Moskowitz continues to work with postal officials to try to solve the issue. Rather than having late delivery in specific areas, as has been the typical problem in the past, late delivery is widespread and an especially bad problem in central Ohio. Meanwhile, readers in far-flung places around the country are reporting better than normal delivery.

"Let me once again assure all readers that Buckeye Sports Bulletin is mailed at the exact time and place as it has been for many years," Moskowitz said. "While I am happy for the readers who are enjoying newfound punctuality in their service, I will continue to work to get people who live just a long pass from the Columbus distribution center, as well as others around the state and nation, the service to which they are accustomed."

While Moskowitz attempts to speed up the delivery, Buckeye Sports Bulletin is offering two options to readers.

Subscribers can upgrade their delivery to first-class mail in an envelope for \$20 for the remainder of football season or \$30 through football recruiting season. Simply call (614) 486-2202 and we will upgrade you immediately, or send your check or money order to P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio, 43212 and mention the "Football" or "Recruiting" upgrade.

Readers may also read the complete edition of each issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin online at BuckeyeSports.com on Mondays during football season, a free service with your subscription.

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starred at Ohio State from 2013-15 before he became the 2016 NFL draft's No. 3 overall pick upon his first-round selection by the San Diego Chargers.

"My No. 1 goal is to win a national championship," Nick Bosa said Aug. 28. "However we

get there, I know I'm going to be a contributing factor if I'm out there. I'm not dying to get big numbers. I want to make plays and help my team in that way. I feel like I'm definitely a big part of it, but I want to see my other guys ball just as much."

## Jordan Corrects Low Snaps

Ohio State junior offensive lineman Michael Jordan is in his third season as a starter, but 2018 has still been a first for him.

Jordan started at left guard as a freshman and sophomore but switched to center for this season in order for the Buckeyes to get their best five linemen on the field. He hadn't previously played center at any level, meaning 2018 marks his first season snapping the ball.

Against TCU in week three, that was an issue, as Jordan struggled with snaps throughout the game. Quarterback Dwayne Haskins often had to stoop down to control the ball.

"I think he handled it well," Jordan said of Haskins. "He made up for me a lot of times and he was still making plays out there."

Jordan admitted that the issues in Arlington, Texas, started in his mind.

"I think that I just made TCU a much bigger game in my head instead of calming myself down," Jordan said. "I was able to calm myself down last week (against Tulane), get the snaps back up."

On Sept. 29, Jordan faced another daunting task in a big game away from home. This time, it was a true road game between No. 4 Ohio State and No. 9 Penn State in University Park, Pa. Thanks to heavy repetition in practice, Jordan avoided those snapping issues against the Nittany Lions.

When asked how he would avoid making similar mistakes at Beaver Stadium, Jordan had a simple answer.

"By getting as much practice reps as possible so that I'm prepared," he said.

## Haskins Named B1G Player Of The Week

Haskins was named the Big Ten's co-of-

fensive player of the week for week four after throwing for five touchdowns in the first half of a 49-6 win over Tulane on Sept. 22. The honor marked Haskins' second weekly Big Ten award in the first four weeks of the season.

Against the Green Wave, Haskins – making just his fourth career start – completed 21 of 24 passes for 304 yards and those five scores without throwing an interception. The five touchdowns are tied for his career high, set in the season opener against Oregon State, and he didn't take a snap in the second half. Haskins' completion percentage of 87.5 was good for the third best in program history for a single game.

## Backup OL Taylor Has Surgery

Meyer confirmed a Sept. 25 report from the Catholic Times that fifth-year senior offensive lineman Brady Taylor had arthroscopic surgery on his left knee to repair a meniscus injury from August.

"He should be back in about four weeks," Meyer said Sept. 26. "We're looking at the (Oct. 27) bye week. A little meniscal thing he had to get taken care of."

In the report, Taylor told the Catholic Times that he tried to play through swelling and pain, appearing in two games as he opened the season as Ohio State's backup left guard. Taylor said he underwent surgery Sept. 22 to remove a loose piece of cartilage in the knee and repair a meniscus tear.

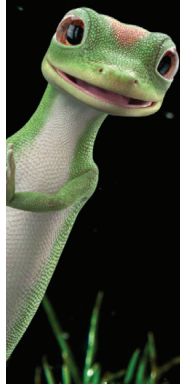
"We have those big games down the road," Taylor said of Nov. 10 at Michigan State and Nov. 24 vs. Michigan, "and I'm definitely working to get back for those. I'll come back and I can pretty much play any position on the line. If

Continued On Page 6

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# OHIO STATE INSIDER

Continued From Page 5

anything happens, I'll be there to go in and take care of my job."

The 6-5, 295-pound Taylor left spring camp

as the favorite to start at center before the Buckeyes slid Jordan from left guard. As a result, Taylor moved to left guard while redshirt freshman Josh Myer became backup center. Taylor has appeared in 32 games for Ohio State.

## OSU Removes 'Silence' Graphic

During the week leading up to the Penn State matchup, Ohio State's social media team posted a graphic featuring junior wide receiver Austin Mack putting his finger to his mouth, mimicking the "shushing" of the Nittany Lion crowd. The graphic also featured the word "silence" above Mack, in an effort to promote the Buckeyes' eventual silencing of the Beaver Stadium crowd on Sept. 29.

Close to 24 hours after the graphic was posted, multiple national media outlets picked up on the picture and became critical of Ohio State, many of them calling the graphic "tone deaf," in light of Meyer's suspension for the mishandling of former assistant coach Zach Smith's employment after Smith was accused of domestic abuse.

The graphic was later removed by Ohio State, and the school issued a brief clarification in its place.

"As we have done in the past, and in preparation for Saturday's game, we issued a message to our fans via social media outlets," the statement read. "The message has been interpreted in ways we absolutely did not intend, and we have removed it from our channels. We understand why people were critical."

Ohio State also later deleted its apology statement. The "silence" promotion was later replaced with a video that promoted "The Brotherhood," a slogan the Buckeyes have used over the years that encourages the tight-knit bond between players.

## Ohio State Unveils Schottenstein Renovations

Ohio State held its basketball media day on Sept. 26, but before the Buckeyes and Chris Holtmann took the dais to preview their upcoming 2018-19 season, they opened up the facilities to the media, allowing them to take in the renovations made within the Schottenstein Center.

Among the renovations were new offices for both the men's and women's basketball teams as well as a significant upgrade to the main hallway outside the practice facilities. About \$500,000 for the renovations was donated by former Ohio State star and National Player of the Year Evan Turner, who now has the hallway named after him. The hallway features an updated video board that plays constant highlights from years past, a wall honoring Ohio State's All-Americans, NBA draft selections and other National Players of the Year.

On the ground floor of the facilities are a number of stand-alone projection boards that honor Ohio State's more recent NCAA Tournament teams, recent graduates, iconic campus locations and even an ode to LeBron James, who has made numerous donations to the program, including vast amounts of fresh gear for the players to wear.

The new offices were built as an addition to the Schottenstein Center on the north side of the building and feature offices for each member of Ohio State's coaching staff as well as their support staff members.

## Burrow Lights Up Ole Miss

Through five games, former Ohio State quarterback Joe Burrow hasn't been perfect in his new role as LSU's starting quarterback, but his team is still undefeated after his last performance at home in Baton Rouge, La.

Hosting Ole Miss, the Tigers rolled the Rebels 45-16 with Burrow completing 18 of 25 passes for 292 yards and three touchdowns to zero interceptions. Burrow has yet to throw an interception this season, despite completing only 53.4 percent of his passes for 1,023 yards and six scores.

Burrow also added 96 yards on the ground on just nine carries, more than doubling his rushing production for the season to 154. He has led the Tigers to a No. 5 ranking in the AP poll after entering the season ranked No. 25.

Five games into the season, Burrow and Alabama starter Tua Tagovailoa are the only two starting quarterbacks in the SEC who have not thrown an interception. Burrow, though, has defeated a pair of top-25 teams in that span, while the Crimson Tide have played just one, defeating then-No. 22 Texas A&M 45-23 at home. The Tigers and Tide are set to square off Nov. 3 in what could be a top-five matchup.



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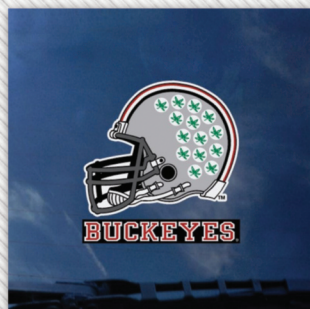
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# Late Touchdowns, Defensive Stands Spark Bucks

Continued From Page 1

Before Ohio State could conduct its game-winning drive, though, the Buckeyes needed to make it a one-possession game. That happened with 6:42 on the clock when junior wide receiver Binjimen Victor made an acrobatic catch then broke away on an elusive run to score a 47-yard touchdown that made it 26-21.

After that, the defense needed a stop – and that looked in question, at least for a moment. Starting at his own 30-yard line, Penn State quarterback Trace McSorley, who ran for 175 yards in the win while setting a school record for total yards with 461, guided the Nittany Lions to the OSU 37, aided partially by a 15-yard face-mask penalty against sophomore defensive end Chase Young, who would go on to redeem

himself when it mattered most. After a 9-yard run by McSorley on second-and-14 and an incomplete pass, though, the home team was forced to punt, and Blake Gillikin did everything he could, pinning Ohio State at its own 4-yard line with 4:35 on the clock.

What ensued was, in the words of Meyer, “one of the great drives in Ohio State history.”

The march got off to a perfect start when Haskins found sophomore running back J.K. Dobbins on a screen pass, and he turned it into a 35-yard gain. On the next play, Dobbins ran for 7 more yards, and two snaps later, junior Mike Weber gained 11 yards and a fresh set of downs.

Then it was a 14-yard pass to fifth-year senior Parris Campbell, an incompletion, and a 5-yard rush by Dobbins to set up third-and-5 at the Penn State 24. On that play,

Haskins found junior K.J. Hill on a short route, and he broke free down the sideline, aided by a block from fifth-year senior receiver Terry McLaurin that took out three

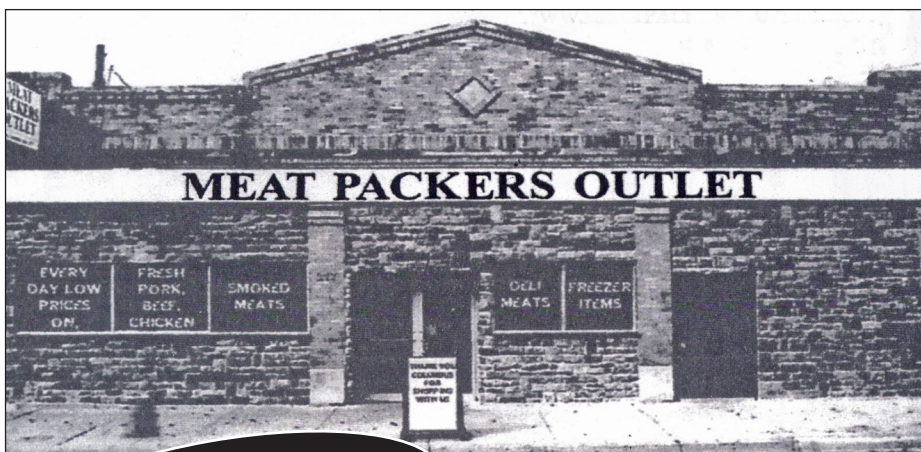
Nittany Lion defenders, for what ended up being the game-winning score.

“No reason to be nervous, no reason to flinch,” senior right tackle Isaiah Prince said



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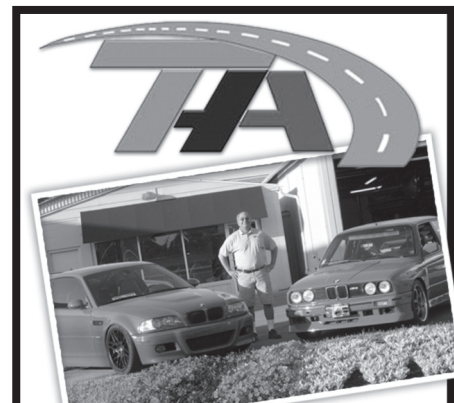
**CLOSE CALL** – Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer (center) led his team to a one-point win over Penn State for the second year in a row.



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when asked about the team's mind-set ahead of the final drive. "Stick together as brothers, play for each other and just continue to play hard. We've been in situations like this before, so it's nothing new to us."

The Nittany Lions got the ball back with just over two minutes, needing only a field goal to win the game. They drove to the Ohio State 43-yard line before finding themselves facing a fourth-and-5 with the game in the balance. After three straight timeouts – two from Penn State and one from Ohio State – McSorley handed to running back Miles Sanders, who was hit for a 2-yard loss by Young, effectively ending the game.

#### Always In It

Trailing by 12 points with less than 10 minutes to play is a daunting situation, one that would rarely result in a win anywhere, let alone in a hostile environment in University Park, Pa. In fact, Meyer, himself, admitted that there was a time when he thought the game was out of reach.

Luckily for Ohio State, the rest of the Buckeyes didn't share those feelings.

"That sideline was not giving up," Meyer

said. "There was a time – you looked up and I saw those pompoms and the whole deal and I thought that was over. Not our sideline."

The Buckeyes have been down-and-out before. Even last season against Penn State, OSU overcame a 15-point deficit in the fourth quarter to win, 39-38. But that was in Columbus, not the unfriendly confines of Beaver Stadium.

For this set of players, led by this quarterback, that didn't matter. Haskins said after the game that he never has a bleak outlook, and that helped him rally his team for the biggest win of the season so far.

"Every opportunity we get on the field is an opportunity to go win a game," Haskins said. "And it was a tough one, but we wanted it tough – it was good."

Prince had a similar sentiment, citing his team's ability to keep pushing as a key factor in the comeback win.

"I think we played great as a team, played a good team, but we just continued to fight hard," said Prince, who noted that the win was special for him after he struggled in that environment two years earlier. "I think we knew what we were walking into. I think

the majority of the people on this team were here in 2016 and we didn't want to leave with that feeling again, so we just continued to play."

#### All On The Table

The Big Ten East is one of the most competitive divisions in college football on an annual basis, but it often comes down to two teams – Ohio State and Penn State.

In each of the past two seasons, the winner of the matchup between the Buckeyes and Nittany Lions has gone on to win the Big Ten – Ohio State last year, Penn State in 2016. Entering the game this time around, both teams had perfect 4-0 records, but it's Ohio State that has an undefeated season intact, and the Buckeyes now control their own fate – both in the conference and in the College Football Playoff picture – going forward.

"Obviously this one had been circled on our schedule for a while," Day said. "To come in here on the road and win, we knew it was going to be hard. Whiteout conditions, night game, they had it rolling and did a great job on defense. But our kids hung in

there. Winning in the Big Ten on the road is hard."

Haskins, for his part, said he was able to keep the game in focus, even when down in the fourth quarter. He noted that it wouldn't have done himself or his teammates any good to dwell on the consequences of a loss.

"When you're playing a game you want to keep your mind set on that game," Haskins said. "The thing for me was just trying to do everything I can to win the game. I wasn't thinking about next week or whatever the case would be if we were to lose the game, but the biggest focus is trying to score when we can."

After the game, though, the Buckeyes were able to think about what a win means for the season. And that includes considering what impact a loss could have had as well.

"This is a monumental win," junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones said. "If we would have lost this game, a lot would have been at stake – a chance at playoffs, the Big Ten probably out of the picture. And then you've got a dub, still got a shot. Everything is right on process."

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# Victor's Late Heroics Spark Ohio State Victory

With Ohio State trailing 26-14 and less than seven minutes to play, the Buckeyes' chances of winning in Happy Valley looked bleak.

## GAME NOTEBOOK

James Grega

Then Binjimen Victor emerged.

After a roller-coaster night, sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins stepped up in the pocket and delivered a pass to Victor, a junior, while throwing across his body over the middle on first-and-10 just past midfield. Victor, who had just one catch on the night at that point, went full extension to grab the ball in traffic, broke numerous tackles and maneuvered his way through traffic for an electric 47-yard touchdown. The touchdown brought Ohio State to within a score at 26-21 with 6:42 to play and re-energized a team that had looked down and out.

"Ben Vic started that bad boy off, that comeback," head coach Urban Meyer said after the game. "That was one of the best plays – right in front of me on the sideline there, went and attacked the ball and then the receivers got in defenders' ways and blocked (their hearts) out and he made a play and also that gave the whole sideline hope."

Despite entering the game with just five receptions on the season, Victor's potential has never been questioned within the football facilities at Ohio State. A year ago, Victor was second on the team in touchdown receptions with seven, but through four games this season, he hadn't received much of an opportunity.

That changed against Penn State on Sept. 29 in prime time, but offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Ryan Day said that Victor's performance wasn't just an over-night success.

"For him to make that play in this moment shows his maturity, but it didn't just happen tonight," Day said. "It has been a process. It has been ongoing. He did a great job in the TCU game, made some great blocks and has been showing progress. It was coming. We kept saying it was coming; it came right here."

Victor did not record a catch in two of Ohio State's first three games this season. He caught three passes in garbage time against Rutgers and scored his first touchdown of the season in a blowout win over Tulane. He has had his moments in games that are out of hand, but he finally got his time to shine in a premier game against the Nittany Lions and, at the end of the day, gave credit to his teammates for his heroics in University Park, Pa.

## Game Analysis

### What Worked Well

When Ohio State needed to move its offense, coordinators Ryan Day and Kevin Wilson dialed up screens and cracked things open. Three pivotal plays on two drives – including two of the Buckeyes' four touchdowns – came on savvy play calls by head coach Urban Meyer's offensive brass.

With less than two minutes left in the second quarter and Penn State in command of a 13-0 lead, OSU got the ball back in Nittany Lions' territory after a Miles Sanders fumble and went to sophomore running back J.K. Dobbins for a 26-yard screen timed perfectly by sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins while Dobbins flanked out right to put OSU on the board. In the fourth quarter, Ohio State's go-ahead scoring drive started at the 4 before Dobbins busted a 35-yard gain off another screen. Later in the march, junior receiver K.J. Hill magnificently maneuvered a bubble screen, spinning past John Reid while blocks by wide receivers Austin Mack and Terry McLaurin paved the way for a 24-yard touchdown with 2:03 left.

### What Didn't Work

On both sides, OSU had issues upon issues. Ohio State surpassed the century mark on the ground, but the Buckeyes amassed only 119 rushing yards on 37 attempts (3.2 average) with a long of 18 after Penn State had given up 245 yards on 45 carries to lowly Illinois the previous weekend. As a result, OSU was unable to take the top off the Nittany Lions' defense without a play-action attack to draw them in and fire shots deep. On defense, Ohio State allowed 492 total yards of offense for PSU – including McSorley's inside slant to KJ Hamler for a 93-yard touchdown pass, which is the Buckeyes' second 93-yard touch-

down given up in the past three weeks. Penalties nearly proved costly for OSU, which committed 10 fouls for 105 yards, against an equal opponent in PSU.

### Play Of The Game

Junior wide receiver Binjimen Victor's circus catch and subsequent weave 47 yards into the end zone miraculously kept Ohio State alive down 26-21 with 6:42 left and led to Hill's winning touchdown, but those scores set up the play of the game when Penn State got the ball back with McSorley set for a two-minute drill. After the Nittany Lions moved the ball swiftly on McSorley's 27-yard pass to Pat Freiermuth, though, they stalled thanks to sophomore defensive end Chase Young's 4-yard sack followed by an incompletion and 9-yard QB scramble to create a fourth-and-5 from the Buckeyes' 43.

Drama swirled as PSU, OSU and PSU took timeouts in order. Penn State then lined up in a trips-left formation with one tight end on the right side of the line of scrimmage in a three-point stance. In an apparent run-pass option play, the Nittany Lions' two receivers out wide started to block downfield as their one receiver inside drifted on a bubble screen. On the handoff, McSorley read junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones off the left edge and gave to Miles Sanders. With junior defensive end Jashon Cornell lined up at three-technique defensive tackle, however, he pushed his opposing offensive lineman – PSU's right guard – back 2 full yards behind the line of scrimmage. As Cornell won the battle, Young swung inside unblocked. Sanders had nowhere to go when Young wrapped him up, forcing a turnover on downs.

– Garrett Stepien

"It gave us a big jump," he said of his TD catch. "We were down, and we needed a play. We had been talking about how somebody needed to make a play and get the fire started, and that is what I had to do. I am just happy about this win that we got. It was a team effort. The defense had a great game. It was a team win. I am not too much about myself. I am a team guy, and I just want to thank my teammates as well."

With the biggest play of the season now under his belt, Victor's heroics could serve as a springboard for the rest of the year according to Day.

"I think it is a defining moment for him, I sure do. Ben has made some plays in some games, but to make a play in a moment like that and change momentum of a whole game, that is a lot for him," Day said. "It started a few weeks ago. He made some big blocks in the TCU game, and we hadn't seen a ton of that from him. Then he makes that play, and I think it was a defining moment for him."

### OSU DE Young Dominates

With Nick Bosa out for the second straight game with an abdominal injury, Ohio State's defense needed someone to come up big, and Chase Young didn't disappoint.

The sophomore tallied six tackles, three for loss, and added a pair of sacks and two pass deflections in the one-point victory. He ended the game with his fourth-down stop of Penn State running back Miles Sanders as the Nittany Lions tried to mount a late winning drive.

Fellow defensive end Jonathon Cooper, who added two tackles for loss in the win, said after the game that both he and Young felt the need to step up in place of Bosa, something he feels they accomplished.

"Me and Chase just want to show that we're not taking any steps back," Cooper said. "If anything, if Nick goes down we have to step up our game even more. I don't think we approached the game any differently, but we knew what type of game it was going to be, we knew what type of opponent we were going to face and we just went out there and gave it our all."

Young effectively made two fourth-down stops on his own in the game, as he deflected a fourth-down pass attempt from Trace McSorley late in the third quarter that gave Ohio State the ball back at the OSU 24 in addition to his tackle of Sanders on Penn State's final drive.

Junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones said he was delighted with his younger teammate's performance and added that he expects Young to continue to get better as his career continues.

"Really proud. His progress has grown so much since spring ball to now," Jones said. "He's going to continue to grow, even next year when I'm gone."

### McSorley Torches Buckeye Defense

For as well as the Ohio State defense played at times, the Penn State offense also got the better of the Buckeyes in stretches, and more often than not, it was McSorley doing the damage.

The senior quarterback threw for 286

yards and two scores and rushed for a career-high 175 yards in the loss. It was the first 100-yard rushing game in his career, as he continually made Ohio State's defense pay with his legs, whether it was scrambling for first downs or moving the chains on designed runs.

Jones said after the game that while he was happy with the win, he was frustrated by the amount of yards McSorley accounted for against them.

"It sucks," Jones said. "I'm a part of that, I've had him and then he got off me. And other guys had him and he was able to break free, but you've got to find a way to get him down – any fast quarterback."

Despite McSorley's success, the Nittany Lions elected to give the ball to their running back, Sanders, on the critical fourth-and-5 at the end of the game. Meyer said that Ohio State anticipated McSorley being involved somehow on the crucial fourth down, which has already become a sore subject for many in Happy Valley.

"The quarterback is their guy, obviously. That's – he's a winner, he's a competitor and he's a great, great player," Meyer said. "So the conversation was that somehow they're going to get him involved in that play. So Greg (Schiano) came up to me and said, 'OK, let's burn a timeout, let's see what they're in right before the snap.' We did and I could hear over the headsets, 'They're going to try to get a zone read and get the quarterback involved.'"

### Jones Hobbled, Appears In Boot After Game

With Bosa out, Ohio State's defensive line depth has already taken a hit, and the Buckeyes had to deal with another scary moment against the Nittany Lions.

Jones, who finished the game with four tackles, including one for loss and a half sack as well as a key fumble recovery, struggled to finish the game with what appeared to be



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## OHIO STATE VS. PENN STATE



TIM MOODY

**CHIPPING IN – Fifth-year senior receiver Parris Campbell tallied a game-high seven catches for 60 yards against Penn State.**

an ankle injury suffered late in the fourth quarter. He left Beaver Stadium with a boot on his left leg.

“I was rushing and I was like bending and I kind of fell,” he said, recounting the play he was injured on. “I don’t remember if someone fell on my leg to make me fall or if I just fell and someone fell on it, but it was like my toes were down and somebody landed on it. I felt something.”

Despite the injury, Jones finished the game and was on the field for the critical fourth-and-5 stop. Meyer said he was devastated at first when he saw Jones go down, but the coach commended his toughness for gutting it out on the final drive.

“It stuck a knife in our heart when he went down, but he was just a rolled ankle and he fought through it,” Meyer said. “I just saw him. It’s really bothering him now, but he stuck it out. Just great performance all the way around.”

Jones was expected to get an MRI on Sunday, but as of the time BSB went to press, the severity of the injury was unknown.

### Screen Plays Aid OSU Offense

For much of the Meyer era at Ohio State, screen plays have done more to hurt the Buckeyes than help them. However, against Penn State, the Buckeyes used both wide receiver and running back screens to their advantage.

Two of Ohio State’s four touchdowns were scored on screens, including the Buckeyes’ first score of the game, a 26-yard touchdown to running back J.K. Dobbins. The final score of the game also came on a screen, this time to wide receiver K.J. Hill, who took a bubble 24 yards to the house with just more than two minutes to play in the game.

Because Penn State likes to bring pressure defensively, the Buckeyes had plenty of screens in the game plan during the week of preparation.

“Really, really important,” Day said of the screen plays. “When they are blitzing and rushing hard and doing that, it helps our offensive linemen and schematically it gives us a chance. It gave us a chance to score down there. That was big. And then on the 4-yard line, we called one there and a couple more on that drive.”

Perhaps the biggest screen play came on Ohio State’s final drive, the play Day mentioned above. Backed up onto their own 4-yard line, Haskins found Dobbins on a running back screen. Dobbins weaved his way through the Penn State defense for a

gain of 35 yards, giving the Buckeyes instant momentum and getting them out of the shadow of their own end zone.

Another screen to Parris Campbell ultimately set up Hill’s go-ahead score. Day said the screen plays wouldn’t have worked if not for superb blocking on the perimeter from the rest of Ohio State’s receivers.

“When you watch the film, it is going to be the guys blocking for him. They are unbelievable blocking on the perimeter. That was a huge part coming into halftime,” Day said. “We said we had to spread the field, had to start playing with more tempo. We had to be on the attack. In order to do that, guys had to block on the perimeter, and I thought they did a great job in the second half.”

### Penalties Almost Cost Buckeyes

For the second straight week, penalties plagued Ohio State but didn’t cost them a victory.

The Buckeyes were whistled for 10 penalties against Penn State for 105 yards, including five personal fouls, one of which led to an ejection. One of the personal fouls, an offensive face mask on tight end Luke Farrell, negated a 33-yard field goal by Sean Nuernberger. Meyer elected to attempt the field goal again from 48 yards, and Nuernberger missed the kick wide right.

“The penalties were – that’s awful,” Meyer said. “We had a face mask on a field goal I think. I’d like to see that. But we had a face mask on a field goal and some young players, we had an excellent punt return and we had it called back. Just some silly penalties from some young players and we’ve got to get that fixed because usually you don’t win a game like that when you do that.”

Through five weeks, Ohio State is averaging 8.4 penalties per game, costing it 80.6 yards per contest which ranks the Buckeyes 11th in the Big Ten. Only Nebraska, Maryland and Michigan average more penalties/yards per game lost in the conference.

### PSU Sets Beaver Stadium Attendance Record

Ohio State’s 27-26 win over Penn State was witnessed by the largest crowd in Beaver Stadium history.

Penn State announced a record crowd of 110,889, the highest-attended game in the 58-year history of the stadium. The previous high was recorded last season, when 110,823 saw Penn State defeat Michigan, 42-13, on Oct. 21, 2017.

The Buckeyes have also been a part of three other games at Beaver Stadium that rank in the top 10 in terms of attendance in stadium history. In 2007, 110,134 fans saw Ohio State defeat the Nittany Lions 37-17 behind the arm of Todd Boeckman, the fourth-highest attended game at Beaver Stadium. Two years later, 110,033 witnessed the Buckeyes defeat the Nittany Lions again, 24-7, behind quarterback Terrelle Pryor. The 2009 matchup is the sixth-highest attended game in program history.

### Pryor Ejected For Targeting

During the third quarter of Ohio State’s win over Penn State, sophomore safety Isaiah Pryor was called for targeting Nittany Lion wide receiver KJ Hamler, who briefly left the game with an injury. The play was briefly reviewed and stood, forcing Pryor to leave the game.

By rule, Pryor will have to sit out the first half of Ohio State’s Oct. 6 contest against Indiana but will be eligible to return for the second half.

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# 4th-Quarter Surge Leads Buckeyes Past Penn State

By CRAIG MERZ  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Ohio State did it again.

For the second straight year, the Buckeyes stared at a double-digit deficit in the fourth quarter against Penn State. But unlike the 2017 classic in Ohio Stadium in which fifth-year senior quarterback J.T. Barrett rallied OSU back from being down 35-20 to a 39-38 victory, the rematch before a white-clad Beaver Stadium-record crowd of 110,889 in University Park, Pa., on Sept. 29 came down to the poise and arm of third-year sophomore Dwayne Haskins, his talented receivers and dominant sophomore defensive end Chase Young.

Trailing 26-14, Haskins threw touchdown passes of 47 yards to junior Binjimen Victor and 24 yards to junior K.J. Hill in the fourth quarter to complete the comeback in a 27-26 victory (the two-point conversion attempt after Hill's touchdown failed).

The fourth-ranked Buckeyes (5-0, 2-0 Big Ten) sealed the win when Young tackled Miles Sanders for a 2-yard loss at the OSU 45 on fourth down with 1:16 left in the game.

What made the comeback so unbelievable was that the winning drive went 96 yards, or, 3 yards more than the Buckeyes had in the entire first half when the No. 9 Nittany Lions (4-1, 1-1) outgained them by 200 yards yet led only 13-7.

Haskins was 22 of 39 for 270 yards and three TDs after starting 5 for 14 for 31 yards



SONNY BROCKWAY

**JUST ENOUGH – Sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins (7) threw two fourth-quarter touchdowns in the win over Penn State.**

and an interception. More importantly, on the two fourth-quarter scoring drives he went 6 of 8 for 133 yards.

Fifth-year senior Parris Campbell had seven catches for 60 yards, and Hill added six catches for 59 yards. Sophomore back J.K. Dobbins rushed for 57 yards on 17 carries and a score in addition to putting the Buckeyes on the board with a 26-yard TD reception. Dobbins finished with two receptions for 61 yards.

Young, starting a second straight game for injured junior end Nick Bosa, had a monster game. He was credited with six tackles, three tackles for loss totaling 11 yards, two sacks for

9 yards, two pass breakups and two quarterback hurries.

Penn State lost despite quarterback Trace McSorley totaling a school-record 461 yards (286 passing, 175 rushing) and two TD passes. His favorite target was KJ Hamler, who had a 93-yard TD reception among his four catches for 138 yards.

## How It Happened

Penn State took a 3-0 lead with 4:58 left in the first quarter when a 63-yard drive stalled at the OSU 16. PSU had been the beneficiary of a spectacular one-handed grab by Juwan Johnson to the Buckeyes' 17. On the next play, a backward pass to Tommy Stevens resulted in a 13-yard loss. The drive stalled and Jake Pinegar nailed the three-pointer from 34 yards.

PSU drove to the Ohio State 28, thanks to McSorley's career-long 51-yard run, on its next series, but a sack for a 2-yard loss at the 28 by Young and junior Malik Harrison on third down forced a 46-yard field-goal try that Pinegar missed.

OSU ran 10 plays for just 27 yards in the first quarter, and its troubles continued early in the second quarter when Haskins was intercepted for the second time this season. His pass went off the hands of junior tight end Rashod Berry – the third drop of the game by a Buckeye – and Garrett Taylor returned it 45 yards to the Ohio State 28.

But PSU's fourth foray into OSU turf ended in another field goal of 39 yards by Pinegar for a 6-0 lead with 11:18 to go in the quarter.

The Nittany Lions then erupted out of nowhere to take a 13-0 lead with 5:59 to go on Hamler's 93-yard TD catch-and-run with 5:59 remaining in the first half after sophomore punter Drue Chrisman had pinned them at the 2.

It was the longest passing play in history allowed by the Buckeyes. OSU on Sept. 15 vs. TCU yielded the longest running play, a 93-yard TD run by Darius Anderson.

With the OSU offense going nowhere, the defense stepped up later in the quarter when sophomore linebacker Tuf Borland stripped Sanders and junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones recovered at the Penn State 25.

Dobbins lost a yard on first down, but he had the 26-yard TD on a screen pass to make it 13-7 with 1:50 left in the first half.

Ohio State, which had four first downs in the first two quarters, went 75 yards in 13 plays for the 14-13 lead after taking the third-quarter kickoff. Dobbins completed the drive with a 4-yard TD run at the 10:22 mark. Hill had consecutive catches totaling 20 yards to set up the score after the drive was extended when Dobbins converted a fourth-and-1 at the PSU 36.

The Buckeyes blew a chance to increase the lead midway through the third when a 33-yard field goal by Sean Nuernberger was taken off the board by a face-mask penalty on sophomore tight end Luke Farrell. Nuernberger tried again from the 48 and missed.

Late in the third, Young knocked down a McSorley pass on fourth-and-1 from the OSU 24 as Penn State coach James Franklin eschewed a 41-yard field-goal try for the lead.

But the McSorley-Hamler connection helped Penn State go ahead 20-14 with 12:22 left in the game. A 36-yard pass play to the 30 was made even bigger by a 15-yard targeting call on sophomore safety Isaiah Pryor that moved the ball to the 15 and forced Hamler from the game. Pryor was ejected and will miss the first half of the next game vs. Indiana (junior cornerback Damon Arnette would later exit with an injury).

McSorley then ran for 13 yards before tossing a 2-yard TD pass to Pat Freiermuth.

Ohio State turned the ball over on downs at the PSU 48 on the next series when Haskins was stopped for no gain on fourth-and-1.

McSorley took charge again with a 21-yard pass to Mac Hippenhammer and runs of 19 and 10 yards before a 1-yard TD run by Sanders, but the two-point conversion failed, and the Nittany Lions led 26-14 with 8:00 left.

OSU needed just 1:18 and three plays to go 75 yards to make it 26-21. After a pass interference moved the Buckeyes to the PSU 47, Victor made a leaping grab at the 35, shirked two tacklers and weaved his way into the end zone.

"That play gave us the huge boost that we needed," Jones said. "We were down by two tugs and he scored, made a Houdini play – I don't know how he did it. Broke free, scored and got everybody going."

Penn State got as far as the OSU 37 after getting the ball back but had to punt, and Blake Gillikin potted it down on the 4 with 4:35 to play.

The go-ahead drive started with a short pass to Dobbins that turned into a 35-yard gain. He followed with a 7-yard rush. After an incompleteness, junior Mike Weber ran for 11. Haskins found Campbell for 14 to the PSU 29 before missing him on the next play.

Dobbins then ran 5 yards, setting up the quick pass wide to Hill, who used several downfield blocks to speed down the right sideline for Haskins' 19th TD pass of the season.

Following a touchback, Penn State moved from its 25 to the OSU 48 on a completion to Freiermuth, but McSorley suffered a 4-yard sack by Young on the next snap. After an incompleteness and a McSorley 9-yard run to the OSU 43, the Nittany Lions faced a fourth-and-5.

The Nittany Lions took a timeout, then the Buckeyes did likewise, and Penn State took one more after that. With most people expecting McSorley to run, Sanders instead got the ball on the option and was stuffed by Young.

OSU went into the victory formation and lost 10 yards on three kneels to run out the final 76 seconds.

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# The Numbers Game

## Ohio State 27, Penn State 26

Sept. 29, 2018 – Beaver Stadium; University Park, Pa.

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
OHIO STATE (5-0, 2-0 BIG TEN)	0	7	7	13	– 27
PENN STATE (4-1, 1-1 BIG TEN)	3	10	0	13	– 26

### First Quarter

**PSU** – Pinegar, 34 yard field goal, 4:58; 8 plays, 63 yards, 3:37 TOP.

### Second Quarter

**PSU** – Pinegar, 39 yard field goal, 11:18; 4 plays, 7 yards, 1:30 TOP.

**PSU** – Hamler, 93 yard pass from McSorley (Pinegar kick), 5:59; 3 plays, 98 yards, 1:03 TOP.

**OSU** – Dobbins, 26 yard pass from Haskins (Nuernberger kick), 1:50; 2 plays, 25 yards, 0:42 TOP.

### Third Quarter

**OSU** – Dobbins, 4 yard run (Nuernberger kick), 10:22; 13 plays, 75 yards, 4:38 TOP.

### Fourth Quarter

**PSU** – Freiermuth, 2 yard pass from McSorley (Pinegar kick), 12:22; 6 plays, 73 yards, 2:22 TOP.

**PSU** – Sanders, 1 yard run (Hippenhammer rush failed), 8:00; 7 plays, 52 yards, 2:18 TOP.

**OSU** – Victor, 47 yard pass from Haskins (Nuernberger kick), 6:42; 3 plays, 75 yards, 1:18 TOP.

**OSU** – Hill, 24 yard pass from Haskins (Haskins pass failed), 2:03; 8 plays, 96 yards, 2:32 TOP.

**Att.** – 110,889.

**Weather** – 60-52 degrees, clear, cool; wind NW 4 mph.

### Team Statistics

	OSU	PSU
First Downs	21	22
Rushing	8	9
Passing	11	9
Penalty	2	4
Rushing-Yards	37-119	44-206
Passing Yards	270	286
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	22-39-1	16-32-0
Offensive Plays	76	76
Total Net Yards	389	492
Third Down Efficiency	4-17	3-17
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-2	1-3
Punts-Avg.	9-47.9	8-39.0
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	2-1
Penalties	10-105	7-64
Time of Possession	28:21	31:39

### Individual Statistics

**RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) – OSU:** Dobbins 17-57; Weber 9-51; Campbell 2-19; Haskins 4-8; Hill 1-(-3); TEAM 4-(-13). **PSU:** McSorley 25-175; Sanders 16-43; Stevens 3-(-12).

**PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD) – OSU:** Haskins 22-39-1-270-3. **PSU:** McSorley 16-32-0-286-2.

**RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) – OSU:** Campbell 7-60; Hill 6-59; Mack 3-25; Dobbins 2-61; Victor 2-55; Weber 1-5; Saunders 1-5. **PSU:** Johnson 5-61; Hamler 4-138; Freiermuth 3-44; Sanders 2-2; Hippenhammer 1-21; Polk 1-20.

**PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) – OSU:** Chrisman 9-47.9-58. **PSU:** Gillikin 8-39.0-53.

**PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.) – OSU:** Hill 1-(-2). **PSU:** Thompkins 4-(-3); Hamler 1-10.

**KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.) – OSU:** None. **PSU:** Hamler 3-47.

**MISSED FIELD GOALS (Yds.) – OSU:** Nuernberger 48. **PSU:** Pinegar 46.

**FORCED FUMBLES – OSU:** Borland. **PSU:** None.

**FUMBLE RECOVERIES (No.-Yds) – OSU:** D. Jones. **PSU:** None.

**INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) – OSU:** None. **PSU:** Taylor 1-45.

**TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) – OSU:** Young 3.0-11; Cooper 2.0-4; Borland 1.0-5; D. Jones 1.0-4; Werner 1.0-3; Browning 1.0-3; Sheffield 1.0-1; Harrison 0.5-1; Hamilton 0.5-0. **PSU:** Givens 1.5-5; Windsor 1.0-2; Gross-Matos 1.0-1; Miller 0.5-1; Parsons 0.5-1; Farmer 0.5-0.

**TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.) – OSU:** Young 2.0-9; Borland 1.0-5; D. Jones 0.5-3; Harrison 0.5-1. **PSU:** Windsor 0.5-1; Parsons 0.5-1.

**PLAYERS IN THE GAME – OHIO STATE:** Offense, Munford, Pridgeon, Jordan, Knox, Prince, Farrell, Haskins, Dobbins, Campbell, Mack, McLaurin, Nuernberger. Defense, Young, Hamilton, D. Jones, Cooper, Harrison, Borland, Werner, Sheffield, Pryor, Fuller, Arnette, Chrisman. Reserves, Smith, Okudah, Dixon, Hill, White, Davis, Browning, Mitchell, Cornell, Victor, Berry, K. Jones, Olave, Wint, Wade, Weber, Pope, Hilliard, McCullough, Friday, Landers, Togiai, Saunders, Hausmann, Prater, Ruckert, Garrett, Haubeil, Cage. **PENN STATE:** Offense, Johnson, Freiermuth, Bates, Gonzalez, Menet, McGovern, Fries, Polk, Hamler, McSorley, Sanders, Pinegar. Defense, Miller, Givens, Windsor, Gross-Matos, Farmer, Johnson, Brown, Oruwariye, Taylor, Scott, Reid, Gillikin. Reserves, Stevens, Butler, Thompkins, Castro-Fields, Chisena, Checa, Miller, Parsons, Hippenhammer, McPhearson, Petrishen, Thomas, Monroe, Sutherland, Hartlaub, Wade, Luketa, Joseph, Hansard, Shelton, Simpson, Thorpe, Miranda, Wright, Sullivan-Brown, Bowers, Lutz, Vasey, Toney.

## Season Statistics

2018 Game-By-Game				
Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd	
Sept. 1	(5) OREGON STATE	W, 77-31	102,169	
Sept. 8	(4) RUTGERS	W, 52-3	93,057	
Sept. 15	(4) vs. TCU* (15)	W, 40-28	64,362	
Sept. 22	(4) TULANE	W, 49-6	103,336	
Sept. 29	(4) at Penn State (9)	W, 27-26	110,889	
Oct. 6	INDIANA	4 p.m.	–	
Oct. 13	MINNESOTA	TBA	–	
Oct. 20	at Purdue	TBA	–	
Nov. 3	NEBRASKA	TBA	–	
Nov. 10	at Michigan State	TBA	–	
Nov. 17	at Maryland	TBA	–	
Nov. 24	MICHIGAN	Noon	–	
Dec. 1	Big Ten Title Game**	8 p.m.	–	

OSU's gameday AP ranking is in parentheses before the opponent, while the opponent's ranking is after the name.

\* – At AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

\*\* – At Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

Team Statistics		
	OSU	Opp
First Downs	149	85
Rushing	59	32
Passing	76	41
Penalty	14	12
Average Per Game/Rush	210.4	154.8
Average Per Game/Pass	346.6	202.2
Total Offense	2,785	1,785
Total Plays	392	334
Average Per Game	557.0	357.0
Average Per Play	7.1	5.3
Penalties-Yards	42-403	30-280
Fumbles-Lost	3-1	9-4
Third Down Efficiency	34-68	24-75
Percentage	50%	32%
Fourth Down Efficiency	4-6	1-4
Percentage	67%	25%
Sacks-Yards	19-137	7-24
Time Of Possession Avg.	30:16	29:44

Score								
By Quarters	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.	
Ohio State	66	73	51	55	–	245	49.0	
Opponents	17	30	34	13	–	94	18.8	

Individual Statistics					
Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
J.K. Dobbins	73	380	5.2	3	21
Mike Weber	61	350	5.7	3	49
Tate Martell	18	121	6.7	2	47
Master Teague	17	106	6.2	1	33
Brian Snead	11	37	3.4	1	5
Dwayne Haskins	14	36	2.6	1	17
Demario McCall	4	26	6.5	0	15
Parris Campbell	4	11	2.8	0	18
C.J. Saunders	0	8	0.0	0	0
K.J. Hill	1	-3	-3.0	0	0
TEAM	7	-20	-2.9	0	0
OSU Totals	210	1,052	5.0	11	49
OPP Totals	192	774	4.0	7	93

Passing	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT	Effic.
D. Haskins	109	154	70.8	1,464	19-2	188.75
Tate Martell	23	28	82.1	269	1-0	174.63
OSU Totals	132	182	72.5	1,733	20-2	186.58
OPP Totals	75	142	52.8	1,011	5-4	118.61

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
K.J. Hill	27	318	11.8	2	27
Parris Campbell	26	359	13.8	5	63
Austin Mack	18	230	12.8	1	48
Johnnie Dixon	10	145	14.5	2	44
Terry McLaurin	9	218	24.2	4	75
Binjimen Victor	7	126	18.0	2	47
J.K. Dobbins	7	100	14.3	1	35
Mike Weber	7	46	6.6	1	15
C.J. Saunders	6	42	7.0	0	19
Demario McCall	5	46	9.2	0	35
Jaylen Harris	2	22	11.0	0	15
Chris Olave	2	19	9.5	0	14
Luke Farrell	2	19	9.5	1	10
Jeremy Ruckert	1	13	13.0	0	13
Garyn Prater	1	13	13.0	0	13
Jaelen Gill	1	11	11.0	0	11
Rashod Berry	1	6	6.0	1	6
OSU Totals	132	1,733	13.1	20	75
OPP Totals	75	1,011	13.5	5	93

Scoring	TD	EPK	EPR	EPRC	FG	PTS
S. Nuernberger	–	32-32	–	–	3-5	41
Parris Campbell	5	–	–	–	–	30
J.K. Dobbins	4	–	–	–	–	24
Terry McLaurin	4	–	–	–	–	24
Mike Weber	4	–	–	–	–	24
Johnnie Dixon	2	–	–	–	–	12
K.J. Hill	2	–	–	–	–	12
Tate Martell	2	–	–	–	–	12
Binjimen Victor	2	–	–	–	–	12
Rashod Berry	1	–	–	–	–	6
Nick Bosa	1	–	–	–	–	6
Luke Farrell	1	–	–	–	–	6
Davon Hamilton	1	–	–	–	–	6
Dwayne Haskins	1	–	–	0-2	–	6
Dre'Mont Jones	1	–	–	–	–	6
Austin Mack	1	–	–	–	–	6
Brian Snead	1	–	–	–	–	6
Master Teague	1	–	–	–	–	6
OSU Totals	34	32-32	–	0-2	3-5	245
OPP Totals	12	10-11	0-1	–	4-7	94

FG Distance	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
S. Nuernberger	2-2	1-2	0-1	0-0	3-5
OSU Totals	2-2	1-2	0-1	0-0	3-5
OPP Totals	1-1	2-3	1-3	0-0	4-7

Punting	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Drue Chrisman	22	982	44.6	0	65
OSU Totals	22	982	44.6	0	65
OPP Totals	36	1,432	39.8	1	53

Interceptions	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Dre'Mont Jones	1	28	28.0	1	28
Malik Harrison	1	13	13.0	0	13
Kendall Sheffield	1	0	0.0	0	0
Shaun Wade	1	0	0.0	0	0
OSU Totals	4	41	10.2	1	28
OPP Totals	2	124	62.0	0	46

Punt Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
C.J. Saunders	8	50	6.2	0	20
Demario McCall	3	32	10.7	0	26
K.J. Hill	3	17	5.7	0	17
OSU Totals	14	99	7.1	0	26
OPP Totals	5	7	1.4	0	10

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Johnnie Dixon	3	73	24.3	0	38
Demario McCall	2	52	26.0	0	31
C.J. Saunders	2	24	12.0	0	14
OSU Totals	7	149	21.3	0	38
OPP Totals	12	187	15.6	0	22

Def. Leaders	Solo	Ast.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Jordan Fuller	14	8	22	1.5-2	–
Malik Harrison	13	7	20	1.0-1	0.5-1
Jahsen Wint	14	4	18	0.5-1	–
Dre'Mont Jones	10	8	18	6.5-36	3.5-31
Damon Arnette	15	2	17	–	–
Tuf Borland	6	10	16	1.5-5	1.0-5
Isaiah Pryor	8	7	15	1.0-1	–
Pete Werner	11	3	14	2.0-9	1.0-6
Nick Bosa	11	3	14	6.0-43	4.0-39
Jeffrey Okudah	11	2	13	–	–
Chase Young	7	5	12	6.0-34	4.0-27
Kendall Sheffield	10	1	11	2.0-4	–
Justin Hilliard	9	2	11	1.0-7	–
Baron Browning	3	8	11	2.5-10	1.0-6
Shaun Wade	7	3	10	–	–
Robert Landers	5	5	10	2.0-8	–
Dante Booker	5	3	8	3.0-19	1.0-12
Keandre Jones	5	3	8	1.0-1	1.0-1
Jonathon Cooper	3	5	8	3.0-7	1.0-3
Jashon Cornell	5	1	6	1.0-8	–
Tommy Togiai	4	1	5	–	–
Davon Hamilton	1	4	5	1.5-2	–
Dallas Gant	2	2	4	–	–
Tyreke Smith	1	3	4	–	–
Brendon White	1	3	4	–	–
Johnnie Dixon	3	0	3	–	–
Tyler Friday	3	0	3	1.0-6	1.0-6
Taron Vincent	1	1	2	–	–

10 others tied with 1 tackle each

**OSU Totals 194 108 302 44-204 19-137**  
**OPP Totals 236 140 376 23-58 7-24**  
**Fumbles Forced:** 4 – Nick Bosa, Tuf Borland, Dwayne Haskins, Pete Werner.  
**Fumbles Recovered:** 4 – Nick Bosa 2, Davon Hamilton, Dre'Mont Jones.



# BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 27, Penn State 26

**Ohio State offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Ryan Day on what turned things around for the Buckeyes:** "To come here and win is hard. They weren't giving us anything. They did a great job. It was tough sledding there for a while. We were trying to find our way, and I thought our guys stuck with it, believed in it, made a couple big plays on some screens, a big play by (junior receiver) Binjimen Victor – unbelievable play there. That kind of got us going. When Ben made that play, there were guys on the sideline saying, 'We are going to win this game now.' A lot of credit to the defense and the way they played in this game and the special teams, but it was a learning game for the whole offense and for (sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins)."

**Haskins on things coming together in the fourth quarter:** "They weren't going to let us throw the ball downfield, and that was pretty evident the whole game. They just had a lot of pressure, and I missed a couple throws and didn't have some great protection on some plays. But Coach Day said a play has to be made in the fourth quarter, and (strength coach Mickey Marotti) said to us that last drive, 'Remember last year when we played Penn State at home.' That is a memory we had going into that last drive."

**Victor on the impact of his fourth-quarter touchdown:** "It gave us a big jump. We were down, and we needed a play. We had been talking about how somebody needed to make a play and get the fire started, and that's what I had to do."

**Victor on what he saw on his touchdown:** "To be honest, I don't even know what happened. I ran a dig route, caught it, and there was somebody in my face and all I saw was green grass and took off."

**Day on Victor's touchdown:** "That is probably one of the best plays I have ever seen live. In terms of talent level, he is off the charts. It's just one catch. We have to keep building from there."

**OSU head coach Urban Meyer on Victor:** "He's had three weeks of great practice. He's one of those extremely talented, very good young men that just has not performed to his potential but he has been outrageous in practice and he's – that's a coming-out party for him."



Binjimen Victor

**Haskins on Victor:** "I mean, Ben does it all the time in practice. He's a freaky athlete. Every Sunday we work on two-minute drill, situations like that, and he makes those catches every day. So this was a time for him to do it in the game, and he really came up big."

**Victor on Haskins:** "He is a great quarterback, a calm guy. We just had to make a play, humble ourselves and slow down, calm down. We were going to be all right."

**Day on Haskins' response to a hostile environment:** "I think he showed some poise. You wish he had a couple plays back, but there are times where he had to throw the ball away when it wasn't fun. We had momentum going, and that showed some maturity from him."

**Day on whether he had any doubts during the game:** "Through your career, you do a bunch of different things. You experience different things. Being here and winning the game against Penn State last year, you believe. You always believe and the kids believe."

**OSU junior defensive end Jonathon Cooper on handling the pressure when a game comes down to the defense making a play:** "I feel like we handle it well. We don't really take it as, 'Aw man, so much pressure, we have to make a play, we have to do this.' We just know that it all starts with the D-line. It all starts – defensive line wins the football game. The front, offensive line, defensive line, we win the game and we knew that



Jonathon Cooper

if it was going to come down to something that we had to be the ones to make the play."

**OSU junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones on being booed after suffering an injury:** "I don't care about being booed, but being hurt is terrible."

**Haskins on the environment at Penn State:** "The environment wasn't really stressful. I probably would just say that we weren't moving the ball the way we wanted to. That slows things down on offense, but I thought we did a good job recovering when we needed it."

**Jones on the environment:** "Extremely hard, one of the hardest things I've ever done in my life. You can't hear, it's hard to communicate, it's hard to see because of the whiteout and then their tempo was making it hard for us to get the calls on time. It's a tough place, just glad we got the dub."

**Haskins on Penn State quarterback Trace McSorley:** "Everything I was expecting. He's a hell of a player, fierce competitor, makes a lot of plays and he gave us a lot of fits today. But glad we came out with the W."

**Penn State head coach James Franklin on the loss:** "The reality is that we have gone from an average football team to a good football team to a great football team. We have worked hard to do those things, but we are not an elite football team yet. As hard as we have worked to go from average to good and from good to great – the work that it's going to take to get to an elite program, it's going to be just as hard as the ground and the distance that we have already traveled. Scratch and claw and fight. Right now, we are comfortable being great. I am going to make sure that everyone in our program, including myself, is very uncomfortable because you only grow in life when you are uncomfortable."



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# Bucks Finding Ways To Win Despite Big Plays

By JAMES GREGA  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Through five games, Ohio State's defense has gone through its ups and downs as it attempts to replace a number of veterans now playing in the NFL.

The Buckeyes added co-defensive coordinator and safeties coach Alex Grinch in the offseason in an effort to bolster a staff that lost Kerry Coombs, who was replaced by Taver Johnson as cornerbacks coach. A new NCAA rule allowed FBS schools to add a 10th assistant, and Grinch was near the top of Ohio State's wish list.

Through the first four games, Grinch's influence on the defense seemed to be minimal. The Buckeyes were exposed for multiple big plays in the season opener against Oregon State but rebounded against Rutgers, allowing just three points in a 49-point victory.

A week later, the Buckeye defense forced three turnovers in a prime-time 40-28 victory over TCU in Arlington, Texas, but the big plays were still an issue, as Ohio State allowed scoring plays of 93 and 51 yards in the win. The Buckeyes again posted a stellar performance against Tulane, and while Ohio State was able to salvage a 27-26 thriller in University Park, Pa., on Sept. 29, OSU still surrendered its share of big plays.

Penn State matched TCU's 93-yard play against OSU with one of their own, a quick pass to KJ Hamler from Trace McSorley that was taken the distance up the Nittany Lion sideline. McSorley also accounted for a gain of 51 yards on a scramble in the first half that played a huge role in him accounting for more than 100 yards on the ground for the first time in his career.

According to Grinch, the big plays Ohio State has allowed this season are due to a lack of execution, not a lack of talent.

"We like to play as many guys as possible," Grinch said Sept. 26. "That has everything to do with their performance during the week. Any rotation we can get certainly will help. Certain positions are different than others. Guys have to show up on Saturday. If there is any drop-off, then the ones have to go and that happens in several instances."

Starting safety Isaiah Pryor has had a chance to limit the big plays on many instances this season but has repeatedly taken poor angles, leading to plays taking up more yards than perhaps they should.

Even before Pryor took a poor angle on Hamler's long touchdown and was later ejected for targeting for a separate hit on Hamler, Grinch said that even if a player understands the game plan, he still has to show an ability to make plays for the defense, something that hasn't happened much for Ohio State this season in the secondary.

"From a week-long preparation standpoint, guys have to show it on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday," he said. "Not just understanding the game plan but being able to be a playmaker for the defense."

One bright spot, despite what some fans might think, has been the development of the linebackers over the course of the season.

Against Penn State, Malik Harrison posted a career game, collecting eight tackles, a half sack and a crucial stop of McSorley in the third quarter, preventing what would have been a first down and perhaps a big play on the ground for the Penn State quarterback had he escaped Harrison's grasp.

While Tuf Borland and Baron Browning continue to rotate at middle linebacker, Harrison and Pete Werner have solidified themselves as Ohio State's outside backers. Werner accounted for five tackles, including one for loss against Penn State.

"Those two guys (Werner, Harrison) separated themselves, and that warranted those guys getting the bulk of the reps," Grinch said.

At middle linebacker, Borland has had his ups and downs this season but forced a critical fumble against the Nittany Lions that led to Ohio State's lone first-half touchdown. The rota-

tion at middle linebacker figures to continue for the time being while Grinch continues to find ways to get his best players on the field.

"It is closer to a rotation than it is situational, but there are absolutely situations where you might lean on one as opposed to the other. The 'Mike' linebacker is the quarterback of the defense, and both have the command in terms of getting the defense lined up and making the appropriate communication," Grinch said. "You're a better football player playing 30 reps as opposed to 60 reps. If you could do that at every single position, that would be ideal. It is not always a knock against the individual that comes out. As much as anything, it is credit to the guy that comes in for him."

Although Ohio State's defense has allowed multiple big plays this season, it has stiffened when it needed to, especially in big games, and Urban Meyer is pleased with Grinch and coordinator Greg Schiano's unit.

"Hats off to the defense, because they kept us in the game," Meyer said after the win over the Lions.



Alex Grinch

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# Once A Long Shot, Munford Shining For OSU

By CRAIG MERZ  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Thayer Munford was recently asked if his first four starts at left tackle for Ohio State had met or surpassed his expectations because he had been graded a champion by the coaching staff in each of them.

"I exceeded them," the sophomore said. "My goal is to try and be the best I can be and help this team win games and win a national championship."

Exceeding beyond the expected has become the norm for Munford, who had to overcome poor grades and a transfer from one high school powerhouse to another followed by being ruled ineligible for much of his senior season at Massillon (Ohio) Washington.

Along the way, he had dropped nearly 40 pounds and worked himself into shape to become the last commit in OSU's 2017 class.

He said in the spring of 2018, before he earned the starting position over junior

Joshua Alabi, that he remembered entering the program with the idea that he was just as good as the other recruits.

"I just came in just like everybody else," he said. "Just like a freshman, come in, don't know what to do yet, still trying to learn and stuff. But after that is was just like, 'OK, now I just need to go ball out during camp, make sure the coaches see me on film.'"

Munford (6-6, 319) played in 12 of 14 games as a freshman last season. Of the 202 plays that he participated in, the one Buckeye fans might remember is his huge block that helped quarterback J.T. Barrett score on a 21-yard run for Ohio State's first touchdown in what ended up being a 31-20 win over Michigan last November.

It was probably the first time many had heard of Munford. In a way, that's a good thing. If you're an offensive lineman, chances are you don't stand out unless you

make a mistake – then everybody knows your name.

The subject came up in the days leading up to the Sept. 29 game at Penn State. Munford was in Beaver Stadium for the "White Out" in 2016 as a recruit and saw then-sophomore offensive lineman Isaiah Prince victimized by the Nittany Lions' defense, drawing the ire of the Ohio State fans after the 24-21 loss.

"We talk about it a little bit, but I haven't asked him a lot about it because I know this for sure, that's deep into him," Munford said. "I was there for recruiting and I saw how he did. Yes, he messed up, but at the same time he played his butt off."

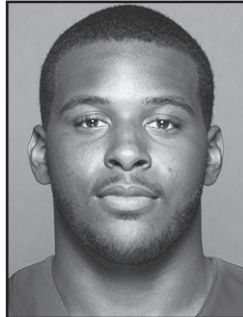
"I know people hounded him for that, but at the same time if he didn't have that situation he wouldn't be the player he is today."

Learn from experience. That's how Munford hopes to grow as a player. That's why he specifically asked Prince how to handle the hysteria of 110,000 opposing fans as Munford prepared for his first game in Happy Valley.

"Isaiah told me everybody should stay focused and pay attention to what you're going to do," Munford said.

That same focus is needed to handle the critics when things don't go as planned.

"You've got to block it all out," Munford said. "Yes, people are going to be mad at you for giving up a sack, but what offensive line doesn't? It's part of the game. We've got



Thayer Munford

good defensive players that get sacks and they've got good defensive players, too, so you can't do much about it. You've got to keep going, keep playing."

Munford's emergence as an important piece of the Ohio State offense is something that could not have been imagined as late as his junior year of high school.

He helped Cincinnati LaSalle win the state title as a sophomore in 2014 and again the following season but transferred to Massillon Washington for his senior year. Munford's coach as a freshman and sophomore at LaSalle was Nate Moore, who departed for Massillon Washington before the player's junior year. The move left Munford shattered.

Moore and his family had become close to Munford, who was raised by his mother, MeLisa Thompson. Munford, who as a freshman was diagnosed with a learning disability, was at first angry at Moore for leaving and developed a bad attitude and his grades dropped his junior year as his weight rose to 363 pounds.

Forget being eligible for football, he was in danger of missing the opportunity to be the first in his family to graduate from high school because he didn't meet the requirements of his specialized learning program.

Combine that with several shootings in the inner-city neighborhood of Lincoln Heights where Munford lived, and his mother made the tough decision to ask the Moores to take legal guardianship of him in Massillon and enroll him in school there for the final months of his junior year.

Munford got on a strict diet and exercise

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routine that dropped his weight to 315 and he enrolled in summer school to remain eligible. He also attended Ohio State's Friday Nights Light in July 2016, drawing the attention of the coaching staff.

OSU offensive line coach Greg Studrawa went to bat for Munford. Earlier this year, he explained why.

"He's had a rough life," Studrawa explained. "And when Nate left La Salle high school in Cincinnati where I first met him, a lot of things went bad for him and he needed someone to believe in him. I saw a talent – he was 363 pounds. When you look at him people said, 'Oh, he's too fat, he's too this.' But I saw a kid that just needed someone to believe in him and he was so talented when you just watched him move."

"And then you met the kid, he was hungry for someone to believe in him, someone to teach him, someone to say you can do this instead of you can't do this, you can't do that – that's what he was told. And so, I saw that in him early and then when Nate took him (to Massillon) and gave him something to believe in up there, you could see what the kid could do if someone had belief in him."

Everything was pointing in the right direction for Munford until he received word that the Ohio High School Athletic Association had ruled him ineligible for the 2016 season because he had been recruited to Massillon by Moore.

The biggest problem in the eyes of the OHSAA was that Moore, after taking the Washington job, had given Munford, who was still at LaSalle, rides to a pair of camps in the summer of 2015. Moore was also sanctioned even though the contention of him and Munford was that Munford made

the initial contact because he had no other way to travel to the camps at Ohio State and Pitt.

Munford's chances of receiving a scholarship were remote at that point without having a senior season on tape, but an agreement was reached between lawyers for Moore and Munford and the OHSAA that Munford could return to eligibility after seven games.

He played the final three regular-season games and one in the playoffs. Munford was back on OSU's radar but still needed three tries to pass the ACT before an offer was tendered.

Here are his remarks in BSB shortly after committing: "If I get the help that I need, I can be successful in my academic career. The thing I am looking forward to most is to better my academics. That is No. 1 and to better myself as a football player. I got to college and I (will earn) my degree. That is the most important thing for me."

Studrawa said his research convinced him that Munford was worth a scholarship.

"That's recruiting – that's getting to know the high school coach, that's getting to know the guys in the neighborhood," he said. "That's getting to those people and say, 'Hey, this kid's involved in that or he's not involved in that.' That's part of recruiting and doing your homework and talking to everyone around – the teachers."

"I mean, I talked to his teachers. I talked to everybody that's been around that kid, met his mom, his aunt. He was one of those kids that wanted to get out and get away

from that. That's why he needed the chance so badly."

Munford made the most of his opportunity his freshman year, and that led to the battle to earn a starting spot this season.

First, he had to make the switch from right tackle. Fortunately, Munford had already spent some time working at left tackle since arriving in Columbus.

"I feel like I know a lot of the offense

now, and Coach Stud's really helping out with all the technique stuff," Munford said in the spring. "Isaiah's helping me out a lot, everybody's helping me out a lot because they want me to be the man."

Studrawa remembers what Munford said when approached in the spring to make the move to left tackle permanent: "This isn't bad, Coach, I like this."

That comes as no surprise to Studrawa, who a few years earlier saw a raw talent that needed direction.

"I knew how hungry he was because all he wanted was a chance, and a lot of people gave up on him because they didn't want to deal with all those kind of things he went through," the coach said. "That kid needed somebody to believe in him, and now he's excelling. Look at him now, what do I see in him? He's athletic, he's powerful. He picks things up so fast it's unbelievable. So, all those things now, what I saw, are coming to fruition and the kid's just excelling."

When Munford was named the starter for the Sept. 1 season opener vs. Oregon State in Ohio Stadium, he had one request of Studrawa – don't tell his mother. It's

customary for the position coaches to let parents know their sons will be starting, but Munford wanted it to be a surprise when he trotted on the field with the other 10 players on the offensive unit.

"I looked up and saw her and she was bawling her eyes out," he said.

Munford said he is fortunate to have good role models along the line to help him improve. For example, junior Michael Jordan in his first season at center had numerous low snaps against TCU on Sept. 15.

The following week, Munford witnessed Jordan spending extra time working on hiking the ball.

"After the TCU game he did beat himself up a lot," Munford said. "Everybody on the unit knows he's going to get it. It doesn't matter. If he had a couple of bad snaps, he had a couple of bad snaps but at the same time he worked on it. I love him for that."

"He's trying to perfect himself, to be the best he can be for Ohio State."

In another case, Prince went after and tackled an Oregon State player after his interception of Haskins.

"That play is an example of the hard work and dedication he put in in the offseason because he's a hard worker," Munford said. "Everybody on the line respects him, everybody on the team respects him."

Munford does a bit of running on his own. When the Buckeyes score, he's usually the first lineman to the end zone to pick up the scorer and celebrate.

"I'd be so hyped, I just go down there and just run to them," he said. "I'm so happy that we get touchdowns. It's not because of us (linemen), it's because of them. If not for them, we wouldn't be scoring touchdowns."



Greg Studrawa

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# Indiana Working On Finishing Games In '18

By JAMES GREGA  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

At halftime of the 2017 season opener, Indiana looked like it belonged near the top of the Big Ten East. On national television, with the college football world watching, the Hoosiers led then-No. 2 Ohio State 14-13 on a Thursday night in Bloomington, Ind., and had the Buckeye offense reeling.

In the second half, everything changed.

Ohio State outscored the Hoosiers, 36-7, in the final 30 minutes to take home a convincing 49-21 victory. Much like that game, the second half of Indiana's season took a turn for the worse.

Indiana briefly rebounded from the Ohio State loss and entered the second half of the season with a 3-2 record (a week three game against FIU was canceled). The Hoosiers had games against Maryland, Illinois, Rutgers and Purdue left on the schedule, but head coach Tom Allen's team finished the season one win shy of qualifying for a bowl game.

In 2018, the Hoosiers are in a similar scenario.

Allen's squad carries a 4-1 record into its Oct. 6 contest against Ohio State, and the Hoosiers are trying to flip the script from last season and not only finish games but finish the second half of the season strong.

Allen said at Big Ten Media Days in July that finishing strong was one of the main rallying cries of the offseason in Bloomington.

"I think that has been the big focus of my offseason evaluation, was to be able to finish all those games we were so competitive in and fighting late in the game," he said. "Whether it's converting on the side of the offense or making a big stop on defense and being able to get – whether we get into overtime like we did last year with Michigan, get inside the 5-yard line and be able to punch it in and finish, and we were not able to do that."

Of Indiana's seven losses in 2017, four

were decided by one score. The Hoosiers fell to the Wolverines 27-20 in overtime at home, lost by eight in East Lansing, Mich., against Michigan State and fell by just three against Maryland on the road. In the season finale against Purdue, needing a win to be eligible for a bowl game, the Hoosiers were down 31-10 before rallying to score the final 14 points of the game. An onside kick with a minute left in the game was recovered by the Boilermakers, sending Purdue to a bowl game and keeping the Hoosiers at home.

This season, two of Indiana's four wins have come by more than one score. The lone loss, a 35-21 defeat at the hands of Michigan State, had the Hoosiers climb to within one score late in the fourth quarter, only for the Spartans to respond with a 1-play, 75-yard touchdown drive to put the game out of reach.



Tom Allen

Allen has put an emphasis on the run game for Indiana's offense, something that seems to have a direct correlation to the outcome of their games. In the Hoosiers' first three games

of the season, all of which were victories, Indiana rushed for an average of 235 yards per game. In the loss to the Spartans, the Hoosiers managed just 29 yards on 32 carries.

"Running the football was the thing that came out to me in my evaluation. Our inability to do that effectively enough is an area we've focused on this past spring and will be in fall camp," Allen said in Chicago.

## Players To Watch

Offensively, the most valuable player for Indiana through five games has been freshman running back Stevie Scott. The Syracuse, N.Y., native has rushed for 464 yards through five games this season, ranking him fourth in the Big Ten.

He was named the co-Big Ten Freshman of the Week following a 204-yard performance against Virginia in a 20-16 win. His performance has been critical for Indiana's

## Get To Know ... Indiana

### About Indiana

- **2018 Record:** 4-1 (1-1 Big Ten).
- **Team Information:** Offensive Formation – Multiple; Defensive Formation – Multiple; Starters Returning – Offense 11, Defense 4, Specialists 1.
- **Head Coach:** Tom Allen, second full year, 9-9 (all at Indiana).
- **Series History:** 92nd meeting, Ohio State leads, 74-12-5.
- **School Facts:** Location – Bloomington, Ind.; Enrollment – 48,514; Nickname – Hoosiers; Colors – Cream & Crimson; Conference – Big Ten (East Division); Stadium – Memorial Stadium (Surface, FieldTurf; Capacity, 52,656).

### Top Offensive Players

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Stevie Scott	98	464	4.7	4	42
Peyton Ramsey	51	170	3.3	2	23
Ronnie Walker Jr.	17	76	4.5	1	19

Passing	Comp.-Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT
Peyton Ramsey	115-162	71.0	1,039	8-5

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Whop Philyor	18	194	10.8	1	65
Nick Westbrook	15	160	10.7	1	23
Donavan Hale	14	176	10.6	3	34

### Team Offensive Stats

Points Per Game – 28.2  
Rushing Yards Per Game – 179.4  
Passing Yards Per Game – 232.8  
Total Offense Avg. Per Game – 412.2

### 2018 Schedule

Date	Opponent	Result/Time (ET)
Sept. 1	at FIU	W, 38-28
Sept. 8	VIRGINIA	W, 20-16
Sept. 15	BALL STATE	W, 38-10
Sept. 22	MICHIGAN STATE	L, 35-21
Sept. 29	at Rutgers	W, 24-17
Oct. 6	at Ohio State	4 p.m.
Oct. 13	IOWA	Noon
Oct. 20	PENN STATE	TBA
Oct. 26	at Minnesota	8 p.m.
Nov. 10	MARYLAND	TBA
Nov. 17	at Michigan	TBA
Nov. 24	PURDUE	TBA

### Top Defensive Players

Def. Leaders	Solo	Ast.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Jonathan Crawford	21	5	26	3.0-12	1.0-8
Dameon Willis Jr.	15	7	22	2.0-2	–
Raekwon Jones	13	4	17	3.5-5	1.0-2
Marcelino Ball	14	2	16	4.0-26	2.0-18
T.D. Roof	13	2	15	2.0-7	1.0-6
Khalil Bryant	8	6	14	–	–

Interceptions	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Jonathan Crawford	1	33	33.0	1	33
Khalil Bryant	1	4	4.0	0	4

### Team Defensive Stats

Points Per Game Allowed – 21.2  
Rushing Yards Per Game Allowed – 158.2  
Passing Yards Per Game Allowed – 163.6  
Total Offense Avg. Per Game Allowed – 321.8

success early this season, and Allen said he knew immediately in fall camp that Scott (6-2, 236) was going to be a special back for the Hoosiers.

"He's a big boy now and he's just naturally very strong, he has really good patience and vision," Allen said following Scott's performance against the Cavaliers. "I noticed that right away in fall camp. I knew this kid was going to be special. I just didn't know when he was going to get his shot, and obviously due to injuries and the situations we have right now, he got it early and he's taken advantage of it. I think he's going to be a pretty special one."

Joining Scott in the backfield is quarterback Peyton Ramsey. A sophomore, Ramsey took over for Richard Lagow early in the 2017 season but dealt with multiple injuries throughout the year.

After earning the starting quarterback job outright during the offseason, Ramsey

led the Hoosiers to the perfect 3-0 start before getting his first taste of adversity this year against Michigan State. A dual-threat quarterback, Ramsey was forced to throw a career-high 46 passes against the Spartans and threw two of his five interceptions this season in the loss. Allen was asked following that game if he considered playing backup Michael Penix in meaningful reps but chalked the loss up to poor team play instead of pinning it on his quarterback.

"So obviously we're not good enough offensively and so, but then defense had their chance to get the ball back and give our offense a chance to go win the game and the defense did not take care of their job," he said. "So it's a team loss."

Penix, a true freshman, was the second-highest rated recruit in Indiana's 2018 recruiting class and was ranked as the No. 21 quarterback prospect in the nation.

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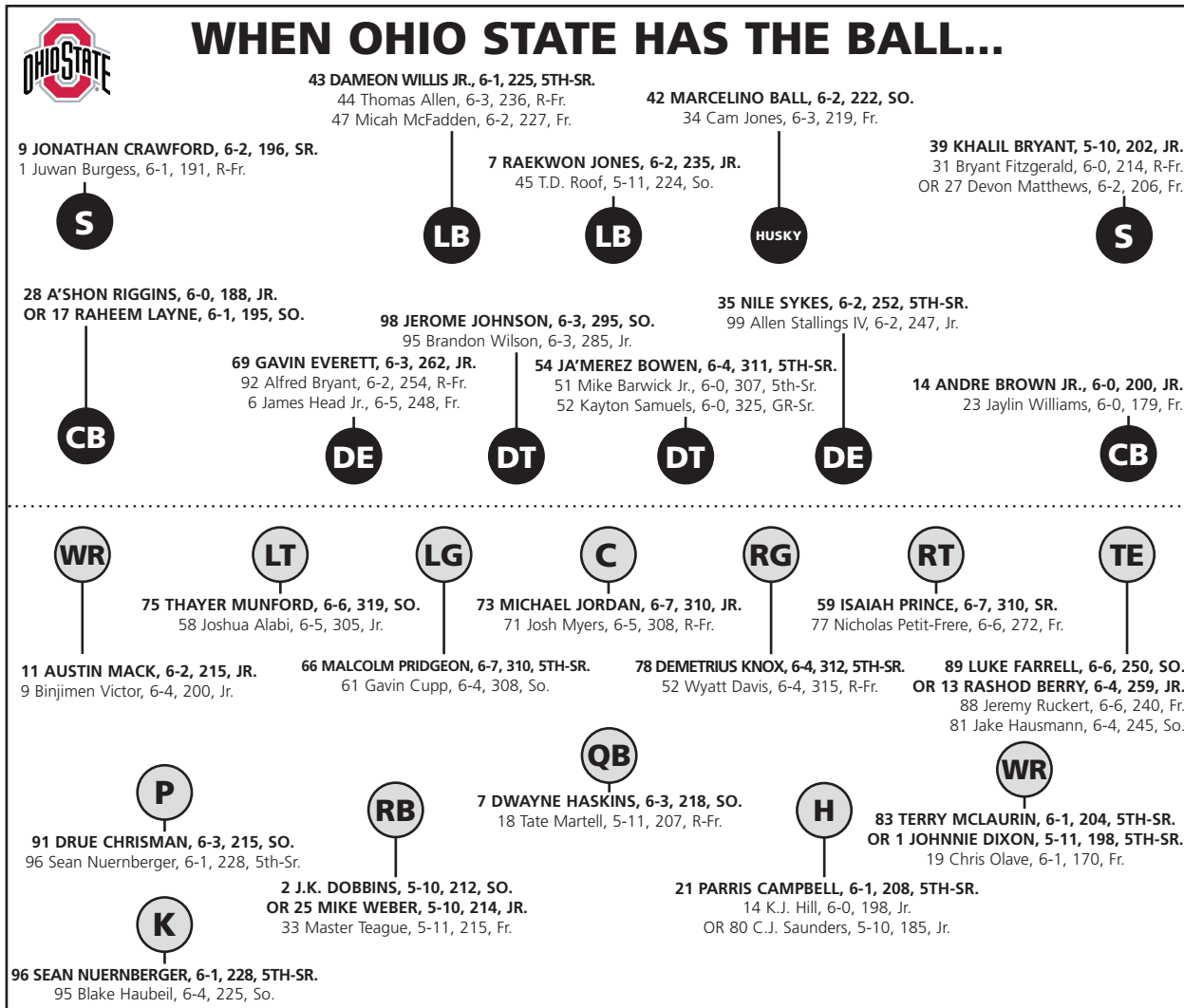


# Ohio State vs. Indiana

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## Projected Depth Charts



## How We See It

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

One of the objectives in playing Indiana will be to re-establish the running game. The Buckeyes rank 33rd nationally with 210.4 yards per game after being limited to 119 yards (3.2 per carry) vs. a stout Penn State defense. Of course, Ohio State could not get anything going offensively in the first half vs. the Nittany Lions, and trailing by 12 in the fourth quarter meant more passes than runs. The good news for the Buckeyes is that late in the game both J.K. Dobbins and Mike Weber were able to collect substantial and key yardage behind the offensive line when it counted. Dobbins finished with 57 yards and Weber 51. The yardage will be there for the taking against the Hoosiers (4-1, 1-1 Big Ten), who are 67th against the run, conceding 158.2 yards a game. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

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

The Hoosiers will not strike fear with their running game, which ranks 63rd with an average of 179.4 yards. But the Buckeyes (5-0, 2-0) are only 62nd vs. the rush (154.8) and are prone to giving up big plays, and they could not handle Penn State quarterback Trace McSorley, who torched them for 175 yards on the ground, including a 51-yard gallop. Indiana QB Peyton Ramsey (despite the first name) is not on the same level as McSorley, but he is a good passer and can run when called upon, presenting the Buckeyes' with another challenge. He rushed for 51 yards and a touchdown in the 24-17 win over Rutgers on Sept. 29 and has 170 rushing yards for the season. The Hoosiers' top runner is Stevie Scott who has 464 yards on 4.7 yards a carry. **EDGE: EVEN**

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

This would appear to be a mismatch with Dwayne Haskins ranking 15th while averaging 292.8 yards through the air with 19 TDs vs. two picks. His 70.8 passing percentage would be even higher if his receivers weren't dropping two or three passes a game. They make up for the occasional slips with some sensational plays like the grab Binjimen Victor had for a 47-yard score vs. Penn State. Indiana is 14th nationally against the pass (163.6 yards) and has given up six touchdowns while making five picks. Still, the Buckeyes have way too many options, and Haskins' confidence is sky high after winning 27-26 at Penn State on Sept. 29. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

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

Ramsey was 27 of 40 for 288 yards against Rutgers but could have been even better because two of his top receivers had injuries and were rested to have them ready for the Buckeyes. Whop Philyor, one of those rested, has a team-best 194 yards (10.8 a catch) and a TD. Luke Timian, the other, has 13 catches for 138 yards (10.6). Also, Donovan Hale leads the team with three TD catches. Indiana is 60th at 232.8 yards a game. OSU is a not-so-great 48th (202.2) after being lit up by McSorley for 286 yards, including a 93-yard TD to KJ Hamler for the longest pass play ever against the Buckeyes. Fortunately for OSU, they have defensive end Chase Young to create havoc in the backfield. Safety Isaiah Pryor is suspended for the first half of the game because of targeting against Penn State. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### SPECIAL TEAMS

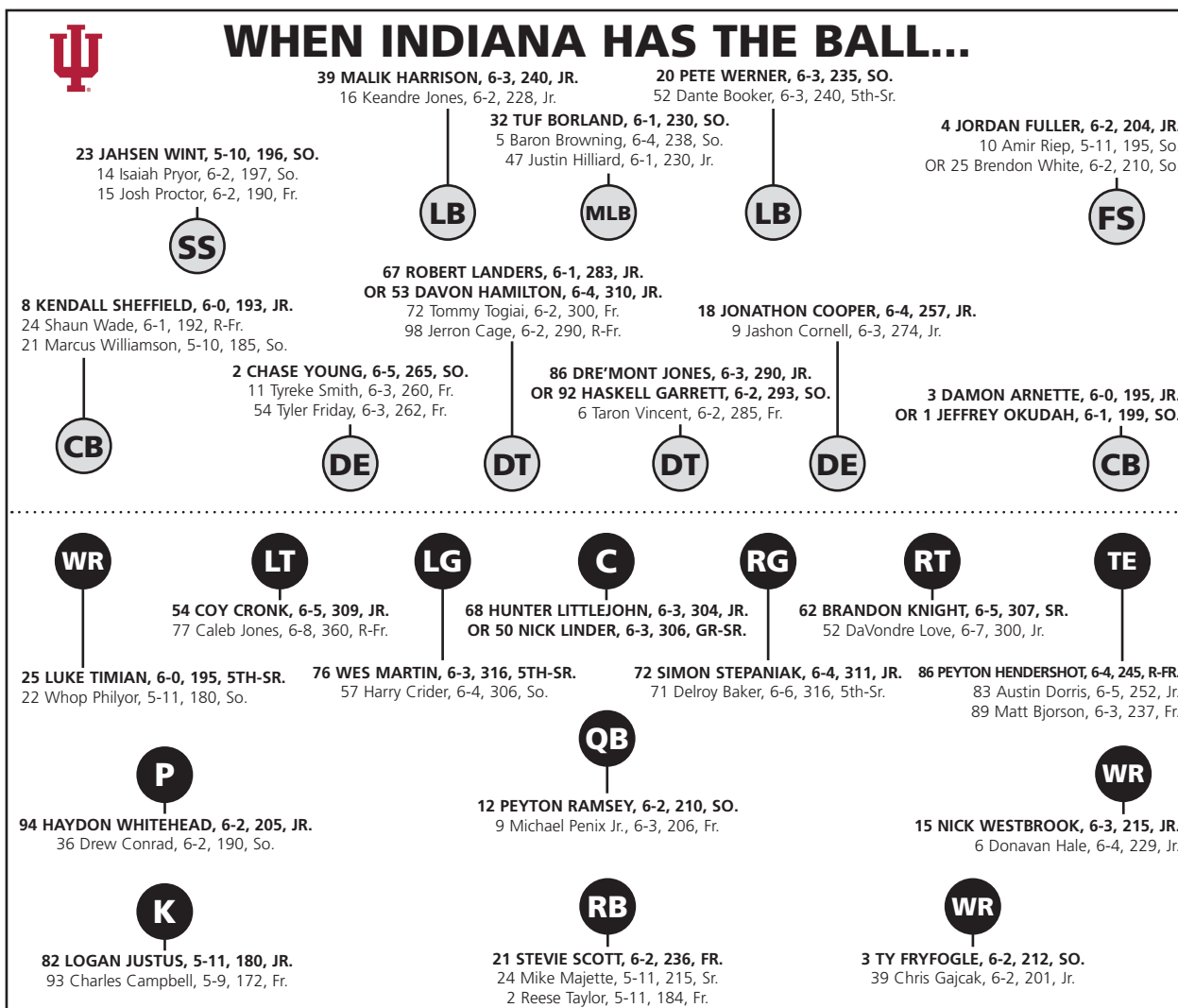
Punter Drue Chrisman was the star for the Buckeyes while their offense lagged against the Nittany Lions. He averaged 47.9 yards on nine kicks with a long of 58 and three inside the 20. Indiana will counter with J-Shun Harris II, who has overcome three ACL injuries to rank 11th nationally with 26.0 yards per punt return. He has an 86-yard TD and is averaging 14.4 yards a return. Logan Justus has 5 of 6 field goals with a long of 44 for the Hoosiers. **EDGE: EVEN**

### INTANGIBLES

The first thought is that the Buckeyes will have a major letdown after their stirring comeback win at then-No. 9 Penn State. A game like that can take a physical and emotional toll. The coaching staff will not let the team slip, though, because there were simply too many mistakes, especially on special teams where unsportsmanlike conduct calls on kickoffs continue to be a problem. Who's their coach, anyway? Ohio State had 10 penalties for 105 yards vs. PSU. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### PREDICTION

Indiana is a respectable team and showing signs of growth. If they can catch the Buckeyes off guard they may make the Buckeyes squirm for a while, but they don't have the horses to run with Ohio State for 60 minutes. Heck, OSU backup quarterback Tate Martell, who doesn't get a chance to play against good teams such as TCU and Penn State, will likely see the field again. **OHIO STATE 49, INDIANA 17**





# Greene Proud Of Trailblazer Role At Ohio State

By MARK REA  
BSB Managing Editor Emeritus

Dwayne Haskins owes a debt of gratitude to Cornelius Greene (now Green). Likewise for J.T. Barrett, Cardale Jones and Braxton Miller as well as Terrelle Pryor and Troy Smith.

As a sign of an ever-evolving society, no one takes much notice these days of the fact that nearly every starting quarterback at Ohio State over the past dozen or so years has been an African-American. But in the mid-1970s, black quarterbacks were still very much a rarity – so much so that when Greene became the starter for the Buckeyes in 1973, he became the first African-American ever to start under center at Ohio State.

Some 45 years later, most of Greene's records have been eclipsed. For example, when he finished his OSU career, he was the only player in program history to account for at least 2,000 yards rushing and 2,000 yards passing. Barrett, Miller and Pryor each accomplished that feat. Greene was also second only to Archie Griffin in terms of career total offense at Ohio State. He is now 14th on that list and destined this year to drop another notch if Haskins keeps up his present pace.

Yet the mantle of being the trailblazer for such a talented group of quarterbacks is one Greene has always worn with honor.

"Of course, I'm proud about it," he said. "Back then, I realized the significance of it, but there really wasn't much time I spent thinking about it. There was just so much to learn and so

much to do that I tried to block that side of it out even though it was very significant. You know, I got a lot of racial letters and taunts and phone calls and things like that, but I was able to kind of block that out.

"I was always able to concentrate on what I was supposed to be doing. Don't get me wrong. I knew I was always going to be considered an African-American quarterback and I was always going to be the first African-American quarterback at Ohio State as well. But more important to me was that I wanted to go down as being a great quarterback."

As time has passed, and Greene's numbers have been surpassed, his legacy has not diminished one iota in the eyes of his teammates.

"Corny knew what the odds were and the obstacles he was facing," Griffin said. "But he had a lot of confidence in himself, and he chose to take the hard road when a lot of people were telling him he was crazy. He left his hometown, left his friends, went to an entirely new place with completely new surroundings and worked his tail off. I don't know that I could have done something like that at that time in my life, and I have always admired him for that."

Greene was born in 1954 into one of the many poverty-stricken ghettos scattered throughout Washington, D.C. He was a naturally gifted athlete and always on the move, eager to get out of the projects as quickly as possible. He ran with a small group of close-knit

neighborhood friends who called him Butch and needled him endlessly about his extremely slight build, often telling him he was so skinny, his pants had only one belt loop.

The youngster would always flash a bright smile and chuckle along with the joke, but his sunny disposition was just a mask, a defense mechanism for the despair he faced at home.

His father was blind, and his four sisters and three brothers tried to help their mother as best they could. Young Cornelius was shuttled off

to be raised by his aunt and uncle, and he spent many of his summers staying with other family members in Flint, Mich. The youngster dreamed of the day when he could strike out on his own, and it didn't take long for him to figure the best way out of his situation was to get an education – and the only way to do that was through athletics.

Luckily for him, he had been bestowed with natural instincts and lightning speed, and despite his small frame, he quickly earned renown as one of the most electrifying athletes in the D.C. area.

At Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, a predominantly black school named for one of the first nationally-accepted African-American writers, Greene excelled in everything he tried. He averaged 25 points per game in basketball, using his catlike quickness in the open court to slash to the basket. His keen hand-to-eye coordination made him a .500 hitter on the baseball team, while a strong, whip-like arm led to a 30-2 career record as a pitcher.

But it was football where his skills were really on display as a freelancing, scrambling quarterback whose now-you-see-him-now-you-don't ability made Dunbar one of the top high school programs in the area.

Like most of his friends, Greene grew up a fan of the Washington Redskins, who had an array of star players including such future Pro Football Hall of Famers as receivers Charley Taylor and Bobby Mitchell, linebacker Chris Hanburger and quarterback Sonny Jurgensen. During a four-year span between 1966 and 1969, Jurgensen led the league in passing yardage. But the aging Jurgensen – known almost as well for the paunch under his belt as his powerful right arm – was not the kind of quarterback Greene wanted to emulate.

"Sonny was my favorite because he played for the Redskins, but Fran Tarkenton was the guy I would say I most patterned myself after," Greene said. "He was a person that was more my size, and he scrambled around a lot. That's what I liked to do, and that's what I liked about him."

Tarkenton, who was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame following an 18-year career spent with the Minnesota Vikings and New York Giants, earned his nickname "The Scrambler" for his ability to elude would-be tacklers in the backfield and turn potential sacks into positive yardage.

But while Tarkenton got a reputation for being an elusive quarterback, he was also a prolific one. When he retired after the 1978 season, he was the NFL's all-time career leader with 47,003 passing yards, a figure that still ranks No. 11 in league history.

"I wanted to be like Tarkenton," Greene said. "I wanted to be the guy who could run and pass. I wanted to be the guy who could beat you all kinds of ways."

## Sparty's Loss, OSU's Gain

More than 80 colleges and universities

offered enticements of one sort or another to get Greene's name on a national letter of intent. He was even offered a small bonus by the Baltimore Orioles to join their minor league organization as a shortstop.

"They offered \$25,000, which at that time was more money than I ever knew existed," he said. "But I was looking for something more. I wanted an education."

Michigan State seemed a perfect fit. Its sprawling campus in East Lansing was less than an hour west of Flint where he had spent several summers, and the Spartans had been recruiting Greene for years, using former player Jimmy Raye – that school's first black starting quarterback – to convince the youngster to come to Michigan State.

But on his official recruiting visit to East Lansing, Greene was abandoned at a party by his host player, leaving the youngster to find his own way back to his hotel. The Spartans were quickly eliminated.

A few weeks later, Greene found himself at another party, this time at Ohio State with a completely different vibe.

"I hit it off with some other black players who took me under their wing," he said. "We hung out, went to some parties, hung around with some white guys and it gave me a good feeling. I was in an environment with less than 5 percent blacks, but I felt comfortable. It felt like a fraternity."

When he returned home to D.C. and told everyone he was going to sign with Ohio State, his decision was met with derision and scorn. Friends, rival recruiters and even family members expressed their doubt, reminding Greene what he already knew.

"They said Ohio State had never had a black quarterback or a black middle linebacker because those positions were supposed to be for the smartest players," he said. "But to me, that was just an old stereotype. Plus, I was cocky enough that I wanted to do whatever other people told me I couldn't. I wanted to show them that I could."

When he arrived in Columbus, however, he thought he had made the biggest mistake of his life. His roommate was supposed to be fellow freshman Woodrow Roach, another black player the Buckeyes had recruited out of the D.C. area. But after his first day of summer practice, Greene returned to his dorm room at Stradley Hall to find Brian Baschnagel, a running back from the Pittsburgh suburbs, unpacking his bags. Head coach Woody Hayes was already testing his freshman quarterback's mettle. If Greene was going to be the first black starter at his position in program history, he had better learn how to relate to his white teammates.

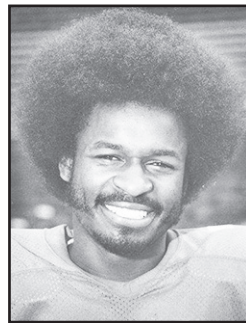
Somehow, the two hit it off when they discovered they had more in common than they thought.

"I was just worried about me making the team and maintaining a starting position, and to me, Corny was in the same boat as I was," said Baschnagel, whose mop top of black hair and quintessentially-'70s mustache was in sharp contrast to his roommate's towering Afro hairstyle. "There were a lot of athletes out there, black and white, who were fighting for security on the team, trying to get some playing time on the field. The reality, at least for me personally, was that I was oblivious to color."

Greene agreed.

"I'd never even been around white people, but Brian and I ended up as best friends," he said. "We did everything as brothers, and he taught me a lot. We covered for each other and shared our backgrounds. The whole experience made me a better person."

It was a good thing Greene was making



Cornelius Greene

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## THE OHIO STATE QUARTERBACK

new friends among his teammates because he wasn't endearing himself to the Ohio State coaching staff. He was late for his first team meeting and got an earful from Hayes. He was sixth on the depth chart at quarterback as he struggled to grasp an offensive scheme much different from the one he ran in high school, and whenever he did get the rare chance to show what he could do, it usually ended in disaster.

"The starter, Greg Hare, was having a bad day, so Woody called me up," Greene remembered. "But I didn't know the plays and didn't have the sense to tell him. He called the play in the huddle, but I turned the wrong way and ran into the fullback and fumbled. Woody goes off on me, screaming, 'Get him out of here!' So, I went right back down (the depth chart). I had spent all of about two minutes on the varsity and I was devastated."

"For the rest of the summer, I was getting ulcers and couldn't sleep. I finally went to our team doctor, who told me not to worry. He said I was about the fifth quarterback Woody had given an ulcer to."

Greene's contribution to the Buckeyes as a freshman in 1972 were negligible. He attempted one pass – which fell incomplete – ran the ball three times for a net minus-14 yards, and returned three kickoffs (all during the 42-17 Rose Bowl loss to USC) for an average of 18.7 yards per attempt. He wasn't even listed in the team's media guide that year.

"When I first got to Columbus, Woody told me straight-out that I'd only play if I was good enough," Greene said. "That first year, I wasn't good enough. I didn't think so then and I was upset about it. But I knew deep down that I was going to have to get better if I wanted to play. So, I kept working and working and working."

### Trailblazing Quarterback

Meanwhile, Hayes continued to ride his

young quarterback mercilessly, a ritual Greene once tried to describe by saying, "He'd land on you and get outrageous." But the legendary coach obviously saw tremendous potential in his young quarterback.

An excellent spring camp in 1973 followed by more improvement in the fall pushed Greene to No. 2 on the depth chart behind Hare. Then, when the senior co-captain pulled a hamstring muscle just before the season opener against Minnesota, the scrawny sophomore from the D.C. ghetto was about to make history as the first black player to start at quarterback for the Buckeyes.

"It was surprising, it was fearful – there was a lot going through my mind," Greene said of that first starting assignment. "But for me, I knew I was prepared. I guess the butterflies of starting your first game, it seemed like I had those same butterflies almost before every game, so I didn't see too much difference. I knew the significance of it – of what I was doing – but there was so much to learn and so much to do that I tried to block that side of it out."

Greene led the Buckeyes to a 56-7 rout of the Golden Gophers despite completing only 1 of 3 pass attempts for 10 yards. He operated the offense smoothly thanks to a 383-yard rushing attack that included 84 yards of his own and his first collegiate touchdown, a 4-yard run midway through the first quarter that staked Ohio State to a 14-0 advantage.

One week later, Greene had the first of four career 100-yard rushing performances, totaling 113 yards and a pair of touchdowns during a 37-3 victory against TCU.

The Buckeyes went on to enjoy a 10-0-1 record that season with the only blemish a 10-10 tie in the regular-season finale at Michigan. OSU topped things off with a 42-21 pasting of No. 7-ranked USC in the Rose Bowl, a game in which Greene earned most valuable player

honors after he threw for 129 yards and rushed for 45 more and a touchdown that broke a 21-21 tie early in the third quarter.

Ohio State wasn't the only Big Ten school to field a black quarterback that season – Tony Dungy was at Minnesota, Tyrone Willingham was at Michigan State and Dennis Franklin was at Michigan – but the Buckeyes had the best as Greene went on to become one of the most prolific dual-threat quarterbacks in school history as well as one of the most successful.

During his three seasons as the starter, he led the Buckeyes to Big Ten championships and Rose Bowl appearances every year. He was named to the all-conference first team in 1974 and '75 – a feat not accomplished by an OSU quarterback since Don Scott in 1939 and 1940 – and earned team most valuable player honors as a senior despite playing on the same team as Griffin, who won his second Heisman Trophy that year.

It was Griffin himself who cast the deciding ballot for Greene, paving the way for the senior quarterback to be named the Big Ten's Most Valuable Player in 1975.

"Corny was our leader on and off the field," Griffin said. "There was never any question in my mind who our team MVP was that year."

Greene finished his college career with 2,348 yards passing, a total that ranked third best in program history at the time. Making the number even more remarkable is that it was achieved during a time when the Buckeyes ran the ball almost 75 percent of the time while Griffin was enjoying back-to-back Heisman Trophy seasons.

Likewise, Greene's career rushing total of 2,080 yards was testament to his athleticism. It was the school rushing record for quarterbacks that stayed on the books for 35 years until Pryor broke it in 2010.

One thing few if any Ohio State quarter-

backs could match Greene for, though, was flash. He gave himself the nickname "Mr. Flamboyant," which was quickly shortened to "Flam," and he flashed a quick, 50,000-watt smile that could light up a city block. Long before seemingly every star player had a customized vehicle parked in the team lot, Greene toolled around Columbus in a flashy Pontiac Grand Prix with "FLAM 7" on his custom license plates, and he began showing up for team functions dressed in bold-colored, three-piece suits and platform shoes. It wasn't long before his sartorial splendor rubbed off on his teammates.

"When I first met Archie, he wore black shoes with everything," Greene said. "I always used to say I was flashy and he was classy. But I got him shaped up. It wasn't long before he got red shoes, green shoes, all kinds of color shoes. We had a ball."

In return, Griffin turned his friend onto something with a higher calling.

"When I first got to Ohio State and I wasn't starting right away, I was very disappointed, very low," Greene said. "I'd sit there watching TV, and Archie, he'd be reading the Bible. It got to working on me, you know, and pretty soon he made me receive Jesus Christ into my life."

"And it came in handy, too. I found that being a quarterback under Woody Hayes, you needed all the faith you could get."

As for how the Ohio State football program has evolved since his playing days, Greene admits to a little bit of jealousy.

"With the read-pass option and all the spread offenses of today," he said, flashing his trademark smile, "I would be a Heisman Trophy winner. No doubt about it."

*Buckeye Sports Bulletin will be running features on Ohio State quarterbacks throughout the 2018 football season.*

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# Ohio State Ends Commitment Drought For 2019

Two weeks into head coach Urban Meyer's full-time return to Ohio State, the Buckeyes finally have some serious momentum brewing on the recruiting board. Most importantly, though, OSU is in the thick of potentially breaking through with several priority prospects in the 2019 class.

## RECRUITING OUTLOOK Garrett Stepien

The surge started Sept. 28 when Ohio State ended its commitment drought of two months and one day as it hauled in a pledge from four-star wide receiver and top-130 overall prospect Jameson Williams — its top target at the position — in the current cycle.

With the addition, the Buckeyes saw their class increase to 15 members as they moved up four spots from No. 15 to No. 11 in the 247Sports composite team recruiting rankings for 2019. The next cycle, meanwhile, still has the Buckeyes firmly at No. 3 in the 247Sports composite team recruiting rankings with six early commitments aboard for 2020.

To stay in the know on Ohio State recruiting, head to BSB's 24/7, full-service website, 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 to receive simple instructions on further access.

### 2019 4-Star WR Commits To OSU

The 2019 recruiting class got the jolt it needed Sept. 28 when Williams, a St. Louis Cardinal Ritter College Prep four-star wide receiver, announced in favor of the Buckeyes. The 6-1½, 169-pound wideout took to Twitter at 3:39 p.m. ET when he shared his OSU decision.

In a video posted with the caption "Committed!" Williams was shown running routes and catching passes on a football field as coaches and mentors were describing the wide receiver.

"One year, he broke his arm," one said. "He told the coach, 'Tape it up. Tell the ref to make him let me play.' The ref made him get into the ambulance. This kid is a warrior — undoubtedly great."

"Jameson 'Juice' — man, he's the real deal," another said. "Explosive kid has deep passion about the game. He does everything you ask him to do, plus more. The kid breathes the game. He eats the game. He's definitely a kid that's going to be on Sundays."

The video ends with Cardinal Ritter head coach Brandon Gregory before Williams turns around with a scarlet Buckeyes shirt and forms an overhead "O" with his arms.

"What up, Jame-o, this is Coach B.G.," Gregory said. "Control what you can control. Trust in the process. You did both, and for

## 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
Jameson Williams	WR	6-1½	169	★★★★	St. Louis Cardinal Ritter
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

that, I'm proud of you, kid. This moment is well deserving. Wish you nothing but the best. It's been a pleasure being your coach. But with that being said, let's let the world know where you will be committing to."

Williams is the 247Sports composite's No. 130 overall prospect, No. 24 wide receiver and No. 2 player in Missouri. His pledge

provides Ohio State with its 15th member and second wideout for the current cycle, joining Austin (Texas) Lake Travis five-star wide receiver Garrett Wilson.

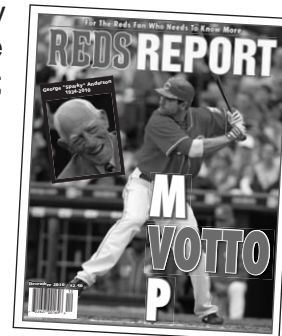
The Buckeyes extended Williams an offer Aug. 30 of last year. He followed up with unofficial visits Nov. 11 for OSU's 48-3 rout of Michigan State and April 8 during spring camp.

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# ASK AN ANALYST

## With CBS Sports Network's Tom Lemming

**What are your thoughts on Parkersburg, W.Va., four-star tight end Brenton Strange, who recently visited Ohio State and Penn State, as a prospect and how he potentially fits into the Buckeyes' 2019 recruiting class?**

"They've always done well (in West Virginia). There's not a lot of talent in West Virginia, but they're recruiting it well. They've got one of the two best players from the state committed, the tackle (Huntington Spring Valley 2019 four-star Doug Nester), who I really like. So I'm sure that's how – when they hit (Nester), that's how they got to (Strange) because there's only four or five guys in the whole state that you'd want to even look at.

"But Strange is a good ballplayer. He's really come up, too. When I went there a year ago, he was just considered a possibility for Ohio State. He's up now. Some people have him ranked as a four-star guy. The ranking always comes by who offers, so Ohio State offers and it automatically becomes a four-star player. But he was always a good player. I think he just took some time for people to realize that he is a really good ballplayer. I think athletes like (Strange) can flourish in any offense – Ohio State or pure pro-style."

**Penn State has recruited its region effectively since head coach James Franklin arrived in 2014, but Ohio State has been in plenty of battles as well over the years. How have the Buckeyes targeted**

**the Keystone State and its surrounding areas under head coach Urban Meyer? How do they stack up with Franklin's Nittany Lions?**

"You see SEC recruiting with Urban (Florida head coach from 2005-10) and Franklin (Vanderbilt head coach from 2011-13). These are guys that went through the wars in the SEC and they came out as two of the best recruiters in the country, which they are. You see the battles. Franklin is as good as Urban when it comes to recruiting. He stays on top of the players. He's a head coach. Meyer and Franklin, their hobby is recruiting – not golf or anything else. Their hobby is recruiting.

"Because I'm around the country all the time, I've seen these guys. What I notice is Urban and Franklin actually call the top players over the phone, a good number of them, every week and stay in touch with them. Most head coaches leave that to the assistant coaches. (Alabama head coach) Nick Saban's the same way as these two. There aren't too many head coaches that work recruits really hard."

**With the new redshirt rule, unexpected consequences have surfaced at several schools regarding quarterback transfers. How much has it or will it impact the way programs approach quarterback recruiting? Do you feel like a new era is coming up with freshman quarterbacks being ready right away?**

"Yes, I do see that because now with the ability to

transfer without a whole lot of problems the kids that get beat out are going to be leaving. So the head coaches don't want to be caught short, which is going to happen if they don't recruit in an abundance of quarterbacks in the young classes because you're going to see – I think now there's a revolving door of quarterbacks coming and going because they aren't starting and they aren't happy when they get beat out. The big shocker is the kid at Alabama, Jalen Hurts. I thought for sure that he would leave. He's a possibility. Because he has another year anyway, there was a lot of talk that he would leave.

"I think you'll be seeing that a lot now with kids, especially at the quarterback position, just because if they get beat out by somebody the same age or younger, really their careers are just about over unless the starter suffers an unfortunate injury. So I can see the ones with confidence in themselves leaving. Kelly Bryant had a great career going at Clemson. To me, that's strange that they would put Trevor Lawrence ahead of him.

"I imagine freshmen would be redshirted if they weren't ready. Because of the new rules, almost all of these quarterbacks early enroll after midterm graduation from high school. So they aren't your average freshmen. No longer are they the wide-eyed freshmen usually coming in for August training camp. They're somewhat veteran-type of players when you take into account that they've been on campus for spring ball and summer workouts."

On June 14, Williams included the Buckeyes in his final five with Nebraska, Oregon, Alabama and UCLA. He officially visited Columbus the weekend of June 22-24, the first of his five available trips, putting

OSU in early command after Williams unofficially visited Alabama from June 19 into the weekend.

"When I talked to him (about the official visit) he loved it," Gregory told BSB in June.

"He talked about how they went bowling. I'm like, 'Jameson, bowling is bowling.' But it was just something about it. Then he got to visit (Coach Meyer's) house and go swimming and just do non-football related stuff

where he said it just felt more like a family atmosphere. That's what we preach here at Cardinal Ritter. So for him to leave one

**Continued On Page 24**

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# Williams Becomes 1st Commit Since Meyer's Return

Continued From Page 23

family atmosphere into another one I think would be great for him. Just talking to him a little bit about (the official visit), he enjoyed it a lot."

Williams marks Meyer's first commitment after his return from the head coach's three-game suspension.

After unofficial visits to Oregon (June 27) and Nebraska (June 31), he was set to take four more of his official visits in the fall. Williams made his planned trip Sept. 15 at UCLA for the Bruins' 38-14 loss to Fresno State but then announced Sept. 18 that he had canceled his subsequent trip Sept. 22 to Oregon for the Ducks' prime-time game against Stanford. Nebraska (Sept. 29 vs. Purdue) and Alabama (Oct. 13 vs. Missouri) were his other scheduled official visits before he committed to Ohio State.

CBS Sports Network national recruiting analyst Tom Lemming scouted Williams last November, watching film with the wide receiver and Gregory while in St. Louis. What are the Buckeyes getting in Williams?

"He's a big-time talent," Lemming told BSB. "I spent time with him and his coach in the press box last Thanksgiving Day in the morning. We were down in St. Louis, and I said, 'Before we have all of that holiday festivities, I have to make one stop.' So I went and saw Jameson because I had missed him during my other St. Louis trips. The coach brought him out, we're in the press box ... and then we watched film.

"The kid's the real deal. He's a track star, he's got great hands, he's a big-time ballplayer, and Ohio State's had some success with St. Louis since they got Ezekiel Elliott from St. Louis. He's a terrific wide receiver. He's got the speed to stretch the defense.

"But also, he's a strong kid with strong hands and the kind of guy that can beat you over the middle. He's, I think, the complete wide receiver. I really like him a lot. I liked him a lot more after I met him in person and watched him on film. He was even better than I first thought he was. He's legit, four-plus-star guy."

OSU's offense, which increasingly incorporates a pass-heavy approach under offensive play-caller Ryan Day, fits Williams because of his all-around ability and how much speed he possesses.

"He'll fit in with any offense with his speed and his hands," Lemming said of Williams. "Wide receivers fit into any offense. It's the one position where athletic ability rules out. But he's going to go. Obviously, he's got to learn some of the ways, but he'll be a good one. (Interim OSU receivers coach) Brian Hartline, he was one of my All-Americans. He knows the position, so he'll do a real good job there coaching Williams. He's the type of

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

### 30 Years Ago – 1988

Despite Ohio State's poor performance on the field Oct. 1 in a 31-12 loss to Illinois, the Buckeyes made waves on the recruiting trail when they hosted an abundance of prospects at Ohio Stadium.

As recruiting began to evolve in the late 1980s, OSU was hosting between 30 and 45 high school players per home game. Complimentary tickets to the games included tours of the Horseshoe and discussions with head coach John Cooper plus the rest of the staff.

Among the recruits, Columbus Independence wingback Roger Harper came away impressed with what Ohio State had to offer. As a local product, he had been to plenty of Buckeye games, but the all-access experience made a difference this time around. "I like the new coaching staff," Harper said. "They seem to be more down to earth. They're a nice group of folks."

### 25 Years Ago – 1993

Ohio State and Penn State had been battling for top recruits over the years, and 1993 was no different when the Nittany Lions edged the Buckeyes for inside linebacker Clint Seace's commitment.

The Coatesville, Pa., product chose PSU despite OSU's confidence in its ability to lure Seace out of the Keystone State. The 6-3, 245-pounder had been very complimentary of Ohio State after an unofficial visit to campus over the summer. In fact, he was rumored to be a Buckeye lean prior to his Penn State announcement.

With a time of 4.7 seconds in the 40-yard dash and a 4.0 grade-point average, Seace was an intriguing prospect on and off the field.

### 20 Years Ago – 1998

Among the 30-plus prospects in attendance Oct. 3 for No. 1 Ohio State's 28-9 victory over No. 7 Penn State, the Buckeyes made progress with one of their top targets, Canadian running back Kerry Carter.

The 6-2, 215-pounder from Vaughn (Ontario) Henry Carr Secondary near Toronto sized up as OSU's prototypical tailback recruit

with a time of 4.45 seconds in the 40-yard dash. He was blown away by his trip, putting Ohio State in heavy consideration between official visits Sept. 12 to Michigan State and Oct. 10 to Michigan.

"I am really considering it," Carter said of the Buckeyes. "They are No. 1 on my list. I got to spend time with (running backs coach Tim) Spencer. He's one of the best coaches I've seen so far. He's a lot of fun to be around, but he is straight-up with you.

"He told me about my chances at Ohio State, and I think it's a great opportunity. They have a history of running backs and big running backs, like myself."

### 15 Years Ago – 2003

Ohio State blanked Northwestern in a 20-0 shutout Sept. 27 at Ohio Stadium, where the Buckeyes hosted a small but quality group of recruits.

Among the OSU prospects on hand in Columbus were the Miami Edison duo of offensive lineman Jacky Claude (6-4, 290) and outside linebacker Brouce Mompremier (6-0, 210). The out-of-state targets made their trip from south Florida about 24 hours after they helped Edison to a 9-7 win over North Miami Beach.

When they arrived for their unofficial visit, Ohio State rolled out the red carpet. Claude, Rivals.com's No. 12 offensive guard, had scheduled an official visit for Dec. 5. He was considering the Buckeyes with Tennessee, Florida State, Florida and Miami (Fla.) at the time. Mompremier was Rivals.com's No. 12 outside linebacker.

"(Linebackers coach Mark) Snyder wanted me to get up there because I couldn't get up to their camp," Mompremier said. "Ohio State is one of the schools I'm looking at."

### 10 Years Ago – 2008

At the end of September, Ohio State boasted the No. 1 recruiting class of 2009 with 25 commitments adding up to 4,578 points in the initial Scout.com rankings. The Buckeyes were well ahead of No. 2 Southern California, which had 3,826 points.

At the time, OSU head coach Jim Tressel was aiming for the top-ranked class for the first time

during any of his recruiting cycles in Columbus. Naples, Fla., fullback Carlos Hyde and Youngstown (Ohio) Cardinal Mooney defensive tackle John Simon highlighted some of the notable names on Ohio State's long list of pledges.

### Five Years Ago – 2013

As the Buckeyes looked to secure depth at running back for the next two recruiting cycles, Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary 2014 four-star Parris Campbell and Canton (Ohio) McKinley 2015 four-star Eric Glover-Williams marked their two commitments at the position at the time.

The search led OSU to contact Wake Forest, N.C., 2015 running back Bryce Love. The 5-10, 210-pounder received an offer from Ohio State on Sept. 25 and looked to visit Columbus in the near future.

"I've been working hard in practice and just preparing each week," said Love, who had additional offers from Clemson and Stanford as his recruitment heated up. "I've also tried to watch more game film, pick up tendencies of teams and just focus on the little things."

### One Year Ago – 2017

Potomac (Md.) Bullis School two-sport athlete Bryson Shaw had been committed to Maryland for lacrosse since September 2015, but his future started to shift when he attracted interest from Ohio State and others for football.

"I think I'm getting pretty close with Ohio State and Penn State, and Duke and North Carolina," Shaw told Scout.com recruiting analyst Brian Dohn. "Those are the schools I'm talking to a lot now. After the season is over, I'm going to visit a lot of schools."

From the same high school as Buckeye quarterback Dwayne Haskins, Shaw (6-2, 175) emerged on OSU's recruiting radar when defensive line coach Larry Johnson and director of player personnel Mark Pantoni identified the 2019 three-star safety.

"The other day (Pantoni) sent me a photo of me playing," Shaw said. "He was like, 'Just watched your game. You balled out. Keep playing.' I've just been going back and forth with him. I talk to them a lot, actually. It's been pretty good."

kid that can come in anywhere and play as a freshman."

Williams' pledge marks Ohio State's 10th four-star prospect, following a duo of five-star recruits and a trio of three-star verbals. Meyer's return is significant, but OSU had Williams in the works for a while.

"I think the momentum was already being built," Lemming said. "(Meyer) was already running things in the offseason, so it wasn't anything too crazy. I don't think (there's a huge momentum shift). I think it's minimal because he's always been there. I don't think that they weren't doing so well. Really, they expected him back, the players did, so it wasn't hurting them that much at all. Him coming back, I don't see too much of a difference (in recruiting) because they knew he

was going to be there. Recruiting has been great from the beginning for Ohio State."

### 2019 4-Star APB Sets OSU OV

For the second time in the past month, Wandale Robinson will be on campus at Ohio State. The four-star all-purpose back from Frankfort (Ky.) Western Hills will be making his fourth trip since April to Columbus the weekend of Oct. 6 when the Buckeyes host Indiana at Ohio Stadium.

Robinson (5-9½, 179), who unofficially visited OSU on Sept. 8 for the 52-3 rout of Rutgers, will be using the fifth of his official visits. He had been undecided between spending the final official visit on Ohio State or Kentucky, but prior to an unofficial visit Sept. 29 for the Wildcats' 24-10 win over South Carolina, his mind was made up on setting the official visit with the Buckeyes.

"I will be taking my last official visit to Ohio State next weekend," Robinson's tweet Sept. 25 read.

Robinson is fresh off an official visit to Alabama – his third trip to Tuscaloosa, Ala., in the past six months. He checked out the Crimson Tide the weekend of Sept. 22 in Alabama's 45-23 victory against Texas A&M.

According to Steve Wiltfong of 247Sports, the Buckeyes are heavily involved with Robinson. He is from the same state as Rondale Moore (5-8½, 174), a four-star wide receiver from Louisville (Ky.) Trinity whom OSU recruited in the class of 2018 but cooled

on late before he signed with Purdue and who has since started his freshman campaign among the best playmakers in college football. Robinson possesses a similar build and electrifying skill set.

"I like Ohio State, and Ohio State's really pushing for Wandale Robinson," Wiltfong said. "I think that if they could go back and do it again, Rondale Moore, who trains at the same facility in Louisville that Wandale Robinson gets his work in, I think Ohio State would have pushed harder for Rondale Moore. They're definitely not going to make that mistake twice. In their mind, they're all in for Wandale Robinson. He's a difference maker on offense."

Robinson is the 247Sports composite's No. 323 overall prospect, No. 4 all-purpose back and No. 7 player in Kentucky for the 2019 recruiting class. He hauled in his offer May 23 from Ohio State, between unofficial visits April 6 and June 14.

### OSU Offers 2020 3-Star Mich. ATH

Ohio State remained active on the trail in the 2020 recruiting class, crossing the state border up north and offering Gibraltar (Mich.) Carlson three-star athlete Ian Stewart.

The 6-3, 200-pounder added offers from Purdue (Aug. 7) and Michigan State (July 31) in the past two months. The Buckeyes mark his 20th scholarship so far. He earned an offer from Michigan at a June 18 camp.



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Offered by Buckeyes special teams coordinator/cornerbacks coach Taver Johnson, who recruits the Detroit area for OSU, Stewart – a wide receiver and free safety in high school – could play either side of the ball at the next level. He is the 247Sports composite's No. 354 overall prospect, No. 69 wide receiver and No. 9 player in Michigan.

#### OSU Offers 2019 3-Star Ohio LB

Ohio State turned heads Sept. 26 when the Buckeyes extended a rare in-state offer, pulling the scholarship trigger on Cleveland St. Ignatius three-star linebacker Tommy Eichenberg.

The 6-3, 225-pounder committed June 27 to Boston College. He was previously being recruited by the Buckeyes, dating back to his unofficial visits to campus in the spring.

"I've been to Ohio State and talked to the coaches," Eichenberg told Bill Greene of 247Sports. "They said these things take time, and they just want to make sure I'm the right fit for them."

OSU hosted Eichenberg at Ohio Stadium for the April 14 spring game, but an offer never materialized. Five games into his senior campaign, though, he evidently got off to a strong enough start for Ohio State to reconsider.

As the Buckeyes look to fill a position of need in their 2019 recruiting class, they look to Eichenberg for one of the potential answers. Eichenberg is the 247Sports composite's No. 420 overall prospect, No. 19 inside linebacker and No. 14 player in Ohio.

#### 4-Star WR Sets OV's, Decision

Ohio State already hauled in a commitment from a four-star wide receiver from the Midwest area in Williams. Could another be on the way down the road?

A top target for the Buckeyes as they build their 2019 recruiting class, Indianapolis Warren Central four-star wide receiver David Bell is set to announce his commitment when he participates in the All-American Bowl. The game, which takes place Jan. 5 at the Alamodome in San Antonio, will be televised starting at 1 p.m. on NBC.

Bell earned an OSU offer Dec. 4, 2017, and unofficially visited June 15. He set his official visit for Nov. 24 when Ohio State hosts Michigan. The 6-2, 185-pounder took the first of his five official visits Sept. 29 when he attended Penn State's whiteout game against the Buckeyes – a 27-26 loss for the Nittany Lions.

Bell's other official visits include Nov. 3 at Purdue, Dec. 7 at Indiana and Dec. 15 at Iowa. He included the Buckeyes in his final five on June 7 with the Hawkeyes, Hoosiers, Boilermakers and Nittany Lions.

#### 2019 4-Star Rekindling Interest

Is Ohio State back in the mix for Odessa (Texas) Permian four-state athlete Peyton Powell? After he attended AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, Sept. 15 as a guest of the Buckeyes' for the 40-28 victory against TCU, Powell has reportedly continued to rekindle a bond with OSU. Powell, who took his first two official visits earlier in the year at Virginia (June 15-17) and Ohio State (June 22-24) before he went to Oklahoma the weekend of Sept. 1, used his fourth official visit the weekend of Sept. 29 for the Horned Frogs' 17-14 edge of Iowa State.

Before the trip to Fort Worth, Texas, it was reported Sept. 27 that Powell and the Sooners had parted ways after previous mutual interest pointed to them as the favorites for his commitment. Going into the visit with TCU, which is recruiting Powell as a wide receiver, Wilftong said a decision was likely to come shortly after between the Horned Frogs and the Buckeyes.

After OSU hosted Powell (6-2, 182) on his official visit over the summer, it was considered the favorite until Oklahoma entered the equa-

tion. With the Sooners now out of the picture, though, the two-team race taking shape creates an interesting development for Powell as Ohio State looks to add further momentum to its 2019 recruiting class. Powell is the 247Sports composite's No. 351 overall prospect, No. 19 athlete and No. 42 player in Texas. He plays quarterback for Permian and is being recruited as a defensive back by the Buckeyes.

#### Cavazos Weathers Injury Scare

One of Ohio State's top commitments for the 2020 recruiting class, Bradenton

(Fla.) IMG Academy four-star defensive back Lejond Cavazos (6-0, 186) weathered an injury scare Sept. 29.

During the first quarter of IMG Academy's 34-7 win over Miami Northwestern, as John Garcia Jr. of 247Sports first reported, Cavazos went down while blocking for 2019 five-star running back Trey Sanders. An ambulance took Cavazos off to a local hospital with what was feared to be a potential season-ending hip injury. However, a best-case scenario unfolded for the future Buckeye, who proved to have nothing more than a bad bruise.

Cavazos committed June 27 to OSU over Oregon, Texas A&M and others among his national list of offers. He was Ohio State's second pledge for a 2020 group.

Cavazos and IMG Academy are off the weekend of Oct. 6 before they resume action Oct. 12 against Clearwater (Fla.) Superior Collegiate.

*For the latest in Ohio State football recruiting, be sure to check out BuckeyeSports.com, free to all BSB print subscribers, daily. For simple sign-up information, see page 5.*

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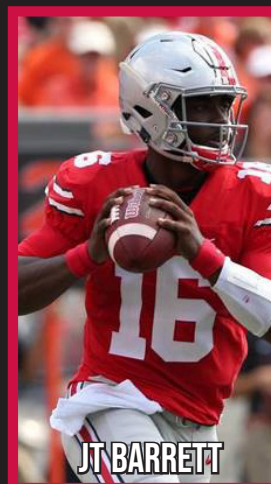
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# Pickerington North Duo Catching OSU's Attention

By GARRETT STEPIEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Since head coach Urban Meyer took over at Ohio State in 2012, he and his coaching staff have cast a wide net in recruiting. With a national-then-local approach, the Buckeyes have gone after top talent from coast to coast and border to border, venturing up north to Michigan while building pipelines to hotbeds such as Florida and Texas.

As a result of OSU's approach in recruiting, local prospects have at times gone overlooked.

For the classes of 2020 and 2021, though, two local prospects have already emerged on Ohio State's radar – from the same high school – in Pickerington (Ohio) North's developing duo of receiver Chris Scott and defensive end Jack Sawyer. About a half-hour drive from Ohio Stadium, the southeast suburb of Columbus has become a football factory between its two high schools — North and Central.

Scott and Sawyer stand out among North's Division I recruits, which include a pair of 2019 prospects committed to Ohio University in tight end Tyler Foster (6-6, 235) and outside linebacker Ben Johnson (6-2, 190). Central boasts several notable names with ties to the Buckeyes, including 2019 three-star defensive tackle DeWayne Carter (6-3, 270) and 2020 three-star quarterback Demeatric Crenshaw (6-2, 205).

Before the players from both teams square off Oct. 12 with North at Central, Scott and Sawyer provided BSB with a

glimpse of what OSU sees in the two targets after North's 52-7 win Sept. 14 at Westerville Central. On both sides of the ball, the two dominated in advance of their unofficial visit to Ohio State for the Sept. 22 game against Tulane.

"I always love coming out on a Friday night," Sawyer told BSB. "It's the best day of the week for me. I just love coming out here competing with my brothers and my teammates, and just getting after the quarterbacks and the running backs. So it's just so much fun. I just love the game of football so much. That's really just a joy."

"When we play efficient and play how we know we can play, we're dangerous – very dangerous," Scott told BSB.

## Next Big Thing

Sawyer, who in 2017 earned his first offer Oct. 25 from former OSU assistant Luke Fickell at Cincinnati, unofficially visited Columbus for the Nov. 18, 2017, game against Illinois. Ohio State kept tabs on the defensive end as he added three Big Ten offers to his growing list, in April resulting in a rare early offer by the Buckeyes to a local prospect for 2021.

"Here, we've obviously had some really special kids," North head coach Nate Hillerich told BSB. "But what's a little different about (Sawyer) is his toughness, his work ethic and attitude. You find so many times that kids – the four-star, the five-star kids – they don't work as hard in the offseason. They don't play every play hard. They take plays off. He's one of those kids that he doesn't do that. He's just a special player. He's a motor. He has all of those things that

are going to make him special at the next level."

Sawyer added 20 pounds of muscle to his 6-5 frame in the offseason, jumping from 200 pounds to 220. He has freakish athleticism, even leading to a Division I basketball offer from former OSU assistant and current Stony Brook head coach Jeff Boals. With the focus on football, though, Sawyer's ties are strong to Meyer and defensive line coach Larry Johnson at Ohio State.

"Coach Johnson, me and him really get along well," Sawyer said. "I like his techniques. I like his coaching styles. He's obviously one of the best in the country at what he does, too, so me and him have a good connection."

A master technician with 22 years of experience as a defensive line coach at the collegiate level, Johnson's approach has already impacted Sawyer. Among other highlight-reel plays against Westerville Central, Sawyer's strip-sack resulting in a touchdown for North showed shades of Nick Bosa. As the Buckeyes' junior defensive end does so often, Sawyer fought off a double-teamed block and hunted down the quarterback for a game-changing play.

"Since I've been watching so much film, I could tell just based on their sets that they were going to try to run a screen," said Sawyer, who posted eight sacks in four games through Sept. 22. "So I came off the edge, and when I saw he was going to try to throw the screen, I jumped up. When he pumped it, I just followed him and just caught him, stripped it and tackled him."

Only a sophomore, Sawyer's recruitment has a long way to go. Despite the hype, however, he knows he has room for improvement.

"I really wanted to improve on my speed and getting off the line of scrimmage for the ball," Sawyer said. "I really want to start hitting those hands on pass rushes and making my moves. I'm trying to perfect my craft. Being a leader for the team, taking charge and making sure guys are in the right spot, coming to practice on time, staying on their grades. So that's really what I've taken to improve upon this season."

## Room To Grow

Although Scott doesn't hold an OSU offer like his teammates, he has drawn interest from an abundance of Power 5 programs, including Ohio State.

Before he set his string of unofficial visits – Sept. 15 at Cincinnati, Sept. 22 at Ohio State and Sept. 29 at Louisville – Scott saw a preview of possible suitors enter his

recruitment on Sept. 1 when coaches were allowed to contact 2020 prospects. He heard from Cincinnati, Ohio State, Pittsburgh and Michigan State, among others.

"Once I build more relationships, get to all the places that the colleges are recruiting me, it's just about building relationships with the coaches, getting my film together and just keep performing at my highest level," said Scott, who hopes to schedule unofficial visits to Michigan, Michigan State, Penn State and Kentucky. "I think things will start to blow up. But I'm just trusting the process and trying to enjoy it."

After he posted five catches for 97 yards against Westerville Central, his momentum carried into the next weekend. Despite North's 31-28 loss to Dublin Coffman, Scott caught seven passes for 108 yards and a touchdown. Johnson and co-defensive coordinator/safeties coach Alex Grinch were in attendance, watching Sawyer and Scott in addition to Dublin Coffman 2020 four-star athlete Michael Drennen (5-11, 190).

"(Scott's) ball skills are tremendous," Hillerich told BSB. "I think he's a kid who is, as a basketball player, really smooth. He gets into and out of routes well. His speed is, I think, underrated. I think we found that out this year. He can turn it on. He runs by people. Him being the guy this year helps. Last year, we had some senior receivers that were probably the No. 1 targets. So him being the No. 1 guy now, he's taken off. I expect him to be a leader for us. I think, come December or January, there will be plenty of Power 5 offers coming his way."

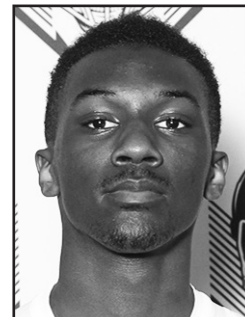
The 6-3, 175-pounder looks the part. With a blend of speed and skill, what more does he need to do for his game – and recruitment – to take off?

"Really just all-around bettering my game – my route running, getting faster, getting bigger and stronger, of course," Scott said. "With the team, it's just been about becoming more of a leader because Jack Sawyer and I were the only two underclassmen on varsity last year. So with the seniors we have now and us, between so many young guys contributing to the team, we just try to be leaders out on the field in that aspect of the game. Just putting in work the whole summer and still during the season and stuff like that."

"I feel like I can beat you deep if you want to press. If you want to play off, I can catch the short passes and make plays for the team. I just think I'm really a solid all-around receiver. Yes, there are things I still do need to work on. But as of now, I just think I'm a really good all-around receiver."



Jack Sawyer



Chris Scott

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# Northwestern's Larkin Retires From Football

After just two seasons at Northwestern, starting running back Jeremy Larkin was forced to end his career four weeks into the 2018 season after being diagnosed with cervical stenosis. The condition is not life threatening, but forced the sophomore running back to medically retire from playing football.

## BIG TEN NOTES

James Grega

According to the University of Virginia, cervical stenosis is a "condition in which the spinal canal is too small for the spinal cord and nerve roots. This can cause damage to the spinal cord, a condition called myelopathy, or pinch nerves as they exit the spinal canal."

According to teammate and linebacker Paddy Fischer, Larkin had complained of numbness, one of the main symptoms of cervical stenosis. Larkin informed head coach

Pat Fitzgerald of his diagnosis Sept. 21, six days after rushing for 82 yards on 22 carries in a 39-34 loss to Akron.

"Football has been a lifelong passion, and it has been a process to reconcile the fact I won't be on that field again, given I've played this game since I was 5 years old," Larkin said in a statement released Sept. 24. "I'm extremely appreciative of the Northwestern sports medicine and athletic training staffs for uncovering this condition, and for my coaches and the medical staff for always putting my health first. I came to this University to engage at the absolute highest level on the field and in the classroom, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to continue one of those while supporting my teammates from the sideline."

Larkin, a Cincinnati native whose father is a cousin to Cincinnati Reds Hall of Famer Barry Larkin, is expected to serve as a student assistant coach for the remainder



Jeremy Larkin

of the season. At the time of his diagnosis, Larkin led the Wildcats in rushing, carrying 72 times for 346 yards and four scores. As a freshman in 2017, he toted the ball 84 times for 503 yards and five scores, serving as the primary backup to Justin Jackson.

Fitzgerald said that while he is disappointed for Larkin, he is thrilled that Larkin's condition was diagnosed before something more serious occurred.

"This is heartbreaking because I see every day how much Jeremy loves the game, loves his teammates and loves to compete," Fitzgerald said. "But this is the absolute best possible outcome for him. The discovery of this condition allowed Jeremy and his family to make an informed decision for his long-term health and well-being. For those of us who have known Jeremy Larkin since his high school days, his future is exceptionally bright. I can't wait to see the impact he makes in our world."

In their first game without Larkin, Northwestern opened a 17-0 lead on No. 14 Michigan before surrendering 20 unanswered points to lose by three to the Wolverines. Without Larkin in the backfield, the Wildcats managed just 28 rushing yards on 34 carries in the loss.

### PSU RB Out For Season

Larkin wasn't the only Big Ten running back to have his college football career come to an end in late September.

On Sept. 24, Nittany Lions head coach James Franklin announced that senior reserve running back Mark Allen would miss the remainder of the season due to an unspecified injury, effectively ending his college football career.

"Mark's got a very bright future," Franklin said. "He's going to be very successful at whatever he chooses to do. He's talking about getting a little bit into coaching. We've got a lot of love and respect for

## BIG 2018 Standings

### East Division

	Conf.			All		
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
Ohio State	2	0	1.000	5	0	1.000
Michigan	2	0	1.000	4	1	.800
Maryland	1	0	1.000	3	1	.750
Michigan State	1	0	1.000	3	1	.750
Indiana	1	1	.500	4	1	.800
Penn State	1	1	.500	4	1	.800
Rutgers	0	2	.000	1	4	.200

### West Division

	Conf.			All		
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
Wisconsin	1	0	1.000	3	1	.750
Northwestern	1	1	.500	1	3	.250
Purdue	1	1	.500	2	3	.400
Iowa	0	1	.000	3	1	.750
Minnesota	0	1	.000	3	1	.750
Illinois	0	1	.000	2	2	.500
Nebraska	0	2	.000	0	4	.000

### Sept. 29 Scores

Michigan State 31, Central Michigan 20  
Indiana 24, Rutgers 17  
Purdue 42, Nebraska 28  
Michigan 20, Northwestern 17

**Ohio State 27, Penn State 26**

### Oct. 6 Games

Maryland at Michigan, Noon (ABC)  
Northwestern at Michigan St., Noon (FS1)  
Illinois at Rutgers, Noon (BTN)  
Iowa at Minnesota, 3:30 p.m. (BTN)  
**Indiana at Ohio State, 4 p.m. (FOX)**  
Nebraska at Wisconsin, 7:30 p.m. (BTN)

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## From The Pages Of BSB

**35 Years Ago – 1983**

Ohio State's first defeat of 1983, a 20-14 setback Sept. 24 at Iowa, wasn't the only loss the Buckeyes suffered in week three.

Running back Keith Byars, one of the few bright spots for OSU after nine carries for 98 yards and one touchdown in the first half against the Hawkeyes, was expected to miss seven to 14 days because of a bruised knee.

"That's the most important thing we've got to do – re-establish ourselves as a run-oriented football team," said head coach Earle Bruce. "We will have effective passing, but we will be a run-oriented football team. That's what makes our football team good."

Ohio State also lost middle guard Spencer Nelms (ankle) and starting rover Steve Hill (calf) during the defeat, but they were expected to be ready for the Minnesota game Oct. 1.

**30 Years Ago – 1988**

After Ohio State's 36-33 victory Sept. 24 against LSU, the Buckeyes fell flat Oct. 1 in their 31-12 loss to Illinois.

Four games into the John Cooper era, the new head coach had OSU at an uninspiring 2-2 start after falling to the Fighting Illini.

"You talk about pathetic," Cooper said, "you saw it today."

Ohio State struggled mightily on offense with 248 total yards on 74 offensive snaps, an average of 3.4 yards per play, where the Buckeyes dearly missed production from the ground game.

In the wake of senior Vince Workman's dismissal for taking money from a sports agent and junior Marc Hicks' sprained ankle, on top of sophomore Carlos Snow's torn knee ligament, OSU managed only 38 rushing yards.

**25 Years Ago – 1993**

Former Ohio State quarterback Michael Kabealo (1936-38) died Sept. 24 in Kettering, Ohio, at the age of 77. Kabealo led the Buckeyes to consecutive second-place finishes in the Western Conference from 1936-37. For his senior year in 1938, he was a team co-captain.

Kabealo's family bled scarlet and gray. His late brother, John, was also a letter-winner at OSU as a fullback from 1933-35.

**20 Years Ago – 1998**

Ohio State opened Big Ten play with a statement Oct. 3 when the Buckeyes beat Penn State in a 28-9 victory at Ohio Stadium. In the top-10 tilt between the conference's unbeaten blue bloods, the top-ranked Buckeyes stifled the No. 7 Nittany Lions for 181 total yards on 59 offensive plays – an average of 3.1 yards per snap – on a rainy Saturday in Columbus.

With the win, OSU head coach John Cooper convincingly moved to 4-2 against legendary PSU head coach Joe Paterno.

"If you tell me before the game we're going to beat them like we did, I'll take it in a minute," Cooper said.

**15 Years Ago – 2003**

The saga around Ohio State running back Maurice Clarett continued the week of Sept. 22 with several twists and turns.

Two days before Clarett enrolled in classes for fall semester, his attorney, Alan C. Milstein, filed a lawsuit Sept. 23 against the National Football League to challenge the rule that states a player must be three years removed from high school to become draft-eligible.

A sophomore at the time, Clarett attended Tuesday and Thursday classes as he awaited word on his eligibility to potentially enter the NFL draft pending the civil case.

Much of the lawsuit cited the Sherman Act, which relates to antitrust matters, as Milstein made the argument for Clarett's eligibility for the NFL draft after his client "would have been selected in the beginning of the First Round and would have agreed to a contract and signing bonus worth millions of dollars."

Clarett's eligibility for Ohio State went by the wayside after a misdemeanor charge of falsification, which led to a suspension for the university's 2003 athletic year. He had filed a false claim that more than \$10,000 in items of value were stolen from his car in the parking lot of the Woody Hayes Athletic Center.

**10 Years Ago – 2008**

Ohio State's defensive line depth shrank by one in late September when sophomore defensive end Mark Johnson transferred. On Sept. 27, a school spokesperson confirmed to BSB that Johnson did not report to the first week of class and was looking to leave the university.

The 6-3, 250-pound native of Los Angeles originally joined the Buckeyes as a four-star recruit and the No. 12 linebacker in the country for the class of 2006. After he redshirted in 2006, Johnson played sparingly in 2007 before his move to defensive end the following spring. He ended his career at OSU with two games played and one tackle.

**Five Years Ago – 2013**

At halftime of No. 4 Ohio State's 31-24 victory against No. 23 Wisconsin on Sept. 28, the university honored Mike Conley at midfield for his \$500,000 donation to the men's basketball program.

The former Buckeye guard, who was seven years into his NBA career with the Memphis Grizzlies, had the weight room named after him – the Mike Conley Jr. Strength and Conditioning Room.

"The whole university, the students, the fans, the teachers, everybody has supported me and helped mold me into the man I am today," Conley told BSB. "I just want to be able to pay it forward to these guys and all the student-athletes that come through here in the future."

**One Year Ago – 2017**

Ohio State returned to Big Ten play with an exclamation point Sept. 30 when the No. 11 Buckeyes strung together their third straight win in a 56-0 shutout at Rutgers, where they went on the road without three players.

Roughly an hour before kickoff against the Scarlet Knights in Piscataway, N.J., OSU announced that sophomore defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones, senior safety Erick Smith and sophomore running back Antonio Williams had not made the trip.

In a statement, Ohio State said Jones and Williams were medical absences. At the time, the Buckeyes did not clarify Smith's reason. Head coach Urban Meyer later addressed Jones' "freak injury." The starting defensive lineman had scraped his leg in the locker room following practice during the week leading up to the game.

"We'll know more about it after we get back," Meyer said after the Buckeyes dispatched Rutgers. "He's going to be fine. It was bad – almost could have been a nerve injury, but it's not."

Sept. 29, shedding his usual No. 24 to honor his injured teammate.

**Ash Asks For Patience**

The 2018 season has not gotten off to the start for Rutgers that third-year head coach Chris Ash had hoped for.

After opening with a 35-7 win over Texas State, the Scarlet Knights have dropped four straight, including blowout losses to Ohio State, Kansas and Buffalo.

Following a 42-13 loss to the Bulls at home, Ash opened his Monday morning press conference by asking the fans in Piscataway, N.J., for patience as he continues to try to build a program at Rutgers that

hasn't had a postseason appearance since 2014.

"We do value our fans support as we do continue to improve and build our program. We are where we are right now today, but it's not where we will be as we continue to go and develop a lot of the players that we have in our program," he said. "We are a young team. We have very few seniors, one of the smallest senior classes probably in the country, and a lot of these young players are continuing to improve as we go, and they will continue to improve as we continue to go."

The Scarlet Knights won just two games in Ash's first year and doubled that number in 2017. Rutgers is set to finish out the

season with games against Illinois (Oct. 6), Maryland (Oct. 13), Northwestern (Oct. 20), Wisconsin (Nov. 3), Michigan (Nov. 10), Penn State (Nov. 17) and Michigan State (Nov. 24).

**B1G Players of The Week**

Even in a losing effort, Penn State quarterback Trace McSorley had the best statistical performance of any player in the conference for games played Sept. 29.

McSorley compiled 461 yards of total offense – a program record – and accounted for a pair of touchdowns, while a third was overturned following a video review. He did not turn the ball over in a 27-26 loss to the

Buckeyes and recorded his first 100-yard rushing game, finishing with a game-high 175 yards on 25 carries.

Other notable Big Ten performances included Nebraska quarterback Adrian Martinez, accounting for 414 total yards in a 42-28 loss to Purdue on Sept. 29. It was the fourth straight loss to open the season for the Huskers, but it was the best game of Martinez' career thus far, as he also accounted for a pair of touchdown passes, both to wide receiver J.D. Spielman who finished with 10 catches for 135 yards.

The loss to the Boilermakers marked the eighth straight defeat for Nebraska, the longest losing streak in school history.

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# Holtmann Hoping To Sustain Culture In 2018-19

When Chris Holtmann was hired by Gene Smith in the summer of 2017, he wanted to make sure he set the tone right away for his first season as Ohio State's head coach.

## COURT REPORT James Grega

Prior to his introductory press conference, Holtmann made a point to meet with Ohio State's 2017-18 roster as a team while also meeting with each player individually to discuss his and their expectations for the season.

Clearly, whatever Holtmann did worked. The Buckeyes exceeded everyone's expectations, perhaps even his own, as Ohio State returned to the NCAA Tournament in 2018 while finishing second in the Big Ten regular-season standings. Keita Bates-Diop was named the Big Ten Player of the Year, and the Buckeyes were just minutes away from their first Sweet 16 berth in six years before ultimately falling to Gonzaga in the second round of the tourney.

As Ohio State enters the second year of the Holtmann era in Columbus, there are plenty of new faces roaming the halls of the newly-renovated facilities at the Schottenstein Center (more on that in Insider on page 4).

Holtmann's first freshman class is now officially on the roster as Luther Muhammad, Jaedon LeDee, Duane Washington and

Justin Ahrens get set for their first collegiate seasons while transfers CJ Walker and Keyshawn Woods prepare for their first season as Buckeyes. While Walker will be forced to sit this season due to NCAA transfer rules, Woods will be eligible to play immediately as a graduate transfer.

With so many new faces, reinstituting the culture that has been set by Holtmann and his staff could potentially be more challenging. However, junior forward Micah Potter said that the new Buckeye veterans, as well as the young guys, have already bought into what Holtmann and his staff are all about and are impressing the OSU vets.

"You have to give a lot of credit to Coach Holtmann getting us to buy in last year and then bringing in guys who are ready to buy in immediately," Potter said. "All of the guys that came in this year, even the older guys CJ and Keyshawn, all of them are guys that are ready to buy in and want to play hard."

Last season, Holtmann repeatedly credited Bates-Diop and Jae'Sean Tate for their immediate buy-in for their final season in Columbus. Holtmann said it was because Ohio State's two best players immediately followed what he and his staff were preaching that the rest of the team followed and it led to a successful season.

As the team moves forward into 2018-19, he said he won't know the total team buy-in until the Buckeyes face some sort of adversity.

"We've got a group that is anxious to learn and is excited to be a part of what

we are doing, but I don't know if you know the total buy-in of your team until you face some adversity in the midst of the season," Holtmann said Sept. 26. "Until you face it a couple times, you can't really make those determinations until then."

Holtmann's team will be faced with numerous challenges early on. The Buckeyes are set to play road games against both Cincinnati and Creighton in the first month of the season, while also hosting Syracuse and traveling to Chicago to take on UCLA in the CBS Sports Classic.

While the standard was set by his first team in Columbus, Holtmann said he is ready to put the 2017-18 campaign behind him and look forward to a new season full of questions, but also plenty of possibilities.

"I said at the former-player dinner, this is the last time I am talking about last year's team. It is time to move forward," he said. "Last year's team is last year's team. We are really proud of what that group accomplished, but now is the time for this group to form its own identity, and that is going to require contributions from some guys our fan base might not be familiar with."

### Finding A Go-To Guy

In critical moments last season, it was clear whom Ohio State was going to on offense. However, Bates-Diop is now playing in the NBA for the Minnesota Timberwolves, and the Buckeyes must look to a new go-to man in crunch time.

C.J. Jackson and Kaleb Wesson are the first two names that come to mind when you look at Ohio State's 2018-19 roster. However Holtmann said through just a few practices, he has yet to determine who that player might be for the Buckeyes.

"One of the biggest questions for this group is going to be, who answers the bell late when it gets into crunch-time situations," he said. "You had two all-conference guys (Bates-Diop and Tate) who made so many plays for us late in the year last year."

Jackson would appear to be the early favorite for such a role for a number of reasons. For starters, Jackson hit the game-winner in the regular-season finale last season, a rainbow three-point jumper to bury Indiana in double overtime on the Hoosiers' senior night.

In addition, Jackson is the lone senior on Ohio State's roster who has played significant minutes for the Buckeyes. Woods has plenty of college experience but has yet to play a minute in the scarlet and gray, and Joey Lane – the longest tenured player on the roster – is not a major contributor.

The younger Wesson brother, however, might also slide into that role. An All-Big Ten Freshman team selection last season, Wesson averaged 10.2 points per game last season despite playing just 20.7 minutes

per contest, the least amount of any starter a year ago.

Holtmann said that Ohio State's offense will operate through Wesson at times this season but that the offense will be more by-committee.

"I think that is going to fall on Kaleb some this year for sure," Holtmann said. "But I also think that will be a collective thing for us. I think the open man will be the most important option for us late in games this year. Certainly Kaleb is going to be a guy that will, in terms of volume, get more opportunities, but I think the open man is perhaps going to be the most critical element when it comes to late-game situations."

### Perimeter Defense A Strength

When Holtmann arrived on campus, Ohio State's perimeter defense wasn't exactly a strength for his team.

The Buckeyes surrendered 69.8 points per game in the final year under Thad Matta, with just a plus-3.0 point scoring margin. In the first year under Holtmann, Ohio State improved its scoring margin to plus-8.6, reducing its number of points allowed to 67.6 thanks to improved defense, especially on the perimeter.

Then-freshman Musa Jallow proved to be a consistent defender, bringing added athleticism and length to the perimeter for Ohio State, and in the 2018 class, Ohio State added Muhammad, who is touted as one of the best on-ball defenders in his recruiting cycle.

Should those two play together, Potter said Ohio State's defense could be even better than last season, despite the losses of Bates-Diop and Tate.

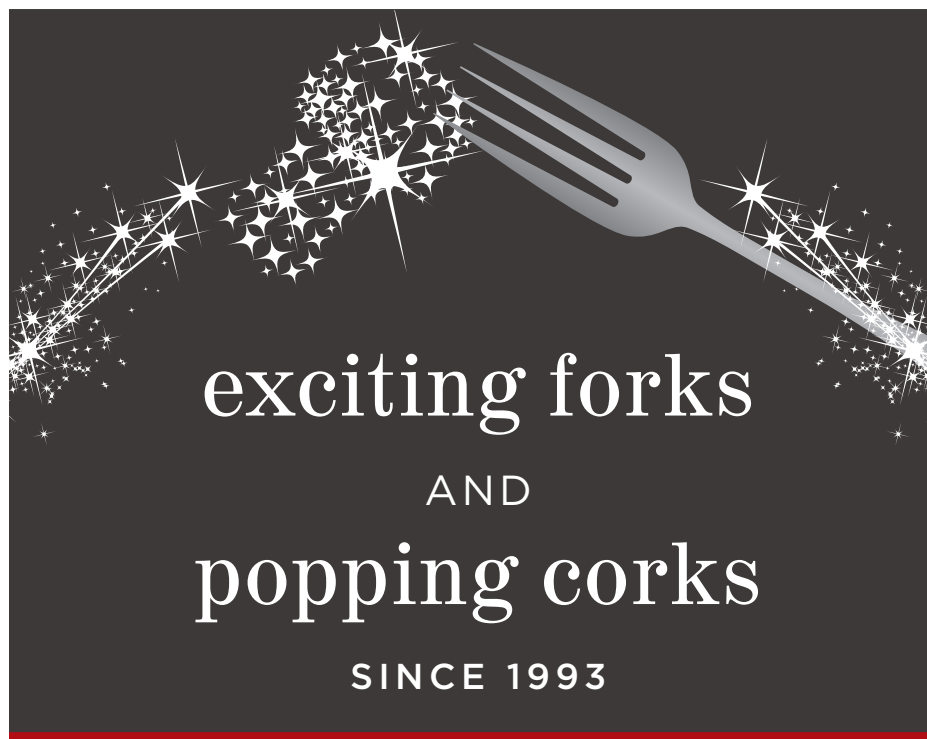
"Luther proved it throughout the entire summer," Potter said of Muhammad. "He has got that super tough, killer mentality. He is not a guy who is going to score and not play defense. He is going to lock up. Defense is more important to him than offense. Having him and Musa as lockdown perimeter defenders like that will be solid."

"I think it is rare for anyone to want to play defense, especially a freshman," Potter added. "Luther is a dog. He has a killer mentality. He is going to kill you on offense, and he is not going to let you kill him on defense."

Muhammad, like all the freshmen, was not available to speak to the media at Ohio State's Sept. 26 media day but was busy taking photos and asking joke questions to his teammates.

While he and his fellow rookies might be jokesters off the court, Potter said that once the ball is tipped, Muhammad and Washington specifically have a tendency to flip a switch.

"Luther and Duane like to talk and they are big jokesters, but when they are in between those four lines, it is business. They are going to have fun doing it, but they are also going to take it super serious."



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## OHIO STATE MEN'S BASKETBALL

### 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

As good as Jallow and Muhammad are on the perimeter, Holtmann said neither is among Ohio State's best defenders when it comes to defending opposing guards.

"Andre Wesson and C.J. Jackson are our two most sound perimeter defenders," Holtmann said. "They have to continue to grow in that area."

The older Wesson brother proved to be a valuable asset on defense early in his career, and as his sophomore season went on, he began to fill up the scoring column as well, tallying a career-high 13 points in an upset win over No. 3 Purdue in February.

Holtmann didn't discredit Jallow or Muhammad's potential on the defensive end

but did add that both need to continue to develop in order to live up to their potential in 2018-19.

"I think they both have the ability to be good perimeter defenders," Holtmann said. "C.J. Jackson is another good perimeter defender. Luther is a freshman and he is really good on the ball, but he has to be better off the ball. He wants to be a good defender. He has a good approach and a good attitude."

"Musa had some really good moments for us defensively last year. He has to grow in that area as well as his overall offensive game, but we have some versatility with those two guys."

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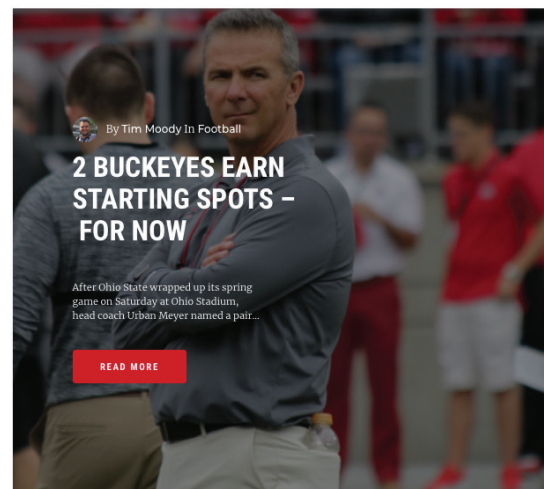
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# Bucks Close Offseason With Recruiting Momentum

On Sept. 22 at Ohio Stadium, the football game between Ohio State and Tulane wasn't the only area where the Buckeyes were trying to secure a victory. The women's basketball team hosted one of its top targets for the 2019 recruiting class.

## DOUBLE DRIBBLE Garrett Stepien

Aaliyah Boston, a five-star recruit evaluated by ESPN's HoopGurlz Recruiting Rankings as the No. 3 overall prospect and No. 1 post player in the country, took one of her five official visits as she spent the weekend in Columbus.

The blue-chip prospect from Worcester (Mass.) Academy trekked to the Midwest for the second time in the past month. Boston also officially visited Notre Dame the weekend of Sept. 1. While in South Bend, Ind., she connected with two Fighting Irish commitments – Stenardsville (Va.) William Monroe five-star forward Samantha Brunelle and Danville (Ill.) Schlarman Academy five-star point guard Anaya Peoples – as ND took the first swing.

When she arrived at Ohio State, though, the Buckeyes rolled out the red carpet. On her trip to campus, two of OSU's three pledges – Dublin (Ohio) Coffman five-star guard Jacy Sheldon and Indianapolis North Central five-star point guard Rikki Harris –

also took their official visits. Canton (Ohio) McKinley five-star guard Kierstan Bell, who made OSU's class of 2019 a trio when she announced her Aug. 25 commitment, didn't make the drive down to Columbus. However, head coach Kevin McGuff and associate head coach Patrick Klein reconnected with Sheldon and Harris while building a better relationship with Boston.

In the spring, Boston told SportsNet New York that she planned to schedule an official visit to Connecticut as well. Two months ago, her top four featured the Huskies with South Carolina, Notre Dame and Ohio State. She spent parts of the summer with USA Basketball, among 12 players on the U17 World Cup Team.

Bell (No. 6 overall, No. 2 guard), Harris (No. 24 overall, No. 6 point guard) and Sheldon (No. 41 overall, No. 10 guard) give the Buckeyes a strong start for their 2019 cycle. Boston could put it further over the top, as could Ohio five-star targets Zike Cooke (No. 7 overall, No. 2 point guard) of Toledo Rogers and Jordan Horston (No. 2 overall, No. 1 guard) from Columbus Africentric.

"Physical low-post prospect delivers through contact; workhorse on glass, delivers consistent results on the block; outlets and initiates the fast break, mobile in transition; defensive stopper and the elite post prospect in the class of 2019," Collegiate Girls Basketball Report's Dan Olson said of Boston in a scouting report.

With an influx of graduate transfers set to come off the books at the end of the

2018-19 campaign, OSU has flexibility as the coaching staff navigates a talent-rich recruiting cycle. Carmen Grande, Ashanti Abshaw, Carly Santoro, Adreana Miller, Najah Queenland, Makayla Waterman and Karlie Cronin constitute the seven seniors on Ohio State's 12-player roster.

## Recent Hire Brings Boost In Recruiting

When Ohio State's staff had an opening in the offseason, McGuff carefully considered recruiting among the strengths of the candidates in the mix. Quality as a recruiter stood out when he came across Jennifer Sullivan, who joined the Buckeyes as an assistant coach after five years with Missouri State.

With the Lady Bears, she helped keep three all-state recruits from Missouri home in the Show Me State, plus pulled an all-state prospect pulled from Illinois. Over the course of their careers, Missouri State won 79 games and made four postseason appearances. Those players developed into key cogs for the Lady Bears with a combined 439 games and more than 3,100 points plus roughly 1,500 rebounds.

The success allowed Missouri State to branch out as well, re-establishing pipelines in Missouri and beyond. Sullivan's efforts created paths to signees in Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Illinois and Minnesota.

Sullivan is taking on her biggest challenge yet with the Buckeyes in the Big Ten, but McGuff expressed confidence in her ability as a recruiter and as a coach.

"She's a really, really hardworking young person, high character and I just knew some people that worked with her throughout her career and she's got a great reputation," McGuff told BSB. "She's a really good recruiter and loves developing relationships with young people. I also think she'll be an excellent mentor for our current kids, so I'm excited to have her. She's done a great job so far."

Sullivan joined Ohio State's staff in May, rounding out McGuff's cabinet of three assistants with Klein and third-year coach Carrie Banks.

Before Missouri State, Sullivan spent 2012-13 as associate head coach at Louisiana-Lafayette where she handled additional duties as recruiting coordinator and with guard development and scheduling. Prior to the one-year stint with the Ragin' Cajuns, Sullivan worked as an assistant and recruiting coordinator in her native Jonesboro, Ark., at Arkansas State. She was an assistant for McNeese State in 2008-09 after initial stops at Rhodes College (2006-07) and Memphis (2007-08).

As a player, Sullivan starred at Memphis from 2001-05 with 800 points, 310 rebounds and 99 steals. After she earned team MVP

her senior season in 2004-05, Sullivan graduated from the university with a degree in communications.

## Pro Bucks: Recent Grads Ink Deals

Despite the recent completion of the 2018 WNBA season, basketball hasn't stopped for several recent OSU stars.

After stints in the WNBA between April and August, Kelsey Mitchell, Stephanie Mavunga, Linnae Harper and Alexa Hart are headed overseas.

In the WNBA, Mitchell and Mavunga were bright spots for the Indiana Fever as it struggled through growing pains to a 6-28 record. Mitchell started 17 of the 34 games she played, finishing as Indiana's second-leading scorer with 12.7 points per game and landing on the league's all-rookie team. Mavunga, meanwhile, averaged 2.2 points and 2.2 rebounds in 7.8 minutes in 25 appearances.

"I was excited for them," Fever head coach and general manager Pokey Chatman said of Mitchell and Mavunga. "They said that's what we're supposed to do. What I was trying to impress upon them is that there's so much focus on them at the highest level. That's why it was so pleasing for us."

While he was in town with his family, McGuff watched the former Buckeyes play Aug. 11 against the Las Vegas Aces at Mandalay Bay Events Center. Despite the 92-74 loss for the Fever, McGuff expressed pride in the ways their careers have taken off at the next level.

"I watched them play against the WNBA Las Vegas team, so we just had a couple of minutes afterward to catch up," McGuff said of Mitchell and Mavunga. "It was great to see them both. I think they've both had really good years. Kelsey's been one of the best rookies out there. She's put up great numbers. She's got an unbelievable career ahead of her. I can't wait to watch her continue to grow and develop. Steph also has done a lot of good things. They've got a few more people kind of in front of her there, which is fine, but they've both had really good years."

The season just ended, but Mitchell and Mavunga continue their journey overseas. Harper, who averaged 2.0 points in 6.1 minutes over 24 games with the Chicago Sky (13-21), and Hart, who spent preseason training camp with the Atlanta Dream, will also take their talents to Europe.

"They're all set to go play overseas," McGuff said. "Kelsey's going to Turkey, Stephanie's going to Russia, Linnae Harper's going to Israel and Alexa Hart's going to Israel."

Mitchell signed with Besiktas JK in Istanbul, Turkey; Mavunga signed with BC Enisey in Krasnoyarsk, Siberia; Harper signed with Bnei Yehuda in Tel Aviv, Israel; and Hart signed with Bnot Hertzeliya in Herzliya, Israel.



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

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# After Long Journey, Nolan Is Starring For OSU

By GARRETT STEPIEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

When the Ohio State field hockey team needed Kelsey Nolan, she found her way into game-changing situations, starting and finishing a season-saving victory.

In the midst of three straight losses, the Buckeyes were wrapping up an East Coast swing Sept. 23 with a top-25 matchup at Rutgers. After two overtimes, a 3-3 stalemate went into a shootout.

The midfielder, who already had a first-half goal to her name, stepped up once more in the right place at the right time for the Buckeyes.

On the sixth shot of the shootout, Nolan walked up and walked off. She steadily dribbled left before rapidly switching right, swiftly beating the outstretched goalkeeper and perfectly plopping the ball into the back of the net before the team mobbed her in celebration.

The 4-3 triumph in Piscataway, N.J., brought then-No. 23 Ohio State (5-5, 1-2) back to .500 overall with its first win of Big Ten play over the then-No. 17 Scarlet Knights (7-2, 1-2).

"It was a big game because we really needed a win, but it was just about staying composed throughout," Nolan told BSB. "With the shootout, I have a plan for what I'm doing and I just stick to it."

As a sixth-year senior, Nolan's plan hasn't followed the original blueprint. Upon graduation from Hempfield High School in Landisville near her hometown of Lancaster, Pa., she initially went to Yale. With the Bulldogs in 2013, Nolan got off to a promising start. As a freshman, she started the first four games of her career, scoring her first career goal in a 6-0 win over Sacred Heart.

A broken fibula derailed Nolan's rookie campaign, sidelining her for the rest of the fall. On top of the injury, Nolan progressively felt uncomfortable as she adjusted to student-athlete life at Yale, an Ivy League school. Nolan

returned for her sophomore year in the fall of 2014, starting all 17 games and leading the Bulldogs in goals and points (6, 13), but something wasn't right.

"Things were just bad," Nolan said. "I wanted to make sure to see if it was more than that."

In the spring of 2015, Nolan took a semester off as she sorted through her options. When she looked into transfers, her first thought was to head home. However, Nolan's academic aspirations ultimately paved the path to Columbus.

For a while, Nolan knew what she wanted to do with her career. In high school, she was a member of the Society for Academic Excellence in Foreign Language and served as a peer tutor for English as a Second Language. At Ohio State, she wanted to pursue degrees in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), which boasts undergraduate- and graduate-level coursework and "prepares new teachers for the dual role of educator and advocate for English learners and their families" in Ohio State's College of Education and Human Ecology.

"Schools don't offer that as an undergrad program, but Ohio State does," Nolan said. "I came here and I was pretty much going to be done with field hockey and just play club team."

Though Nolan reached out to the varsity team, former head coach Anne Wilkinson, who mentored the Buckeyes for 21 years until 2016, didn't get back to the transfer in time. With schoolwork as her focus, Nolan turned the page as she adjusted to life at OSU. In due time, though, her experience at Ohio State created an opportunity she couldn't pass up.

As she stayed on her path to a dual-degree in TESOL and linguistics, Nolan's communication with Wilkinson led to a walk-on offer. Nolan accepted, joining the team in the spring and falling back in love with the sport. After she

played sparingly as a sophomore in 2016, her role increased under head coach Jarred Martin as a junior in 2017.

In Martin's first year, the Buckeyes rebounded from a 6-11 mark to go 10-9. Nolan played in all 19 games, starting nine with a goal in OSU's season-opening win Aug. 27 against Lehigh. Nolan's teammates took note in 2018, her third year with the program, when she was voted a team captain.

"You'll notice very quickly just her overall personality – she's a very happy person, she loves Ohio State and she loves this team," Martin told BSB. "So you get a feel for that pretty quick. Once you start going to practices, you start to see her consistently show up with her competitiveness and her attitude. She's somebody that leads by example for the team. If there's a person you need when things are tough and you're not feeling energetic – we practice at 8 a.m. – if you're feeling sleepy, you will rarely see that from her. That, for me, earned some respect. And for her teammates, too."

"She plays in the center of the field for us, she was voted captain. I think there are things that are coming through for her as just a byproduct of her as a person, as an athlete – just Kelsey Nolan."

Ohio State is young overall. Among 25 players on the roster, the Buckeyes tally 11 freshmen and four sophomores. Martin has

seen Nolan's leadership leave its mark on her younger teammates.

"It's invaluable," he said. "When you're a freshman, you come into the locker room and you are able to see what she personifies. That probably has more of an impact than I do as a coach. When you come into the locker room, you are ready to go. You're alert, you're focused and you want to be your best today. We talk about it – if you want to be a champion, that is your choice you make every single day you wake up. It's not always easy, but I think Kelsey, she has that."

When she isn't injecting energy into her teammates on early mornings at Buckeye Varsity Field, Nolan takes the same approach to academics. As she ponders her postgraduate life after field hockey, Nolan has mapped out the next step in her plan. Whether it comes as a high school English as a Second Language teacher or further in academia – she completed her student-teaching requirements and is mulling a Ph.D. in applied linguistics – Nolan said she appreciates where she has come from, where she is now and where she still has yet to go.

"I think it's just all about how much work and effort you're putting in," she said. "If I feel like I'm not ready to play in practices and games, I'm trying to keep up the energy and come prepared and stuff like that. So I think that really helps kind of moving up. I'm also one of the older players, so I feel like just the experience I have kind of helps me. So I think all of those things kind of added into it."



Kelsey Nolan

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# BUCKEYE SCOREBOARD

## FOOTBALL

### (5-0, 2-0 BIG TEN)

**Sept. 1** OREGON STATE, W 77-31; **8** RUTGERS, W 52-3; **15** vs. (15) TCU at Arlington, Texas, W 40-28; **22** TULANE, W 49-6; **29** at (9) Penn State, W 27-26.

**Oct. 6** INDIANA (Homecoming), 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** (Men) Golden Eagle Invitational at Cookeville, Tenn., 1st/4; **15** Commodore Classic at Nashville, Tenn., Men: 8th/14; Women: 1st/19; **29** Loyola Lakefront Invitational at Chicago, Men: 9th/26 (248); Women: 3rd/33 (85).

**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

### (6-6, 2-3 BIG TEN)

**Aug. 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 (19) Boston University, W 4-2; **7** BALL STATE, W 6-0; **9** LEHIGH, W 5-0; **14** (6) PENN STATE, L 3-2; **16** MIAMI (OHIO), L 2-1; **21** at (3) Maryland, L 1-0; **23** at (17) Rutgers, W 4-3; **28** INDIANA, W 1-0; **30** IOWA, L 2-1.

**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 GOLF (FALL)

**Sept. 15-16** Northern Intercollegiate at Sugar Grove, Ill., 4th/14 (881); **24-25** Bearcat Invitational at Cincinnati, Cancelled; Inverness Intercollegiate at Toledo, NTS; **30-Oct. 2** Nike Collegiate Invitational at Fort Worth, Texas.

**Oct. 8-9** JACK NICKLAUS INVITATIONAL at Dublin, Ohio; **22-23** Muskies Classic at Cincinnati.

## WOMEN'S GOLF (FALL)

**Sept. 16** East & West Match Play at Ann Arbor, Mich., Stroke Play: 4th/8 (585); **17** East & West Match Play at Ann Arbor, Mich., vs. UC Davis, L 3-2; **18** East & West Match Play at Ann Arbor, Mich., vs. Oregon State, W 3-2.

**Oct. 1-2** Windy City Collegiate at Chicago.; **12-14** Tar Heel Invitational at Chapel Hill, N.C.; **28-29** Jim West Challenge at San Marcos, Texas.

## MEN'S SOCCER

### (1-7-2, 0-3-1 BIG TEN)

**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** USE, L 1-0; **11** BOWLING GREEN, T 1-1 (2OT); **16** at Penn State, L 3-1; **21** NORTHWESTERN, T 0-0 (2OT); **25** at Michigan, L 3-1; **30** RUTGERS, L 3-2.

**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

### (6-4-1, 3-1-1 BIG TEN)

**Aug. 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, L 1-0; **14** at Penn State, L 4-0; **20** at Illinois, W 2-0; **23** at Northwestern, W 1-0 (OT); **27** IOWA, W 2-0; **30** NEBRASKA, T 1-1 (2OT).

**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.

## MEN'S ICE HOCKEY

**Oct. 12-13** at Arizona State, 9:05 p.m.; 9:05 p.m.; **19-20** MASSACHUSETTS, 7 p.m.; 5 p.m.; **26** BOWLING GREEN, 7 p.m.; **27** at Bowling Green, 7:07 p.m.

**Nov. 2-3** at Notre Dame, 7:30 p.m.; 7:30 p.m.; **9-10** at Colgate, 7 p.m.; 4 p.m.; **16-17** WISCONSIN, 7 p.m.; 5 p.m.; **23-24** PENN STATE, 5 p.m.; 8 p.m.; **30-Dec. 1** at Minnesota, 8 p.m.; 5 p.m.

**Dec. 28-29** MERCYHURST, 7 p.m.; 8 p.m..

**Jan. 4-5** at Michigan State, TBA; 8 p.m.; **11-12** MICHIGAN, 7 p.m.; 7 p.m.; **18-19** at Penn State, 7 p.m.; 7 p.m.

**Feb. 1-2** NOTRE DAME, 7 p.m.; 8 p.m.; **8-9** at Wisconsin, 8 p.m.; 8 p.m.; **15-16** MINNESOTA, TBA; 6 p.m.; **22-23** at Michigan, 6:30 p.m.; 8 p.m.

**March 1-2** MICHIGAN STATE, 6:30 p.m.; 5 p.m.; **8-10** Big Ten Tournament First Round; **16** Big Ten Tournament Semifinals; **23** Big Ten Tournament Finals; **29-31** NCAA Regionals.

**11/13** NCAA Frozen Four at Buffalo, N.Y.

## WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY (2-0)

**Sept. 28-29** at Quinnipiac, W 3-2; W 3-2.

**Oct. 5-6** COLGATE, 6:07 p.m.; 3:07 p.m.; **12-13** MINNESOTA STATE, 6:07 p.m.; 1:07 p.m.; **19-20** at Minnesota, 8:07 p.m.; 5:07 p.m.; **26-27** at St. Lawrence, 6 p.m.; 3 p.m.

**Nov. 2-3** ST. CLOUD STATE, 6:07 p.m.; 3:07 p.m.; **9-10** at Bemidji State, 4:07 p.m.; 4:07 p.m.; **16-17** MINNESOTA DULUTH, 6:07 p.m.; 1:07 p.m.

**Dec. 1-2** at Minnesota State, 7:07 p.m.; 3:07 p.m.; **15-16** MERCYHURST, 3:07 p.m.; 1:07 p.m.

**Jan. 5-6** MINNESOTA WHITECAPS, 3:07 p.m.; 12:07 p.m.; **11-12** WISCONSIN, 6:07 p.m.; 3:07 p.m.; **18-19** at Minnesota Duluth, 8:07 p.m.; 5:07 p.m.; **25-26** at Minnesota, 6:07 p.m.; 3:07 p.m.

**Feb. 1-2** at St. Cloud State, 4:07 p.m.; 4:07 p.m.; **8-9** BEMIDJI STATE, 6:07 p.m.; 3:07 p.m.; **22-23** at Wisconsin, 8:07 p.m.; 4:07 p.m.

**March 1-3** WCHA Quarterfinals; **9-10** WCHA Final Faceoff at Minneapolis; **16** NCAA Quarterfinals; **22/24** NCAA Frozen Four at Hamden, Conn.

## WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL (10-6, 1-3 BIG TEN)

**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., W 3-0; **8** vs. Missouri at Towson, Md., W 3-1; at Towson, W 3-0; **14** vs. Evansville at Dayton, W 3-1; **15** vs. Tennessee at Dayton, L 3-1; at Dayton, L 3-2; **19** at (6) Wisconsin, L 3-0; **22** (4) PENN STATE, W 3-1; **26** INDIANA, L 3-1; **29** at Maryland, L 3-2.

**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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# Buckeyes Do Enough To Survive In Happy Valley

What was expected to be two racehorse offenses on display Sept. 29 looked like spring planting by a couple of plow horses the first 30 minutes of play.

## COACH'S CORNER With Bill Conley

If Ohio State had given an MVP award for the first half of its 27-26 win over Penn State, it would have gone to Drue Chrisman, who punted the ball seven times with good distance and great hang time. It was the first time as a starter that Dwayne Haskins really played in a truly hostile environment and the first time he faced a team that really pressured him in the pocket.

The Penn State defensive line was playing far better than its experience indicated it should have against the toughest opponent that it had faced so far this year in the Buckeyes. The Ohio State offensive front had trouble, a lot of trouble, picking up Penn State line stunts and blitzes the first half as Haskins had blue jerseys staring him in the face on each possession. To make matters worse, Buckeye receivers dropped passes that would have racked up much needed yardage and kept drives alive.

Fortunately, the Ohio State defense was causing Trace McSorley and the Nittany Lions fits of their own. Despite a couple of big plays, the Buckeye defense bent but didn't break until the 93-yard McSorley to KJ Hamler pass that went the distance. The Buckeyes would turn in a very important touchdown of their own with a screen pass from Haskins to J.K. Dobbins right before half.

The two Big Ten powerhouse offensive units went to the locker room scratching their heads. The Ohio State and Penn State offenses were only a combined 2 of 18 in third-down conversions after the first 30 minutes of play, and the underdog Nittany Lions held a 13-7 lead. The pressure was on the Buckeyes to make the needed adjustments to avoid an upset by the nation's ninth-ranked team.

### McSorley The McGiant

It looked as if the Ohio State had it figured out in the first drive of the third quarter. The running offense that was nowhere to be found the first half started to jell for the Buckeyes. The offensive line started to take control of the line of scrimmage as the Buckeyes put together a 75-yard drive mixing runs with short passes.

Ohio State took the lead in the third quarter, but good times didn't last because the Nittany Lions had the great equalizer in Trace McSorley. The sleeping giant awoke and took charge of the game as if he owned Happy Valley and the Buckeyes were not welcome. The Ohio State defense knew they had to stop McSorley's arm, and more importantly his feet, but just couldn't muster up enough big plays to stop him in critical situations.

This outstanding athlete had never lost a game in Happy Valley as a starter, and it looked like he would be the hero once again. Buckeye defenders had pretty much shut down the Penn State rushing attack the second half, except for McSorley, their most dangerous weapon. For the night, McSorley finished with 461 total yards, 175 of that on the ground. He kept drives alive, ran hard, broke tackles and simply refused to flinch in key moments of the game. After the Buckeyes had fought back to take their final lead of the night, it looked

like McSorley would march the Nittany Lions down the field for a game-winning field goal.

The Buckeye defense stiffened, however, and the Penn State offense was stopped in its last possession. The biggest shocker of the night came on Penn State's last play when head coach James Franklin didn't call McSorley's number on fourth down.

### Hail To The Victor

Saturday night was the only time you'll ever hear an Ohio State grad say, "Hail to the Victor."

Binjimen Victor made the play of his life scoring a touchdown which capped off a three-play, 75-yard drive to bring the Buckeyes within a score with less than seven minutes left in the fourth quarter. He not only made the reception of a high Haskins pass but put the ball away and read the great blocks by his fellow receivers as he weaved his way into the end zone.

Victor etched his name into the Ohio State record books even if he never catches another pass in his career. He is yet another example of the amount and depth of talent at the wide receiver position for the Buckeyes. Just as K.J. Hill, Parris Campbell, Austin Mack and Johnnie Dixon have all performed at a high level this season, Victor put the exclamation point on the term "big play."

### Haskins Got Heat

Haskins faced an onslaught he had never seen before, and he will be better for it. He didn't get anywhere close to his normal numbers in passing yards, completion percentage or third-down conversions.

The things he did well are what mattered in the long run. First of all, he regained his poise when he needed it in the fourth quarter. He marched his team down the field for two late touchdown drives of 75 and 96 yards when trailing the toughest opponent of the season in an extremely hostile environment. He threw for three touchdown passes for the evening. He used seven different receivers for the night and didn't get frustrated with himself for some errant throws, and he didn't lose faith in his teammates who had some early drops.

His leadership was absolutely outstanding in the most crucial point of the game. Haskins proved himself to be a winner in front of a national television audience.

### Linebackers Spotty

There was a ton of criticism going into the game of OSU linebacker play. In the last game against Tulane, none of the three starters recorded a single tackle. Everyone knew that unit had to improve to have any chance of beating Penn State, and it did.

Tuf Borland, Pete Werner and Malik Harrison accounted for 21 total tackles and 2½ tackles for loss. No one can argue that one of the biggest plays of the game was when Borland put his shoulder pads right on the football being carried by Penn State running back Miles Sanders, causing that late second-quarter fumble which led to the Buckeyes' first score of the game.

Though they did improve as a unit, there are still some glaring concerns at the position. The coaching staff can't ask the linebacking corps, with the exception of Harrison, to cover receivers or backs out of the backfield. They simply do not have the speed to play man coverage on faster, quicker and more athletic skill players. A coach does expect 'backers to be able to run with tight ends, but do not put them in a situation where they have little chance of success.

When the Buckeye defense runs man coverage, they need to have players on the field who can do just that and also make tackles in the open field. It's not fair to the players or the team to expect them to make multiple plays in space. It simply takes more versatile athletes.

### The Near Future

The upcoming schedule is a big plus for the Buckeyes. They can't take any opponent lightly, but fortunately many of the games that could be possible stumbling blocks prior to Michigan are played in Ohio Stadium.

This should give the team a chance to heal up from the very physical game against the Nittany Lions, concentrate at practice on mistakes made in the first half of the season and really fine-tune both the offensive and defensive units. I am sure the coaches will harp on the vast and untimely number of penalties, especially those that were not of an aggressive mistake but more of a lack of mental discipline. They cannot afford any more senseless penalties in crucial situations in future games. A very tough task to accomplish but one that must be addressed.

One thing is for certain, the road to the Big Ten championship is not nearly as tough for the Buckeyes as it is for Penn State. There is no time to relax, but if the Buckeyes take care of business, the divisional championship could be decided even before the Michigan game. Ohio State will have to finish the regular season undefeated and win the Big Ten Championship Game, probably against Wisconsin, to guarantee a spot in the playoffs.

### Positives To Build On

Like most teams, Ohio State has made its share of mistakes this season. However, the positives are well worth mentioning, and there a lot more of them than negatives.

This team has found a true on-the-field leader in Haskins. The offense makes plays when it has to, and the running game is getting better. The wide receiving corps is one of the very best in the country in both talent and depth. The offensive line is solid despite being shaky at times against Penn State.

Defensively, the front has really picked up the slack since the injury to Nick Bosa. They are still the best in the country at pressuring the quarterback and collapsing the pocket. Young guys are starting to emerge as difference makers on that line, and as with our receivers, there is still plenty of depth on the defensive line unit. The back end of the defense has a lot of good athletes but still needs to grow and get better. A huge part of their continued improvement will be based on figuring out what they can and can't do best in game situations.

As for special teams, the punting game is strong and Drue Chrisman is emerging as one of the best punters in the nation, but we definitely need to get more consistent in the area of placekicking. I still give the team a solid "A" performance after five games.

*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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# Buckeyes Are Flying High With Easy Stretch Ahead

Penn State and TCU out of the way. Same goes for the Urban Meyer suspension. A perfect 5-0 as the regular season approaches its midway point.

Things are looking really good for Ohio State.

## EXNER POINT Rich Exner

Then there's the bonus – the bonus being the weak October and early November schedule. It comes as Ohio State still needs the threat of Iowa in 2017, and they certainly are not the threat that TCU or Penn State were.

Indiana, Minnesota, Purdue, an off week and Nebraska are ahead.

Are any of these opponents capable of an upset? I guess. Remember Iowa in 2017? But none of these upcoming games likely poses the threat of Iowa in 2017, and they certainly are not the threat that TCU or Penn State were.

The key dates remaining are Nov. 10, when Ohio State goes to Michigan State, and Nov. 24, when Michigan visits the Horseshoe.

### The To-Do List

So what's on the to-do list between now and Nov. 10? Start with solving the big-play problem on defense.

Twice Ohio State has given up 93-yard touchdowns – a Darius Anderson run that put TCU in the lead for a while and a Trace McSorley to KJ Hamler pass and run that upped Penn State's lead to 13-0. Even Oregon State enjoyed big-play success – a 49-yard TD pass and runs of 78 and 80 yards for touchdowns.

One aspect might be impossible to fix. Ohio State's defense has not been fast enough to chase down runaway players in the open.

But work in the meeting rooms and on the practice field can make a difference. Mistakes leading to the openings must be reduced, and the defensive schemes must be evaluated to limit whatever has led to the cracks on these isolated but very big breakdowns. It could take time, but there is time.

On the offensive side at Penn State, the passing game broke down for the first time this season. Haskins had just 62 passing yards at halftime.

There was plenty of blame to go around. Haskins was not his usual accurate self. Part of that was because the line and other blockers were not able to sustain the onslaught of the Penn State rush. This was not a good combination for slower developing pass plays, later largely scrapped for more screens and quick pitches.

And part of the Buckeyes' early passing problems came because of a serious case of dropsies. By the time Haskins was intercepted on the deflection after one second-quarter drop, Ohio State receivers had already dropped two earlier passes.

So the assignment is simple.

Win the next five games to improve to 10-0. And do it while covering this short list of to-dos as well as anything else the coaches come to identify.

The good thing is that the schedule makes all this possible.

### Ohio Where?

The starting lineups for Ohio State and Penn State offered a quick reminder of the national nature of recruiting these days. Only roughly one-third of the starters (14) were from either Ohio or Pennsylvania, two states with well-deserved reputations for producing football talent.

Seven of Ohio State's starting 22 are from Ohio. Seven Penn State starters are from Pennsylvania (this is out of a starting 23 listed on the broadcast).

The others were spread among a dozen states: Maryland (5), New Jersey (5),

Virginia (5), Indiana (3), Texas (3), Florida (2), Michigan (2), California (1), Georgia (1), Illinois (1), Massachusetts (1), New York (1) and Wisconsin (1).

Ohio players starting for the Buckeyes were Robert Landers of Dayton, Dre'Mont Jones of Cleveland, Jonathon Cooper of Gahanna, Malik Harrison of Columbus, Thayer Munford of Cincinnati, Parris Campbell of Akron and Luke Farrell of Perry.

### The Most Important Play

Somewhere, Jim Tressel must have been smiling. You'll recall how much Tressel liked to describe punting as the most important play in football.

The work of OSU punter Drue Chrisman was huge in keeping the Buckeyes in the game during the first half against Penn State. Chrisman averaged 47.7 yards on seven first-half punts of 44, 49, 53, 44, 58, 44 and 42 yards with five at or inside the 21.

Penn State's Blake Gillikin averaged 36.6 yards and had five first-half punts of 19, 36, 48, 43 and 37 yards, with two at or inside the 20.

### Chase Young

Sophomore defensive end Chase Young deserves a special shout-out.

Not only did Young make the key tackle on the fourth-down play to stop Penn State's last hope, but he had a sack two plays earlier on the same series. And earlier in the game, he had two key pass deflections.

His six tackles on the night included two sacks among three tackles for loss.

When Young signed with the Buckeyes in 2016 out of Maryland, he was rated one of the top players in the country. He is starting to show why, just at an important time with Nick Bosa out.

### National Outlook

Kirk Herbstreit wasted little time sizing up what he thought of the Buckeyes after the win at Penn State, placing OSU

second in the nation behind Alabama. A lot of people would agree, though it's good that the rankings don't matter anymore.

Any undefeated team from the five major conferences, plus Notre Dame, almost certainly will be in the playoffs. The only thing that would stop that is if there were five or six unbeaten, which is highly, highly unlikely.

There are just 11 undefeated teams left from this grouping:

- Atlantic Coast (2) – Clemson (5-0) and North Carolina State (4-0).
- Big Ten (1) – Ohio State (5-0).
- Big 12 (2) – Oklahoma (5-0) and West Virginia (4-0).
- Pacific 12 (1) – Colorado (4-0).
- Southeastern (4) – Alabama (5-0), Georgia (5-0), LSU (5-0) and Kentucky (5-0).
- Plus independent Notre Dame (5-0).

### Top 10

Here's my top 10:

1. Alabama (5-0) – This should be undisputed at this point.
2. Ohio State (5-0) – Most impressive of the rest, even if it wasn't always pretty at Penn State.
3. LSU (5-0) – Liking the Tigers' win over Auburn more than what has been accomplished by the other schools below, but not certain LSU is better than No. 4 or No. 5.
4. Georgia (5-0) – Rolling but untested so far.
5. Clemson (5-0) – Lackluster wins against Texas A&M and Syracuse, but still unbeaten.
6. Notre Dame (5-0) – Credit deserved for wins over Stanford and Michigan.
7. Oklahoma (5-0) – Untested so far, just like Georgia.
8. West Virginia (4-0) – Same as above.
9. Auburn (4-1) – Win over Washington; one-point loss to LSU.
10. (tie) Washington (4-1) – Recovering well after opening-day loss to Auburn.
10. Penn State (4-1) – Will win a lot of games.

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# Issues Aside, Buckeyes In Position To Contend

No college football team with championship aspirations should ever relax, but sometimes it's OK to step back and take a deep breath.

## MOODY MUSINGS Tim Moody, Editor

That's what Ohio State, ranked third in the nation and still undefeated, should do this week, because those two qualifiers were very close to not being true. The Buckeyes, for the second year in a row, found a way to overcome a double-digit deficit in the fourth quarter against Penn State to come out with a victory.

This time it was a 27-26 win thanks to timely defense and two outstanding drives by Dwayne Haskins and the Ohio State offense in the fourth quarter. The game-winning drive was 96 yards, and there weren't really even many stressful moments for the Buckeyes on that epic march.

No matter how it happened, it was a win. It was a win against a top-10 opponent, too. And it was a win that served as a reminder that Ohio State still has a lot of room for improvement with more than half of the regular season still remaining.

For now, though, that's not a big deal because one thing is certain: Ohio State controls its own destiny, both in the Big

Ten and in the College Football Playoff conversation.

Sure, Ohio State could lose a game (maybe two?) and still win the conference. The Buckeyes could lose once and still make the playoffs – they've been to the final four twice with losses to their name. But, in order for that to happen, they'd have to rely on other teams stumbling. It's always better to have full control, and that's what Ohio State has with a relatively easy stretch of games coming up.

That said, Urban Meyer's team needs to get a few things fixed if it has designs on a 12-0 regular season, a Big Ten title and a trip back to the playoffs. First off, the offensive line needs to find more consistency. When the line is blocking, Ohio State's offense can score touchdowns at will thanks to Haskins' arm, the hands of a deep wide receiver corps and the legs of J.K. Dobbins and Mike Weber. But when the line isn't blocking, Haskins doesn't seem quite as crisp, and the receivers suddenly aren't quite as open.

It takes time to run a high-flying offense, and that's what the line needs to give Haskins going forward.

On defense, Ohio State is strong at about nine of 11 starting spots. The defensive line is stellar, the linebackers are coming along nicely – no matter what some onlookers might say – and Jordan Fuller, Kendall Sheffield and Jeffrey Okudah have all played well in the backfield. That leaves one more cornerback and one more safety as question marks.

Damon Arnette has played well at times, but he's prone to committing costly penalties, and his health is a question after he left the Penn State game with an injury. And at safety, Isaiah Pryor and Jahsen Wint have been far below the level of Fuller. The Buckeyes have given up too many big hits, and the safeties have often found themselves in poor position to make an attempt at stopping that.

So for the next five weeks leading up to a Nov. 10 trip to East Lansing, Mich., to face Michigan State, the Buckeyes need to work on those issues. And luckily for Ohio State, they can be comfortable knowing that the next four games (Ohio State has an off week Oct. 27) should provide a chance to iron out any problems without risking a loss.

And if Ohio State does fall to Indiana, Minnesota, Purdue or Nebraska, then it's unlikely that the Buckeyes were going to be competing for any championships this season in the first place.

### The Magic Number

Where would Ohio State be without No. 2?

Which one, you might ask? Both of them, I'd say.

Sophomores Dobbins and Chase Young, a defensive end, are Ohio State's best players on their respective units right now. Young has stepped up admirably in the absence of injured All-American Nick Bosa, and it's no guarantee that Ohio State would have knocked off the Nittany Lions without his play. Young finished the win with six total tackles, three tackles for loss, two sacks, two pass breakups and two quarterback hurries, and he affected many more plays than that.

If Young can keep improving and keep becoming more and more disciplined, then opposing offensive lines don't have much chance of blocking him.

It just so happens that Dobbins wears the same jersey number as Young, and it just so happens that he was equally important in the win over Penn State. The La Grange, Texas, native burst onto the scene last year, and despite averaging just 3.4

yards per carry on 17 totes, I'd argue that his game against the Nittany Lions was the most important of his career so far.

Dobbins scored Ohio State's first touchdown on a 26-yard screen pass, giving the team much-needed momentum heading into halftime. Then he scored from 4 yards out early in the third quarter to give Ohio State its first lead of the game at 14-13.

Then, with his team backed up against its own end zone, Dobbins took a screen pass 35 yards on the first play of the Buckeyes' game-winning drive to ignite the offense once again. Whether it was running or receiving, Dobbins earned every one of his 118 yards and two touchdowns in Happy Valley.

### Record Scorer

I recently received an email from a Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscriber pointing out the fact that fifth-year senior kicker Sean Nuernberger is well on his way to break the program's all-time scoring record.

As things stand, former Buckeye kicker Mike Nugent (2001-04) holds the all-time record for career points with 356 after he converted 140 extra points and 72 field goals in his career. Nuernberger entered the season with 276 career points to rank eighth, but he's already tacked on 41 more with 32 extra points and three field goals through five games. That puts him at 317 points and in fourth place – he has passed Tim Williams (290), Rich Spangler (294), Vlade Janakievski (295) and Keith Byars (300) so far.

Next up, Nuernberger will have his sights on Dan Stultz at 342 points, followed by Pete Johnson at 348. Then it will be a push to see if he can catch Nugent before the end of the year.

Nuernberger, who has made all 209 extra-point attempts in his career, is also on pace to break the NCAA record for consecutive extra points at 233 (Alex Trlica, Texas Tech, 2004-07).

I'll provide updates on Nuernberger's quest in this space throughout the rest of the season.

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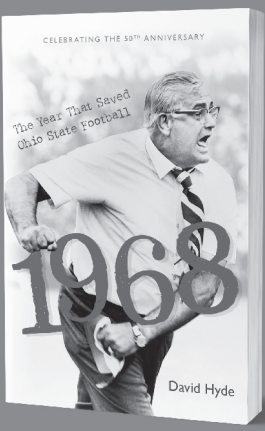
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# Somehow, OSU Found A Way To Make It Happen

In a dramatic, exciting win such as the one Ohio State scored over Penn State in a battle of Big Ten East titans, there is plenty to talk about. Yet I find myself rendered almost speechless.

So rather than try to make a coherent description of the Buckeyes' 27-26 win over the Nittany Lions and their 110,889 white-clad fans, I guess I will just jump in and ramble.

We have heard about and seen all season that Ohio State is loaded with playmakers. When the game was on the line, quarterback Dwayne Haskins was able to get the ball to those playmakers, and the result was the stunning – maybe not so stunning to those who follow the Buckeyes – comeback victory.

Seemingly left for dead after Penn State went up 26-14 midway through the final period, the Buckeyes got the spark that put them back into the game from Binjimen Victor, the forgotten man so far this season among Ohio State's huge stable of fleet receivers. Victor, who entered the game seventh on the team with just five catches, made a spectacular grab and then ran for a 47-yard touchdown to pull the Buckeyes to within a score at 26-21 with an ample 6:42 to play.

Trace McSorley, aided by a face-mask call on Chase Young, marched his team to the Buckeye 37 before the Ohio State defense stiffened. But Penn State punter Blake Gillikin buried the Buckeyes at their 4. There was plenty of time, with 4:35 to go, but a daunting 96 yards to cover.

Again, Haskins and the Buckeyes went to their playmakers. J.K. Dobbins immediately gave Ohio State room to operate with a 35-yard catch-and-run. Later, Mike Weber converted a third down with an 11-yard run. Parris Campbell got the Buckeyes to the PSU 29 with a 14-yard reception, and two plays later, K.J. Hill took a grab-and-go 24 yards for the game-winning touchdown.

Hats off to Victor and Hill for their exciting touchdowns, but don't overlook the mark of a championship team on each of those scores. The downfield blocking by the receivers was critical on both plays. Campbell, Rashod Berry and Johnnie Dixon helped spring Victor, and Austin Mack and Terry McLaurin paved the way for Hill.

Of course neither of the touchdowns would have been possible without Haskins serving as the trigger man.

The quarterback's performance served notice that the sophomore is not going to put up video game-like numbers every game. All he has to do, however, is what a quarterback is supposed to do: lead his team to victory.

Despite any hand-wringing by Buckeye fans, especially in the first half, Haskins put up credible numbers against the Lions. He was 22 of 39 for 270 yards and three touchdowns, solid numbers in a big game, even if they don't seem so compared to the numbers he had been putting up in previous games against mostly lesser opponents. More importantly, he was guilty of only one turnover – not his fault on a dropped-pass interception – and was sacked only once. He was completely cool, calm and collected when the game was on the line.

With the previously mentioned playmakers at his disposal, he does not have to hit those picture-perfect bombs – throws that were well covered by Penn State – in every game. A short pass that is turned into a long gain is equally effective, gaining just as many yards.

On defense, concerns remain, but there is no denying that the stop troops were effective enough when it mattered to secure the win. This was a true case of a bend-but-don't break defense.

Penn State entered Ohio State territory on 11 of its 17 possessions yet mustered just 26 points.

By contrast, the Buckeyes were in PSU territory only seven times in 18 tries. Particularly damaging to the Nittany Lions' cause were their efforts on their first three drives, where they amassed 155 yards, making it at least to the Buckeye 39 on each try, but coming away with just three points for their work. A touchdown on any of those drives and the outcome of the game might have been completely different.

The Lions ended up gaining 492 yards for the game, 461 of which McSorley was accountable for (93.7 percent), only 22.5 yards below their average entering the game. But those yards added up to just the 26 points, less than half the 55.5 average they had racked up in their first four games.

You can't praise Ohio State's defenders without praising Young, who repeatedly came up big, recording three TFLs and a pair of sacks among his six stops, including the 2-yard loss that sealed the Buckeye victory. He added a couple of key pass breakups and a pair of quarterback hurries to round out a dynamic day at the office.

Young had shown flashes in the early going this season, but this was the first time he has played like Nick Bosa, the man whose shoes he is trying to fill. It would certainly be great if Bosa were able to return in time to join Young for the big games with Michigan State and Michigan in November. If so, look out, Spartans and Wolverines.

Middle linebacker Tuf Borland, who was the subject of much criticism from BSB readers on our BuckeyeSports.com Forum and elsewhere for being slow to the ball, had mixed results against the Nittany Lions. He recorded eight tackles, including a sack, and forced the fumble that finally got the Buckeyes untracked late in the second quarter.

But he was also the man in the middle as McSorley ran for an incredible 175 yards.

The defense was also subject, once again, to yielding the big play. This time it was KJ Hamler who took a McSorley pass 93 yards for a touchdown, with, once again, a bad angle by a Buckeye defensive back aiding the long gain. The Buckeyes have given up more big – and I mean really big – plays in five games than they might normally in a couple of seasons. McSorley added a 51-yard run for good measure.

Also continually troublesome is the number of penalties committed by the Buckeyes, this time 10 for 105 yards. That could have bitten the Buckeyes against the Nittany Lions and, if the problem continues, will surely bite them somewhere down the road.

Interestingly, it was a penalty that was ultimately not called that saved Ohio State. Young, who as mentioned had already been flagged for a face-mask penalty, was initially called for another one on Penn State's final drive. However, it was determined that Young actually had McSorley by the collar, and the play went down as a 4-yard sack.

If the penalty had stood, the Lions would have had first down well inside OSU territory. Instead, they faced a second-and-14 at the PSU 48. Three plays later and the game was essentially over.

On a positive note, kudos to punter Drue Chrisman, who almost single-handedly kept the bumbling Buckeyes in the game in the first half with his seven well-placed punts for a 47.7-yard average.

And finally, I have said many times in this space during the successful tenure of Meyer at Ohio State that I can't believe the esteemed coach doesn't have a play where his quarterback takes the ball under center.

Trailing 20-14 with just over 10 minutes to play, the Buckeyes faced a fourth-and-less-than-1 at the Penn State 48. Meyer made the right call in going for it, but in a somewhat slow-developing play out of the shotgun, Haskins was stopped for no gain.

Penn State took advantage of the short field. With McSorley accounting for 49 net yards, the Lions marched to the end zone, taking what easily could have been an insurmountable 26-14 lead with just 8:00 to play.

With Ohio State's huge and powerful line and a tall and strong if not fleet quarterback in Haskins, it's hard to believe the Buckeyes could not have gained what looked to be a foot on a quarterback sneak, even if the whole world knew it was coming.

As I believe I have heard Meyer himself say, if you can't make half a yard, then you don't deserve to win. And on this night, maybe the Buckeyes didn't deserve to win.

But win they did.

## Borton In His Own Words

We continue our series on Ohio State quarterbacks in this issue with a feature on 1970s great Cornelius Green(e). Green, voted the eighth-best Ohio State quarterback of all time by BSB readers, was the conductor of the Ohio State offense in one of the school's golden eras.

If I am able to communicate my vision of this series properly – my bad so far, not the writers, who have done a fine job – I am hopeful of really looking into the way the quarterback position has evolved at Ohio State and in college football for that matter, through the words of Buckeye QBs.

You may remember that we kicked off the series with a story on John Borton, who passed for an unheard of 1,555 yards in 1952, a mark that stood at Ohio State until Art Schlichter broke it 27 years later.

Reader Tom Hilliker was kind enough to share a letter that Borton wrote to his son Tim around 1985. Hilliker's wife worked with one of Borton's teammates, Dick Guy, helping prompt the letter to the young football fan, then about 7 years old.

In the handwritten note, Borton explains how he became the starting quarterback and how he ended up throwing for so many yards in an era when coach Woody Hayes was famous for his "three yards and a cloud of dust" offense.

"The job was up for grabs, and I got it because I could throw well," Borton wrote to the young Hilliker. "At the start of the season the game plan was to feature the ground attack, but we soon discovered we needed the pass because our offensive line could not control the line of scrimmage and we soon discovered that we could complete passes, gain yardage and score TDs."

It's interesting to note that, in his early years at Ohio State, Hayes could be flexible with his offense. In later years, he would have just kept pounding the ball. Of course in later years he had the superior talent to control the line of scrimmage and keep pounding.

Borton went on to put a Roger Maris-type asterisk on Schlichter's new record.

"I set mine in nine games," Borton reminded. "I believe he had 11 (actually 12)."

Adjusted for game inflation, Borton's record would have stood two more years until 1981, when Schlichter passed for 2,551 in 12 games.

That sophomore season was Borton's first and last hurrah, as injuries curtailed the rest of his career.

"Based on my performance as a sophomore, all were enthused about the next two years. However, injuries kept me off the field most of 1953 and all of 1954. In 1953 I got a broken nose and severely strained ankle ligaments, both times trying to tackle J.C. Caroline in the Illinois game. He later played for the Chicago Bears.

"The following season I broke the ring finger on my right hand during practice before the season started. The finger would not straighten, and I could not take the snap from center."

Despite not being able to play, Borton was proud of that 1954 team that went on to win the Rose Bowl and the national championship.

"That was a long time ago and anyone who saw us play would agree, we were among the best."

Borton signed the letter, "Drive, drive on down the field, John Borton."

I love the letter because it was written to a young football fan. Being a young fan of any sport is such a joyous time.

In fact, Borton's mention of J.C. Caroline made me take notice because to this day I know that one of the very first football cards I ever got was of J.C. Caroline. I suspect I have that card somewhere (thank you, Mom, for not throwing out my cards).

Borton somewhat downplays the significance of trying to stop Caroline. He was an All-American that season and led the nation in rushing with 1,256 yards, according to the always-reliable Wikipedia. He played 10 years in the NFL, and to show how sketchy NFL record keeping was in the early days, for years all-time quarterback great Johnny Unitas claimed that Caroline intercepted his first pro pass and returned it for a touchdown. It wasn't until years later that research debunked Unitas' tale.

Many thanks to Tom Hilliker for sharing the letter (that Tim's mother didn't throw away).

## I Admit It, I'm Hooked

You've probably noticed that we have been pushing The Forum on BuckeyeSports.com pretty hard. That's the place where Buckeye Sports Bulletin readers interact with each other and the BSB staff. There is also a wealth of information there as staff members and readers post tidbits and BSB staffer Garrett Stepien posts all the latest in recruiting news.

I was never much of a message board guy, but I have to admit I find myself frequently jumping on the Forum. I sit down for what I think will be a minute and I'm there communicating with the staff and readers for a half hour or more.

We're eager to hear what you have to say so jump on board.

Also, for those of you who are having postal problems, don't forget that you can read the complete edition of each issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin on Mondays during football season. Past issues are archived for your information and entertainment.

If you are not already enjoying all that BuckeyeSports.com – free with your Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscription – has to offer, email your name, address and preferred email address to [subscriptions@buckeyesports.com](mailto:subscriptions@buckeyesports.com) and we will send back simple instructions on how to access the site.



# FOR ATHLETES

## HEADS UP CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS

### 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.

#### CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Balance problems
- Dizziness
- Double or Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not "feeling right" or "feeling down"

## 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.

**GOOD TEAMMATES KNOW: IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON**

<http://www.healthy.ohio.gov/concussion>



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