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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

Jan. 19, 2019



One Last Win

SONNY BROCKWAY

ROSY FINISH – Head coach Urban Meyer (center) led Ohio State to a 28-23 win in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1, marking his final game with the Buckeyes. He celebrated postgame with his wife, Shelley (third from right), daughter Gigi (second from right) and son, Nate (right).

Meyer Caps Ohio State Career With Rose Bowl Victory

By **TIM MOODY**
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

When Urban Meyer woke up on the final day of 2018, there was about 48 hours left in one of the most decorated coaching tenures in Ohio State history.

That ending would wait for a little while, though. He had to lead the sixth-ranked Buckeyes in the Rose Bowl against No. 9 Washington first, and even before that, he had one last pregame press conference to attend – along with Huskies coach Chris Petersen.

The two coaches arrived Dec. 31 for what is typically a boilerplate press conference ahead of a bowl game. But there was nothing typical about Ohio State's postseason this time around: The press conference took place 27 days after Meyer announced his retirement, effective Jan. 2, 2019. The Rose Bowl – the Granddaddy of Them All – was an afterthought. On that morning, so was Petersen.

Both coaches gave opening statements, and then the moderator opened proceedings up for questions – the first seven of which were directed at Meyer. The aim was to get Meyer to open up more about his career, what brought that to an end and his legacy overall.

He had a different focus – only fitting, since that was always the case with Meyer. "I don't want to devalue the experience, but we're here to win a football game," he said. "And the best part of doing a bowl experience is to do your very best to go win and winning it. We've been working hard on that, realizing who we're playing, how good they are."

For The Roses

About 30 hours after those comments, it was time for Ohio State to attempt

to do just that. And for the first 45 minutes of the 105th Rose Bowl Game, it looked like Meyer would be going out on top with one last dominating victory.

That might not have been quite fitting for a coach whose biggest highlights at Ohio State came with hard-fought, down-to-the-wire wins.

You can go back to Meyer's first season in Columbus – 2012 – for a prime example of that. The Buckeyes, boasting a 7-0 record, hosted Purdue and found themselves trailing, 22-14, in the fourth quarter with star quarterback Braxton Miller sidelined via injury. Kenny Guiton guided Ohio State on a scoring drive, hitting Chris Fields with three seconds left then finding Jeff Heuerman for the 2-point conversion to force overtime, where the Buckeyes won on a 1-yard run by Carlos Hyde.

It was one of the first major highlights for Meyer, who began his career at Ohio State 24-0 before losing back-to-back games to Michigan State and Clemson to end the 2013 season.

Then came 2014, a national championship season that included a double-overtime win at Penn State and a 42-35 victory over No. 1 Alabama in the Sugar Bowl.

The 2015 season was highlighted by a loss in a close game – 17-14 to Michigan State – and the high note of 2016 was a double-overtime win over Michigan in a game that pitted the No. 2 Buckeyes against the third-ranked Wolverines.

The 2017 season had its share of drama, too. The Buckeyes stormed back from a 16-point deficit to beat Penn State, 39-38, and backup quarterback Dwayne Haskins replaced an injured J.T. Barrett to lead the Buckeyes to a comeback win at Michigan to end the regular season.

This year, there was another one-point win at Penn State and a

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On Schedules

The Alabama-Clemson national championship game is now behind us, so we Buckeye fans can now start thinking about the 2019 OSU season.

I have noticed for several years that OSU does play 12 teams that are all classified as FBS schools. Our upcoming 2019 schedule looks very competitive. So why do teams like Alabama, Georgia and Clemson all “get a pass” by playing one or more smaller non-FBS teams?

Alabama this year played The Citadel, Georgia played Austin Peay and Clemson played Furman. So I checked their 2017 schedules for the same three teams. In 2017, Alabama played Mercer, Georgia played Samford and Clemson played The Citadel.

So, how can the talking heads claim that these three teams play a more challenging schedule than the Buckeyes?

The final College Football Playoff ranking had a two-loss Georgia even ranked ahead of OSU. Is this fair?

Barrie Brandt
Dublin, Ohio

‘An Expected Shock’

Ever since Dec. 4, 2018, I’ve been trying to process the retirement of head coach Urban Meyer. I guess that the best way to describe it was “an expected shock.” I could see it coming but refused to believe it.

Most people think that the apparent rapid decline in Meyer’s health was caused by the Zach Smith fiasco last August, which went on for several weeks. It’s an opinion that I agree with. Furthermore, this kind of donnybrook would have killed 20 or so lesser men, but Meyer and the team fought through the adversity with flying colors, again proving to be one of the top teams in the nation.

The reason for this letter is to express my extreme gratitude to the coach and his family. Meyer has given me many happy moments for the last seven seasons. I was lucky

enough to see him and the team in person at the Horseshoe more than once and most importantly in January 2015 at the national title game in Arlington, Texas. All incredible memories for sure.

It’s hard to say goodbye to a man who gave Buckeye Nation an average of 11 wins over seven seasons, a .903 win percentage, a record of 83-9 and an obvious devotion to his student-athletes by setting them up for success when football is long over. Difficult to top by any standard.

Now, the team is in the hands of Ryan Day, and if his fast start is any indication of the future, we’re about to enter another golden age. Still, I’ll never be able to watch another game without visualizing the man on the sidelines pumping the air with his fists and repeatedly raising his arms to the crowd in victory.

He’ll be missed. One hell of a coach.

John Sheridan
San Antonio

A Tribute

Any true Buckeye football fan has to thank Urban Meyer and his Buckeye teams for giving us seven seasons of exciting football. His record of wins and losses is enough reason – Big Ten championship teams, their bowl games won and the national championship.

But the most impressive record has to have been his teams that defeated “That Team Up North” seven consecutive times. I’m like many followers of this traditional game and suffered through the years after each loss, but Coach Meyer gave us something worth shouting: “We don’t give a damn for the whole state of Michigan, we’re from Ohio!”

Nelson Bell
Toledo

Final Four Criteria

Your Dec. 15 issue was especially interesting and infor-

mative by all contributors on Coach Meyer and other OSU sports.

Dan Carusone’s letter to the editor in that edition (“How Do They Stack Up?”) reflects the template that’s been established by the media and fans ever since the committee announced the final four teams. Mr. Carusone expressed his disappointment the way most everyone else has. His conclusion that OSU didn’t make the playoffs “simply because the Buckeyes lost yet another game they could have easily won,” unfortunately, is probably correct.

However, the Purdue game should not have been the reason they didn’t make it. In my opinion, the only factor in deciding who makes it to the final four that should be considered by the members of the committee is which are the four best teams in the country the day after the conference championships? A previous loss or a bad performance should not matter.

Some people will say, “But they didn’t just lose – they got blown out by an average team and their defense gave up too many big plays in other games.” I think that reasoning should not have been relevant when the decision was made.

Who among us thinks that OSU is one of the four best teams in the country since the win over Northwestern? If you do, then you should be upset they were not in the playoffs because the committee did not think like you, not because they lost to Purdue.

Ted Rose
Columbus

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.

From The Pages Of BSB

35 Years Ago – 1984

The USFL’s New Jersey Generals had territorial rights to Ohio State and drafted several Buckeyes. Those players included Vaughn Broadnax, Joe Dooley, Thad Jemison, Garcia Lane, Orlando Lowry, Rowland Tatum and Bill Roberts. The Generals also traded the rights for John Frank to the Pittsburgh Maulers. Meanwhile, the Michigan Panthers drafted Shaun Gayle and Cedric Anderson.

One player from OSU not drafted by any USFL team was Curt Curtis. The injured linebacker filed a lawsuit against the State of Ohio, Ohio State University and the university’s board of trustees over his season-ending leg injury Oct. 18 when he crashed through a glass door while running wind sprints at French Fieldhouse. One of Curtis’ contentions in the \$2 million suit was that he stood to profit from a potential career in the new professional football league.

30 Years Ago – 1989

Former head coach Earle Bruce became head coach of Colorado State on Dec. 23. Bruce, 57, signed a four-year deal with a first-year salary of \$70,000.

Bruce had spent nine seasons at the helm in Columbus from 1979-87, following that with a year at Northern Iowa in Division I-AA, going 5-6 on the 1988 season.

He had signed a four-year deal originally with Northern Iowa, leaving Colorado State to buy out that contract when he left the Panthers for the Rams.

“I’m a Division I-A coach and I belong in Division I-A,” Bruce said. “Sometimes you have to take control of your life and do what you have to do.”

At CSU, Bruce replaced Leon Fuller, who resigned in 1988 after going 1-10 and 25-55 in seven seasons.

25 Years Ago – 1994

As Ohio State sorted through its offseason, the Buckeyes learned leading up to the Jan. 10 deadline that defensive tackle Dan Wilkinson had declared for the 1994 NFL draft and wide receiver Joey Galloway would return to school.

Wilkinson announced his decision days after OSU’s season wrapped up.

“I pretty much knew this is what I’d do all year,” Wilkinson told BSB. “I knew if I didn’t get injured and had a pretty good season I’d be ready. There was no question in my mind.”

“It’s going to be an adjustment, a new way of life, but I don’t think it’s going to be a big deal.”

Galloway had a press conference scheduled Jan. 10 but surprised the crowd in attendance as he held off his departure for one more year, an unexpected announcement.

“I had an opportunity to go home and meet with my

parents, sit down and weigh both sides of the decision,” Galloway said. “I think I’m in a great situation, since if I decide to come out there’s a lot of money out there, and I think I could be very successful in the NFL. Also, this is a great place to play football, as everyone around here knows.”

“It’s a great place and hard to leave. Therefore, I’ve decided to return for my senior season.”

20 Years Ago – 1999

Capping its season with a 24-14 win over Texas A&M in the Sugar Bowl on Jan. 1, Ohio State finished second in the final major polls.

The Buckeyes (11-1) trailed only No. 1 Tennessee (13-0), which beat Florida State 23-16 to become college football’s champion.

“I think it all depends on what happens Monday night in the Fiesta Bowl,” head coach John Cooper said after OSU’s victory against the Aggies. “If Tennessee wins, I don’t have an argument.”

Ohio State’s result at No. 2 was its second in three years, following 1996 when the Buckeyes went 11-1 and won the Rose Bowl. Also of note, OSU’s Sugar Bowl and earlier defeat of Michigan marked the program’s first time beating its rival and winning in a bowl game in the same season since 1982.

15 Years Ago – 2004

After Mark Dantonio left as Ohio State’s defensive coordinator to become Cincinnati’s head coach, the Buckeyes hired from within when head coach Jim Tressel promoted linebackers coach Mark Snyder.

“I think Coach Tressel trusts me, and that’s a pretty great feeling,” Snyder said.

Snyder made the same move in 1996 at Youngstown State, bumping from linebackers coach to defensive coordinator when Tressel coached the Penguins prior to OSU.

“It’s an interesting feeling,” Snyder said. “I guess I kind of feel the same. I mean, I know we’re going to continue to do the things we’ve been doing.”

“But there really isn’t any more pressure that I feel here than I remember feeling at that time. I don’t believe I’ve ever felt anything other than a pressure to win wherever I’ve coached.”

10 Years Ago – 2009

Three days before Ohio State played Texas in the Fiesta Bowl on Jan. 5, arguably the Buckeyes’ best player declared for the NFL draft. On Jan. 2, junior running back Chris “Beanie” Wells announced that he would skip his senior season and head to the next level.

“This has been a difficult decision, but in the interest of

my family, I have decided to enter my name into the 2009 National Football League draft,” Wells said in a statement. “I want to thank my teammates, my coaches, my teachers and the academic advisors for all they have done, and I definitely want to thank all the Buckeye fans for all their support. Ohio State has become like a family to me, and it will always be that way.”

The 6-1, 237-pound Wells left OSU as the fourth-leading rusher in program history with 3,382 yards, including 16 career games of 100 yards or more, plus 30 touchdowns.

Five Years Ago – 2014

Head coach Urban Meyer had retained his entire staff after the 2012 season, but he had hires to make following the 2013 campaign. Co-defensive coordinator/safeties coach Everett Withers left Ohio State to become James Madison’s head coach, while defensive line coach Mike Vrabel leapt to the NFL with the Houston Texans as linebackers coach under head coach Bill O’Brien.

Withers joined the Buckeyes in 2012 and stayed through the end of 2013, coaching in OSU’s 40-35 loss to Clemson in the Orange Bowl on Jan. 3, despite accepting the job at James Madison on Dec. 20.

“It was a great two years,” Withers said. “You win 24 games, that’s unbelievable. I enjoyed a lot, being around the coaching staff, the players. I enjoyed it. It was a fun experience for me. I’ll always take a bunch from this experience into my future endeavors.”

Vrabel started at Ohio State, his alma mater where he played defensive end from 1993-96, as linebackers coach in 2011 under then-interim head coach Luke Fickell and stayed on the next two years as defensive ends coach.

“I am thankful for everyone (associated) with TOSU for 3 great years and my family and I are excited to join the Houston Texans as the LB coach,” he posted on his Twitter account after the news was reported.

One Year Ago – 2018

On Jan. 8, Ohio State announced its hiring of Washington State defensive coordinator/secondary coach Alex Grinch. At the time, Grinch’s specific responsibilities with the Buckeyes were to be determined at a later date.

Grinch’s arrival in Columbus marked a homecoming of sorts for the Grove City, Ohio, native after he had spent his previous three seasons coordinating the Cougars’ defense. Grinch joined an OSU defensive staff that included coaches such as Greg Schiano (coordinator/safeties), Bill Davis (linebackers), Kerry Coombs (cornerbacks) and Larry Johnson (defensive line) following the NCAA’s rule change to allow 10 assistant coaches.

Urban Meyer's Final Season By The Numbers



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Charter Member

I've always been kind of a numbers guy. I loved math in school – real math, not that algebra nonsense – and have been fascinated by statistical information ever since I can remember.

I probably learned at a very young age how to do long division by calculating batting averages and completion percentages, so it stands to reason I enjoyed digging into what was a historical 2018 season numbers-wise for the Ohio State football team.

Here are some of the most outstanding numbers put up by the Buckeyes this past season.

1 – Ohio State finished the 2018 season with 13 victories, the first time in program history the Buckeyes had won that exact number of games. The team has two 14-win seasons, and each of those produced national championships (2002 and 2014).

2 – Washington joined Purdue as the second team this season to have a 300-yard passer, 100-yard receiver and 100-yard rusher in the same game against the Buckeyes, a feat that hadn't been accomplished against Ohio State since Clemson did it during its 45-30 win in the 2014 Gator Bowl. Never before this season had two opponents in the same season ever had a 300-yard passer, 100-yard receiver and 100-yard rusher in the same game against OSU.

3 – Ohio State finished No. 3 in the final Associated Press writers' poll, marking only the second time since the AP poll began in 1937 that the Buckeyes had finished in the No. 3 spot. OSU has finished among the top five in the writers' poll on 27 occasions, but the only other time it has finished third was in 2012.

4 – Urban Meyer became only the fourth man in history to capture a Rose Bowl victory in his final game as a college head coach. The others are Fritz Crisler of Michigan, Clarence "Biggie" Munn of Michigan State and Dick Vermeil of UCLA.

5 – The Buckeyes finished the 2018 season boasting a program-record five receivers on the roster with 10 or more career touchdown catches – Terry McLaurin (19), Johnnie Dixon (16), Parris Campbell (15), Binjimen Victor (12) and K.J. Hill (10).

6 – Dwayne Haskins became the sixth Ohio State quarterback to win Most Valuable Player honors at the Rose Bowl. The other five are Terrelle Pryor (2010), Joe Germaine (1997), Cornelius Greene (1974), Rex Kern (1969) and Dave Leggett (1955).

7 – At just seven letters, Ryan Day has the shortest name of any Ohio State head football coach in history. Jack Ryder (1892-95, 1898), Perry Hale (1902-03), John Wilce (1913-28) and Paul Brown (1941-43) each had nine letters in their names.

8 – Ohio State captured its eighth Rose Bowl victory in 15 appearances. Eight wins ties Michigan for the most victories by a Big Ten school (the Wolverines have made 20 trips to Pasadena) but still trails USC by a wide margin. The Trojans have appeared in 34 Rose Bowl games, winning 25 times.

10.5 – Sophomore defensive end Chase Young notched a sack in the Rose Bowl to run his total to 10.5 for the season, making him the first OSU defender to notch double digits in sacks since Joey Bosa had 13.5 during the 2014 national championship run. Before Bosa, you have to go back seven more years to find an Ohio State defensive player with 10 or more sacks in a season. That was Vernon Gholston, who totaled 14 sacks in 2007.

13 – Tight end Rashod Berry became the first Ohio State player ever to score a Rose Bowl touchdown while wearing jersey No. 13. In fact, only one other Buckeye in history has ever scored points in a Rose Bowl while wearing that jersey number. Vlade Janakievski kicked three field goals during OSU's narrow 17-16 loss to USC in the 1980 game.

31 – During his tenure with the Buckeyes, Meyer was a perfect 31-0 in games that had a noon Eastern kickoff.

37 – The longest play for Washington during the Rose Bowl was a 37-yard pass from quarterback Jake Browning to wide receiver Aaron Fuller midway through the fourth quarter. It was the only play in the game of 30-plus yards for the Huskies – pretty significant since the Ohio State defense during its previous 13 games had allowed 37 plays of 30 yards or more.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Mark Rea

43.2 – Drue Chrisman averaged 43.2 yards on 61 punts in 2018, and his career average actually went down. Chrisman, who had averaged 44.2 yards per attempt heading into the 2018 season, now carries a career average of 43.6, which is still good enough for fourth all-time in program history behind Andy Groom (45.0, 2001-02), Cameron Johnston (44.9, 2013-16) and Tom Tupa (44.7, 1984-87).

50 – Haskins established a new single-season record at Ohio State for touchdown passes with 50. To put that into some sort of historical perspective, Art Schlichter established the program's *career* record in 1981 with 50 TD passes, and he held that mark for 14 years.

54 – The number of regular-season Big Ten victories for Meyer. That ranks him in a tie for 21st place all-time with Ray Eliot, who coached at Illinois from 1942-59. In case your math isn't serving you well, it took Meyer only seven seasons to win the same number of conference games it took Eliot a total of 18 years to accomplish.

90 – Campbell caught 11 passes during the Rose Bowl, giving him 90 receptions for 2018 and establishing a new single-season record at Ohio State. David Boston had held the record since 1998 when he caught 85 passes.

160 – Campbell teamed with Hill, who had 70 receptions this season, to give the Buckeyes a record-setting receiving tandem. The 160 passes caught by Campbell and Hill broke the previous program mark set in 1998 when Boston and Dee Miller combined for 144 receptions.

172 – OSU kickers Blake Haubeil, Sean Nuernberger and Tyler Durbin have put together a streak of 172 consecutive PATs. The Buckeyes have converted each of their PAT kicks since Durbin missed one during the 24-21 loss at Penn State on Oct. 22, 2016.

216 – Nuernberger, who suffered more stops and starts than a city bus during his days as a Buckeye, finished his career with 216 consecutive PATs without a miss. That is good enough for the school record as well as the Big Ten career mark. Nuernberger also finished with 324 career points, fourth only to Mike Nugent (356, 2001-04), Pete Johnson (348, 1973-76) and Dan Shultz (342, 1997-2000).

357 – The Ohio State defense gave up 357 points this season, breaking the old record of 330 set during the 2014 national championship run. OSU opponents averaged 25.5 points per game, and that's also a new record. The 1989 team gave up an average of 24.7 points per game.

403.4 – As long as we're on the subject, the Buckeyes surrendered an average of 403.4 yards per game this season, and that shattered the old mark of 385.7 set during the 1988 season. That was John Cooper's first season as head coach at Ohio State, and the team finished with a 4-6-1 record, one of only two losing seasons in the past 52 years.

499 – Haskins re-established his own single-game record with 499 yards during the Big

Ten Championship Game against Northwestern. It was one of five games this season during which the OSU quarterback topped the 400-yard mark – remarkable in that the Buckeyes had only one such performance in their history coming into this season. Schlichter threw for 458 yards during a 36-27 loss to Florida State in 1981.

.902 – Meyer's winning percentage at Ohio State. If the conference weren't such a stickler for using 10 years as its coaching yardstick, Meyer would be the Big Ten's all-time leader in win percentage, topping Fielding Yost of Michigan, who posted an .888 win percentage with the Wolverines during the early part of the 20th century.

1,053 – Sophomore running back J.K. Dobbins finished the season with 1,053 yards rushing, making him the first player in OSU history to crack the 1,000-yard mark as both a freshman and sophomore. Dobbins' feat meant that Meyer had a 1,000-yard rusher in each of his seven seasons with the Buckeyes, something he had never enjoyed in 10 years as a head coach before he got to Columbus.

1,063 – Campbell finished his senior season with 1,063 yards, the first OSU player to crack the 1,000-yard mark in receiving since Michael Jenkins had 1,076 in 2002. Only three other Ohio State receivers have ever enjoyed 1,000-yard seasons. Boston set the program record with 1,435 in 1998, Terry Glenn had 1,411 in 1995, and Cris Carter totaled 1,127 receiving yards in 1986.

1,131 – Ohio State ran 1,131 offensive plays this season, breaking the record of 1,099 set by the 2014 team. The Buckeyes have run 1,000 or more plays in a season only four times in their history, and each occurred during the Meyer era. Before Meyer got to Columbus, the record for most plays in a season was 939, a mark established in 1995.

2,469 – Ohio State receivers accounted for 2,469 yards this season after the catch. Leading the team was Campbell with 784 of his 1,063 receiving yards coming after the catch was made.

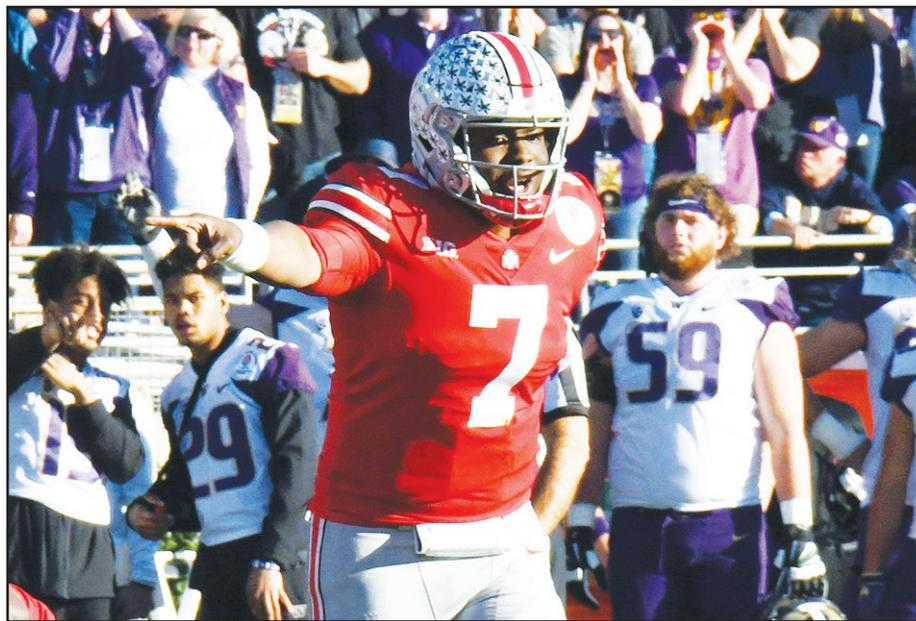
2,676 – Mike Weber finished his OSU career with 2,676 yards, good enough for 15th on the school's all-time rushing list. Weber also totaled eight games of 100 yards or more during his career, and only 18 other players in program history have had more.

4,831 – Haskins obliterated the program record for most passing yards in a season, finishing with 4,831. Joe Germaine had held the old mark of 3,330 since 1998.

5,100 – Thanks to Haskins' record-setting performance, the Buckeyes blew away their single-season mark for most passing yardage with 5,100. The old record of 3,707 was set in 2014.

91,853 – The official attendance figure for the 2019 Rose Bowl Game, which was well off the record of 106,869, set on New Year's Day in 1973 when top-ranked USC rolled to a 42-17 win against No. 3 Ohio State. However, seating in the Rose Bowl stadium was reconfigured after the 1998 game, and its official capacity is now listed at 90,888. That made this year's Rose Bowl one of only two bowl games that were sold out. The other was the Orange Bowl between Oklahoma and Alabama, which served as one of the College Football Playoff semifinal games.

0 – The sum total of Big Ten Coach of the Year awards won by Meyer despite the fact he won a division title in each of his seven seasons with the Buckeyes as well as three conference titles and the 2014 national championship. Zero is the same total of Big Ten Coach of the Year awards won by Jim Tressel in 10 seasons with Ohio State, and Tressel won seven league titles or co-titles (including a record-tying six in a row) and the 2002 national championship. Apparently, at least in the Big Ten, consideration for coach of the year honors comes only if you are not expected to win.



SONNY BROCKWAY

NEXT STEP – Ohio State quarterback Dwayne Haskins declared for the NFL draft after starting as a third-year sophomore in 2018.

Haskins Declares For NFL Draft

Ohio State sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins declared for the NFL draft Jan. 7, leaving a litany of program records in his wake after three seasons in Columbus.

Haskins, who redshirted in 2016, backed up J.T. Barrett in 2017 and took over the starting role in 2018, is projected as a high first-round pick and the top quarterback in the 2019 draft by various experts.

"Buckeye Nation, I would like to thank you for everything," Haskins wrote in a note posted to Twitter. "You have made this experience a blessing. As a young kid, I had dreams of playing at The Ohio State since the age of 10 years old. God has blessed me with an opportunity to go achieve another dream. The NFL."

In his lone season as a starter, the Potomac (Md.) Bullis School product set program and Big Ten single-season records for completions (373), attempts (533), passing yards (4,831) and passing touchdowns (50) while throwing just eight interceptions. Haskins also set various single-game passing records, capped by a record 499-yard performance against Northwestern in the Big Ten title game.

He was the Big Ten Offensive Player of the Year, Quarterback of the Year and Chicago Tribune Silver Football recipient in addition to being Ohio State's first Heisman Trophy finalist since Troy Smith won it in 2006.

Martell Begins Transfer Process As Fields Arrives

Quarterback Tate Martell, who was a redshirt freshman in 2018 while backing up Haskins, entered his name in the NCAA transfer portal Jan. 10, according to various media reports. The move means other schools are allowed to contact Martell regarding a potential transfer – although it does not guarantee that he will leave the school.

While no final decision regarding Martell had been announced as BSB went to press, all indications pointed toward the former blue-chip recruit from Las Vegas Bishop Gorman seeking an opportunity elsewhere, with West Virginia, Miami (Fla.) and Louisville touted as possible destinations.

Martell was 23 of 28 for 269 yards and a touchdown this season while also finishing third on the team with 128 rushing yards and two touchdowns on 22 attempts. His likely departure, though, came on the heels of former five-star Georgia signee Justin Fields deciding to transfer to Ohio State.

Fields enrolled in time for the start of the spring semester in Columbus and, pending an NCAA decision regarding a hardship waiver, is widely expected to be eligible to play right away at Ohio State after backing up Jake Fromm at Georgia last season.

Fields, from Kennesaw, Ga., completed 27 of 39 passes for 328 yards and four touchdowns in 2018 while rushing 42 times for 266 yards and four more scores. He was the No. 2 overall recruit and No. 1 dual-threat quarterback in the class of 2018, according to the 247Sports composite rankings.

If Martell transfers, Ohio State will be left with just three scholarship quarterbacks – Fields, rising redshirt freshman Matthew Baldwin and former West Virginia transfer Chris Chugunov, who is the only one of the three with collegiate starting experience. None of the three has thrown a pass for the Buckeyes.

Walk-on quarterback Kory Curtis of Cape Coral, Fla., also reportedly put his name in the transfer portal, meaning the only other quarterback on the roster is walk-on Daniel Vanatsky, who was a freshman out of Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy in 2018.

6 Signees Enroll Early

Fields wasn't the only new addition to

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Next BSB Mails Jan. 29

The next print issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin is scheduled to be mailed Jan. 29.

However, the Buckeye Sports Bulletin staff will be providing plenty of coverage leading up to the traditional National Signing Day on Feb. 6 as well as coverage of both basketball teams at BuckeyeSports.com, free to all Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers.

Readers will also want to follow the hockey and wrestling teams and much, much more. Additionally, subscribers can talk about the events of the day with members of the BSB staff and other Buckeye fans on BuckeyeSports.com's Forum.

As we continue our look at the Ohio State quarterback, we are turning things around on Reprint Thursdays with stories from games against some of the greatest quarterbacks of all time who have faced the Buckeyes in the BSB era. The next installment of reprints will feature Stanford's John Elway on Jan. 17.

If you are not already taking advantage of BuckeyeSports.com, BSB's 24/7 website, simply email your name, address and preferred email address to subscriptions@buckeyesports.com and we will send back simple instructions on how to access the site. Don't forget, subscriptions@buckeyesports.com is our email address, not the website. We will send you directions on how to access the site.

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Readers who have been experiencing postal delivery problems can also read the complete edition of each issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin online at BuckeyeSports.com on Mondays during football season and Tuesdays the rest of the year.

Your copy of the paper will still arrive in your mailbox at its usual time.

If you have any questions about BuckeyeSports.com or your mail service, feel free to call us at the above number.

2018 Ohio State Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Result/Time (ET)	TV	Record, Bowl Result
Sept. 1	OREGON STATE	W, 77-31	ABC	2-10, not eligible
Sept. 8	RUTGERS	W, 52-3	BTN	1-11, not eligible
Sept. 15	vs. TCU*	W, 40-28	ABC	7-6, 10-7 win over California (Cheez-It)
Sept. 22	TULANE	W, 49-6	BTN	7-6, 41-24 win over Louisiana (Cure)
Sept. 29	at Penn State	W, 27-26	ABC	9-4, 27-24 loss to Kentucky (Citrus)
Oct. 6	INDIANA	W, 49-26	FOX	5-7, not eligible
Oct. 13	MINNESOTA	W, 30-14	FS1	7-6, 34-10 win over Georgia Tech (Quick Lane)
Oct. 20	at Purdue	L, 49-20	ABC	6-7, 63-14 loss to Auburn (Music City)
Nov. 3	NEBRASKA	W, 36-31	FOX	4-8, not eligible
Nov. 10	at Michigan State	W, 26-6	FOX	7-6, 7-6 loss to Oregon (RedBox)
Nov. 17	at Maryland	W, 52-51 (OT)	ABC	5-7, not eligible
Nov. 24	MICHIGAN	W, 62-39	FOX	10-3, 41-15 loss to Florida (Peach)
Dec. 1	vs. Northwestern#	W, 45-24	FOX	9-5, 31-20 win over Utah (Holiday)
Jan. 1, 2019	vs. Washington@	W, 28-23	ESPN	10-4, 28-23 loss to Ohio State (Rose)

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

- Big Ten championship game at Indianapolis (Lucas Oil Stadium)

@ - Rose Bowl at Pasadena, Calif. (Rose Bowl Stadium)

as Michigan's defensive coordinator for two stints (1995-96; 2011-14). His coaching career dates back to 1971 and covers the high school, collegiate and professional ranks.

"Greg is a terrific coach," Day said. "His experience as a coordinator and his knowledge of the Big Ten are extremely important to me."

Washington was a defensive assistant at Michigan last season, but he's a Columbus native with plenty of Ohio State ties. His father, Al Sr., was a linebacker for the Buckeyes from 1977-80 and sits at eighth in career history at OSU with 345 total tackles.

Washington went to Bishop Watterson before playing collegiately at Boston College while Day was on the Eagles' staff. Washington also spent time as an assistant at Boston College from 2012-16, working with Day there from 2013-14. Washington has been a collegiate coach since 2007 and also spent one season (2017) on Luke Fickell's staff at Cincinnati as defensive line coach.

"Al Washington is going to be a terrific addition to our coaching staff," Day said. "I've known him as a player and as a coach, and I know his family very well. I think his familiarity with this region as a coach and as a recruiter is going to be very impactful, as will his leadership with our linebackers unit."

At Least 4 Coaches Retained Amid Big Staff Shakeup

As of press time, Day had official-

ly announced that two of Meyer's staffers would be staying on board and a third was reportedly being kept in the fold.

First, back on Dec. 8, Day announced that Brian Hartline would be retained and promoted to permanent wide receivers coach after serving in an interim capacity under Meyer last season.

"Brian is a terrific young coach and mentor to our players, and I am thrilled he is on our staff permanently now," Day said. "Brian was displaying outstanding leadership qualities when he was a quality control coach, and his efforts coaching the wide receivers this season are a huge reason we are Big Ten champions and headed to the Rose Bowl."

On the same day Mattison's hiring was announced, Day officially promoted defensive line coach Larry Johnson to associate head coach while he will continue leading the defensive line for the sixth year running as well.

At Ohio State, Johnson has coached four Big Ten defensive linemen of the year in Joey Bosa (twice; 2014-15), Tyquan Lewis (2016) and Nick Bosa (2017).

"Larry's experience at Ohio State will allow him to have a major role in the guidance and direction of this program," Day said. "His promotion to associate head coach is well earned. Larry is a wonderful teacher and mentor, and his players always become a part of his family. I am thrilled that he will continue to be a part of this program."

Continued On Page 6

the Ohio State football roster at the start of the spring semester. Six of Ohio State's 2019 signees also enrolled early, including a pair of five-star recruits.

The list of early enrollees was led by Lewis Center (Ohio) Orlentangy Orange five-star defensive end Zach Harrison and Austin (Texas) Lake Travis five-star wide receiver Garrett Wilson, the two highest-rated recruits in Ohio State's 2019 class. Wilson is the No. 16 overall player and No. 2 receiver, according to the 247Sports composite. Harrison ranks No. 4 overall and first among strongside defensive ends.

Along with the five-star duo, Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas three-star running back Marcus Crowley and Wayne (N.J.) DePaul Catholic four-star safety Ronnie Hickman were joined as early enrollees by the Mentor, Ohio, four-star duo of defensive end Noah Potter and offensive tackle Ryan Jacoby.

The six enrollees are out of 15 players who signed with the Buckeyes Dec. 19 on the first day of the early signing period for the 2019 class. For more on the class overall, see Recruiting Outlook on pages 22-26.

Jordan Declares For NFL Draft

While Haskins' decision to leave early for the NFL was expected, many were surprised when Ohio State junior center Michael Jordan, a three-year starter, also opted to leave for the NFL.

During the lead-up to the Rose Bowl, offensive coordinator Ryan Day, who is now the head coach at Ohio State, said the plan was for Jordan to return to guard in 2019, allowing sophomore Josh Myers to take over at center.

Jordan, from Canton, Mich., was an All-American and All-Big Ten honoree in 2018, his first season playing center after starting at left guard as a true freshman in 2016 and sophomore in 2017. Jordan played in and started every game for the Buckeyes from 2016-18.

"In my heart, I know I am ready for the NFL, largely because I have been coached by the very best," Jordan wrote in a note posted on Twitter.

His decision to leave early for the NFL leaves Ohio State with just 11 scholarship offensive linemen in the fold, although that

number could grow to 12 if four-star offensive guard Doug Nester of Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley, a longtime Ohio State commit, signs with the Buckeyes in February.

Jordan is widely projected as a possible second-day selection.

Day Pulls 2 Assistants From Michigan

When Day took over as head coach Jan. 2 following Urban Meyer's retirement, the expectation was that he would make at least a few changes to the coaching staff. Not many would have been likely to predict that he'd be pulling two coaches away from archrival Michigan, though.

That's exactly what Day did, first hiring Greg Mattison as co-defensive coordinator Jan. 7 then bringing on Al Washington as linebackers coach the next day.

Mattison was the Wolverines' defensive line coach in 2018 in addition to serving

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Continued From Page 5

While there had been no official announcement as of press time, a report from The Columbus Dispatch said that running backs coach Tony Alford would remain on Day's staff as well. There was also no announcement regarding offensive line coach Greg Studrawa, but The Dispatch reported he would be back with OSU as well.

Three defensive coaches, though, were officially departing. Oklahoma hired co-defensive coordinator/safeties coach Alex Grinch after one season at Ohio State. Grinch will be the Sooners' defensive coordinator.

Greg Schiano, who served as defensive coordinator for two years, left Ohio State to pursue options in the NFL, according to a statement from Day, while linebackers coach Billy Davis was hired to fill that same role with the Arizona Cardinals of the NFL.

Cornerbacks coach Taver Johnson won't be retained on Day's staff, either, after the coach hired a pair of defensive backs coaches in January (more on that below). Johnson coached under Meyer for just one season after also serving as OSU's defensive backs coach under Jim Tressel (2007-10) and Luke Fickell (2011).

Yurcich, Hafley, Barnes Join Day's Staff

In addition to Mattison and Washington, Day hired three more assistants from outside the program leading up to press time.

First, on Jan. 2, Day hired Oklahoma State offensive coordinator Mike Yurcich to be passing game coordinator and quarterbacks coach in Columbus. Yurcich signed a two-year deal worth \$950,000 annually.

Yurcich, a native of Euclid, Ohio, has been coaching at the collegiate level for 20 years and spent the 2013-18 seasons with the Cowboys.

"I am really excited to announce that Mike is joining the Ohio State staff," Day said. "Mike is not only an Ohioan coming home, but he is also an extremely talented coach who has enjoyed success throughout his career. His Oklahoma State offenses have been among the most proficient in college football, and I look forward to welcoming and introducing Mike and his family to our staff, players and community."

Along with Mattison, Day also named Jeff Hafley as co-defensive coordinator. Hafley, who worked with Day with the San Francisco 49ers in 2016, will also serve as defensive backs coach at Ohio State.

From Montvale, N.J., Hafley has been coaching since 2001. He has collegiate stops at Worcester Polytechnic (2001), Albany



Mike Yurcich

43 Ohio State Athletes Earn Degrees At Fall Graduation

Another 43 Ohio State student-athletes earned degrees from the university at autumn commencement on Dec. 15. The list included various national champions, conference champions, All-Americans and top academic performers.

Among the graduates were five members of the Ohio State football team, including team captains Parris Campbell and Johnnie Dixon – both wide receivers – and star defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones.

Also among the graduates was the 2018 NCAA long jump champion, Zack Bazile. He was also a four-time first-team All-American. Three-time synchronized swimming national champion Alyssa Hoying earned a degree as well, as did Devon Kerr, who was the 2018 Big Ten Women's Soccer Goalkeeper of the Year.

Other notables on the list were Ben Randall, who was the first back-to-back first-team All-American in OSU men's lacrosse history, and Kelsey Nolan, a field hockey player who was a Big Ten Distinguished Scholar by holding a 4.0 grade-point average. Women's soccer All-American Nikki Walts, the 2017 conference midfielder of the year, earned her degree as well.

What follows is a complete list of the student-athletes who earned degrees from Ohio State in the fall, listed in alphabetical order by sport.

BASEBALL – Tyler Cowles, sport industry; Noah McGowan, sport industry; Tanner Tully, sport industry.

CHEER – Carter Marsch, communication; Alexis Schillig, communication; Joel Robert Windle, health sciences program.

MEN'S CROSS COUNTRY/TRACK & FIELD – Nicholas Elswick, family resource management.

WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY/TRACK & FIELD – Erin Gyurke, early childhood education.

FENCING – Julien Baneux, finance; Frederik Koch, finance.

FIELD HOCKEY – Kelsey Nolan, linguistics.

FOOTBALL – Parris Campbell, sociology; Johnnie Dixon,

sociology; Dre'Mont Jones, sociology; Malcolm Pridgeon, human development and family science; Brady Taylor, family resource management.

MEN'S GYMNASTICS – Joshua Hurwitz, food, agriculture and biological engineering.

MEN'S HOCKEY – Christian Lampasso, industrial systems engineering.

MEN'S LACROSSE – Benjamin Randall, finance.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE – Abigail Wise, electrical and computer engineering.

ROWING – Stephanie Gase, chemical engineering; Kristin Faith Hoying, health sciences program.

MEN'S SOCCER – Brady Blackwell, sport industry; Kevin Blackwood, communication; Michael Dichlian, marketing; Jacob Duska, finance.

WOMEN'S SOCCER – Eleanor Gabriel, psychology; Arden Holden, environment, economy, development and sustainability; Devon Kerr, sport industry; Sarah Roberts, sport industry; Nichole Walts, kinesiology (master's).

SOFTBALL – Shelby McCombs, human development and family science.

MEN'S SWIMMING – John Barone, marketing; Michael Eaton, logistics management; Thomas Trace, neuroscience; Noah Worobetz, exercise management.

SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING – Alyssa Hoying, sport industry.

MEN'S TRACK & FIELD – Zachary Bazile, agricultural communication; Nicholas Demaline, sport industry; Michael Peebles, communication.

WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD – Margaret Barrie, communication.

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL – Audra Appold, communication.

WRESTLING – Anthony DeCarlo, communication.

– Tim Moody

(2002-05), Pittsburgh (2006-10) and Rutgers (2011) in addition to professional experience with Tampa Bay (2012-13), Cleveland (2014-15) and San Francisco (2016-18). This will be his first coordinator job.

"I love the idea of having two coordinators on defense," Day said. "I like having a diversity of opinion, but even more I like the expertise and experience that Jeff has in the secondary coupled with the expertise that Greg (Mattison) brings to the front seven."

Day likely rounded out his defensive coaching hires Jan. 10 when he named Matt Barnes special teams coordinator and assistant secondary coach. Barnes most recently served as linebackers coach and special teams coordinator at Maryland, where he coached for three years.

Like Mattison and Washington, Barnes has also spent time at Michigan, where he was a defensive analyst in 2015. He has also coached at Florida as a graduate assistant and at West Virginia Wesleyan College as an offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach. He began his coaching career in 2009 at Delaware Valley College as running backs coach.

"Matt is a young coach who has really done a great job at Maryland," Day said. "He's an energy guy who has considerable knowledge of the Big Ten Conference plus experience in the Southeastern Conference. He's going to work well with our staff, and I'm pleased to have him onboard."

4 Announce Their Return To School

Since the Big Ten title game, four key Buckeyes announced that they would return to Ohio State for another season. Defensive starters Jordan Fuller (safety), Damon Arnette (cornerback) and Malik Harrison

(linebacker) all announced that they'd be back at Ohio State in 2019, as did wide receiver K.J. Hill, who was Ohio State's second-leading receiver last year.

Fuller and Harrison will be seniors while Arnette and Hill will be fifth-year players.

Fuller, a team captain from Norwood (N.J.) Old Tappan, tied with Harrison for the team lead with 81 total tackles this season to go with one interception. He has 162 career stops and three career picks in 38 games. Harrison, from Columbus Walnut Ridge, added 8½ tackles for loss and a pick this season in his first year as a starter to go with a pair of sacks. For his career, he has 130 tackles and four sacks in 38 games.

Arnette, from Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas, made 40 tackles and had one interception this season. In 40 career games, he has recorded 105 tackles and four interceptions.

Hill will be Ohio State's leading returning pass catcher as a fifth-year senior out of Little Rock, Ark. In 2018 he caught 70 passes for 885 yards and six scores. In 39 career games he has tallied 141 receptions for 1,667 yards and 10 touchdowns.

Bucks Finish 3rd In Final AP Poll

Ohio State didn't make the College Football Playoff, but the Buckeyes still finished ranked ahead of two teams that did.

Coming off a 28-23 win over then-No. 9 Washington (10-4) in the Rose Bowl, Ohio State (13-1) finished No. 3 in the final Associated Press top 25 of the 2018-19 season, behind No. 1 Clemson and No. 2 Alabama. The Tigers clinched the top spot and all 61 first-place votes by dispatching the Crimson Tide, 44-16, in the CFP national title game.

Ohio State's third-place ranking was one ahead of Oklahoma, which was the fourth seed in the playoff, and two ahead of Notre Dame, which had previously been No. 3.

The top 10 was rounded out by No. 6 LSU, No. 7 Florida/Georgia (tie), No. 9 Texas and No. 10 Washington State. Washington finished 13th after losing to the Buckeyes.

From the Big Ten, Michigan finished 14th, Penn State finished 17th, Northwestern was 21st and Iowa was 25th. That gives Ohio State wins over four of the final top 25 for the season.

Cincinnati, the team led by former Buckeye Luke Fickell which Ohio State faces early in the 2019 campaign, finished No. 24 after going 11-2 this year.

The Buckeyes open their 2019 season at home against Florida Atlantic on Aug. 31 before facing Cincinnati Sept. 7. Ohio State also faces Northwestern (Oct. 18, away), Penn State (Nov. 23, home) and Michigan (Nov. 30, away) from the final top 25.

Game At Northwestern Moved To Friday

Ohio State's 2019 contest at Northwestern was moved to Friday, Oct. 18, from Saturday, Oct. 19, the schools announced Dec. 18.

The contest will mark Ohio State's first Friday night game since the Big Ten began playing on Fridays in 2017. In 2016, the conference decided that six games would be played on Friday nights each season – three featuring Big Ten teams against other opponents and three league matchups. The Friday night game will come after an Oct. 12 off week for the Buckeyes.

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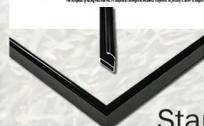


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Meyer Celebrated Rose Bowl Win Before Next Steps

Continued From Page 1

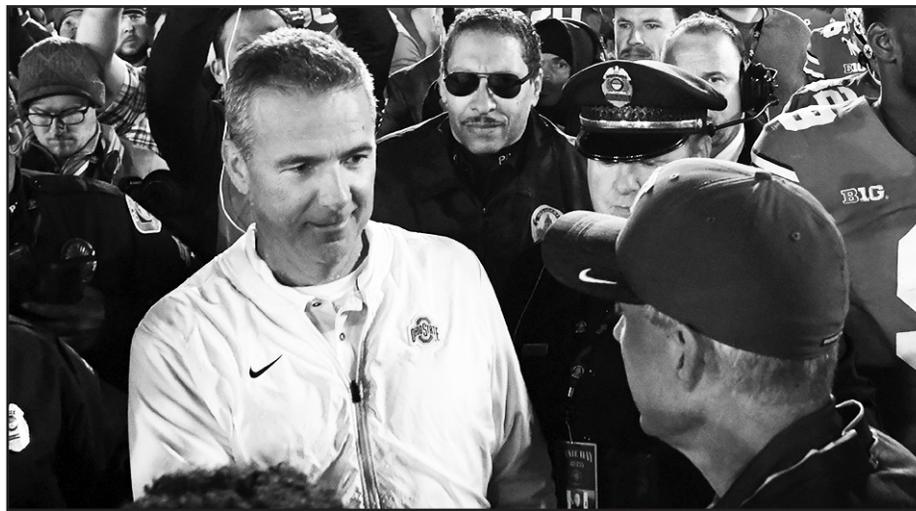
back-and-forth, 52-51 overtime win at Maryland.

It was only fitting that Meyer's final game would land in the dramatic category despite a 28-3 lead going into the fourth quarter.

The Huskies certainly weren't going to let it happen any other way.

"I think on the sideline the whole time just saying keep swinging and keep getting after it," Washington quarterback Jake Browning said of how the Huskies fought back. "Just a couple plays away from getting that first score."

The Huskies finally found the end zone with 12:17 remaining when running back Myles Gaskin hit Drew Sample for a 2-yard pass, capping a 10-play, 66-yard drive that drained 4:38 off the clock. Gaskin himself scored from a yard out with 6:42 to play then again from 2 yards out with 42 seconds left



SONNY BROCKWAY

WHAT'S NEXT? – Urban Meyer (left) is set to teach a leadership class at Ohio State while serving as an assistant athletic director.

to make it 28-23 as the Ohio State offense struggled to regain a spark after Haskins threw three first-half touchdowns and running back J.K. Dobbins scored early in the third.

"Right down to the stretch I was worried," said Ryan Day, Ohio State's offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach and also the man who took over the program from Meyer the following day.

After Gaskin's second touchdown, the Huskies lined up for a crucial inside kick, needing a touchdown to win the game. Meyer kept coaching down to the final moments – after the Huskies lined up, he took a timeout to reassess Ohio State's plan for a recovery.

Washington lined up again and, fittingly, beloved team captain and fifth-year senior wide receiver Johnnie Dixon came up with the ball, clinching the Rose Bowl for Ohio State and sending Meyer out with an 83-9 record for the Buckeyes.

The Aftermath

After Dixon's recovery, the celebrations began for Ohio State – which included a video on the scoreboard featuring a few players, Dixon included, thanking Meyer for everything he has done for the program. The coach also made sure to salute the band and acknowledge the crowd – just as he has always done.

"I told you that when adversity strikes and people scatter," he said, "and when I needed them the most, you gave us the very best. The band didn't scatter. The band was there. Buckeye Nation was there. We saw that all throughout the adversity that we went through. And I can't tell you – my love affair for Buckeye Nation has never been as strong."

Meyer embraced his wife, Shelley, and celebrated with his son, Nate, and daughter Gigi – his other daughter, Nicki, was back in Ohio after recently giving birth to Meyer's second grandson.

The coach even took a moment to hug university president Michael Drake, who was one of the central figures in Meyer's three-game suspension to start the 2018



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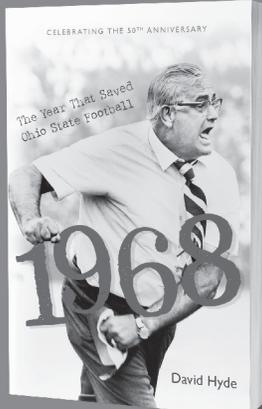
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season, which possibly played a role in his decision to retire, along with serious health concerns regarding headaches caused by an arachnoid cyst on his brain.

As Meyer celebrated on the field, though, he didn't seem any different than after any other big win in a career that included many. The difference was simply that when he woke up the next day he would no longer be the head coach at Ohio State, for better or for worse.

"This has always been very personal," Meyer said. "I'm from the great state of Ohio, and I'm very proud of my state. I've been a

Buckeye fan, like I said, as long as I can remember.

"And I operated – it's not healthy all the time – but I operated under the sense of fear. When I would see our former players come around this program – and you know I was in the elevator yesterday



Ryan Day

with Archie Griffin, a dear friend, and John Cooper is a dear friend, and we lost Coach (Earle) Bruce recently and Jim Tressel is a dear friend of mine – and I just felt an obligation to not let them down."

That intensity, perhaps more than anything, played a huge role in Meyer's career coming to an end at the age of 54. At least he says it has come to an end. The now-former coach is set to join the Ohio State staff as an assistant athletic director while teaching a leadership class at the university.

Whether his coaching career is really over nobody can know for sure. But his time as the head coach in Columbus is over, and Day found himself hitting the ground running after the win.

For one night at least, though, Day was still Meyer's employee, and the Buckeyes wanted to celebrate one last win.

"There's a lot to go through and the focus is all about winning this game," Day said, "because if you don't do that, then you don't do a service to obviously Coach Meyer and the seniors and this team."

"So the focus was winning this game. I thought the guys played really well in the first half and kind of hung on there at the end. Celebrate it tonight then go about the business tomorrow."

The Transition

After that celebration ended, Day was the head coach. That's a new feeling for a man who has never been a head coach at any level of football – apart from serving in an interim capacity while leading the Buckeyes to a 3-0 start in 2018.

"It's an amazing feeling. It is," Day said. "To be the leader of such a special place, special group of men, this program, Buckeye Nation, it's an honor."

For Day, the moment was full of excitement. For Meyer there was certainly excitement, too, but he was heading into an unknown as a 33-year coaching career came to a close.

"I have no idea, to be honest with you," Meyer said when asked about how he would feel Jan. 2. "I've been thinking about that a little bit and trying not to think about it

because it gets in the way of these (players) and the team.

"But I have the best athletic director (Gene Smith) around. I have a school that I love dearly. I feel very welcome in Buckeye Nation and here, and I'm an Ohioan. So my job as we move forward is to make Coach Day, who is an elite coach, make this program even stronger, and that's all our focus. That's their focus, my focus, Gene Smith's focus. It's a very strong program, but we're going to make it stronger."

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Remembering Meyer's Time As OSU Head Coach

By JOE DEMPSEY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

On Jan. 1, Urban Meyer coached his last game at Ohio State, leading the Buckeyes to a 28-23 win over Washington in the Rose Bowl.

He coached the Buckeyes for seven seasons, going 83-9 with three Big Ten titles and a national championship to his name. All in all it adds up to one of the most successful careers in Ohio State history – even in college football history, if you add in the two national championships at Florida as well.

With Meyer's coaching career coming to an end with his retirement, BSB spoke with a selection of media members and former Ohio State players and coaches to discuss Meyer's time in Columbus and his legacy at Ohio State.

Bill Conley

Former Ohio State player and assistant coach.

On Meyer's legacy: "I think he accomplished as much in his seven years here as many coaches have not accomplished in twice that many. Not only his exceptional record in terms of wins and losses, his success over archrival Michigan, his tremendous bowl record and his recruiting, above all, have been remarkable. His ability to go into any high school in the country and legitimately have a shot at a player and get them on campus for visits, which is a big part of that. And of course that tied in directly with the great number of players he's put in the NFL. So I don't know how anybody could have accomplished more in that amount of time.

"I think he brought Ohio State to be consistently talked about as one of the top five programs in the country every year, one of the elite programs. We've always had great tradition and great football here but there was no real drop-off in a year. It doesn't matter how many guys graduated or whatever, we're always one of the most elite teams in the country."

A memory of Meyer: "I remember him as a (graduate assistant). He was a GA on our staff under Earle Bruce in the '80s and you could tell the guy was going to be a success, because he took his job very seriously for a young man, and really wanted to be successful and become a student of the game of football."

Cornelius Green

Three-time Big Ten champion quarterback for Ohio State in the 1970s. (Green spelled his name with an "e" on the end during his playing days.)

On Meyer's legacy: "Urban's just a leg-

end. Love him, hate to see him go, but see why he has to go. But just cementing his legacy with Ohio State. I went up to the Rose Bowl just to witness his last game, so, very heartfelt for me. That was a milestone for me. Winning that Rose Bowl game, seeing Urban get the joy and all the accolades that he received after the game was just awesome.

"He's right up there. He had one of the greatest winning percentages of all time, so you've got to put him up there with the Mount Rushmore of great coaches. As much as I loved Coach Hayes and all the great coaches here, you've got to give due where it is. Urban's record is just undeniable. He's one of the greatest to ever do it."

A memory of Meyer: "Personally, I'm very lucky because Archie Griffin was Urban's favorite player, so he had to see me if he loved Archie. When I met Urban, he got into a quarterback position and started running the option – he was trying to emulate me. So we just started laughing and hugged, it was just a great feeling. He made me feel like a million dollars."

Jack Park

Radio commentator for Sports Radio 97.1 The Fan, author and Ohio State football historian.

On Meyer's legacy: "Urban stands out to me in three ways. A tremendous recruiter, that might have been his greatest talent, really. And all we have to do is look at the people, and it was done very consistently. He was a great organization man. He saw the big picture, which helped him become such an outstanding leader. And of all the coaches that I've followed, he was as good a leader maybe as we've ever had or maybe football's almost ever had.

"If there's one incident that I will remember about Urban Meyer's leadership ability, it's the first seven weeks of this season. And those first seven weeks of this season are the four weeks of fall camp and the first three games – and he wasn't there. So why would I remember that? Urban Meyer had such a great organization put into place that if he had to leave for a period of time, the organization continued to function at a very high level, and that's one of the greatest compliments a leader can earn."

A memory of Urban: "I have a new book ('Buckeye Reflections') that I co-authored that just came out last year. Maureen Zappala and I, we did a book signing prior to that dinner and we donated a lot of the proceeds to the fundraiser, but then we attended the dinner, Urban was the keynote speaker that night. And I remember thinking I've never heard him speak as well. And the lady that's my co-author, Maureen Zappala, she is an excellent, nationally recognized professional

speaker. She speaks all over the country on leadership topics, and she does a lot of coaching of other professional speakers and executives and so forth at a pretty high level. So she has seen quite a few keynote presentations over the years. I had never been able to get the two of them together until she got to meet Urban that night.

"They got to spend just a couple minutes together, but at the end of the speech she said that's the best keynote speech she ever saw. And another interesting thing about that, he talked that night in that speech about what Earle Bruce meant to him. And Earle, he said, meant more to him and did more for him than any man in his life except his father. And that was on a Thursday night, I think it might have been the 19th of April. And he really talked about Earle, and Earle died the next morning."

Tim May

Longtime OSU football beat reporter for The Columbus Dispatch who, like Meyer, retired following the 2018 season.

On Meyer's legacy: "Bottom line, he's a winner extraordinaire. That's reflected in his record and in his championships. Like a lot of modern-day coaches ... I think he's taken it to another level in trying to develop his players and open the eyes of his players to life other than, and after, football, which I think is totally underrated.

"Everybody always wanted to point to the amount of money (Urban Meyer and Jim Tressel) were making, and they were making a lot of money, but the bottom line is almost anytime you would go to the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, those guys would be there working. And I'm not privy to how much vacation Urban Meyer ever took while he was the head football coach at Ohio State, but it might surprise you how little vacation he took."

A memory of Meyer: "Speaking about the Real Life Wednesday program with just the passion he had for it was really impressive to me. Only because it definitely meant something to him. And it was coming from his heart to a certain extent because he had two daughters who were scholarship volleyball players and there were things during their recruitment process – and even from the way things went with him at their respective colleges – that he wanted it to be different for Ohio State football players. He wanted there to be more to it than just the actual athletic part of it, the sport of it.

"I think that is genuine with him, and the way he went out of his way to make that program work – we talked about it several times, and it meant as much to him as the spread zone-read option. It definitely did. And think about it, the Real Life Wednesday program goes on longer than the football season does. So that's his point, there's got to be more to it than just the football part."

Doug Lesmerises

OSU football beat reporter for Cleveland.com.

On Meyer's legacy: "Urban Meyer's not the first guy to do this, where the greatness sort of takes its toll and shortens your career a little bit. But he is firmly in that group – when you win national titles at two different schools, when you are one of the originators of the spread offense, when you are one of the leaders in sort

of the way recruiting has changed – that mark matters.

"He saved (Ohio State football). He fell through the sky like a miracle and to think about where Ohio State football would be if Urban Meyer didn't exist, they wouldn't be here. And I thought after what happened with the NCAA issues and Tressel's resignation, that there was going to be a black cloud hanging over Ohio State for a while. And he came in and wiped that away and nobody else could have done that. To have a two-time national championship head coach who grew up in Ohio watching the Ohio State-Michigan game, was a fan of Woody Hayes, his mentor was Earle Bruce, and he's available. He's unemployed when the Ohio State football program explodes is a miracle."

A memory of Meyer: "I asked him in a news conference about the way he was looking on the sideline. I brought to his attention that Kirk Herbstreit said he looked anguished on the sideline, and in that news conference he sort of said people shouldn't worry about me, I'm fine. But quickly after that, that day, I was told that he wasn't happy with that answer, he felt like he wasn't being 100 percent truthful. I think he had been thinking about it already, but he then decided he was going to let people in and tell the fans what was really going on with his health. And so to go from that moment to then later that day being in his office with a couple other reporters and him explaining just how serious a health issue this was – again, you're talking about one of the 10 best coaches ever, sitting in his office with just a couple people talking about what was the beginning of the end."

Ari Wasserman

OSU football writer for The Athletic and former BSB writer.

On Meyer's legacy: "I would say that he's probably a top-five coach of the modern era because he won three national championships and obviously, we know how hard it is to win a national title in this era, in this realm of college football, and winning three is incredible. But he also revolutionized the spread offense, he changed the entire way that the game is played across the country. He innovated recruiting tactics and techniques, he made programs for the athlete within the college football program that helps recruit. And I think he basically was the reason the entire Big Ten is better now.

"It's hard to compare him to Woody Hayes because it's two different eras, because Woody didn't even have a scholarship limit. So based on the parity, the stakes, the money, television, recruiting and how much of a circus that's become, I would say he's the greatest coach in Ohio State football history."

A memory of Meyer: "The thing that I think has always stood out to me about Urban in every single situation that I've had with him, both in press conferences and one-on-one, he has an aura about him when you're in the room with him or having a discussion with him or talking to him, where he always makes the people in that room want to be better. And it's not just his team, it's his coaches, it's the media, it's everybody. And I think that that is a God-given, inherent trait that is part of the reason why he will go into the College Football Hall of Fame."

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Rose Bowl Trip A Dream For BSB's Staffers

Ohio State rang in the new year Jan. 1 with a 28-23 win over Washington in the Rose Bowl.

The game marked just the second trip to Pasadena, Calif., for the Buckeyes since the turn of the century and the first for head coach Urban Meyer. It was also a first trip to the Granddaddy of Them All for Buckeye Sports Bulletin staffers James Grega, Tim Moody and Garrett Stepien.

What follows is a collection of thoughts on a trip to the Rose Bowl from the BSB trio.

James Grega

Growing up the son of a first-generation Ohio State alum, I had heard the stories of what it was like to go to the Rose Bowl.

The parade, the game, the San Gabriel mountains, Los Angeles. You hear about it all. I heard stories firsthand from my dad about what it was like to attend a game and watch Ohio State in the Rose Bowl. But until I experienced it myself, words couldn't do it justice.

Walking into the stadium for the first time and walking around on the field for pregame warmups was like something out of a picture book. There were no clouds in the sky the entire day, and the grass was immaculate. It truly felt like you were walking on air.

The game itself was boring until the fourth quarter when Washington made its run, but the picture that unfolded as the sun set was unlike anything I had ever seen before. The way the scarlet-clad Ohio State fans mixed with the purple of Washington seemed to be portrayed perfectly in the mountains in the distance.

The entire week, from landing in Los Angeles to flying home a few days later, was a dream. The game for all intents and purposes meant little, but to be on the same field as Urban Meyer as he walked off the field for what is likely the last time as a head coach was surreal. To do it at the Rose Bowl made it feel like a dream.

Many people today say that outside of the College Football Playoff, bowl games are just meaningless exhibitions, and for the most part, I tend to agree with them. The Rose Bowl, though, is different.

Of all the players on both sides who could have sat out to protect themselves for NFL purposes, none of them did. They played. Why? Because the Rose Bowl is everything that is perfect about college football. It is one of the few things that the corporate hand of college football hasn't been able to touch yet. It's still pure. It's still perfect. I will never forget my first trip to the Granddaddy of Them All, and I absolutely plan to go back one day and sit in the stands the next time as a fan, to take even more of the spectacle in.

Tim Moody

Back on New Year's Day 1997, Ohio State



TIM MOODY

CROSSED OFF THE LIST – James Grega was among three BSB staffers to make his first trip to the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day.

faced off with Arizona State in Pasadena, coming away with one of the more storied victories in program history. It wasn't a national championship or a win over Michigan, but it was a huge moment for the Buckeyes.

It also happened to be Ohio State's first trip to the Rose Bowl in my lifetime, but I was a little too young to actually remember the game live. But I grew up reading about, hearing about and talking about that game. I've seen it on replay more times than I could count – all because it was the Rose Bowl.

The Scarlet and Gray are supposed to play in Pasadena – that's just how it works – so to have a chance to make the trip to the Rose Bowl this year was certainly a dream come true. And honestly, the game itself was only a part of it.

One thing that struck me – something I didn't expect – was the field itself. I've never seen grass so perfect – you could've convinced me it was artificial turf – and walking around the field, taking in the sights before the game, was somewhat surreal.

I was also struck by the fact that the stadium looks somewhat small but holds about 90,000 and there really isn't a bad seat in the house.

Going to games as a media member isn't quite the same, but it was obvious throughout the week that attending the Rose Bowl and the accompanying festivities would be a lifetime highlight.

The fact that it was Urban Meyer's final game played into the allure of the contest as well – we saw the end of arguably the great-

est coaching tenure in program history. And he went out with a win – a hard-fought, ugly win, but still a win.

I'm not sure there could have been a better place for Meyer to end his career – although I'm sure he would have preferred to be playing a few hours north in Santa Clara, Calif. – the site of this year's national title game.

Garrett Stepien

When the wheels touched down at Hollywood Burbank Airport and I climbed down the stairs of the plane onto the tarmac and into the bus to Loews Hollywood Hotel, an unforgettable experience began.

With palm trees scattered in the California hills setting the scene for my four-night stay to cover the Rose Bowl, a bucket-list item that I got the privilege to check off just two years into my postgraduate career in journalism, I was already pinching myself.

To and from the Residence Inn LA Live in downtown Los Angeles (media headquarters) and out to Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena, plenty of work was involved as I typed away from Ohio State media day Dec. 30 to postgame coverage Jan. 1.

When the media shuttle first took us to the game's site on media day with the Buckeyes, the arrival was as majestic as one would have imagined. Without a cloud in the sky and temperatures in the high 60s, the SoCal sun beamed as the stadium sat in a valley between hills and mountains in the distance. Going from interviews with two-deep players and all 10 coaches, the team took its photo outside the front of the Rose Bowl, and the 48-hour window to game time made reality set in.

After the joint press conference Dec. 31 with head coaches Urban Meyer and Chris Petersen, kickoff came up quickly 24 hours later on New Year's Day. Giving myself as much time as possible, I arrived for the 2 p.m. local time start at 9 a.m. when the press box opened. I could have sat there all day, and jokingly told another reporter down on the sidelines during pregame warmups that I wished I were a fan taking in the game – walking around, there truly was not a bad seat in that venue.

As the sun set on Rose Bowl Stadium in the third quarter, golden hour felt like the peak of the contest with Ohio State up 28-3 over Washington. Venturing back down to the field as the fourth quarter winded down, though, the Huskies had life left in them as the Buckeyes started letting the lead slip away. While some UW fans had already prematurely filtered out of the stadium, the nerves among the OSU contingent were evident as the margin shrank to 28-17 and then 28-23.

Ohio State obviously recovered Washington's outside kick and milked away Meyer's successful finale, with "O-H, I-O" chants echoing throughout the Pasadena night and confetti raining down as the Scarlet and Gray celebrated the win. The game might have gotten somewhat stale after the Buckeyes dominated the Huskies in the first half, but let me tell you – in Rose Bowl Stadium, I never felt like there was a dull moment. Looking back on it with a hat tip to Reynolds Travel, I'm incredibly thankful our entire BSB staff – Tim, James and I – was able to be out there and bring subscribers the front-to-back coverage firsthand in this issue.

We encourage Buckeye Sports Bulletin readers to share their recollections of their first Rose Bowl. Send them to BSB at P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio, 43212 or you can email them to BSB@buckeyesports.com.

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OSU Takes Rose Bowl Despite 2nd-Half Stress

With less than a half to play, the 105th Rose Bowl was well in hand for the team wearing scarlet and gray. At least, that's what it looked like on New Year's Day in Pasadena, Calif.

GAME NOTEBOOK Tim Moody

No. 6 Ohio State scored on a 3-yard run from sophomore back J.K. Dobbins with 8:23 to play in the third quarter, putting the Buckeyes ahead of No. 9 Washington, 28-3. The Huskies had hardly moved the ball, and Ohio State was scoring with relative ease.

Those turned out to be the Buckeyes' final points of Urban Meyer's tenure as head coach, but Ohio State (13-1) was still able to hold on for a 28-23 victory over Washington (10-4).

The swing started in the third quarter after Dobbins' touchdown when the Buckeye offense stalled. Offensive coordinator Ryan Day, who took over as head coach after the game, said the offense struggled to get in a groove with Washington controlling the clock.

"Really in the third quarter, they kind of ate up a bunch of clock and so we never really got into a rhythm," Day said. "We got that first touchdown drive and then I think the third quarter we only had the ball maybe four minutes, so we kind of got stagnant there."

"We had some three-and-outs, we tried running the ball to eat up some clock because the defense was on the field. We're a rhythm offense, so in hindsight we probably should have just kept the foot on the gas a little bit more, but we won the Rose Bowl."

Almost a quarter after Dobbins' touchdown, the Huskies struck back with 12:17 to play when running back Myles Gaskin threw a jump pass to Drew Sample to make it 28-10. Less than six minutes later, Gaskin punched the ball in himself from a yard out, and he



SONNY BROCKWAY

PROLIFIC FINALE – Fifth-year senior wide receiver Parris Campbell (21) caught 11 passes for 71 yards and a touchdown in his final game as a Buckeye.

scored again with less than a minute to play to make it a one-possession game for the first time since Ohio State went ahead 14-3 early in the second quarter.

"At halftime, we just said take it one drive at a time," Washington quarterback

Jake Browning said after the game. "And I think coming out in the second half, Myles definitely sparked it. And fourth quarter we were able to move the ball up and down the field pretty well, and we were just a little too little too late."

"But we're always going to keep swinging, we always did keep swinging, and I think that's kind of how we are as a team. We're never out of it. Just keep battling."

Washington's final chance came down to an onside kick. Ohio State called a timeout just before the first attempt, and the second was recovered by fifth-year senior wide receiver Johnnie Dixon, allowing the Buckeyes to kneel out the remainder of the clock.

Day admitted that he was worried about the outcome "right down to the stretch."

Meyer Victorious In Finale

Wins are nothing new for Meyer at Ohio State (or at any of his four head coaching stops). The 54-year-old has been a head coach for 17 seasons, spending two years each at Bowling Green and Utah before six at Florida and seven at Ohio State. That's all part of an overall coaching career that spanned 33 years.

The Rose Bowl marked the end to all of that – assuming things go as planned – sending Meyer out with an 83-9 record at Ohio State and a 187-32 record overall.

Of all those 187 wins, though, the last one was a little bit different.

"I would have been on the phone recruiting the last half of the walk off the field if it wasn't our last game," Meyer quipped in the postgame press conference about what it would have been like if he was coming back. "And right now I'd be starting to put pencils to who is coming back, who is not coming back, and what do we do at left tackle, what do we do this, what do we do that. But the new guy's got to worry about that, and we're certainly going to help him. So it felt different."

While Meyer has said on numerous occasions that he doesn't expect to coach again – in fact he is set to serve an assistant athletic director at Ohio State after his retirement – plenty of speculation has continued. For her part, Meyer's wife, Shelley, told ESPN that she has a firm opinion on that front.

"I would be ecstatic if he didn't (coach again)," Shelley Meyer said. "I'm done. I want him to be done. He's too intense."

Campbell Sets New Single-Season Mark

Parris Campbell was targeted early, and he was targeted often. That could describe the entire season for Ohio State's fifth-year senior starting H-back, or it could refer to the Rose Bowl alone.

Campbell, an Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary product, reeled in 11 receptions on New Year's Day as the Buckeyes topped Washington. That total gave Campbell 90 receptions for the season – the most ever for an Ohio State player in a single year.

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Game Analysis

What Worked Well

The pass offense. Dwayne Haskins didn't miss a beat after a month-long layover since the Dec. 1 Big Ten Championship Game against Northwestern, a 45-24 win over the Wildcats, as the sophomore quarterback carved Washington's 21st-ranked pass defense (185.4 yards allowed per game) for 251 yards and three touchdowns on a 25-of-37 (67.6-percent) clip. Haskins hit nine different targets with fifth-year senior receiver Parris Campbell (11 receptions for 71 yards), fifth-year senior wide receiver Johnnie Dixon (two receptions for 27 yards) and junior tight end Rashod Berry (one reception for a yard) the receivers to haul in scores. The Huskies, who entered the Rose Bowl ranked 12th in total defense (301.8 yards allowed per game) were arguably the best defense Haskins faced over the course of the 2018 season, and he still managed to make the Buckeyes' offense pick up where the unit left off.

What Didn't Work

The offensive line. While junior Joshua Alabi filled in admirably for sophomore left tackle Thayer Munford, who didn't dress with an undisclosed injury, OSU was out of sorts at times up front. Ohio State committed nine penalties for 53 yards, with false starts in abundance while Washington got after Haskins for three sacks. Junior running back Mike Weber ran hard with 15 carries for 96 yards, but the Buckeyes struggled to consistently open up the

ground game with only seven totes for 24 yards by sophomore running back J.K. Dobbins, including a 3-yard touchdown plunge that made it 28-3 in the third. The inconsistency up front slowed Ohio State's offense and kept the Huskies hanging around.

Play Of The Game

All season long, the Buckeye defense has been a glaring weakness, but they made their stops when the stakes were highest down the stretch. OSU's offense stalled throughout the fourth quarter, allowing UW to creep back into the ballgame behind a trio of Myles Gaskin touchdowns – one passing and two rushing – in the final 12:17. Washington might have been able to take the lead on one of those had its offense mounted one more scoring drive between those Gaskin scores.

The Huskies had the ball on their own 15 with 4:57 to go and picked up 7 yards on Jake Browning to Andre Baccellia on first-and-10 before an incompletion on second-and-3 from the 22 brought up a critical third-down situation for Ohio State. On that third-and-3 from UW's own 22, Browning found Gaskin on swing pass left out of the backfield with room to run, but sophomore safety Brendon White timed it perfectly and blew up the would-be conversion for a 5-yard loss. The Buckeyes' contingent at Rose Bowl Stadium erupted, and Washington punted away, all but securing the OSU victory.

– Garrett Stepien

The previous record of 85 was set by David Boston in 1998, but Campbell had already surpassed that mark with seven receptions before halftime.

In the victory, Campbell also became just the fifth player in program history to tally 1,000 or more yards receiving in a single season, joining Boston (1,435; 1998), Terry Glenn (1,411; 1995), Cris Carter (1,127; 1986) and Michael Jenkins (1,076; 2002). Campbell finished his final collegiate season with 1,063 receiving yards and 12 touchdowns through the air.

Haskins Reaches 50 Touchdowns

With three touchdown passes in the first half, Ohio State sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins became the sixth player in NCAA Division I history to throw 50 scoring strikes in a single season.

The first to accomplish the feat was Houston's David Klingler, who threw 54 touchdowns in 1990. Hawaii's Colt Brennan set the all-time mark with 58 in 2006 while Texas Tech's B.J. Symons had 52 in 2003. Haskins is now tied for fourth in the NCAA record books at 50 with Fresno State's Derek Carr (2013) and Oklahoma's Sam Bradford (2008).

"I saw a lot of growth," Day said of Haskins. "I saw a guy who played at a high, high level – and obviously played his best football toward the end of the season, so I'm proud of him there."

Overall in the Rose Bowl, Haskins completed 25 of 37 passes for 251 yards and those three early scores, but he struggled for much of the second half as Ohio State scored just seven points after the break. He improved to 13-1 as a starter, though, in what

was his last appearance for the Buckeyes before heading off to the NFL, although he said after the game that he hadn't yet made a final decision.

"I still have a lot of time making the decision, working with my family and my teammates and coaches to figure out what's best for me," Haskins said. "But right now I'm excited to get this win. Excited to leave Coach (Meyer) with

this victory for myself and the rest of the teammates. It's a blessed situation right now."

White Earns Defensive MVP Honors

Haskins was named the offensive player of the game for his performance, while sophomore safety Brendon White earned the top defensive honors in the 105th Rose Bowl.

White finished the game second among Ohio State player with eight tackles (all solo), including two tackles for loss, to go with a pass breakup. He also had an interception on Washington's fourth-quarter two-point conversion attempt that, if the Huskies had converted, would have made it a three-point game before they attempted to kick inside.



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OSU Overcomes Late Surge To Take Rose Bowl

By CRAIG MERZ
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The Ohio State careers of head coach Urban Meyer and third-year sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins ended triumphantly, although not without some uneasiness until the final seconds at the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains on New Year's Day, 2019.

Haskins passed for three touchdowns in the 28-23 victory for No. 6 Ohio State over No. 9 Washington in the 105th edition of the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif.

Meyer, who announced his retirement on Dec. 4, had to wait four more weeks to fulfill a goal of going to the Rose Bowl. He finished 83-9 in seven seasons with the Buckeyes, including 5-2 in bowl games.

"It's something I've dreamed about as long as I've been watching Ohio State football, which is as long as I've been around," he said. "And it was everything and more."

As was the game, although it appeared for a while that Meyer could relax and enjoy the moment, if that was possible.

The Buckeyes (13-1) cruised to a 28-3 lead midway through the third quarter, but the offense disappeared and they punted their final five full possessions as many of the scarlet- and gray-clad fans among the 91,853 in attendance squirmed.

Washington (10-4) scored three touchdowns in the fourth quarter, and the game was not sealed until fifth-year senior receiver Johnnie Dixon recovered an onside kick at the 50-yard line with 42 seconds left and the Buckeyes ran out the clock.

Haskins was 25 of 37 for 251 yards. His three TDs were a program record in the Rose Bowl. He finished with a school-record 50 passing TDs for the season and on Jan. 7 declared for the 2019 NFL draft.

His favorite target was fifth-year senior Parris Campbell, who had 11 receptions for 71 yards and a TD and now owns the OSU mark for most catches in a season with 90. Junior Mike Weber, who said Dec. 16 that he would enter the NFL draft, rushed for 96 yards on 15 carries in his last game. Sophomore J.K. Dobbins added 24 yards on seven rushes with a score.

Washington quarterback Jake Browning had a brilliant fourth quarter to overshadow a poor first 45 minutes and finished 35 of 54 for 313 yards.

Andre Baccellia had 12 catches for 109 yards. Running back Myles Gaskin had 121 yards and two TDs on 24 totes plus he threw a 2-yard TD pass for the Huskies.

Washington outgained the Buckeyes 444 (315 pass, 129 run) to 364 (251, 113).

Junior safety Jordan Fuller led the Buckeyes with nine tackles (eight solo), and



SONNY BROCKWAY

ADDING TO THE ADVANTAGE – Fifth-year senior wide receiver Johnnie Dixon's second-quarter touchdown gave Ohio State a 14-3 lead.

sophomore Brendon White added eight solo tackles.

The Buckeyes improved to 8-7 in the Rose Bowl while the Huskies fell to 6-8-1.

How It Happened

After OSU and Washington, in that order, had three-and-outs to start the game, the Buckeyes went 77 yards on 11 plays in 2:45, for a 7-0 lead on a 12-yard pass on second down to Campbell for the 7-0 lead on an Instagram-worthy, gorgeous, 60-degree afternoon.

Make no mistake, it was Weber's drive. His first four carries of the game went for 52 yards, including a 19-yard jaunt to the 12 on fourth-and-1 from the UW 31. He also had runs of 9, 14 and 10 yards. Sophomore Demario McCall contributed a 9-yard run just before Weber's long gainer.

Washington finally got untracked two possessions later and used a 15-yard catch by Jordan Chin and an 11-yard run by Gaskin

among the plays that allowed the Huskies to penetrate to the OSU 23, but false start and holding penalties on consecutive plays pushed them back to the 38.

Passes to Salvon Ahmed and Baccellia got the Huskies to the 21, but they had to settle for a 38-yard field goal by Peyton Henry to make it 7-3 with 1:19 left in the first quarter to finish the 55-yard, 11-play drive that consumed 4:57.

Ohio State increased the lead to 14-3 at 12:23 of the second quarter with Haskins finding Dixon for a 19-yard scoring strike.

The 75-yard, 10-play, 3:56 series got off to an inauspicious start with a false start penalty to fourth-year junior left tackle Joshua Alabi, who made his first career start for the injured Thayer Munford. Weber got 2 yards back before Haskins found fifth-year senior Terry McLaurin for a 32-yard gain to the Washington 46. Weber gained 10 yards on a 2-yard run and a catch for 8 to end the first quarter.

Later, facing third-and-3 from the UW 29, Dixon had an 8-yard grab to keep the drive alive. Weber ran for 3 and Dobbins had a catch for 4, but a false start on senior right tackle Isaiah Prince pushed the Buckeyes back to the 19. That was only a slight detour as Haskins connected with Dixon in the end zone on the next play.

Late in the second quarter, sophomore Drue Chrisman punted 30 yards to the Washington 8 with 1:21 left. The Huskies used all of 21 seconds, and the Buckeyes did not have to spend a timeout to get the ball back before scoring a critical TD before the break.

After Washington's punt to the OSU 43, Haskins passed 10 yards to junior Binjimen

Victor and 19 to Campbell, whose 86th catch broke the program's single-season mark set by David Boston in 1998.

A pass interference against the Huskies on a ball intended for Victor resulted in a first down at the 13. Haskins scrambled for 3 yards then hit sophomore tight end Luke Farrell for 9 to the 1. OSU took a timeout with 18 seconds remaining.

Haskins made it 21-3 with a 1-yard toss to junior tight end Rashod Berry with 14 seconds to go at the end of a five-play, 57-yard march in 46 seconds.

The Huskies got the ball to open the second half and had a solid series going, but after they advanced to the OSU 32, a sack by junior defensive end Jashon Cornell (7 yards) and a 4-yard rushing loss by Ahmed knocked them back to the 43 and Joel Whitford's punt went into the end zone.

OSU needed seven plays and 2:02 to go 80 yards for a 28-3 lead at 8:23 of the third quarter. Campbell had catches of 19, 5 and 6 yards, and junior K.J. Hill followed with grabs of 11 and 34 yards to set up a 3-yard TD run by Dobbins.

The Huskies got the ball back and drove to the OSU 22 only to be stopped on fourth-and-4 on their 12th play on a pass breakup by sophomore cornerback Jeffrey Okudah.

Washington closed to within 28-10 on a possession that started in the third quarter and ended early in the fourth when Gaskin took the snap and made a jump pass of 2 yards to Drew Sample on fourth down with 12:17 left in the game.

The 10-play, 66-yard, 4:38 sequence began with a 24-yard catch by Hunter Bryant to the OSU 42.

Four plays later a defensive holding call on White placed the ball on the OSU 21. Gaskin and Baccellia had catches for a combined 16 yards to help set up the scoring play.

OSU punted and once again the Huskies moved across midfield, this time being stymied on a fourth-and-6 at the Ohio State 48 on an errant pass.

After Chrisman's partially blocked punt went 16 yards to the UW 34, Washington needed only five plays to go 66 yards, using 1:30 and make it 28-17.

Baccellia had a 24-yard catch and Aaron Fuller another of 37 to the OSU 5. Gaskin rushed for 1 and 3 yards then scored from the 1 with 6:42 left.

OSU made one first down but had to punt, and the Huskies started from their own 15 with 4:57 left. On third down, White tackled Gaskin for a 5-yard loss on a pass to bring up fourth-and-8, and the Huskies punted 36 yards to the OSU 47 with 3:49 left.

The Buckeyes punted a fifth straight time, and UW began from its 29 with 2:50 to play. Pass interference on White put the Huskies at their 47. A great leaping catch of 17 yards by Bryant on third down moved the ball to the OSU 36. Bryant had a 3-yard reception and Ahmed another for 9 to the 24 and a first down.

Aaron Fuller's catch moved the chains to the 11, and Ty Jones had a reception of 7 yards to the 4. A pass interference on Okudah placed the ball on the 2, and Gaskin ran to the right pylon to make it 28-23 with 42 seconds left following a review to see if he had indeed scored.

Browning's pass for the two-point conversion was intercepted in the end zone by White, and he returned it to the OSU 45 before being tackled.

After the onside kick, Haskins took two knees, and the season and Meyer's career were over.

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The Numbers Game

Ohio State 28, Washington 23

Jan. 1, 2019 – Rose Bowl Stadium; Pasadena, Calif.

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
WASHINGTON (10-4)	3	0	0	20	- 23
OHIO STATE (13-1)	7	14	7	0	- 28

First Quarter

OSU – Campbell, 12 yard pass from Haskins (Haubeil kick), 9:04; 11 plays, 77 yards, 2:45 TOP.

WASH – Henry, 38 yard field goal, 1:19; 11 plays, 55 yards, 4:57 TOP.

Second Quarter

OSU – Dixon, 19 yard pass from Haskins (Haubeil kick), 12:23; 10 plays, 75 yards, 3:56 TOP.

OSU – Berry, 1 yard pass from Haskins (Haubeil kick), 0:14; 5 plays, 57 yards, 0:46 TOP.

Third Quarter

OSU – Dobbins, 3 yard run (Haubeil kick), 8:23; 7 plays, 80 yards, 2:02 TOP.

Fourth Quarter

WASH – Sample, 2 yard pass from Gaskin (Henry kick), 12:17; 10 plays, 66 yards, 4:38 TOP.

WASH – Gaskin, 1 yard run (Henry kick), 6:42; 5 plays, 66 yards, 1:30 TOP.

WASH – Gaskin, 2 yard run (Browning pass failed), 0:42; 10 plays, 71 yards, 2:08 TOP.

Att. – 91,853.

Weather – 60 degrees, sunny; wind N 6 mph.

Team Statistics

	WASH	OSU
First Downs	27	22
Rushing	10	7
Passing	14	14
Penalty	3	1
Rushes-Yards	36-129	32-113
Passing Yards	315	251
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	36-55-0	25-37-0
Offensive Plays	91	69
Total Net Yards	444	364
Third Down Efficiency	9-20	3-13
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-3	1-1
Punts-Avg.	7-38.6	9-39.8
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	0-0
Penalties	6-46	9-53
Time of Possession	35:02	24:58

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) – **WASH:** Gaskin 24-121; McGrew 1-7; Ahmed 5-4; Pleasant 1-0; TEAM 1-(-1); Browning 4-(-2). **OSU:** Weber 15-96; Dobbins 7-24; McCall 2-12; TEAM 2-(-5); Haskins 6-(-14).

PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD) – **WASH:** Browning 35-54-0-313-0; Gaskin 1-1-0-2-1. **OSU:** Haskins 25-37-0-251-3.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) – **WASH:** Baccellia 12-109; Fuller 7-80; Bryant 4-51; Jones 3-22; Ahmed 3-22; Gaskin 3-(-1); Sample 2-1; Otton 1-16; Chin 1-15. **OSU:** Campbell 11-71; Hill 3-54; Dobbins 3-15; Victor 2-34; Dixon 2-27; McLaurin 1-32; Farrell 1-9; Weber 1-8; Berry 1-1.

PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) – **WASH:** Browning 1-34.0-34; Whitford 5-40.0-48; Porter 1-36.0-36. **OSU:** Chrisman 8-42.8-55; TEAM 1-16.0-16.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.) – **WASH:** Fuller 3-8. **OSU:** None.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.) – **WASH:** McGrew 2-20. **OSU:** None.

MISSED FIELD GOALS (Yds.) – **WASH:** None. **OSU:** None.

FORCED FUMBLES – **WASH:** None. **OSU:** None.

FUMBLE RECOVERIES (No.-Yds.) – **WASH:** None. **OSU:** None.

INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) – **WASH:** None. **OSU:** None.

SACKS (No.-Yds.) – **WASH:** Onwuzurike 1.0-9; Burr-Kirven 1.0-6; Bowman 1.0-1. **OSU:** Cornell 1.0-7; Young 1.0-6.

TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) – **WASH:** Burr-Kirven 1.5-7; Onwuzurike 1.0-9; Gaines 1.0-3; Wellington 1.0-1; Bowman 1.0-1; Potoa'e 0.5-1. **OSU:** White 2.0-6; Cornell 1.0-7; Cooper 1.0-6; Young 1.0-6; Hamilton 1.0-4.

TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.) – **WASH:** Burr-Kirven 9-2-11; Wellington 4-3-7; Bryant 5-1-6; McIntosh 2-3-5; Bartlett 2-3-5; Tryon 1-2-3; Potoa'e 1-2-3; Miller 3-0-3; Gaines 3-0-3; McKinney 2-0-2; Molden 1-1-2; Murphy 0-2-2; Beavers 1-1-2; Bowman 1-1-2; Bowman 1-1-2; Onwuzurike 1-0-1. **OSU:** Fuller 8-1-9; White 8-0-8; Harrison 7-0-7; Borland 4-3-7; Sheffield 5-0-5; Okudah 4-1-5; Werner 2-3-5; Cooper 3-0-3; D. Jones 3-0-3; Arnette 2-1-3; Wade 2-1-3; Landers 2-1-3; Young 2-0-2; Cornell 2-0-2; McLaurin 2-0-2; Browning 1-0-1; Pryor 1-0-1; K. Jones 1-0-1; Hamilton 1-0-1; Togiai 1-0-1; T. Smith 0-1-1.

PLAYERS IN THE GAME – **WASHINGTON:** Offense, Cook, Browning, Gaskin, Kirkland, Harris, McGary, Adams, Wattenberg, Chin, Otton, Sample, Henry, Defense, Murphy, Bryant, McKinney, Wellington, McIntosh, Bartlett, Miller, Burr-Kirven, Johnson, Bowman, Gaines, Whitford. Reserves, Baccellia, Tryon, Molden, Bryant, McGrew, Fuller, Tupuola, Potoa'e, Lowe, Beavers, Jones, Pleasant, Ahmed, Taylor, Manu, Sirmon, Warren, Porter, Ulofoshio, Carty, Wambaugh, Bowman, Clark, Bainivalu, Hilbers, James, Sosebee, Richmond, Bronson, Onwuzurike. **OHIO STATE:** Offense, Dixon, Dobbins, Davis, Haskins, Campbell, Alabi, Prince, Pridgeon, Jordan, McLaurin, Farrell, Haubeil. Defense, White, Young, Arnette, Fuller, Sheffield, Cooper, Werner, Borland, Harrison, Landers, D. Jones, Chrisman. Reserves, Proctor, T. Smith, Okudah, Gant, Hill, Dever, Browning, Vincent, Mitchell, Cornell, Victor, Riep, Banks, Berry, Pryor, Harris, K. Jones, Olave, Wint, Wade, Weber, McCall, Teague, Hilliard, McCullough, Booker, Hamilton, Cupp, Woidke, Myers, Togiai, Taylor, Saunders, Hausmann, Gardiner, Ruckert, Garrett.

Season Statistics

2018-19 Game-By-Game				Scoring						
Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd	TD	EPK	EPR	EPRC	FG	PTS	
Sept. 3	(5) OREGON STATE	W, 77-31	102,169	12	-	-	-	-	72	
Sept. 8	(4) RUTGERS	W, 52-3	93,057	12	-	-	-	-	72	
Sept. 15	(4) vs. TCU* (15)	W, 40-28	64,362	-37-37	-	-	-	-10-13	67	
Sept. 22	(4) TULANE	W, 49-6	103,336	11	-	-	-	-	66	
Sept. 29	(4) at Penn State (9)	W, 27-26	110,889	8	-	-	-	-	48	
Oct. 6	(3) INDIANA	W, 49-26	104,193	-39-39	-	-	-	3-5	48	
Oct. 13	(3) MINNESOTA	W, 30-14	100,042	6	-	-	-	-	36	
Oct. 20	(2) at Purdue	L, 49-20	60,716	6	-	-	-	-	36	
Nov. 3	(10) NEBRASKA	W, 36-31	104,245	4	-	0-1	-	-	24	
Nov. 10	(10) at Mich. St. (18)	W, 26-6	74,633	4	-	-	-	-	24	
Nov. 17	(10) at Maryland	W, 52-51 (OT)	38,177	3	-	-	-	-	18	
Nov. 24	(10) MICHIGAN (4)	W, 62-39	106,588	2	-	-	-	-	12	
Dec. 1	(6) vs. NU** (21)	W, 45-24	66,375	2	-	-	-	-	12	
Jan. 1	(6) vs. UW# (9)	W, 28-23	91,853	2	-	-	-	-	12	

OSU's gameday CFP ranking is in parentheses before the opponent, while the opponent's ranking is after the name. (AP ranking used through Purdue game.)

* – at Arlington, Texas (AT&T Stadium)

** – Big Ten championship game at Indianapolis (Lucas Oil Stadium)

– Rose Bowl at Pasadena, Calif. (Rose Bowl Stadium)

Team Statistics

	OSU	Opp
First Downs	403	283
Rushing	136	102
Passing	231	145
Penalty	36	36
Average Per Game/Rush	171.3	158.2
Average Per Game/Pass	364.3	245.2
Total Offense	7,498	5,648
Total Plays	1,131	979
Average Per Game	535.6	403.4
Average Per Play	6.6	5.8
Penalties-Yards	116-1,055	81-781
Fumbles-Lost	17-9	24-12
Third Down Efficiency	95-204	67-205
Percentage	47%	33%
Fourth Down Efficiency	14-21	9-19
Percentage	67%	47%
Sacks-Yards	41-274	23-116
Time Of Possession Avg.	30:52	29:08

Score

By Quarters	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	130	166	118	172	7	593	42.4
Opponents	71	101	71	108	6	357	25.5

Individual Statistics

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
J.K. Dobbins	230	1,053	4.6	10	42
Mike Weber	172	954	5.5	5	49
Tate Martell	22	128	5.8	2	47
Dwayne Haskins	79	108	1.4	4	17
Master Teague	17	106	6.2	1	33
Demario McCall	8	50	6.2	0	15
Brian Snead	11	37	3.4	1	5
Parris Campbell	9	24	2.7	0	18
C.J. Saunders	0	8	0.0	0	0
K.J. Hill	1	-3	-3.0	0	0
TEAM	21	-67	-3.2	0	0
OSU Totals	570	2,398	4.2	23	49
OPP Totals	490	2,215	4.5	26	93

Passing	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT	Effic.
D. Haskins	373	533	70.0	4,831	50-8	174.07
Tate Martell	23	28	82.1	269	1-0	174.63
OSU Totals	396	561	70.6	5,100	51-8	174.10
OPP Totals	272	489	55.6	3,433	18-11	122.24

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Parris Campbell	90	1,063	11.8	12	78
K.J. Hill	70	885	12.6	6	42
Johnnie Dixon	42	669	15.9	8	63
Terry McLaurin	35	701	20.0	11	75
Austin Mack	26	331	12.7	1	48
J.K. Dobbins	26	263	10.1	2	35
Binjimen Victor	21	354	16.9	4	47
Mike Weber	21	112	5.3	1	15
Luke Farrell	20	205	10.2	1	24
Chris Olave	12	197	16.4	3	29
C.J. Saunders	10	73	7.3	0	19
Demario McCall	9	110	12.2	0	35
Rashod Berry	9	78	8.7	2	15
Jaylen Harris	2	22	11.0	0	15
Garyn Prater	1	13	13.0	0	13
Jeremy Ruckert	1	13	13.0	0	13
Jaalen Gill	1	11	11.0	0	11
OSU Totals	396	5,100	12.9	51	78
OPP Totals	272	3,433	12.6	18	93

FG Distance	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Blake Haubeil	6-7	2-3	2-3	0-0	10-13
Sean Nuernberger	2-2	1-2	0-1	0-0	3-5
OSU Totals	8-9	3-5	2-4	0-0	13-18
OPP Totals	3-3	9-11	2-6	0-2	14-22

Punting	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Drue Chrisman	61	2,636	43.2	0	65
TEAM	1	16	16.0	1	16
OSU Totals	62	2,652	42.8	1	65
OPP Totals	87	3,422	39.3	3	56

Interceptions	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Shaun Wade	3	12	4.0	0	12
Kendall Sheffield	2	0	0.0	0	0
Brendon White	1	49	49.0	0	49
Dre'Mont Jones	1	28	28.0	1	28
Malik Harrison	1	13	13.0	0	13
Jordan Fuller	1	4	4.0	0	4
Damon Arnette	1	1	1.0	0	1
Isaiah Pryor	1	0	0.0	0	0
OSU Totals	11	107	9.7	1	49
OPP Totals	8	211	26.4	2	46

Punt Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
K.J. Hill	14	76	5.4	0	23
C.J. Saunders	8	50	6.2	0	20
Demario McCall	3	32	10.7	0	26
Sevyn Banks	1	33	33.0	1	33
Keandre Jones	1	22	22.0	0	0
Chris Olave	0	3	0.0	0	3
OSU Totals	27	216	8.0	1	33
OPP Totals	13	43	3.3	0	12

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Johnnie Dixon	13	240	18.5	0	38
Demario McCall	10	195	19.5	0	42
C.J. Saunders	2	24	12.0	0	14
K.J. Hill	1	4	4.0	0	4
OSU Totals	26	463	17.8	0	42
OPP Totals	33	492	14.9	0	31

Def. Leaders	Solo	Ast.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Jordan Fuller	61	20	81	2.5-4	-

OSU's Season A Success Despite Small Failures

On the first day of 2019, Ohio State wrapped up another season with a victory over Washington in the Rose Bowl. The next day, Ryan Day officially took over as head coach as Urban Meyer rode off into a potential sunset on his coaching career.

Since then, the Buckeyes have begun a whirlwind offseason amid coaching changes and roster additions (and subtractions) heading into the winter.

Buckeye Sports Bulletin editor Tim Moody and staff writers Garrett Stepien and James Grega sat down after the season to break down the 2018 campaign and what comes next for Ohio State football.

How would you assess the overall success or failure of Ohio State's 2018 season?

Tim Moody: Thirteen wins and one loss. That's a successful season no matter how you shake it.

But the thing is, at Ohio State at least, success isn't always measured in such simple terms. The Buckeyes expect to compete for championships – which they did, winning the Big Ten – but to have a one-loss season and miss the College Football Playoff is a sign of an issue for Ohio State.

For two years in a row now, the Buckeyes have lost a heartbreaker on the road to a team that should have been completely over-matched. That loss at Purdue makes 2018 less of a resounding success than if, say, the Buckeyes had suffered a loss against TCU only.

No, the Horned Frogs didn't have a great season, but if Ohio State's one loss had come by say three points in week two instead of 29 at West Lafayette, the Buckeyes would have been in the playoff.

But then again, 13 wins, a Big Ten title and a Rose Bowl victory should never be scoffed at.

James Grega: Considering everything that happened before the season concerning Urban Meyer and Zach Smith, I will view the 2018 Ohio State season as a success, but not an overwhelming one.

If you had told Ohio State fans before the season that the Buckeyes would get waxed by 29 at Purdue yet would roll Michigan and win a Big Ten title and a Rose Bowl, 99 percent of them would take it. On top of that, Dwayne Haskins had the best season by any quarterback in school history and sent Meyer out a winner.

I know most Ohio State fans view any season that ends in a missed CFP appearance as a failure, but that isn't realistic. The Buckeyes had a very good season and should be commended for it.

Garrett Stepien: When one mentions the whole Meyer-Smith fiasco from the summer, it's important to remember the adversity and triumph was overcome by the players and then-acting head coach Ryan Day – not Meyer.

The self-inflicted drama at Ohio State certainly could have derailed the Buckeyes' season, however, which only saw more ups and downs from Nick Bosa's early-fall departure to Meyer's health concerns. OSU still managed to rally, winning 13 games and losing just one, coming away with its first Rose Bowl win in nine years — that shouldn't be overlooked.

James sums things up best by saying Ohio State's 2018 campaign was successful but surely not overwhelming. The Buckeyes had probably the best quarterback the program's ever seen and weren't able to crack



SONNY BROCKWAY

A SUCCESSFUL FINISH – Ohio State went 13-1, won the Big Ten and added a Rose Bowl victory in Urban Meyer's final season as head coach.

the College Football Playoff for the second straight year.

In Columbus, that's the standard, and OSU came up short due to a multitude of head-scratching struggles from coaching to personnel.

Ohio State sent Meyer out on top and ushered in Day's beginning with momentum, putting the Purdue debacle behind as the Buckeyes won out. The torch passed. Day has already begun to keep Meyer's foundation intact while implementing his modifications from coaching staff tweaks to rebuilding the roster via recruiting and transferring. When one considers how badly things could have gone back in August, though, wins are wins and OSU chalked up 13 of them despite every reason for several losses to pile on.

What was the biggest surprise of the year?

JG: I mean, it's obvious isn't it? Getting pummeled by Purdue in late October is something I will never fully comprehend. With the story surrounding the late Tyler Trent, I have a hard time believing there wasn't a higher power involved in that one.

Watching Ohio State get outcoached and outplayed by a team that finished 6-7 and gave up 63 points in a bowl game is something that will leave me scratching my head for a very long time.

TM: Purdue, of course, was a shock in the way it happened, but there were whispers throughout the lead-up that West Lafayette is a dangerous place to play – especially for Ohio State in the past two decades.

For me, the biggest surprise was the lack of a credible running threat for stretches during the season. I still contend that J.K. Dobbins is Ohio State's best offensive player (outside of Dwayne Haskins last year), but the offensive line struggled so much at times

that neither he nor Mike Weber could get anything going. That played a huge role in the loss at Purdue and could easily have derailed the season in close games against Indiana, Minnesota and Nebraska.

GS: Purdue is obvious, as the others note, but I'll go with Nick Bosa's season-ending injury. Bosa was an iron man in his first couple of years at Ohio State, following older brother Joey's footsteps as defensive line coach Larry Johnson's best product ever. He was on pace to have a historic junior campaign, playing just six full quarters of OSU's opening three games and dominating opposing offensive tackles.

When Bosa went down in the third quarter at TCU, I thought he pulled his groin and might be back within a few weeks. Things obviously snowballed from there, though, which left everyone wondering "what if" while Ohio State's deep but different defensive line was forced to retool and adapt without him. The Buckeyes built momentum with early experience for their freshmen as they rotated increasingly for significant snaps and showed promise for 2019 and beyond, but considering how badly the defense as a whole struggled over the course of the year, just imagine what more OSU might have been able to do with Bosa back in the mix.

If you were to hand out a season-long Buckeye Leaf on offense, who would get it? And on defense?

GS: The answer has to be Haskins. People thought Haskins had the ability to elevate Ohio State's offense after its past two stagnant seasons, with all due respect to three-time captain and former quarterback J.T. Barrett, but the sophomore's one-and-done campaign far exceeded expectations.

Numbers do the talking, but Haskins also grew into his role as a leader when he need-

ed to. Haskins picked apart some of college football's best defenses throwing the ball but developed the necessary grit and toughness to tuck the ball and run when the Buckeyes' offense became too one-dimensional.

And on defense, I'll go with Dre'Mont Jones. The junior defensive tackle came back to Ohio State to boost his stock, and he did just that, equally elevating the Buckeyes' defense when the unit needed him most.

Jones' numbers – 43 tackles (13 for loss), 8½ sacks and two touchdowns, one interception return and one fumble recovery – were outrageous, especially considering the injuries he battled through. OSU needed its defensive line to collectively step up, and the unit did just that after Bosa's exit, exhibited by sophomore defensive end Chase Young's 10½ sacks, but Jones was the glue that held it together in the absence of the defense's best player.

JG: If you finish third in the Heisman, you are probably the best player on your team. Haskins was incredible all season and threw 50 touchdown passes. This answer is pretty easy.

Haskins is going to be the first quarterback taken in the 2019 NFL draft and rightfully so. What he did in one season as Ohio State's quarterback might never be done again.

Defensively, I will go with Chase Young. In Nick Bosa's absence, Young played extremely well, especially down the stretch. After dealing with lingering injuries for most of the season, he showed up when Ohio State needed him the most, playing his best football in Ohio State's last four games against Maryland, Michigan, Northwestern and Washington. Buckeye fans should enjoy him in 2019, because it will be his last season with the Scarlet and Gray, barring a severe injury.

TM: Yeah, of course Haskins is the obvi-

OHIO STATE FOOTBALL ANALYSIS

ous pick – but I’ll always be the first to throw Parris Campbell’s hat in the ring for credit where credit is due. The senior wideout had one of the best years by a Buckeye pass-catcher ever, setting a new record with 90 receptions and cracking the 1,000-yard mark.

Campbell came a long way in his career and – at long last – became the on-field performer Ohio State thought he could be this season.

Defensively, I have to pick Jones. With Bosa out, he was the heart and soul of a defense that needed every last ounce of his leadership. Jones also played through a string of injuries. As a player who already knew he was leaving for the NFL, he easily could have opted to just call it a career like Bosa did. Instead, he stuck it out and made huge play after huge play for the Buckeyes.

Looking ahead, Urban Meyer’s coaching career is (most likely) over. What are your expectations for Ryan Day in year one?

TM: This is still a Meyer-built roster for the most part, so the Buckeyes are going to be good. Are they going to go undefeated and win a national championship? Maybe. Are they going to fall to 8-4 and play in the Outback Bowl? No chance.

There really shouldn’t be a big on-field drop-off next season for Ohio State. The bigger question is how will Day recruit in year one? I expect him to string together a strong 2020 class that will rank in the top five nationally. If his new staffers can hold up their end, the Buckeyes could be competing for the top recruiting spot once again – just as Meyer did for so many years.

GS: It’s absolutely insane to expect Day to uphold Meyer’s success. Meyer went 83-9, winning 90 percent of his games as he elevated Ohio State’s football program to levels far beyond where even predecessor Jim Tressel took it.

With that said, Meyer’s recruiting efforts have led to the Buckeyes’ current roster, which remains among the top five in college football for talent. While offensive line (one returning starter) is OSU’s biggest concern, returning speed and athleticism is back on both sides of the ball.

Day takes into 2019 the 3-0 record from his interim stint in 2018, but it’s unrealistic to think he escapes year one without a blemish. Given the talent and returning experience collectively, though, it’s fair to again expect 10 wins on the regular slate with room for more if moving parts such as Georgia transfer Justin Fields at quarterback turn out to be as advertised.

JG: Ohio State’s 2019 conference schedule is absolutely brutal. The Buckeyes draw Michigan, Nebraska and Northwestern on the road in addition to home tilts against Wisconsin, Penn State and Michigan State. The Cornhuskers will be vastly improved, and Michigan on the road is never a guarantee so Day will have to take his lumps in 2019.

I expect at least two regular-season losses for the Buckeyes in 2019, and three wouldn’t shock me. Ohio State will be breaking in a new quarterback and head coach and an almost entirely new defensive coaching staff. Continuity could very well be an issue for the Buckeyes in year one of the Day era so the Buckeye fans will have to be patient. That said, another Rose Bowl and Big Ten title is still on the table with a 10-2 regular season.

Justin Fields’ transfer to Ohio State is the biggest story of Day’s tenure so far. Assuming he is eligible in 2019, how do

you see the quarterback room shaking out for the upcoming season?

JG: Now that Fields is in and Tate Martell is in the transfer portal, I fully expect Fields to be Ohio State’s starting quarterback in 2019, assuming he gets his hardship waiver approved by the NCAA. If Martell does leave, Ohio State needs to find immediate replacements at the backup spot. Outside of Matthew Baldwin, the Buckeyes don’t really have any options at quarterback. If Ohio State can keep Fields healthy, then this doesn’t become much of an issue. However, an injury to Fields could potentially derail Ohio State’s season.

GS: Martell and junior walk-on Kory Curtis have been in the NCAA transfer portal since the week before BSB went to press, so the room might take a depth hit with two fewer bodies in the trenches. With that said, if Martell’s transferring, Ohio State has to feel good about Fields’ chances of getting the hardship waiver for immediate eligibility.

As long as that turns out to be the case, the Buckeyes should have Fields – a perfect fit for Day’s pass-heavy scheme – in line to start. That leaves Baldwin (redshirt freshman), fifth-year senior Chris Chugunov and sophomore walk-on Danny Vanatsky next in line.

Given how historically bad the 2019 recruiting class was considered for quarterback depth, it’s unlikely OSU would want to waste a scholarship on a signal caller this late in the cycle with any of the good ones already signed, sealed and delivered to respective schools. Day has expressed his desire to have four scholarship quarterbacks in the room, however, which means he should try to hit the graduate-transfer or junior-college market hard for a shorter-term option.

Considering graduate transfers’ desire to play elsewhere, though, it’s unlikely the former happens – Alabama’s Jalen Hurts, Notre Dame’s Brandon Wimbush and other starters are already reportedly in the mix to play right away at other Football Bowl Subdivision programs. So the latter, junior college, becomes the safer bet to fit Day’s four-scholarship preference.

TM: With Martell out, there has to be an addition to that room – even with Justin Fields coming in.

Fields has been billed as some sort of combination of Terrelle Pryor, Dwayne Haskins and Cam Newton, it seems, and he’s the highest-rated recruit to ever make it into the Ohio State roster in the Internet rankings era. That said, he’s never started a college game, so there will be at least some growing pains with Fields in the fold.

And you just need depth – Matthew Baldwin could be a star in the future, but Chris Chugunov can’t be the answer behind Baldwin. You need four legit bodies at quarterback, so expect another grad transfer to come in sometime before fall camp. It won’t be a big name, and he might never play a down in Columbus, but it will add necessary depth.

As for Fields, he should win the job and have a huge season. I expect him to largely live up to the hype because, quite honestly, I have no reason to doubt a player with that skill set if Day is coaching him.

And finally, what should Day’s to-do list look like before spring camp begins?

JG: First and foremost, get the quarterback situation figured out. Second, figure out who your leaders and captains are going to be.

The Buckeyes lost a lot of leadership

Continued On Page 18



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OSU Quarterback Situation Sorting Itself Out

Continued From Page 17

from the 2018 team, and with a new coaching staff, player leadership becomes crucial. Figure out who your leaders are going to be, and make sure the younger players buy into the new staff. If that happens, Ohio State should be poised for a successful season.

GS: Before spring ball, I don't think Day necessarily has to get the quarterback situation "figured out." Fields appears to be Ohio State's guy, far and away, but let's see how Baldwin competes and develops as he

returns more than a year removed from his torn ACL last January.

On that note, though, the Buckeyes need to know about Martell staying or going and fill out the room from there with another scholarship. Day's coaching staff appears set, on top of OSU's support staff being retained, so recruiting – which never stops – slides to the top.

NFL draft decisions are done, so Day should have a better sense about Ohio State's scholarship situation and how much more the Buckeyes can add – if they want to – before the Feb. 6 National Signing Day.

Among those priorities, Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley 2019 four-star offensive guard Doug Nester and another lineman are absolutely crucial for Day and position coach Greg Studrawa to continue building depth into next season and beyond.

TM: Let's be honest, apart from adding one more body for depth, the quarterback situation is already figured out. Fields is highly likely to get his waiver, and he's going to be the starter in 2019.

The most important thing right now is to start sorting through the jigsaw puzzle that is going to be Ohio State's offensive line

next season. Michael Jordan leaving for the NFL threw a wrench in things and left the Buckeyes with just 11 scholarship linemen as things stand.

Nester signing is priority No. 1, and Ohio State needs to add one more lineman in the 2019 class in February as well. From there, the Buckeyes should sift through the transfer market to try to get one more veteran in that room.

After that, it'll be time to ramp up for spring camp and really dive into recruiting for the 2020 class with a largely new coaching staff on board.

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Ex-Buckeyes Excelling In Professional Ranks

By **JOE DEMPSEY**
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

With the collegiate season wrapped up, football fans can turn their attention to the professional ranks for the NFL playoffs.

Ohio State fans in particular had plenty of players to root for during the season as there were Buckeyes scattered across the league, many active during the playoffs. What follows is a rundown of the former Buckeyes in the NFL and how they did during the regular season.

AFC North

Cincinnati Bengals – Defensive end **Sam Hubbard** recorded 39 tackles (27 solo), including seven for loss, as a rookie. The Cincinnati Archbishop Moeller product displayed his ability to get after the quarterback, totaling six sacks with nine quarterback hits. The former Notre Dame lacrosse commit showcased his athleticism with two pass deflections, one forced fumble and one fumble recovery, which Hubbard returned 19 yards for a Bengal touchdown.

Center **Billy Price** recovered from an offseason pectoral injury to start Week 1 for Cincinnati. Unfortunately for the former Rimington Trophy winner from Austintown, Ohio, he injured his foot and missed six games in what was an injury-plagued season for Cincinnati.

Defensive tackle **Adolphus Washington** began the season in Buffalo, but the Bills released him after a two-tackle performance

in their first game. After spending eight days on the Cowboys' practice squad, Washington signed with the Bengals. The Cincinnati Taft product recorded six tackles (two solo), one TFL, two quarterback hits and one sack in four games with the Bengals before suffering a season-ending knee injury.

Cleveland Browns – Cornerback **Denzel Ward** showed why he was the No. 4 selection in the 2018 NFL draft with an excellent rookie campaign. The Macedonia (Ohio) Nordon product tallied 53 tackles (41 solo), five TFL, one forced fumble and two fumble recoveries. The two-time NFL Rookie of the Week added three interceptions and 11 passes defended on his way to a Pro Bowl selection.

Pittsburgh Steelers – Defensive end **Cameron Heyward** played in all 16 games for the Steelers, recording 52 tackles (30 solo), one forced fumble, one fumble recovery and three passes defended. The Pittsburgh native made his presence felt in opposing backfields with 10 TFL, 18 quarterback hits and eight sacks.

Linebacker **Ryan Shazier** made incredible progress in recovery from his severe back injury that required spinal stabilization surgery at the end of 2017. On April 26, 2018, Shazier walked onstage at AT&T Stadium to announce the Steelers' first-round draft pick, Terrell Edmunds. On Nov. 30, 2018, Shazier jogged for the first time since his surgery,

according to former Steelers linebackers coach Joey Porter.

AFC South

Indianapolis Colts – Second-year safety **Malik Hooker** recovered from a brutal season-ending injury, where he tore both his MCL and ACL in the seventh game of his rookie campaign. The former All-American totaled 44 tackles (30 solo), one fumble recovery, two interceptions and four passes defended in 14 games for the Colts.



Malik Hooker

Defensive end **Tyquan Lewis** was placed on the injured reserve on Sept. 3 for a toe injury. The former Big Ten Defensive Lineman of the Year returned for the Colts' final eight games, making an impact with 13 tackles (nine solo), three TFL, two sacks, eight quarterback hits and one pass deflection.

Jacksonville Jaguars – Following a first-team All-Pro season for Carolina, guard **Andrew Norwell** signed a five-year, \$66.5 million deal with Jacksonville, making him the highest paid guard in the league at the time. The Cincinnati Anderson product started 11 games before suffering a season-ending ankle injury.

Running back **Carlos Hyde** had an eventful 2018. The Cincinnati native signed a three-year contract with the Browns in the offseason. On Sept. 20, Hyde's 28th birthday, his girlfriend, Mirtha Pichado, was due to

give birth to his first child, and he went from the hospital to the Browns' Thursday Night Football game against the Jets. Hyde ran for 97 yards and two touchdowns, including the game-winning score, giving Cleveland its first win in 19 games. Hyde returned to the hospital, where Pichado gave birth to their son. The next month the Browns traded Hyde to the Jaguars for a fifth-round pick, and the Naples, Fla., native finished the season with 604 total yards and five touchdowns.

AFC West

Denver Broncos – Tight end **Jeff Heuerman** entered 2018 with 283 receiving yards in 26 career games. The Naples (Fla.) Barron G. Collier product turned in his best pro season yet, racking up 281 yards and two touchdowns on 31 catches. The former Buckeye played in just 11 games due to three broken ribs and a bruised lung that ended his season early.

Cornerback **Bradley Roby** played in 15 games for the Broncos, totaling 50 tackles (45 solo), one TFL and two forced fumbles. The Fort Worth, Texas, native made plays in pass coverage with 12 passes defended and one interception.

Los Angeles Chargers – Defensive end **Joey Bosa** missed the Chargers' first nine games with a foot injury, but the former NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year surged in the second half of the season. The Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas product had 23 tackles (18 solo), seven tackles for loss, 5½ sacks, nine quarterback hurries



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and one fumble recovery in seven games (six starts).

Oakland Raiders – Cornerback **Gareon Conley** had an excellent sophomore season after missing all but two games with a shin injury as a rookie. The Massillon (Ohio) Washington product totaled 37 tackles (24 solo) in 15 games (14 starts) but stood out most in pass coverage. Conley ranked fifth in the NFL in passes defended with 15 and had three interceptions, including one he returned 36 yards for a touchdown.

Kicker **Mike Nugent** connected on 6 of 6 field-goal attempts and 4 of 5 extra-point tries but played in only three games. The Raiders placed the Centerville, Ohio, native on injured reserve with a hip injury on Sept. 26.

Defensive tackle **Johnathan Hankins** signed a one-year contract with Oakland on Sept. 13, just three days prior to its Week 2 matchup with Denver. The former All-American from Dearborn Heights, Mich., had a quarterback hit against the Broncos as a backup and then started the remainder of the season. The Detroit Southeastern product recorded 36 tackles (21 solo), four tackles for loss, two quarterback hits and two fumble recoveries.

NFC East

Dallas Cowboys – Second-year wide receiver **Noah Brown** played in eight games (two starts) for the NFC East champions. The former seventh-round pick from Flanders, N.J., hauled in five receptions for 54 yards.

Running back **Ezekiel Elliott** ran for 1,434 yards and six touchdowns on a league-high 304 carries, while shattering career highs in catches (77) and receiving yards (567). Yet to have played a full 16-game season, the former All-American known as Zeke led the NFL in rushing for the second time in three years. Elected to his second Pro Bowl, Elliott also set career highs with 381 touches, 2,001 scrimmage yards and three receiving touchdowns on his way to second-team All-Pro honors.

Running back **Rod Smith** once again served as Elliott's backup, playing in all 16 games and drawing a Week 17 start with Elliott resting for the playoffs. The tailback from Fort Wayne, Ind., took 12 totes for 35 yards and one rushing touchdown and added two catches for 14 receiving yards. Smith's season totals were 127 rushing yards and one score with nine catches for 60 receiving yards.

Philadelphia Eagles – Safety **Malcolm Jenkins** played in all 16 games for the fifth consecutive season and seems to be aging like fine wine. The two-time Super Bowl champion had the second-most tackles (97), solo tackles (79) and TFL (six) of his career at age 31. The former two-time All-American tied his career high with three forced fumbles and added one fumble recovery, one sack, one quarterback hit, eight passes defended and one interception.

Punter **Cameron Johnston** signed with the Eagles as an undrafted free agent in May of 2017 but was waived prior to Philly's championship season. Then the former Big Ten Punter of the Year signed a reserve/future contract on Jan. 3, made the team and impressed in his debut with six punts and a 52.2 average. The 26-year-old Aussie ranked third in the NFL in yards per punt at 48.1, which is 3.2 yards more than his career average at Ohio State.

NFC North

Detroit Lions – Offensive tackle **Taylor Decker** started all 16 games for the Lions in his third season. The former All-American from Vandalia, Ohio, garnered national renown with a big-man touchdown on an 11-yard reception against the Rams.

Green Bay Packers – Center **Corey Linsley** started all 16 games for the second straight season and third overall. The Youngstown (Ohio) Boardman product did not commit a holding penalty or false start all season, with his only infraction coming on an unnecessary roughness call.

Minnesota Vikings – Center **Pat Elflein** missed the Vikings' first two games while still recovering from ankle and shoulder injuries. The former Big Ten Offensive Lineman of the Year from Pickerington (Ohio) North finished the remainder of his second season, playing in 14 games for the second straight year.

Defensive end **Jalyn Holmes** played in five games for Minnesota. The Norfolk, Va., native had three solo tackles, one TFL, one sack, one quarterback hit and one safety.

NFC South

Carolina Panthers – Wide receiver **Curtis Samuel** recovered from a gruesome, season-ending ankle injury to have a solid preseason, but he had to undergo a procedure to fix an irregular heartbeat, causing him to miss the first three games. The former All-American from Brooklyn, N.Y., was effective with his touches, catching 39 passes for 494 yards and five touchdowns. The Erasmus Hall product added 84 yards and two touchdowns on eight rushes.

New Orleans Saints – Safety **Vonn Bell** played in all 16 games for the third time in his three-year career. The former All-American from Chattanooga, Tenn., tallied 88 tackles (62 solo), four TFL, one sack, three quarterback hits, one forced fumble, one fumble recovery and three passes defended.

Safety **Kurt Coleman** played in all 16 games (nine starts) for the Saints. The former All-American from Clayton, Ohio, totaled 32 tackles (22 solo), one TFL and one forced fumble.

Wide receiver **Ted Ginn Jr.** jumped out to a hot start, catching two touchdowns in his first three games. The former three-time All-American from Cleveland suffered a knee injury against the Giants on Sept. 30 and did not play again until Dec. 23. Ginn snagged five catches for 74 yards, giving him 209

yards and two touchdowns on 17 receptions for the season.

Cornerback **Marshon Lattimore** started all 16 games for the Saints in his sophomore campaign. The former AP NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year (2017) from Cleveland recorded 59 tackles (49 solo), one TFL, four forced fumbles, three fumble recoveries and two interceptions.

Wide receiver **Michael Thomas** earned first-team All-Pro honors for his dominant season, in which he caught a league-leading 125 passes for 1,405 yards and nine touchdowns. The Los Angeles native flat out dominated the Rams, bringing in 12 of 15 targets for 211 yards and one touchdown in the 45-35 Saints' victory on Nov. 4. Overall, Thomas posted a stellar catch percentage of 85 percent and was voted into his second Pro Bowl.

Cornerback **Eli Apple** began his third NFL season in New York with the Giants, starting five games and recording 23 tackles (20 solo), one forced fumble, one fumble recovery and five passes defended. The Philadelphia native missed two games with a groin injury and was traded to the Saints after Week 7. Apple started 10 games for the Saints, tallying 52 tackles (42 solo), one

fumble recovery, nine passes defended and two interceptions, good for season totals of 75 tackles (62 solo), one forced fumble, two fumble recoveries, 14 passes defended and two picks.

Atlanta Falcons – Defensive tackle **Michael Bennett** played in two games before the Falcons cut him. The Centerville, Ohio, product recorded five tackles (four solo) and one TFL. Bennett signed a reserve/future contract with Atlanta on Jan. 10.

NFC West

Los Angeles Rams – Long snapper **Jake McQuaide** played in all 16 games for the eighth straight season. The Cincinnati native was elected to his second consecutive Pro Bowl for another stellar performance.

Seattle Seahawks – Offensive tackle **Jamarco Jones** was competing for the Seahawks' right tackle spot but suffered a severe high ankle sprain. The Chicago native required surgery to repair his ankle, causing him to miss his entire rookie campaign.

Tight end **Nick Vannett** enjoyed the best season of his young career. The Westerville, Ohio, native caught 29 of 43 targets while setting career highs in yards (269) and touchdowns (3) for the Seahawks.

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Ohio State Signs 15 In Early Signing Period

The season ended for Ohio State on New Year's Day when the Buckeyes beat Washington 28-23 in the Rose Bowl, but recruiting – before and after – remained a constant from the class of 2019's early signing period to the underclassman evaluations in the 2020 and 2021 cycles.

RECRUITING OUTLOOK

Garrett Stepien

Between coaching changes, from the top with two-year offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Ryan Day taking over for seven-year head coach Urban Meyer to staff shuffles among the 10 assistants that followed, OSU has been tasked with keeping a longtime commitment on board in its 2019 group while building momentum into 2020 and beyond.

Before the Buckeyes flew out Dec. 25 to Los Angeles and started practices for the Jan. 1 matchup with the Huskies at Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena, Calif., Ohio State announced 15 recruits – six of whom enrolled early for spring semester classes starting Jan. 7 – had signed to its 2019 class for the early period. While its efforts continue for the current cycle leading to the Feb. 6 traditional signing day, OSU's 2019 class has few spots



TIM MOODY

FAST START – In his first major act as soon-to-be head coach, Ryan Day received 15 letters of intent on early signing day, including letters from three five-star prospects for 2019.

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ASK AN ANALYST

With Lettermen Row's Jeremy Birmingham

After the early signing period Dec. 19-21, Ohio State landed another five-star when Georgia quarterback Justin Fields – the No. 2 overall prospect in the 2018 class – announced his transfer from the Bulldogs to the Buckeyes. What is head coach Ryan Day getting in Fields?

“One of the most talented quarterback prospects of the last 15 years. I mean, he’s obviously documented as the highest-ranked recruit to ever commit to Ohio State in this Internet era of recruiting. He’s the prototype – 6-3, 230, runs a 4.4 or 4.5 time in the 40-yard dash, can throw the ball 65, 70 yards in the air and is accurate with the ball. He’s that first real guy that we’ve seen at Ohio State that truly fits the definition of a dual threat because he’s not just a guy that runs fast and also throws OK. He’s a guy that really has the ability to excel as a passer. That’s what his quarterback coach, Quincy Avery, told me the other day – he’s an elite passer. That’s something that separates him from some of the other guys at Ohio State that are classified as the dual-threat quarterback.”

“I think there’s a lot of wait-and-see (in quarterback recruiting) because there’s a lot of question marks still about what happens with Tate Martell. Obviously, the goal is to have four scholarship quarterbacks on the roster. If something happens and Martell leaves, then you’re back to three. If by some chance Chris Chugunov leaves, then all of sudden you’re down to two. So the Buckeyes would probably still be looking at some point to add another quarterback via the graduate-transfer market in the next

handful of months, I’d imagine. But if nobody leaves, then we’re looking at an open competition going into the spring between the three quarterbacks (Fields, Martell and Matthew Baldwin) and it’s going to be may the best man win.”

Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley four-star offensive guard Doug Nester remains committed to Ohio State but did not sign early and opted not to enroll in January. He is reportedly considering Georgia, Penn State and Virginia Tech with official visits to all three set for January. Amid staff changes, what does OSU need to do to sign Nester on Feb. 6?

“It’s just holding on for dear life, really. I mean, obviously, the idea here is that (offensive line coach) Greg Studrawa may not return to Ohio State, and that’s something Doug has been told for a while now by other schools. The reality is that Doug started looking at other schools in September when (former coach) Urban Meyer’s stuff started. So it’s not entirely related to his retirement, but that’s sort of what kicked the door open for these other schools.”

“So the Buckeyes are really trying to just build a relationship with Nester and (head coach) Ryan Day. If they make a change with the offensive line coach, then it’s about finding a way to get that guy quickly acclimated and to get that person talking to Doug Nester. The biggest thing – it’s not planned right now – is if they can find a way to get him back on campus this month so he can see what the program is building and what direction they’re going in.”

Shortly after Fields arrived in Columbus, Ohio State welcomed to campus six early enrollees – Jacksonville (Fla.) Trinity Christian Academy three-star running back Marcus Crowley; Mentor, Ohio, four-star offensive tackle Ryan Jacoby; Mentor, Ohio, four-star defensive end Noah Potter; Lewis Center (Ohio) Olenangy Orange five-star defensive end Zach Harrison; Austin (Texas) Lake Travis five-star wide receiver Garrett Wilson; and Wayne (N.J.) DePaul Catholic four-star safety Ronnie Hickman. Which freshmen might we see make the biggest impact for the Buckeyes in spring camp?

“I think what’s really important is for Marcus Crowley to get an opportunity to kick-start his career because there’s so many question marks around Brian Snead’s future. At this point, it’s just J.K. Dobbins and then an open competition for that second running back slot. It’s clear that the Buckeyes want to rotate that spot the way they did this past year with Dobbins and Mike Weber. So I think Marcus Crowley is kind of a guy that I would count, sort of as a sleeper. Garrett Wilson is obviously one of the best players in the country, but that receiving room is very deep – especially with the return of K.J. Hill, who I think will play a position that I think Garrett Wilson very well could have fought for time in. I wouldn’t expect Zach Harrison to make a big impact on the field for Ohio State yet. But to me, that guy that I think really has an opportunity to shock some people is Marcus Crowley.”

left available with a small senior class departing.

Ohio State Signs 15 As Lone Commit Remains

From sunrise to sunset, early signing day took twists and turns – some expected and others unexpected – as Ohio State inked 15 letters of intent in the 2019 class, headlined by the five-star trio of Austin (Texas) Lake Travis wide receiver Garrett Wilson (6-1, 180); Buford, Ga., center Harry Miller (6-4, 310); and Lewis Center (Ohio) Olenangy Orange defensive end Zach Harrison.

The 6-5, 243-pound Harrison was among two signing-day commitments. Harrison and Wake Forest, N.C., three-star defensive tackle Jaden McKenzie (6-3, 285) announced

pledges to Ohio State during ceremonies at their respective high schools.

Harrison, who chose to stay home at Ohio State over finalists Michigan and Penn State, shared his decision in an event kept private from outsiders at Olenangy Orange. In comments streamed live online by Olenangy Orange’s student-run broadcast club, he was brief.

“First off, I want to thank everybody, all the students, for coming,” said Harrison, who stood at the lectern in a gray zip-up hoodie. “I just want to thank you guys for growing up with me, so I thought it was only right for you guys to be a part of this with me. Coaches and all the teachers, I want to thank you guys for putting up with me in the classroom and on the practice fields and helping me become the man I am today.

“I want to thank my family, my big sister, for being here, always someone I can talk to when I need to and being my best friend for the past couple of years. Then I want to thank Mom and Dad for traveling across the country with me and the long car rides and

the hotel rooms and all the dinners and the late-night conversations, trying to help me sort through all the chaos that’s been going on. I know it’s been stressful for all four of us.

Continued On Page 24

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Harrison, McKenzie Make For Early Xmas Gifts

Continued From Page 23

I just want to thank you guys all for helping me through it and just let you know that we did it. That's all."

Harrison then got to the point and announced where he would be spending his next few years, unzipping the sweatshirt and sporting a scarlet shirt.

"It's been a long process, but I've decided to continue my academic and football career at the Ohio State University," he said.

Discussing the Buckeyes' signees about a half hour after Harrison's announcement, Day detailed his first signature win on the trail with how he and defensive line coach Larry Johnson persuaded the 247Sports composite's No. 4 overall prospect, No. 1 strongside defensive end and No. 1 player in Ohio to stay home.

"It's been a long process," Day said. "His head coach, Zebb Schroeder, had a lot to do with this. Larry Johnson has been recruiting Zach for a long, long time. Obviously Urban had a big part of this thing, and it's been a long time coming. We had a home visit last week. It was really important to sit down in the home and talk to the family about the direction of the program, and having some communication just on some of the leadership changes obviously that comes with the change in the head coach, and that communication stayed all the way until last night.

"And so it was kind of down to the wire, but I couldn't be more excited to have him part of this family, a special young man that's going to do great things, and he's going to have a lot of help along the way to do it with him."

Harrison joined Mentor, Ohio, four-star defensive end Noah Potter (6-5, 250) as Johnson's second signature in the trenches. Shortly after Harrison, McKenzie followed through.

"I want to thank God for every tool, resource and blessing I needed to be successful, for giving me every tool and all that I needed to be successful," McKenzie said. "I want to thank my mom for every sacrifice

she's made to better me and my brother's life. I'm also thankful for her dedication and patience to the whole (recruiting) process, and being my No. 1 supporter the whole way through. I understand that I couldn't do this on my own.

"After three state championship titles and a high school career record of 57-1, I'm extremely honored to be a part of the Wake Forest program. The relationships I've built with these coaches are lifelong. I also want to give a shout-out to my (teammates). I really couldn't have made it this far without them, especially my D-line.

"That being said, I plan to continue my academic and athletic career at The Ohio State University."

McKenzie picked OSU over Clemson, North Carolina, Tennessee and Wake Forest. In addition to Ohio State, he took his official visits to North Carolina and Wake Forest, unofficially visiting Clemson and Tennessee as well.

The 6-3, 285-pounder picked up an offer from Ohio State on June 26. Among a flurry of offers the Buckeyes sent out to interior defensive linemen over the spring evaluation period and summer camp circuit, McKenzie's offer from OSU marked his 18th at the time. He added offers from Clemson on June 28 and Georgia Tech on July 30 to reach 20 overall.

On the radar since the summer, McKenzie's mutual interest in Ohio State rekindled late into the fall. He took his official visit to Columbus the weekend of Nov. 24 and saw the Buckeyes beat Michigan, 62-39, at Ohio Stadium.

Day and Johnson reportedly stopped in North Carolina on Dec. 11 for an in-home visit with McKenzie. Three days later, on Dec. 14, McKenzie led his high school program to its 45th straight win in a 9-7 victory over Charlotte Vance for the 4AA state championship. He had six tackles (one for loss) in his team's defensive outing, ending its season 14-0 overall.

On the campaign, McKenzie compiled 83 tackles (22½ for loss) and 10½ sacks as a senior. He is the 247Sports composite's No.

OSU Football Signees & Verbal Commitments

Players in the class of 2019 who have signed letters of intent to play football at Ohio State. * – Players who enrolled early on Jan. 9. ** – Verbal commitment only.

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Steele Chambers	ATH	6-2	215	★★★★	Roswell (Ga.) Blessed Trinity Catholic
Marcus Crowley*	RB	6-1	200	★★★	Jacksonville (Fla.) Trinity Christian
Tommy Eichenberg	ILB	6-3	235	★★★★	Cleveland St. Ignatius
Cormontae Hamilton	TE	6-2	263	★★★	Memphis (Tenn.) Whitehaven
Zach Harrison*	DE	6-5½	243	★★★★★	Lewis Center (Ohio) Olentangy Orange
Ronnie Hickman*	S	6-1	200	★★★★	Wayne (N.J.) DePaul Catholic
Ryan Jacoby*	OT	6-5	270	★★★★	Mentor, Ohio
Jaden McKenzie	DT	6-3½	280	★★★	Wake Forest, N.C.
Harry Miller	C	6-4	300	★★★★★	Buford, Ga.
Doug Nester**	OG	6-6½	314	★★★★	Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley
Noah Potter*	DE	6-5½	250	★★★★	Mentor, Ohio
Bryson Shaw	S	6-2	175	★★★	Potomac (Md.) The Bullis School
Cade Stover	OLB	6-5	235	★★★★	Masnfield (Ohio) Lexington
Jameson Williams	WR	6-1½	169	★★★★	St. Louis Cardinal Ritter College Prep
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 have issued verbal commitments to play football at Ohio State.

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
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
Gee Scott	WR	6-3	211	★★★★	Sammamish (Wash.) Eastside Catholic
Jaxon Smith-Njigba	WR	6-1	188	★★★★	Rockwall, Texas
Luke Wypler	C	6-3½	285	★★★★	Montvale (N.J.) St. Joseph Regional

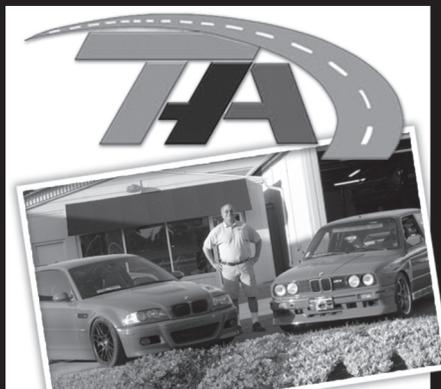
865 overall prospect, No. 59 defensive tackle and No. 40 player in North Carolina.

While OSU secured two additions, early signing day came with some attrition in the morning as Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas four-star safety Jordan Battle (6-1, 187) flipped to Alabama and Oak Park, Mich., four-star quarterback Dwan Mathis (6-6, 205) switched to Georgia. Both had been committed to Ohio State since late June.

When the dust settled between the additions of Harrison and McKenzie and the subtractions of Battle and Mathis, the Buckeyes made 13 previous commitments official. In order of receiving their letters of intent, OSU signed Lexington, Ohio, four-star outside linebacker Cade Stover (6-4, 225); Wayne (N.J.) DePaul Catholic four-star safety Ronnie Hickman (6-1, 200); Potter; Potomac (Md.) Bullis School three-star safe-

ty Bryson Shaw (6-2, 175); Mentor, Ohio, four-star offensive tackle Ryan Jacoby (6-5, 270); Jacksonville (Fla.) Trinity Christian Academy three-star running back Marcus Crowley (6-1, 200); Roswell (Ga.) Blessed Trinity Catholic four-star athlete Steele Chambers (6-2, 215); Miller; Memphis (Tenn.) Whitehaven three-star tight end Cormontae Hamilton (6-2, 263); St. Louis Cardinal Ritter College Prep four-star wide receiver Jameson Williams (6-2, 170); Fort Wayne (Ind.) Wayne three-star athlete Craig Young (6-4, 200); Cleveland St. Ignatius four-star linebacker Tommy Eichenberg (6-3, 225); and Wilson before Harrison and McKenzie.

"I think when you look at this class, some of the things that come to mind are loyalty," Day said. "Some of the things that come to mind are great families and quality student-athletes. And we're very, very excit-



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A Look Back At Recruiting From The Pages Of BSB

30 Years Ago – 1989

With head coach John Cooper at the helm, Ohio State's national recruiting efforts were starting to show in January as the Buckeyes' 1989 recruiting class featured 20 commitments, including 11 from outside Ohio.

The nationwide approach was new to OSU, which traditionally started local and then branched out, but recruiting analyst Tom Lemming gave promising reviews of Cooper's class leading up to National Signing Day.

"I think Ohio State will have a pretty good year," Lemming said. "Of course, it's still pretty early in the game, especially for the top players, but from every indication that I get, they are going to have a pretty good year."

25 Years Ago – 1994

With momentum heading into National Signing Day, Ohio State added an enormous pickup the weekend of Jan. 7-8 in Cleveland St. Ignatius offensive lineman Eric Gohlstin. The 6-5, 295-pounder picked the Buckeyes and became the 1994 class' 10th member.

"It has everything I'm looking for," Gohlstin told BSB. "I like the blend of athletics and academics you get at Ohio State. I don't think it's been any big secret that I've been thinking about Ohio State for a long time. I'm happy to make the commitment."

"The academic side of things is something that can't be overlooked. You know, something could happen and your football playing days could be over tomorrow. You have to look at the future in terms other than football."

20 Years Ago – 1999

About a month away from National Signing Day, Ohio State added two more commitments in Shaker Heights, Ohio, offensive lineman Adrien Clarke (6-5, 315) and Park Forest (Ill.) Rich East defensive back Richard McNutt (6-0, 170).

Clarke chose the Buckeyes over Michigan State and Illinois, staying in Ohio and committing to OSU with three coaches – Cooper, plus assistants Mike Jacobs and Tim

Spencer – present during an in-home visit after the season.

"They were very happy," Clarke said. "Coach Cooper was like, 'You finally decided to make it public. We're glad to have you as part of the family.'"

McNutt gave Ohio State one of the most highly sought-after defensive backs in the nation, emerging as a national recruit but selecting the Buckeyes over Florida, Michigan State, Northwestern and UCLA.

"I know I can go up there and play next year," McNutt said of OSU. "I just have that intuition."

15 Years Ago – 2004

As Ohio State filled out its 2004 recruiting class, the Buckeyes picked up commitments Jan. 11 from two defensive linemen in Detroit Cass Tech's Vernon Gholston (6-3, 240) and Dublin (Ohio) Coffman's Alex Barrow (6-4, 250). OSU hosted both linemen on official visits the weekend after its 35-28 Fiesta Bowl win Jan. 2 over Kansas State.

Gholston had considered Ohio State with Michigan, Michigan State and Iowa.

"He won't make any other visits that I know of," Gholston's coach, Thomas Wilcher, told BSB.

Barrow had visited Maryland and Pittsburgh before upcoming trips to Michigan State and Northwestern, but he chose to stay home with the Buckeyes.

"It felt right," Barrow told BSB. "I decided I'd go ahead and make my decision."

10 Years Ago – 2009

Late in the 2009 recruiting cycle, Ohio State was still looking for its quarterback of the class. Among five commitments playing in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl in San Antonio the weekend of Jan. 2, Hampton (Va.) Phoebeus quarterback Tajh Boyd was left on the Buckeyes' radar.

Boyd shared co-most valuable player honors for his performance in the game completing 7 of 9 passes for a record 188

yards and three touchdowns. The previous instance in which OSU had picked up the All-American Bowl's MVP was Terrelle Pryor from Jeannette, Pa., in 2008.

Five Years Ago – 2014

At the U.S. Army All-American Bowl in San Antonio on Jan. 4, the Cleveland Glenville four-star duo of defensive backs Erick Smith (6-1, 195) and Marshon Lattimore (6-1, 180) committed to Ohio State.

"Ohio State was the right school for me because it was home away from home and the place I always wanted to go to," said Smith, the No. 6 safety in the nation. "Throughout the recruiting process I always had my eye on Ohio State, but other schools were great too."

One of those was Kentucky, which reportedly made a strong push for Smith and Lattimore leading up to the joint announcement.

"I always wanted to go to Ohio State, and it was always the right place for me," said Lattimore, the No. 8 cornerback in the country. "I always felt like it was home, and I felt the most comfortable there."

One Year Ago – 2018

Ohio State added 21 signees in its 2018 recruiting class during the early signing period from Dec. 20-22, but the Buckeyes weren't done. On Jan. 4 at the Under Armour All-America Game in Orlando, Fla., Cleveland Heights four-star defensive end Tyreke Smith announced his commitment to OSU. He chose to stay in his home state over Penn State, which was the other finalist.

"Ohio State, it's definitely a family feeling when I go there," the 6-3, 260-pound Smith said. "I feel like I'm with my brothers. They already took me in as one of theirs. The coaching staff is great. I think they have the best chance to develop me into the player I need to be. I just thought, 'I've got this talent and I want the best coach to handle my talent and make me and shape me into the best player I can be.' Ohio State was that."

throughout the Midwest kept him from making the drive. At offensive tackle, he has emerged among OSU's top remaining targets for the current cycle.

Buckeyes Secure 2020 4-Star WR

Before Ohio State departed the night of Dec. 25 for the Rose Bowl, Day and wide receivers coach Brian Hartline unwrapped a Christmas gift that afternoon in the form of Sammamish (Wash.) Eastside Catholic 2020 four-star wide receiver Gee Scott.

His commitment as the 247Sports composite's No. 70 overall prospect, No. 15 wide receiver and No. 2 player in Washington for 2020 gives Day and Hartline their highest-rated skill player as they build the class for the next cycle.

"The first time I met Coach Hartline, I knew he was a great guy and I could tell how much he cares for his players," Scott told Brandon Huffman of 247Sports. "He loves Ohio State. He's there for the school. He's not going to the NFL to coach. He loves the development of players and what he does there."

The 6-3, 211-pounder picked OSU after taking a redeye flight Oct. 13 to Columbus for its 30-14 victory against Minnesota at Ohio Stadium. Scott made the trip with private trainer Tracy Ford in addition to Eastside Catholic teammate and 2020 four-star running back Sam Adams (6-2, 200), resulting in offers for both players.

"I walked around and it was just a historic football school with a top-notch gameday environment," Scott said. "I thought right then that I could play there and go to school there."

Scott added an offer Nov. 16 from Louisiana State, accumulating over 20 scholarship opportunities before choosing Ohio State.

He joined Cincinnati St. Xavier five-star offensive tackle Paris Johnson (6-7, 285), Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral four-star quarterback Jack Miller (6-4, 210), Montvale (N.J.) St. Joseph Regional four-star center Luke Wypler (6-3½, 285), Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral four-star running back Darvon Hubbard (6-0, 200) and Rockwall, Texas, four-star wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba

Continued On Page 26

ed about the future as these guys will be a foundation moving forward into the next few years."

The 6-6, 310-pound Doug Nester was the lone commitment left unsigned. Pledged to Ohio State since Aug. 5, 2017, Nester was en route for early enrollment before Meyer announced his retirement Dec. 4 and Nester decided to rethink his college choice.

The Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley product officially visited the Buckeyes the weekend of Dec. 7-9, followed by an unofficial visit Dec. 16 to Penn State. Nester then set official visits to Penn State (Jan. 26) and Virginia Tech (Feb. 2), initially including Georgia (Jan. 11) before he canceled the trip.

Recruited by Meyer and offensive line coach Greg Studrawa, Nester continues to build a relationship with Day as he finalizes his decision before Feb. 6. Nester is the 247Sports composite's No. 92 overall prospect, No. 5 offensive guard and No. 2 player in West Virginia.

2 OL Targets Emerge For 2019

Outside of Nester, Ohio State's priority throughout January remains along its offensive line. The Buckeyes have proceeded accordingly, extending an offer and setting up an official visit with a relatively recent target.

"It's important to go identify them," Day said of offensive linemen. "We've got to go identify them. We've got to do a really good job obviously in the 2020 class. We're a little bit down in the O-line, so we've got to do a great job moving forward to get that addressed."

Kahuku, Hawaii, four-star offensive guard Enokk Vimahi announced Jan. 4 that he had

received an offer from OSU. Vimahi is the 247Sports composite's No. 132 overall prospect, No. 8 offensive guard and No. 2 player in Hawaii.

"Just a heads up for everyone out there still wondering. I'm 100 percent not committed anywhere," Vimahi said Jan. 3 at the Alamodome in San Antonio ahead of Jan. 5's All-American Bowl. "My recruitment's still open."

Vimahi's father, David, took to Twitter and reiterated that point Jan. 3. He said his son's top three prior to Ohio State's offer consisted of Notre Dame, Southern California and Oklahoma.

The 6-4½, 281-pounder was originally slated to announce his commitment Jan. 19 during the Polynesian Bowl at Aloha Stadium in Honolulu. However, he announced Jan. 14 on Twitter, that decision would be delayed to Feb. 6.

Vimahi had officially visited Notre Dame (Sept. 1) and USC (Dec. 15) before going to Oklahoma on Jan. 12. With weeks left before National Signing Day, though, he has an

Ohio State official visit as an option before his recruitment officially wraps up.

As the Buckeyes work to get Vimahi on campus, they have already locked in an official visit for one of their other top targets in the trenches. According to reports, Indianapolis Ben Davis 2019 three-star offensive tackle Dawand Jones has set his return to Columbus for the weekend of Jan. 19.

The 6-8, 360-pounder picked up an OSU offer Nov. 21 during an unofficial visit at practice. Jones is the 247Sports composite's No. 1,018 overall prospect, No. 88 offensive tackle and No. 13 player in Indiana.

As a two-sport athlete playing basketball, Jones became a national recruit. He added offers from Louisville (Nov. 25), Oregon (Dec. 2), Auburn (Dec. 6), Florida (Dec. 8) and Penn State since his Ohio State offer, taking an official visit to Southern California (Nov. 9) after receiving an offer Nov. 7 from the Trojans.

Jones was supposed to take his official visit to see the Buckeyes the weekend of Jan. 12, but inclement weather with snow

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Buckeyes Add PWO Ohio Kicker For 2019 Cycle

Continued From Page 25

(6-1, 188) as commitments in the Buckeyes' 2020 recruiting class.

Arizona 2020 QB Commit 100 Percent

After a season-ending left knee injury in October, Jack Miller shared some good news Jan. 9 when he announced his medical clearance.

The four-star quarterback, committed to Ohio State since July 1, shared he was "ready to get back to work" after battling back the past two months from his injury.

Prior to the update, Miller was included in an Instagram post shared by his father, also named Jack, showing him rolling out right and throwing passes downfield to targets during a Jan. 5 workout with private

trainer Mike Giovando at Scottsdale (Ariz.) Coronado.

In eight games as a junior, Miller completed 141 of his 256 passes (55.1 percent) for 2,431 yards and 27 touchdowns to six interceptions.

Ohio 2019 Kicker Commits To OSU

Ohio State has its kicker for 2019, adding Jack Deneher as a preferred walk-on Dec. 21. He visited Oct. 13 for the Buckeyes' 30-14 win over Minnesota at Ohio Stadium, announcing an offer Dec. 17 and committing four days later.

The 6-4, 195-pounder from Dover, Ohio, chose to stay home over other preferred walk-on offers from Cincinnati (Dec. 10) and Iowa State (Aug. 22). Kohl's Kicking ranks Deneher No. 24 nationally.

Georgia 2020 OLB Trims Top Schools

In possession of an Ohio State offer since June 14, 2017, Kevin Swint kept the Buckeyes among his priorities when he announced Dec. 17 a list of his top seven schools that included OSU.

The four-star outside linebacker from Carrollton, Ga., included Ohio State with Boston College, Clemson, Florida, LSU, South Carolina and Wisconsin.

Swint is the 247Sports composite's No. 194 overall prospect, No. 9 outside linebacker and No. 21 player in Georgia for 2020.

D.C. 2020 WR Cuts List To 6

Rakim Jarrett continues to consider Ohio State among his preferred options, evidenced Dec. 26 when he released a top six featuring the Buckeyes. The five-star wide receiver from Washington (D.C.) St. John's College included OSU with Alabama, Florida LSU, Tennessee and USC.

Jarrett hauled in an Ohio State offer July 2, unofficially visiting later that month with 2020 teammates such as five-star outside linebacker Mekhail Sherman (6-3, 234) and four-star defensive tackle Tre Williams (6-1½, 308). The trio returned to campus on another unofficial visit Nov. 24 for the Buckeyes' 62-39 rout of Michigan at Ohio Stadium.

Jarrett added an offer Dec. 20 from the Trojans and announced a Georgia offer Jan. 9. He is the 247Sports composite's No. 27

overall prospect, No. 4 wide receiver and No. 2 player in D.C. for 2020.

Ohio State Gets Ahead On 2021 Class

While its practices for the Rose Bowl ran from Dec. 26-30 at StubHub Center in Carson, Calif., OSU continued to recruit. Those efforts resurfaced Dec. 28 when Bellflower (Calif.) St. John Bosco 2021 wide receiver Beaux Collins (6-3, 185) attended practice as a guest of Hartline's and announced an offer from Ohio State, his 15th.

After the game, the Buckeyes centered further attention on underclassmen, picking up their activity on the trail Jan. 4 when they offered 2021 athlete Emeka Egbuka as a wide receiver. The 6-1, 190-pounder from Steilacoom, Wash., had picked up offers from LSU and Tennessee earlier that day.

After Michigan (April 2), Michigan State (April 18), Indiana (April 18) and Purdue (April 19) earlier in the year, OSU became the fifth Big Ten offer Jan. 14 for West Lafayette, Ind., 2021 outside linebacker Yanni Karlaftis (6-3, 205). Karlaftis' older brother, George, stayed home and signed to the Boilermakers' 2019 class as a four-star defensive end.

In possession of an offer from the Buckeyes since Oct. 26, Ryan Linthicum set his first unofficial visit to Columbus for the weekend of Jan. 19, he announced Jan. 13 on Twitter. The 6-3, 275-pounder from Damascus, Md., boasts offers from Maryland (Oct. 12), Michigan (Oct. 24), Virginia (Nov. 26) and Pittsburgh (Dec. 3).

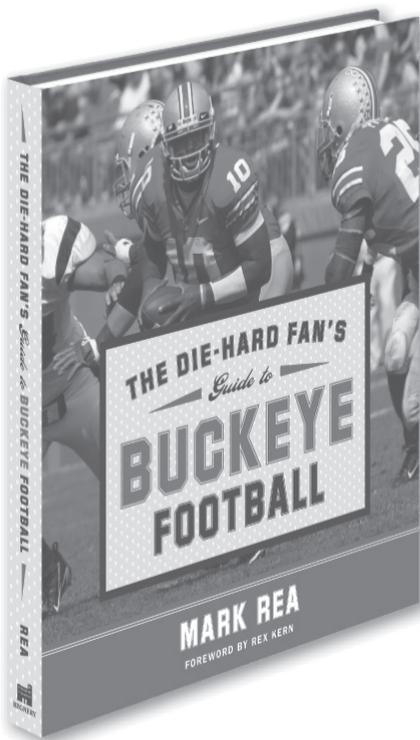


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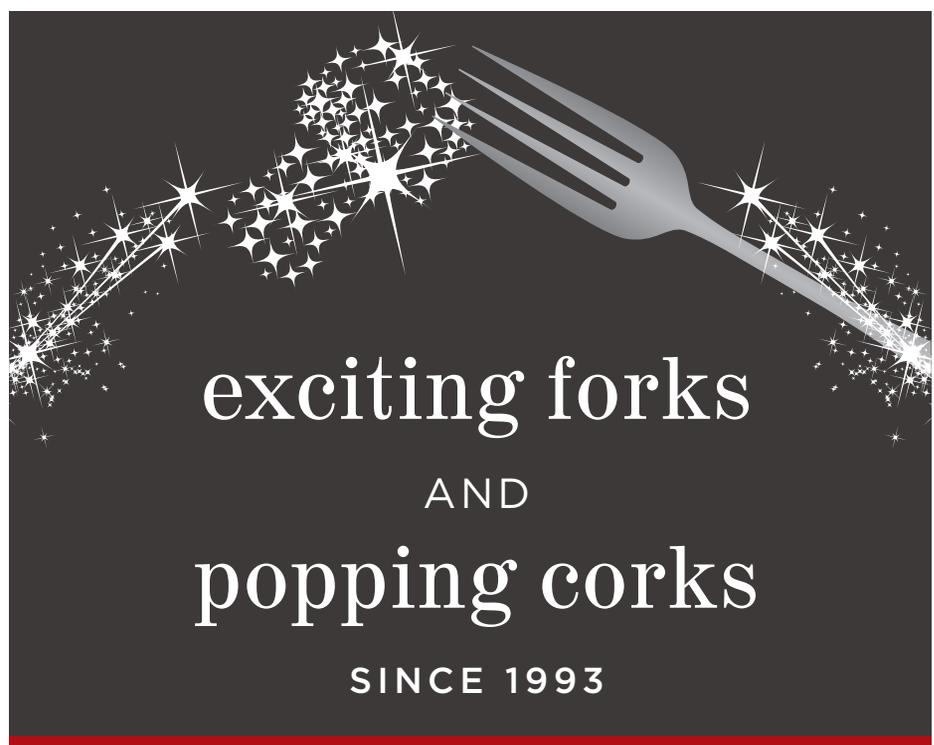
If so, then *The Die-Hard Fan's Guide to Buckeye Football* by Buckeye football expert Mark Rea is for you! This must-have book works its way "Across the Field" through nearly 120 years of Buckeye football, including complete coverage of the national championship seasons and Heisman Trophy winners

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OSU Suffers 1st 3-Game Skid Of Holtmann Era

For the first time in the Chris Holtmann era at Ohio State, the Buckeye basketball team has hit a significant road block.

Ohio State's 72-62 loss to Iowa on Jan. 12 marked the third straight loss for the Buckeyes for the first time since Holtmann arrived in Columbus before the 2017-18 season. The loss to the Hawkeyes dropped the Buckeyes to 12-4, 2-3 in the Big Ten.

COURT REPORT

James Grega

"We're all searching a little bit and trying to look for some life and energy from our bench," Holtmann said after the game. "I've been trying to give some guys an opportunity to see how effective they can be. Obviously, it's a difficult environment for that to happen."

Against the Hawkeyes Holtmann brought usual starter, senior guard C.J. Jackson, off the bench and inserted senior Keyshawn Woods in his place. The change didn't work well, as Jackson and Woods combined for only 12 points and three assists while turning it over seven times between them.

Turnovers have become an issue in Ohio State's latest two losses. The Buckeyes committed a whopping 34 turnovers against Iowa and Rutgers, including a season-high 21 against the Hawkeyes.



KEVIN DYE

ROUGH STRETCH – From Jan. 5-12, the Ohio State men's basketball team suffered three consecutive losses for the first time since Chris Holtmann took over as head coach before the 2017-18 season.

Of the 10 Buckeyes who saw playing time against Iowa, eight committed at least one turnover. Sophomore center Kaleb Wesson, who has also battled significant foul trouble during the skid, committed five

against Iowa. Ohio State turned it over only five times in a Jan. 5 loss to No. 8 Michigan State.

In games vs. the Hawkeyes and Scarlet

Continued On Page 28



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Need For Leadership A Focus For Buckeyes

Continued From Page 27

Knights, Ohio State's big man has been saddled with a pair of fouls in the opening minutes. Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery said that denying Wesson the ball in the paint was a priority for his team. His game plan worked, with Wesson scoring a season-low two points in just 23 minutes after missing the majority of the first half with two fouls.

"You've got to go at them, and you've got to make them defend," McCaffery said. "You've got to run, make them run, and make them work. You've got to play them before (Wesson) gets it. If you let them bury you deep and let him catch it, he's virtually unstoppable. So, we played him early and moved our feet, tried to get ball pressure so the passer doesn't see you right away and can't get it to him.

"He's a guy that demands a lot of attention as you're preparing to play them, for obvious reasons," he added. "So, if you're doing all of that stuff, all of the time, all throughout the course of the game, it worked today."

The two Buckeyes who did not commit a turnover against Iowa, freshmen Jaedon LeDee and Justin Ahrens, earned their most noteworthy minutes of the season. The duo combined for 12 points, seven rebounds and 29 minutes and gave Holtmann some

2018-19 Ohio State Men's Basketball Statistics

12-4 Overall (2-3 Big Ten) Statistics through games of Jan. 12

Player	G-GS	Min.-Avg.	FG-FGA	Pct.	3P-3PA	Pct.	FT-FTA	Pct.	Rebounds		PF-FO	A TO	BS ST	Pts.-Avg.
									O-D	T-Avg.				
Kaleb Wesson	16-15	391-24.4	84-159	.528	11-34	.324	80-110	.727	43-67	110-6.9	53-1	25 37	7 16	259-16.2
C.J. Jackson	16-15	470-29.4	64-157	.408	33-80	.413	46-59	.780	3-65	68-4.3	34-1	62 36	4 16	207-12.9
L. Muhammad	15-14	432-28.8	51-113	.451	17-41	.415	24-36	.667	12-31	43-2.9	32-1	32 21	2 16	143-9.5
Andre Wesson	16-15	440-27.5	41-92	.446	14-42	.333	27-37	.730	19-51	70-4.4	43-1	30 28	10 5	123-7.7
D. Washington	16-1	289-18.1	45-117	.385	23-66	.348	8-14	.571	3-32	35-2.2	22-0	19 18	0 3	121-7.6
Kyle Young	16-12	360-22.5	49-68	.721	1-5	.200	19-31	.613	28-50	78-4.9	32-0	18 12	7 12	118-7.4
Keyshawn Woods	16-6	429-26.8	44-105	.419	13-40	.325	17-21	.810	5-43	48-3.0	35-0	50 18	2 8	118-7.4
Jaedon LeDee	14-1	99-7.1	12-26	.462	0-2	.000	26-34	.765	9-20	29-2.1	17-0	4 6	5 1	50-3.6
Musa Jallow	16-1	197-12.3	15-37	.405	5-15	.333	13-16	.813	16-25	41-2.6	20-1	4 9	5 6	48-3.0
Justin Ahrens	9-0	49-5.4	5-12	.417	4-10	.400	0-0	.000	0-5	5-0.6	6-0	1 3	1 2	14-1.6
Joey Lane	8-0	25-3.1	4-5	.800	3-4	.750	0-0	.000	0-5	5-0.6	2-0	6 3	0 2	11-1.4
Danny Hummer	6-0	17-2.8	1-3	.333	0-1	.000	0-2	.000	0-1	1-0.2	4-0	1 3	0 2	2-0.3
TEAM									19-25	44-2.8			5	
Ohio State	16	3,198	415-894	.464	124-340	.365	260-360	.722	157-420	577-36.1	300-5	252 199	43 89	1,214-75.9
Opponents	16	3,194	352-887	.397	94-320	.294	229-306	.748	151-377	528-33.0	341-11	164 212	49 85	1,027-64.2

important minutes off the bench, especially LeDee, who was forced into action early with Wesson's foul issues.

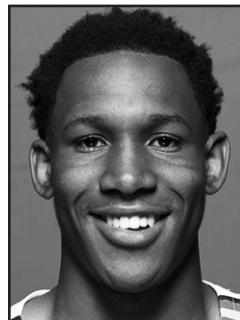
"I thought they had some good moments and some freshman moments," Holtmann said. "I thought it was a combination of both. Jae was active but I don't think necessarily as efficient as we would have liked, but I thought he played really hard and gave us a live body, which is who he is."

Ohio State's next game is against No.

19 Maryland at home on Jan. 18. The Terps carried a 14-3, 5-1 record at the time BSB went to press having won their last five games. The Buckeyes won their only matchup against Maryland last year, a 91-69 victory in Columbus.

For the Buckeyes to snap their skid they will have to improve drastically in the week leading up to the Terps matchup, according to Jackson.

"I know we have to get better, a lot better, and I know good times will come, but we've got a lot of talent in the locker room and we'll be fine," Jackson told The Columbus Dispatch. "We just have to get better pretty fast."



C.J. Jackson

Searching For Leadership

The loss of Keita Bates-Diop, Jae'Sean Tate, Kam Williams and Andrew Dakich left a void after last season in the leadership department, yet Ohio State faced little adversity early in the season. However, as the Buckeyes begin to battle the most hardships they have encountered in two

years, Ohio State will need multiple players to fill the gap left by the four former Buckeyes.

"I think as you get into league play, we'll go as far as our collective leadership takes us, and I really believe that," Holtmann said prior to playing Iowa.

Jackson and former walk-on Joey Lane were tabbed as Ohio State's de facto leaders at the beginning of the year with Woods expected to have an expanding role as the season progressed.

However, neither Jackson nor Woods is playing well in Ohio State's current stretch, and Lane rarely sees the court. While the

Buckeyes search for leadership, freshman Luther Muhammad said that staying together as a unit is key for a team that is made up largely of freshmen and sophomores.

"Every game you're going to go through ups and downs, go through adversity," Muhammad said. "And when you're going through that, you've got to stay together. You can't get distant from each other. You've got to encourage each other and stay as one, stay as a unit."

One player who could step up in a leadership role is junior Andre Wesson. He offered his services as a leader in his comments to the Dispatch after the Iowa game.

"We're still trying to figure that out," he said. "A big thing is leadership, and that falls on me too. I'm an older guy on the team. We need better leadership. That's from me, (C.J.), all the other older guys. We need better leadership."

Bucks Drop Out Of Top-25

After rising to No. 14 in the Associated Press poll, the Buckeyes dropped out of the top 25 after their three-game losing streak.

The Buckeyes dropped only two spots following a nine-point home loss to No. 8 Michigan State on Jan. 5, but after road losses to unranked Rutgers and Iowa, Ohio State fell out of the top 25 for the first time since November.

In the Holtmann era, the highest Ohio State has been ranked is No. 8, which came in the 15th week of the 2017-18 season after the Buckeyes jumped out to a 22-5 record. From that point on, Holtmann's squad lost three of its last five games before the NCAA Tournament, which featured a second-round exit.

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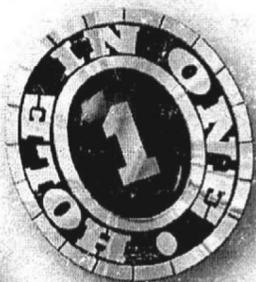
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Ohio State Hoops Endures Slow Start To 2019

By JAMES GREGA & CRAIG MERZ
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writers

Since BSB last went to press, the Ohio State men's basketball team played seven times, including a string of four victories followed by three straight losses in Big Ten play.

Ohio State 73, Bucknell 71

Dec. 15, 2018										
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio										
	1	2	F							
Bucknell (4-4)	40	31	-	71						
Ohio State (9-1)	39	34	-	73						
Bucknell	Total FG	FT	Reb.							
Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.				
Moore	25	1-3	4-6	0-3	0	4	7			
Sestina	14	3-7	2-2	1-2	1	5	10			
Mackenzie	33	4-11	2-2	2-3	2	3	13			
Sotos	35	5-12	1-2	1-6	5	2	12			
Toomer	32	5-10	0-0	1-2	3	3	13			
Newman	23	1-3	1-2	0-3	1	2	3			
Ellis	9	0-1	0-0	0-1	0	0	0			
Funk	6	2-3	0-0	0-0	0	0	6			
Meeks	17	2-5	3-4	0-3	0	1	7			
Robertson	4	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	0	0			
Jones	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Totals	200	23-55	13-18	5-24	13	20	71			

Percentages: FG: 41.8%. FT: 72.2%. **3-point goals:** 12-30 (Moore 1-3, Sestina 2-4, Mackenzie 3-8, Sotos 1-3, Toomer 3-6, Ellis 0-1, Funk 2-3, Meeks 0-2). **Team rebounds:** 1. **Blocked shots:** 1 (Moore). **Turnovers:** 8 (Sestina 2, Newman 2, Moore, Mackenzie, Sotos, Meeks). **Steals:** 6 (Sotos 2, Toomer, Newman, Ellis, Meeks).

Ohio State	Total FG	FT	Reb.							
Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.				
A. Wesson	29	2-8	0-0	4-5	2	4	4			
Young	27	4-7	0-0	1-5	0	3	8			
K. Wesson	27	6-11	9-10	4-6	4	2	22			
Muhammad	32	4-7	0-0	0-2	1	1	8			
Jackson	34	3-5	3-6	0-8	6	1	10			
Jallow	9	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0			
Washington	13	3-8	0-0	0-2	0	0	8			
LeDee	2	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Woods	27	5-9	1-2	0-2	2	2	13			
Totals	200	27-56	13-18	9-30	15	14	73			

Percentages: FG: 48.2%. FT: 72.2%. **3-point goals:** 6-15 (A. Wesson 0-3, Young 0-1, K. Wesson 1-2, Muhammad 0-1, Jackson 1-1, Washington 2-5, Woods 2-2). **Team rebounds:** None. **Blocked shots:** 3 (Young, K. Wesson, Jackson). **Turnovers:** 13 (K. Wesson 4, A. Wesson 3, Muhammad 2, Jackson 2, Young, Woods). **Steals:** 7 (Murphy 3, Mason 3, McBrayer). **Officials:** Garrison, Eppley, Sciroto. **A:** 14,241.

What follows is a brief recap of each of those seven contests. Recaps of each Ohio State men's hoops game can also be found

Ohio St. 75, Youngstown St. 56

Dec. 18, 2018										
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio										
	1	2	F							
Youngstown State (4-9)	25	31	-	56						
Ohio State (10-1)	22	53	-	75						
Youngstown St.	Total FG	FT	Reb.							
Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.				
Maxwell	26	3-6	0-0	2-4	0	5	7			
Anabir	8	0-1	0-0	0-2	0	4	0			
Bohannon	34	4-9	0-0	0-2	0	2	11			
Quisenberry	31	6-12	5-7	1-1	4	3	17			
Covington	20	1-5	0-0	0-0	0	4	2			
Taylor	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Simmons	24	3-8	1-2	0-1	0	1	10			
Hampton	20	2-6	2-2	0-8	2	1	6			
Cathcart	9	0-1	0-0	0-1	0	0	0			
Hamperian	1	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Morgan	11	1-5	0-0	1-1	2	0	3			
Pedersen	8	0-0	0-0	0-2	0	4	0			
Akuckie	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Bofenkamp	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Holcombe	1	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Sally	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Totals	200	20-55	8-11	7-23	8	24	56			

Percentages: FG: 36.4%. FT: 72.7%. **3-point goals:** 8-20 (Maxwell 1-2, Bohannon 3-3, Quisenberry 0-3, Covington 0-1, Simmons 3-4, Hampton 0-3, Morgan 1-4). **Team rebounds:** 4. **Blocked shots:** 1 (Pedersen). **Turnovers:** 11 (Bohannon 3, Quisenberry 2, Pedersen 2, Anabir, Covington, Morgan, TEAM). **Steals:** 5 (Hampton 2, Maxwell, Covington, Simmons).

Ohio State	Total FG	FT	Reb.							
Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.				
A. Wesson	25	2-6	0-0	2-3	0	1	4			
Young	16	2-2	1-2	1-4	1	0	5			
K. Wesson	23	10-14	11-13	3-4	3	4	31			
Muhammad	26	4-10	1-2	1-3	2	1	11			
Jackson	33	3-9	3-4	0-7	7	3	11			
Jallow	13	0-1	0-0	0-1	0	1	0			
Washington	24	2-7	0-0	1-1	1	1	4			
Ahrens	4	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Lane	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
LeDee	5	0-2	0-0	0-1	1	1	0			
Woods	29	3-5	2-2	0-3	2	1	9			
Hummer	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Totals	200	26-56	18-23	10-29	17	13	75			

Percentages: FG: 46.4%. FT: 78.3%. **3-point goals:** 5-19 (A. Wesson 0-2, K. Wesson 0-2, Muhammad 2-4, Jackson 2-5, Jallow 0-1, Washington 0-2, LeDee 0-1, Woods 1-2). **Team rebounds:** 4. **Blocked shots:** 3 (A. Wesson, Young, Jallow). **Turnovers:** 8 (K. Wesson 3, Young 2, Muhammad 2, A. Wesson). **Steals:** 5 (Muhammad 2, Young, Jackson, Woods). **Officials:** Green, Beaver, Ek. **A:** 12,637.

on BuckeyeSports.com, BSB's 24/7 website. Signup information for BuckeyeSports.com, free to all print subscribers, can be found on page 5.

Dec. 15: Bucknell

Ohio State defeated Bucknell in front of an anxious Value City Arena crowd of 14,241 on Dec. 15, 73-71, avoiding a near upset at the hands of the Bison.

Despite leading 69-58 with 4:28 to play, Ohio State needed back-to-back defensive stops to hold on to the lead as Bucknell got off two shots in the final 14 seconds of the game with a chance to pull off the win. The Bison rattled off a 13-4 run in the final minutes, with Ohio State's only points in that span coming from the free-throw line.

The final possession for Bucknell ended with a pair of three-point shots that missed the mark. Bison head coach Nathan Davis confirmed in the postgame press conference that the play drawn up out of a timeout was to go for the win. However, Ohio State veteran point guard Keyshawn Woods overheard some of the Bucknell huddle and forced the Bison to take contested shots.

"Because I was talking to one of their players, I knew they wanted to end the game with a certain play they like to run to the baseline," Woods said. "No. 11 (Avi Toomer) had just hit a three on my mistake, so I wasn't going to let that happen again."

The events that led up to the final possession featured a number of extended runs from both teams in both the first and second halves.

Ohio State held a 37-25 lead with 4:04 to play in the first half before a 15-0 Bison run gave the visitors a three-point advantage just before the half. A jumper from Woods cut the deficit to just one at halftime at 40-39, but the damage had been done. Later, the Buckeyes turned in a 17-3 run, featuring eight points

by Woods and five by C.J. Jackson, to take a 58-52 lead with 11:15 to play.

Outside of Ohio State's struggles at the end of both halves, the Buckeyes got stellar play from Kaleb Wesson, who tallied his first double-double of the season, scoring a career- and game-high 22 points while also pulling down 10 boards. He also dished out four assists but committed four turnovers. Woods (13) and Jackson (10) were also in double figures. Jackson also had six assists and only a pair of turnovers.

Bucknell had balanced scoring with four players in double figures, led by Toomer and Kimbal Mackenzie with 13 each.

Dec. 18: Youngstown State

Despite shooting just 24.1 percent from the floor in the first half, Ohio State collected a 75-56 win over Youngstown State in front of 12,637 fans in Columbus on Dec. 18.

Chris Holtmann's squad did not hold a lead in the first half with the Penguins opening the game on a 14-2 run. The 12-point deficit matched the largest hole Ohio State had been in all season. The Buckeyes also trailed by 12 in a 72-62 loss to Syracuse on Nov. 28.

Ohio State missed its first seven shots and trailed 9-0 before a Kaleb Wesson basket finally got the Scarlet and Gray on the board with 15:18 to play in the opening frame. The Buckeyes clawed their way back to within three by halftime, trailing 25-22 heading into the locker room, despite YSU shooting just 33.3 percent (11 of 33) from the floor.

The halftime discussions weren't exactly pleasant, especially for Kaleb Wesson, who had just five points at the break on 2-of-6 shooting.

"At the beginning of the game, we weren't playing with a purpose," he said. "I had to regain my focus, and I had to get chewed out a couple times. It's not something I

Continued On Page 30

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Buckeyes Lose 3 In A Row In Conference Play

Continued From Page 29

expect to happen, but sometimes when you get chewed out, it just lights something in you. I felt like once that happened, I had to step up."

Kaleb Wesson, who added that "one through 12, and the coaches" were the ones that chewed him out, stepped up and then some. The sophomore big man converted on all eight of his shot attempts in the second half and finished with a career-high 31 points to go along with seven rebounds as the Buckeyes shot 70.4 percent from the floor in the final 20 minutes.

The Buckeyes took the lead, 29-27, on a Kaleb Wesson layup at the 17:02 mark. They pushed to double figures, 43-32, when Jackson nailed a three with 12:38 to play. The final score marked Ohio State's largest lead of the game.

It was the second straight game that Kaleb Wesson had set a career high in points, after scoring 22 points against Bucknell.

Jackson finished with a game-high seven assists and zero turnovers to go with 11 points and seven boards while freshman guard Luther Muhammad chipped in 11 points. The Penguins were led by Darius Quisenberry, who finished with 17 points in the loss.

Dec. 22: UCLA

After a back-and-forth first half, Ohio State used timely shooting and terrific passing in the second to defeat the reeling UCLA Bruins, 80-66, at the United Center in Chicago on Dec. 22. The Buckeyes assisted on 26 of 28 made field goals in the victory.

Kaleb Wesson paced Ohio State (11-1) in the first half with 10 points and six rebounds and finished with 15 points and 12 caroms, his second double-double of the season. Jackson led the Buckeyes in scoring, pouring in 22 points, 20 of which came in the second half. Jackson also collected seven rebounds and six assists.

The Buckeyes had a difficult time cracking the UCLA zone early, as the Bruins (7-5) were ahead for much of the first half but never led by more than five. Ohio State relied heavily on Kaleb Wesson in the opening frame, repeatedly playing through the big man.

Trailing 24-23 with under four minutes to play in the first half, Ohio State got an offensive boost from Muhammad. The New Jersey native hit a corner three-pointer with 3:42 before the intermission and followed it up with a fastbreak dunk and midrange jumper before the half was over, helping the Buckeyes to a 33-30 lead at the break. Those accounted for seven of Muhammad's nine points for the game.

The Buckeyes took a 10-point lead with 6:12 left on a highlight-worthy alley-oop from Woods to Kyle Young, which forced a UCLA timeout. On the ensuing Bruin possession, Andre Wesson blocked a layup, which led to a Jackson three-pointer. Ohio State led by as many as 16 before the game was over.

"I am really proud of the effort of our guys, particularly the second half," Holtmann said after the game. "I thought UCLA's length bothered us. I know, I give them credit, I think they played a hard game the other night on the road (at Cincinnati), and we thought that we would see zone."

Young finished with 11 points, Andre Wesson added nine and Woods dished out 10 assists without a turnover in the win. Kris Wilkes paced the Bruins with 18 but was just

Ohio State 80, UCLA 66

Dec. 22, 2018										
United Center • Chicago										
		1	2		F					
Ohio State (11-1)		33	47	-	80					
UCLA (7-5)		30	36	-	66					
Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
A. Wesson	34	2-4	4-6	0-2	3	2	9			
K. Wesson	28	5-11	4-8	8-4	2	4	15			
Muhammad	30	3-6	2-2	2-1	2	3	9			
Jackson	31	7-16	5-5	0-7	6	3	22			
Woods	35	3-11	0-1	0-4	10	4	6			
Jallow	4	0-1	0-0	1-1	0	0	0			
Washington	14	3-11	0-0	1-2	1	0	8			
Ahrens	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0			
Young	23	5-7	1-1	3-3	2	1	11			
Totals	200	28-67	16-23	15-26	26	18	80			
Percentages: FG: 41.8%. FT: 69.6%. 3-point goals: 8-23 (A. Wesson 1-2, K. Wesson 1-2, Muhammad 1-2, Jackson 3-7, Woods 0-4, Washington 2-6). Team rebounds: 2. Blocked shots: 7 (A. Wesson 5, K. Wesson, Muhammad). Turnovers: 11 (K. Wesson 3, Jackson 3, Muhammad 2, A. Wesson, Washington, TEAM). Steals: 5 (Young 2, A. Wesson, Muhammad, Woods).										
UCLA	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
Riley	25	4-10	1-2	0-3	0	3	10			
Brown	20	4-6	1-2	2-0	0	2	9			
Hands	30	5-10	1-2	1-4	9	3	13			
Wilkes	37	7-18	3-5	3-4	0	3	18			
Ali	19	2-6	0-0	0-4	1	2	4			
Bernard	15	0-1	4-4	0-3	0	1	4			
Smith	17	1-3	2-2	0-4	1	3	4			
Hill	20	2-3	0-0	2-3	2	2	4			
Singleton	17	0-0	0-0	0-1	1	1	0			
Totals	200	25-57	12-17	8-26	14	20	66			
Percentages: FG: 43.9%. FT: 70.6%. 3-point goals: 4-18 (Riley 1-2, Hands 2-4, Wilkes 1-6, Ali 0-3, Bernard 0-1, Smith 0-2). Team rebounds: None. Blocked shots: 6 (Brown 2, Wilkes 2, Bernard, Singleton). Turnovers: 15 (Hands 4, Wilkes 3, Riley 2, Ali 2, Bernard 2, Hill, Singleton). Steals: 8 (Hands 5, Wilkes, Ali, Hill). Officials: Simpson, Cartmell, Ayers. A: N/A.										

7 of 18 from the floor and only 1 of 6 from beyond the arc.

Dec. 29: High Point

Ohio State's final nonconference game of the regular season came and went Dec. 29, with the Buckeyes closing the 2018 calendar year with an impressive 12-1 record.

The host Buckeyes used a late first-half spurt to pull away from High Point, taking down the Panthers 82-64 in a game that featured just enough intrigue to make things interesting, at least in the first half before 14,264 at Value City Arena.

Ohio State opened an early 14-6 lead on the Panthers before Tubby Smith's crew rattled off a 16-2 run to take a six-point lead with 7:02 to play in the opening frame. Holtmann's team, coming off an 80-66 win over UCLA on Dec. 22, responded with a run of its own. Ohio State went on a 19-2 run and eventually took a 37-28 lead into halftime and never looked back. Muhammad surpassed his career high in points in the first half alone, scoring 14 in the first 20 minutes, finishing with 15.

"I was just staying within the game and taking the right shots," Muhammad said of his performance. "Just doing what you do best, not trying to be something that I'm not."

Holtmann's team opened the second half on a 15-4 run to go up 52-32 and led by as many 26 in the second half. The Buckeyes shot 70.8 percent (17 of 24) from the floor in the period.

The Buckeyes got balanced scoring, as four players finished the win in double figures. Jackson led all scorers with 20 points, 14 of which were scored in the second half. After registering double-doubles in two of his last three games entering the matchup against High Point, Kaleb Wesson had 17 points.

"He has got to continue to grow in his physicality," Holtmann said of Kaleb Wesson

Ohio State 82, High Point 64

Dec. 29, 2018										
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio										
		1	2		F					
High Point (6-7)		28	36	-	64					
Ohio State (12-1)		37	45	-	82					
High Point	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
Madison	34	6-10	0-0	3-5	2	2	12			
Whitehead	12	2-4	2-2	2-1	0	4	6			
Kamga	25	1-6	0-0	0-3	3	3	3			
Holland	18	3-4	4-4	0-1	0	2	11			
Proctor	28	2-9	0-2	0-3	1	2	4			
Slay	10	2-3	0-0	0-3	2	2	4			
Wright	17	1-3	0-0	0-0	1	1	3			
Cameron	14	1-4	2-2	1-2	0	2	4			
Gooding	3	1-2	0-0	1-1	0	1	3			
Peterson	12	3-4	1-2	1-4	1	2	7			
Berlin	10	0-1	0-0	0-1	0	1	0			
Sanchez	17	2-4	3-4	2-1	1	2	7			
Totals	200	24-54	12-16	10-26	11	24	64			
Percentages: FG: 44.4%. FT: 75.0%. 3-point goals: 4-13 (Madison 0-2, Kamga 1-2, Holland 1-2, Proctor 0-2, Wright 1-1, Cameron 0-1, Gooding 1-2, Peterson 0-1). Team rebounds: 2. Blocked shots: None. Turnovers: 17 (Kamga 4, Peterson 3, Whitehead 2, Gooding 2, Holland, Wright, Cameron, Berlin, Sanchez, TEAM). Steals: 7 (Proctor 3, Cameron 2, Wright, Gooding).										
Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
A. Wesson	31	3-6	3-4	5-4	4	2	10			
K. Wesson	27	7-12	1-2	0-4	3	4	17			
Muhammad	26	5-8	2-3	0-1	1	1	15			
Jackson	31	7-11	3-3	0-1	3	0	20			
Woods	25	3-4	0-1	0-3	4	2	7			
Jallow	8	0-2	0-0	0-0	0	2	0			
Washington	20	2-5	1-4	0-1	3	1	5			
Ahrens	3	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Lane	3	1-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	3			
LeDee	3	0-0	0-2	0-2	1	1	0			
Young	20	2-3	1-3	0-5	0	0	5			
Hummer	3	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	1	0			
Totals	200	30-54	11-22	5-22	19	14	82			
Percentages: FG: 55.6%. FT: 50.0%. 3-point goals: 11-25 (A. Wesson 1-3, K. Wesson 2-5, Muhammad 3-5, Jackson 3-5, Woods 1-2, Jallow 0-1, Washington 0-1, Ahrens 0-1, Lane 1-1, Hummer 0-1). Team rebounds: 1. Blocked shots: 3 (Young 2, Jackson). Turnovers: 11 (Jackson 4, K. Wesson 2, Woods 2, A. Wesson, Muhammad, Lane). Steals: 5 (K. Wesson 2, Jackson 2, Muhammad). Officials: Kitts, Hornacki, Wymer. A: 14,264.										

with Big Ten play on the horizon. "I have been really pleased with his approach. I think our guys recognize that when we can, we want to play through him."

Andre Wesson chipped in 10 points and pulled down nine rebounds. For the second straight game, Woods started in place of Young. Woods finished with seven points while Young, playing his third game off the bench this season, finished with five.

The Panthers were led by forward Ricky Madison, who scored a team-high 12 points and pulled down eight rebounds. High Point outrebounded the Buckeyes 36-27 for the game.

Jan. 5: Michigan State

Ohio State fell to No. 8 Michigan State, 86-77, at home in front of a sellout crowd of 18,809 at Value City Arena on Jan. 5.

With retired head football coach Urban Meyer, departing quarterback Dwayne Haskins and transfer QB Justin Fields looking on, the Buckeyes took a seven-point advantage at halftime and got 25 points from Kaleb Wesson, but it wasn't enough to collect the win.

"We're not there yet," Holtmann said after the loss. "We're certainly not there yet. You let a team shoot 76 percent on your home floor and score 50 points (both in the second half), then you've got a long ways to go. That's a fact for us."

Thanks to excellent ball movement and 28 combined points from Jackson and Kaleb Wesson, Ohio State took a 43-36 lead at halftime.

With Jackson dealing with cramping issues and Kaleb Wesson saddled with three fouls early in the second half, the Spartans rattled off a 9-0 run to take a brief 51-50 lead at the 14:42 mark. Kaleb Wesson returned and Ohio State continually played through

Michigan St. 86, Ohio St. 77

Jan. 5, 2019										
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio										
		1	2		F					
Michigan State (13-2)		36	50	-	86					
Ohio State (12-2)		43	34	-	77					
Michigan State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
Goins	28	1-7	4-4	1-7	1	3	6			
Ward	29	5-7	11-14	2-6	0	2	21			
Ahrens	30	4-6	0-0	2-1	1	1	9			
Winston	35	8-12	7-11	0-2	5	4	25			
McQuaid	30	3-6	4-4	1-5	2	4	12			
Loyer	5	0-1	0-0	0-1	0	1	0			
Henry	14	1-1	2-2	0-2	1	3	5			
Brown	6	0-1	0-0	0-1	0	0	0			
Tillman	23	3-5	2-2	0-5	4	2	8			
Totals	200	25-46	30-37	6-31	14	20	86			
Percentages: FG: 54.3%. FT: 81.1%. 3-point goals: 6-18 (Goins 0-1, Ahrens 1-3, Winston 2-6, McQuaid 2-4, Loyer 0-1, Henry 0-1, Brown 0-1, Tillman 0-1). Team rebounds: 1. Blocked shots: 4 (Ward 3, Goins). Turnovers: 12 (Goins 2, Winston 2, Henry 2, Tillman 2, Ward, Ahrens, Loyer, Brown). Steals: 4 (Goins 2, Winston, Tillman).										
Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
A. Wesson	29	3-7	2-2	1-3	1	5	10			
K. Wesson	29	9-15	6-9	3-5	0	5	25			
Muhammad	27	3-8	6-8	2-0	2	5	12			
Jackson	28	4-10	0-0	0-5	3	3	10			
Woods	28	0-5	2-2	0-0	4	2	2			
Jallow	10	0-2	0-0	1-1	0	0	0			
Washington	26	4-11	0-0	0-4	1	2	10			
Ahrens	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0			
Lane	0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
LeDee	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	2	0			
Young	21	4-4	0-0	1-0	2	1	8			
Totals	200	27-62	16-21	8-18	15	26	77			
Percentages: FG: 43.5%. FT: 76.2%. 3-point goals: 7-24 (A. Wesson 2-5, K. Wesson 1-2, Muhammad 0-1, Jackson 2-4, Woods 0-3, Jallow 0-2, Washington 2-7). Team rebounds: None. Blocked shots: None. Turnovers: 5 (Washington 2, A. Wesson, Woods, Young). Steals: 7 (Jackson 4, Young 2, A. Wesson). Officials: McClunkins, Green, Oglesby. A: 18,809.										

him, as the big man scored seven points in the first 10 minutes of the second half.

Michigan State's lead extended to five, 64-59, after Wesson picked up his fourth foul with 9:00 to play in the game. With Kaleb Wesson on the bench, Ohio State managed to knot the game back at 64 with a three-pointer from Duane Washington and a layup from Andre Wesson with 7:54 to play.

Trailing 69-66 with 6:15 to play, Holtmann reinserted Kaleb Wesson into the game. After the two teams traded one-point leads for nearly two minutes, Michigan State emerged with a 75-72 lead at the final media timeout with 3:17 to play and never trailed again, leading by as many as 10 after Kaleb Wesson fouled out at the 1:52 mark.

"Truly, I don't think we should have lost the game," Kaleb Wesson said. "I mean, I don't think they're any better than we are. We just had mishaps that happened late in the game that cost us the game, but I don't think there's any huge step or level that we need to take to be a team like that."

Cassius Winston paced the Spartans' second-half surge with 18 points on 5-of-7 shooting from the floor and 7 of 9 from the line. Winston had 25 for the game. He was joined in double figures by Nick Ward and Matt McQuaid, with 21 and 12 respectively. Kyle Ahrens, brother of Buckeye freshman Justin Ahrens, chipped in 9.

Muhammad, with 12, and Andre Wesson, Washington and Jackson with 10 each joined Kaleb Wesson in double figures. Jackson dished out five assists without a turnover.

Jan. 9: Rutgers

The Ohio State men's basketball team had looked to rebound from its first Big Ten loss of the season four days earlier but instead found itself saddled with a second straight defeat Jan. 9 when Rutgers beat the No. 16 Buckeyes 64-61 at the Rutgers Athletic Center in Piscataway, N.J.

OHIO STATE MEN'S BASKETBALL

Rutgers 64, Ohio State 61

Jan. 9, 2019
The RAC • Piscataway, N.J.

	1	2	F
OSU (12-3, 2-2 B1G)	30	31	61
Rutgers (8-6, 1-3 B1G)	31	33	64

Ohio State	Total FG	FT	Reb.	
Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D A	
A. Wesson	36	1-5	2-4	2 1 4
Young	23	3-3	0-0	3-1 0 4 6
K. Wesson	26	-14	5-7	4-3 1 4 18
Muhammad	33	5-11	0-0	0-6 2 1 13
Jackson	35	4-13	0-0	1-2 4 3 10
Jallow	3	0-1	0-0	0-1 0 0 0
Washington	12	2-6	0-0	0-0 1 1 5
LeDee	4	0-0	0-0	0-1 0 0 0
Woods	28	2-5	0-0	0-1 2 4 5

Percentages: FG: 39.7%. FT: 63.6%. **3-point goals:** 8-26 (A. Wesson 0-2, K. Wesson 1-2, Muhammad 3-5, Jackson 2-9, Jallow 0-1, Washington 1-4, Woods 1-3). **Team rebounds:** 6. **Blocked shots:** None. **Turnovers:** 13 (A. Wesson 4, Muhammad 3, K. Wesson 2, Young, Jackson, Woods, TEAM). **Steals:** 7 (Muhammad 2, Jackson 2, A. Wesson, Young, K. Wesson).

Rutgers	Total FG	FT	Reb.	
Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D A	
Omoruyi	7	0-1	0-0	1-0 0 0 0
Doorson	21	2-4	1-2	4-2 1 3 5
Baker	37	5-11	3-4	0-5 4 2 15
Mathis	31	7-11	1-1	0-4 1 2 16
Harper	29	3-13	4-5	1-3 2 2 12
Carter	31	3-6	5-6	3-4 1 1 11
Johnson	14	1-1	1-2	0-2 0 4 3
McConnell	14	1-5	0-0	0-1 1 0 2
Thiam	16	0-1	0-0	0-1 0 2 0

Percentages: FG: 41.5%. FT: 75.0%. **3-point goals:** 5-16 (Baker 2-4, Mathis 1-3, Harper 2-7, McConnell 0-1, Thiam 0-1). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 6 (Doorson 3, Omoruyi, Mathis, Harper). **Turnovers:** 10 (Baker 4, Carter 3, Doorson, Mathis, TEAM). **Steals:** 7 (Carter 2, Johnson 2, Baker, Mathis, Harper). **Officials:** Sciotto, Kueneman, Elk. **A:** 5,379.

Despite the loss of top scorer Eugene Omoruyi early in the game to an injury, the Scarlet Knights (8-6, 1-3 Big Ten) scored the final six points to overcome a 61-58 deficit to the delight of 5,379 fans.

The Buckeyes (12-3, 2-2) had a chance to send the game to overtime, but Jackson missed a three-point try from the left corner with two seconds left and OSU was unable to grab the rebound.

Holtmann rued the missed opportunities to put the game away.

"I thought we ran a couple poor possessions," he said. "C.J., I think, was trying to draw a foul on that one possession, and we had a turnover against the zone. I did love our last look. I did love that one. That was about the only good look."

The Buckeyes felt fortunate to be down only 31-30 at the half because Kaleb Wesson was limited to just nine minutes because of foul trouble.

Kaleb Wesson started the second half with a vengeance by scoring the Buckeyes' first 10 points for a 40-38 lead only to see Rutgers score the next 10 for a 48-40 advantage.

"I think foul trouble hurt him," Holtmann said. "We were able to get him some touches on the interior. He probably had some too that he normally makes. I was pleased to see us get him involved."

Kaleb Wesson had 16 of his 18 points in the second half for the Buckeyes. Muhammad added 13 points.

Ohio State retook the lead, 59-58, on a basket by Muhammad at the 3:07 mark, and Jackson followed with a layup to extend the margin to three before the Knights closed out the game on their final run.

Montez Mathis led Rutgers with 16 points, and Geo Baker added 15.

OSU shot 39.7 percent (23 of 58) from the floor while Rutgers was at 41.5 percent (22 of 53). Rutgers had a wide margin in free throws, making 15 of 20 (75.0) compared to 7 of 11 (63.6) for the Buckeyes.

Jan. 12: Iowa

Ohio State lost the ball too many times

Iowa 72, Ohio State 62

Jan. 12, 2019
Carver-Hawkeye Arena • Iowa City, Iowa

	1	2	F
OSU (12-4, 2-3 B1G)	26	36	62
Iowa (13-4, 3-3 B1G)	24	48	72

Ohio State	Total FG	FT	Reb.	
Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D A	
A. Wesson	19	4-7	3-4	3-0 4 4 13
Young	26	3-5	0-0	1-4 2 3 6
K. Wesson	23	1-5	0-0	3-3 3 4 2
Muhammad	28	2-9	2-2	0-1 2 0 7
Woods	18	1-5	0-0	0-5 0 0 2
Jallow	21	3-6	0-0	2-2 0 1 8
Jackson	22	3-7	1-2	0-4 3 5 10
Washington	14	1-4	0-0	0-1 0 2 2
Ahrens	10	2-3	0-0	0-3 0 1 6
LeDee	19	2-8	2-2	0 3 6

Percentages: FG: 37.3%. FT: 72.7%. **3-point goals:** 10-25 (A. Wesson 2-3, Young 0-1, K. Wesson 0-2, Muhammad 1-5, Woods 0-1, Jallow 2-3, Jackson 3-4, Washington 0-2, Ahrens 2-3, LeDee 0-1). **Team rebounds:** 1. **Blocked shots:** 1 (A. Wesson). **Turnovers:** 21 (K. Wesson 5, Jackson 4, Woods 3, Washington 3, Jallow 2, A. Wesson, Young, Muhammad, TEAM). **Steals:** 9 (Jallow 3, K. Wesson 2, A. Wesson, Muhammad, Jackson, Ahrens).

Iowa	Total FG	FT	Reb.	
Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D A	
Garza	27	6-7	3-4	1-3 1 3 16
Cook	30	5-10	5-9	2-6 0 1 15
Bohannon	34	1-7	3-4	1-3 8 2 6
Moss	26	3-7	2-2	0-1 0 4 9
Wieskamp	32	3-7	4-4	1-6 2 2 10
Dailey	8	0-1	0-0	0-2 1 1 0
Kriener	13	5-7	0-0	1-1 0 1 11
McCaffery	14	0-1	1-2	1-0 0 1 1
Baer	16	2-8	0-0	2-3 3 0 4

Percentages: FG: 45.5%. FT: 72.0%. **3-point goals:** 4-16 (Garza 1-2, Bohannon 1-3, Moss 1-4, Wieskamp 0-2, Kriener 1-1, Baer 0-4). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 6 (Cook 2, Wieskamp 2, Garza, Kriener). **Turnovers:** 14 (Cook 5, Bohannon 2, Kriener 2, Garza, Wieskamp, Dailey, McCaffery, Baer). **Steals:** 11 (Cook 2, Bohannon 2, Wieskamp 2, Garza, Moss, Dailey, McCaffery, Baer). **Officials:** Pfeifer, Riley, Szelc. **A:** 14,528.

and as a result lost its third straight game, a 72-62 defeat at Iowa on Jan. 12.

The Buckeyes (12-4, 2-3 Big Ten), who had held a two-point halftime lead, committed a season-high 21 turnovers that helped the Hawkeyes (14-3, 3-3) outscore them 48-36 in the second half before 14,528 fans at Carver-Hawkeye Arena in Iowa City, Iowa.

"Give Iowa credit but I thought we were really careless," Holtmann said. "That's my fault, my fault."

A familiar pattern followed previous losses to Michigan State and Rutgers. Kaleb Wesson had foul problems again and had just two points on five field goal attempts in 23 minutes. He entered the game averaging 17.1 points.

The Buckeyes led 26-24 at the half after Justin Ahrens scored the stanza's final points on a three-pointer at the 1:16 mark. Kaleb Wesson played just eight minutes in the half, scoring his only bucket of the game.

The Hawkeyes made 10 of their first 14 field goals after the break to go up 46-38 with 11:17 left in the game.

OSU went 3:13 without a point before Andre Wesson hit a free throw with under 10 minutes to play to pull the Buckeyes to within 46-39. The Hawkeyes upped the margin to as much as 16, 61-45, when Isaiah Moss nailed one from beyond the arc and Luka Garza hit a bucket with 5:14 left.

Ohio State narrowed the lead to 69-61 on a three-pointer by Andre Wesson with 39 seconds left. Moss made both free throws with 26 seconds left for a 10-point lead, and that sealed the victory.

Iowa shot 55.6 percent (15 of 27) from the floor in the second half while OSU was at 37.5 percent (12 of 32). The Hawkeyes for the game made 18 of 25 free throws compared to 8 of 11 by OSU.

Andre Wesson had a team-high 13 points and Jackson came off the bench to add 10 for OSU.

Garza led the Hawkeyes with 16 points, Tyler Cook had 15, Ryan Kriener 11 and Joe Wieskamp 10.

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The screenshot shows the Buckeye Sports Bulletin website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'FOOTBALL', 'BASKETBALL', 'SPORTS', 'FORUM', 'BSB ONLINE', 'EAT & STAY', and a 'LOG IN' button. The main content area features a large image of a hockey player in action with the text 'MEN'S HOCKEY: BIG THIRD PERIOD CARRIES NO. 4 OHIO STATE PAST MICHIGAN 4-2'. Below this, there are several article teasers with 'READ MORE' links. On the right side, there's a sidebar with more article teasers, including 'No. 16 Ohio State drops third straight with 72-62 loss at Iowa' and 'Men's Hockey: No. 4 Buckeyes fall 2-1 to Michigan'. The bottom of the page lists several features of the website:

- Daily features, analysis and breaking news stories
- A fan forum where readers can interact with the BSB staff and other subscribers while catching up on the latest Buckeye news
- Rosters, scholarship charts, schedules and commit lists for the football team to keep up to date with the Buckeyes
- Electronic versions of the BSB print editions
- The BSB Quickly archive

Buckeye Sports Bulletin has expanded its online presence to a full-service website to compliment the 24 annual print editions. Access to BuckeyeSports.com is free to all print subscribers and includes numerous great features like:

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- A fan forum where readers can interact with the BSB staff and other subscribers while catching up on the latest Buckeye news
- Rosters, scholarship charts, schedules and commit lists for the football team to keep up to date with the Buckeyes
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OSU Building Confidence Despite Difficult Stretch

After the Ohio State women's basketball team scrapped its way past Florida on Dec. 16, 46-41, at St. John Arena, the Buckeyes fell flat with five straight losses from Dec. 20 to Jan. 5.

Butler (66-53, Dec. 20), Virginia Tech (81-73, Dec. 21), Purdue (60-42, Dec. 28), Nebraska (78-69, Dec. 31) and then-No. 4 Maryland (75-69, Jan. 5) defeated OSU as head coach Kevin McGuff's squad flopped from one win above .500 to four losses under.

DOUBLE DRIBBLE Garrett Stepien

Near the end of Ohio State's nonconference schedule, McGuff knew there was still a ways to go as he got his players ready for the start of their Big Ten slate.

"The things I like - we're playing hard, competing, kids have good chemistry, the culture's good, they show up every day and do what we ask of them," McGuff told BSB. "We're just such an up-and-down offensive team right now, so we're looking - is our execution off? I think we're getting decent shots, not always capitalizing on the opportunities we get. We're just trying to address that as much as we can."

In contrast to McGuff's 2017-18 team, which sat in the top five nationally among scoring offenses with 85.0 points per game, the 2018-19 squad has struggled mightily

to put points on the board. Through Jan. 12, Ohio State ranked 284th among 349 Division I programs with an average of 58.9 points per game, which was also last among 14 Big Ten teams - almost six points behind Rutgers (64.4 points per game).

As freshman Dorca Juhasz develops an inside-out approach - she has posted five double-doubles so far - the 6-4 forward remains raw and thus needs the Buckeyes to surround her with better balance.

"I think, in the beginning, the issue is we settled for too many threes," McGuff said of OSU, which ranked last in the conference in field-goal percentage (.379) and 13th in three-point shooting (.289), the latter being above only Penn State (.282). "Even though they were open, we didn't get any balance in our offense. When we miss shots early, I think we get a little shook with our confidence."

Growing through its lack of experience, Ohio State posted a near upset on the road against the fourth-ranked Terrapins and followed up Jan. 10 vs. then-No. 25 Indiana with a much-needed 55-50 triumph at Value City Arena in Columbus. Snapping the skid, graduate guard Carmen Grande gave the Buckeyes a game-high 19 points and flashed once again as a top scorer on an offense that continues to search for sparks. Grande, who follows Juhasz at second among OSU's leading scorers, has gone from one-dimensional distributor as a Ball State transfer

to an aggressive penetrator in transition as conference play continues.

"It just feels great," Grande said of Ohio State (5-8, 1-3) getting its first Big Ten win against the Hoosiers (14-2, 3-1). "But like we keep saying, it's about the process and even though we've got this one, we're just thinking about getting better. Coach McGuff said it - we wouldn't have won that a month ago, so that means that we're getting better, but we've got to be even better in a month. It feels good, but we need to just keep it going."



Kevin McGuff

Looking for production has been an ongoing task for McGuff, especially as Ohio State's competition cranked up two notches. Up from 16, the conference installed 18 games for the 2018-19 season, putting the Buckeyes' retooled team mainly consisting of graduate transfers and freshmen against an increasingly grueling slate. Adding the win over IU in its back pocket, plus lessons learned from the nonconference schedule, OSU ventures further into its Big Ten tests with confidence.

"We just went from 16 to 18 (Big Ten games) on the women's side, so this is our first year at 18 in the coming year," McGuff said. "That presents some of a little longer stretch and a couple more games that we've got to deal

with. Just looking, I hadn't watched a lot of teams, but you see the scores and it's like the conference is really deep and there's a lot of good teams. It's going to be tough. It always is. But this year, it will particularly be a real challenge.

"The good news is we've played a hard (nonconference) schedule. So hopefully, that will have a positive effect for us. That's what I'm hoping. That's why we do it. Sometimes, this early in the year, it can be tough. But I hope we can be further along and ready for (conference play) because of (nonconference play)."

Buckeyes Rally Around Newfound Defensive Identity

While the struggles on offense have been documented, Ohio State's defense has grown into a positive. As the Buckeyes find their scoring groove for 2018-19, they benefit from disciplined defense and improved rebounding among other areas of strength.

"We're trying to carve it out, definitely, with our defense and our rebounding," McGuff said. "I think that's going to have to be a staple for what we do. It's just hard because we're missing shots that we're capable of making, so I think we've just got to hang in there and make sure we're continuing to focus on working on those shots in practice and then making sure we execute and get balance in our offense



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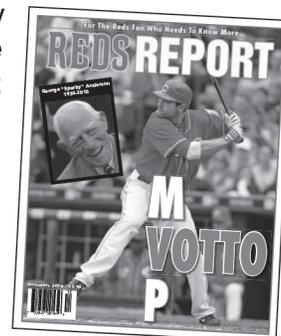
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2018-19 Ohio State Women's Basketball Statistics

5-8 Overall (1-3 Big Ten)
Statistics through games of Jan. 10

Player	G-GS	Min.-Avg.	FG-FGA	Pct.	3P-3PA	Pct.	FT-FTA	Pct.	Rebounds			A	TO	BS	ST	Pts.-Avg.
									O-D	T-Avg.	PF-FO					
Dorka Juhasz	13-13	345-26.5	60-136	.441	8-35	.229	26-38	.684	29-81	110-8.5	22-0	10	23	6	16	154-11.8
Carly Santoro	13-13	395-30.4	37-106	.349	15-53	.283	28-49	.571	20-40	60-4.6	24-0	22	32	2	13	117-9.0
M. Waterman	13-13	419-32.2	36-99	.364	2-17	.118	30-42	.714	31-41	72-5.5	43-3	24	36	22	10	104-8.0
Carmen Grande	13-13	429-33.0	31-117	.265	12-40	.300	22-25	.880	10-34	44-3.4	35-0	58	42	1	22	96-7.4
Aaliyah Patty	13-0	230-17.7	34-73	.466	1-12	.083	6-11	.545	10-43	53-4.1	36-2	3	20	12	10	75-5.8
Adreana Miller	13-9	215-16.5	19-66	.288	15-37	.405	9-13	.692	10-13	23-1.8	25-0	4	13	2	3	62-4.8
Janai Crooms	13-3	220-16.9	25-62	.403	5-12	.417	8-23	.348	4-23	27-2.1	26-1	15	30	9	7	63-4.8
Najah Queenland	13-1	240-18.5	20-42	.476	5-13	.385	9-13	.692	12-23	35-2.7	25-0	15	19	0	11	54-4.2
Jensen Caretti	10-0	108-10.8	17-35	.486	4-13	.308	3-6	.500	4-10	14-1.4	1-0	6	9	5	2	41-4.1
TEAM									21-24	45-3.5				1		
Ohio State	13	2,600	279-736	.379	67-232	.289	141-220	.641	151-332	483-37.2	237-3	157	225	59	94	766-58.9
Opponents	13	2,600	289-736	.393	81-257	.315	183-241	.759	137-337	474-36.5	229-2	153	201	32	83	842-64.8

"I feel like, at first – it's still a learning process, but I feel like I'm getting better knowing the plays and connecting with everyone. So I feel like it's coming more confidently and me playing more. I just feel like it's going to come more easily."

Plank's Lady Buck Of The Month

Between the highs and lows of December in which Ohio State went 2-5, Juhasz had her fair share of growing pains but ultimately reached new heights of development. For those efforts Juhasz takes home her second straight Plank's Lady Buck of the Month honor.

With the exception of the Buckeyes' 66-53 loss to Butler on Dec. 20 and their 60-42 rout at the hands of Purdue on Dec. 28, where she posted just two points in each contest, Juhasz stepped up when her team needed it most. Juhasz started the month with 17 points and 13 rebounds in Ohio State's 69-56 victory against Cincinnati on Dec. 2, following with 11 points and six rebounds in a 69-59 defeat at Washington.

Although she managed only six points and seven rebounds in OSU's 46-41 win over Florida on Dec. 16, Juhasz's layup off an inbound pass from Najah Queenland stuck the Buckeyes' dagger in the Gators. Her game reached another level in Ohio State's 81-73 loss against Virginia Tech on Dec. 21, where she bounced back from the two-point outing against the Bulldogs and went off for a career-high 27 points on just 10-of-14 shooting.

Juhasz finished off 2018 with a high note despite OSU's 78-69 loss against Nebraska on Dec. 31, ringing in the new year with 14 points and seven rebounds. Over the course of seven games, Juhasz averaged 11.3 points per contest and 7.4 rebounds.

and we don't settle for too many threes or too many of anything, that we really have some balance in what we're trying to do."

Ohio State sported those strengths against Indiana, offsetting an abysmal shooting start with key stops, and that allowed the Buckeyes to get back in the game and eventually steal the victory down the stretch.

"I think that it's important that we know that the person coming in from the bench or whoever's coming in for us is going to play hard," Grande said. "We're going to get stops because nobody's weak on defense, so I think that that's a lot of trust to just know that somebody's going to get that next stop."

McGuff echoed Grande's sentiments, noting that those efforts have kept the team in close games. For context, in four of OSU's five wins, opposing teams have not cracked 60 points, with the lone exception coming Nov. 29 in the 76-69 victory against North Carolina.

"We're good, we play hard," McGuff said. "We're kind of hanging our hat on our defense and rebounding, which is going to mean we're going to be in a lot of close games. So we're going to need that confidence to be able to put ourselves over the top and win close games."

"It has to be (the Buckeyes' identity). We're a little bit up and down with our offense. We're improving and we're getting

better shots. We're starting to capitalize on those opportunities, but really the core of who we are has to be our defense and our rebounding."

Graduate Gives Guidance To Developing Freshman Guard

When Janai Crooms came to OSU, she knew her development needed to accelerate more than the team's other two freshmen. Unlike Juhasz and Aaliyah Patty, a pair of forwards, Crooms entered a wide-open position at guard looking for production. While Ohio State brought in its influx of graduate transfers – all guards – McGuff looked to Crooms for her immediate scoring and assisting because he knew what she was capable of.

"Janai can make plays that some other people can't make," McGuff said. "She's got a lot of talent, she's still kind of learning the game, but you can just see – each game, the more she's on the floor and the more she gets comfortable, you can really start to see her blossom and she's got a really bright future."

"She's really grown. It's hard because we have her – she's the backup one and she's the two. As a freshman, it's really hard to play two positions. So I think in the beginning, there was so much going on (in her head) trying to get this down. Now, she's a lot more comfortable with what we're doing

and she's really just playing. You can see her talent and her instinct kind of taking over."

Crooms has come on for the Buckeyes as she learns behind Grande. Crooms chipped in eight of her 12 points against the Hoosiers in timely fashion down the stretch of the fourth quarter, giving OSU the boost it needed in its eventual upset. That production, however, came with correlation to Crooms' recent strides in development beside Grande.

"Carmen and me – she's the point guard and I'm her backup, so I feel like we all can play different positions (on the floor)," Crooms said. "It will just connect when we all know (what's going on)."

"I look up to her a lot, actually. She's always talking to me, helping me with the plays and telling me what to do. So I feel like it's helpful because she's been in college longer and she's always telling me, 'Hey, do this, do that,' and I feel like it translates into the game."



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Dorka Juhasz
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Pecs, Hungary

PLANK'S LADY BUCK OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER

Ohio State Stumbles To Close '18, Open '19

By GARRETT STEPIEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The Ohio State women's basketball team took the court seven times since BSB last went to press, starting with a win over Florida on Dec. 16 and ending with a win over Indiana on Jan. 10. Between the two victories, though, the Buckeyes suffered five losses in a row.

What follows are brief recaps of each Ohio State women's basketball game since the last print edition of BSB.

Dec. 16: Florida

Three-plus low-scoring quarters led to an exhilarating final 10 minutes Dec. 16 at St. John Arena in Columbus, where Ohio State had an answer against Florida down the stretch for a 46-41 victory before 4,585.

"We played hard for 40 minutes, which is what we can control," head coach Kevin McGuff said. "I thought we competed."

Fifth-year senior forward Makayla Waterman led the Buckeyes (4-3) with 11 points and tallied seven rebounds. Freshman forward Aaliyah Patty added eight points and eight rebounds, and Carly Santoro had 10 rebounds to go along with her six points.

Florida (3-7) jumped out of the gates on an 8-2 run in the first 2:07, ending on a triple from Funda Nakkasoglu, who notched a game-high 14 points, before the Buckeyes ended the first quarter down 13-10.

OSU opened up the second quarter with the first four points from freshman forward Dorka Juhasz to take its first lead of the game at 14-13. The lead didn't stand, though, as Florida took a 25-16 advantage – the largest of the first half – before Carmen Grande was fouled with one second left and made both free throws to cut Ohio State's halftime deficit to 25-18.

Ohio State pulled within two points in the third quarter on an old-fashioned three-point play by Waterman at the 6:10 mark to make it 27-25, but the Buckeyes entered the final

Ohio State 46, Florida 41

Dec. 16, 2018										
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio										
	1	2	3	4	F					
Florida (3-7)	13	12	12	4	41					
Ohio State (4-3)	10	8	14	14	46					
Florida	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
Moore	18	1-3	1-2	1-2	0	2	4			
Robinson	9	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	4	0			
Washington	26	3-10	2-2	3-7	1	2	8			
Smith	34	1-7	0-2	2-2	2	3	2			
Nakkasoglu	36	4-14	3-4	0-2	1	1	14			
de Oliveira	5	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	1	0			
Brower	1	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Williams	29	1-7	0-1	1-3	1	3	2			
Rainey	21	1-8	0-0	0-4	0	2	3			
Johnson	20	3-6	0-0	0-3	0	2	8			
Totals	200	14-57	6-11	11-28	5	20	41			

Percentages: FG: 24.6%. FT: 54.5%. **3-point goals:** 7-27 (Moore 1-3, Washington 0-3, Smith 0-1, Nakkasoglu 3-8, de Oliveira 0-1, Brower 0-1, Williams 0-1, Rainey 1-5, Johnson 2-4). **Team rebounds:** 8. **Blocked shots:** None. **Turnovers:** 18 (Smith 4, Nakkasoglu 4, Rainey 3, Moore 2, Washington 2, Johnson 2, Williams). **Steals:** 3 (Washington, Smith, Williams).

Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
Juhasz	19	2-10	2-4	2-5	0	1	6			
Waterman	37	5-15	1-1	4-3	1	0	11			
Grande	36	2-11	2-2	1-3	5	1	6			
Santoro	36	1-6	4-8	4-6	1	2	6			
Miller	13	0-2	0-0	1-0	0	3	0			
Crooms	17	2-3	0-0	1-3	0	0	4			
Queenland	23	2-4	0-0	2-2	1	3	5			
Patty	19	3-7	2-2	0-8	1	5	8			
Totals	200	17-58	11-17	17-34	9	15	46			

Percentages: FG: 29.3%. FT: 64.7%. **3-point goals:** 1-19 (Juhasz 0-4, Waterman 0-2, Grande 0-5, Santoro 0-1, Miller 0-2, Crooms 0-1, Queenland 1-2, Patty 0-2). **Team rebounds:** 6. **Blocked shots:** 7 (Waterman 3, Santoro, Miller, Crooms, Patty). **Turnovers:** 19 (Santoro 5, Juhasz 4, Crooms 3, Waterman 2, Patty 2, Grande, Miller, Queenland). **Steals:** 5 (Santoro 2, Juhasz, Waterman, Grande). **Officials:** Dickerson, Smith, Enterline. **A:** 4,585.

frame down 37-32. The first five minutes of the fourth were slow for both teams as they combined to score just 10 points in that stretch.

In the final 4:58, the Buckeyes came to life, starting with Santoro's free throws that cut the Gators' lead to 41-40. Najah Queenland's layup with 3:02 to go gave OSU its first lead of the second half, and Santoro's layup with 1:53 left extended the advantage to 44-41.

Florida failed on its last chance, handing the ball back to Ohio State with 35 seconds left when Zada Williams ran into Queenland and was called for an offensive foul. After a timeout by McGuff with 20

Butler 66, Ohio State 53

Dec. 20, 2018										
Keiser University • West Palm Beach, Fla.										
	1	2	3	4	F					
Butler (9-1)	18	15	17	16	66					
Ohio State (4-4)	7	18	19	9	53					
Butler	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
Schickel	34	2-8	0-0	0-6	5	5	4			
Weaver	37	9-13	3-4	2-1	1	4	25			
Jennings	39	6-11	6-9	0-5	3	1	20			
Strong	13	1-2	1-2	1-1	1	3	3			
Spolyar	33	1-10	2-4	2-1	5	1	4			
Caceres	16	1-2	0-0	0-1	0	0	3			
Thomas	8	2-2	1-1	0-0	0	0	5			
Brey	20	1-5	0-0	3-2	0	3	2			
Totals	200	23-53	13-20	15-21	15	17	66			

Percentages: FG: 43.4%. FT: 65.0%. **3-point goals:** 7-16 (Schickel 0-1, Weaver 4-6, Jennings 2-5, Spolyar 0-2, Caceres 1-2). **Team rebounds:** 11. **Blocked shots:** 2 (Schickel 2). **Turnovers:** 15 (Spolyar 7, Weaver 4, Brey 2, Schickel, Thomas). **Steals:** 5 (Weaver 2, Spolyar 2, Jennings).

Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
Juhasz	22	1-3	0-0	2-1	0	2	2			
Waterman	33	4-8	2-4	0-3	1	3	10			
Grande	30	0-4	2-2	0-1	2	4	2			
Santoro	36	4-10	4-6	2-3	3	3	14			
Miller	20	2-8	2-2	1-1	0	2	8			
Crooms	16	2-4	0-0	0-0	0	1	6			
Queenland	25	1-4	2-3	0-4	4	4	4			
Patty	15	2-4	2-2	2-3	0	5	7			
Caretti	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Totals	200	16-45	14-19	9-17	10	24	53			

Percentages: FG: 35.6%. FT: 73.7%. **3-point goals:** 7-23 (Juhasz 0-1, Waterman 0-3, Grande 0-2, Santoro 2-8, Miller 2-4, Crooms 2-2, Queenland 0-2, Patty 1-1). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 8 (Waterman 4, Miller, Crooms, Patty, Caretti). **Turnovers:** 17 (Grande 4, Santoro 4, Waterman 2, Miller 2, Crooms 2, Queenland 2, Patty). **Steals:** 7 (Juhasz 2, Waterman 2, Santoro 2, Miller). **Officials:** Dillard, Tobin, Bell. **A:** 250.

seconds to go, the Buckeyes inbounded from center court and Queenland found Juhasz for the layup with 17 seconds left to post the 46-41 final.

Ohio State shot just 29.3 percent from the field (17 of 58), including 1 of 19 from beyond the arc (5.3 percent), while Florida struggled even more, connecting on 14 of 57 shots (24.6 percent) but making 7 of 27 (25.9 percent) from long range.

Dec. 20: Butler

With an off performance by Juhasz, limited to two points on 1-of-3 shooting, Santoro (team-high 14 points) and Waterman (10) stepped up, but Butler proved too much for Ohio State in a 66-53 loss on Dec. 20.

In the first of two games for the Buckeyes

Virginia Tech 81, Ohio State 73

Dec. 21, 2018										
Keiser University • West Palm Beach, Fla.										
	1	2	3	4	F					
Ohio State (4-5)	26	18	17	12	73					
Va. Tech (12-0)	20	16	22	23	81					
Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
Juhasz	30	10-14	4-4	4-4	2	1	27			
Waterman	29	1-3	0-0	1-2	1	4	2			
Grande	37	3-13	2-2	1-4	9	4	9			
Santoro	36	3-9	0-0	2-4	3	4	8			
Queenland	13	0-3	0-0	1-2	0	1	0			
Crooms	7	2-4	0-1	0-2	1	2	4			
Miller	19	3-9	0-2	0-2	0	0	8			
Patty	16	2-5	0-0	0-3	0	0	4			
Caretti	13	5-7	0-0	0-1	1	0	11			
Totals	200	29-67	6-9	10-27	17	16	73			

Percentages: FG: 43.3%. FT: 66.7%. **3-point goals:** 9-16 (Juhasz 3-3, Grande 1-2, Santoro 2-4, Crooms 0-1, Miller 2-4, Patty 0-1, Caretti 1-1). **Team rebounds:** 4. **Blocked shots:** 3 (Waterman 2, Patty). **Turnovers:** 10 (Grande 3, Waterman 2, Caretti 2, Santoro, Queenland, Crooms). **Steals:** 5 (Grande 2, Santoro 2, Queenland).

Virginia Tech	Total	FG	FT	Reb.						
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.			
Magarity	40	6-13	0-0	1-14	3	1	15			
Emery	38	7-15	8-8	0-4	4	1	27			
Mabrey	29	3-4	2-2	0-3	3	2	10			
Brooks	28	3-5	0-2	0-0	1	3	9			
Camp	24	0-2	2-2	0-1	2	1	2			
Baptiste	28	5-12	2-2	3-7	0	3	12			
Sheppard	13	2-5	0-0	0-0	1	2	6			
Totals	200	26-56	14-16	4-29	14	13	81			

Percentages: FG: 46.4%. FT: 87.5%. **3-point goals:** 15-25 (Magarity 3-4, Emery 5-9, Mabrey 2-2, Brooks 3-5, Camp 0-1, Baptiste 0-1, Sheppard 2-3). **Team rebounds:** None. **Blocked shots:** 2 (Magarity 2). **Turnovers:** 9 (Mabrey 4, Emery 2, Camp 2, Brooks). **Steals:** 5 (Baptiste 2, Emery, Brooks, Sheppard). **Officials:** Sidlaksy, Tieman, Merritt. **A:** 127.

(4-4) at the West Palm Beach (Fla.) Invitational before 250 at Keiser University, the Bulldogs (9-1) rode their pair of 20-point scorers with Michelle Weaver's game-high 25 and Whitney Jennings' 20 as they started and finished strong.

OSU started the game down 13-2 at the 3:05 mark of the first quarter, its only bucket on Waterman's jumper at the 8:01 point, and trailed 18-7 heading into the second quarter. Ohio State outscored the Bulldogs, 18-15, in that period and cut Butler's lead down to single digits, with Juhasz's lone points coming on a jumper with 1:31 left in the first half to make it 33-25 at halftime.

"It's disappointing because once again mentally we weren't sharp to start the game and they made us pay," McGuff said. "You cannot spot them a 10-point lead – we can't

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OHIO STATE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Purdue 60, Ohio State 42

Dec. 28, 2018
Mackey Arena • West Lafayette, Ind.

	1	2	3	4	F
OSU (4-6, 0-1)	11	14	10	7	42
PUR (10-4, 1-0)	15	19	8	18	60

Ohio State	Total FG	FT	Reb.
Juhasz	24	1-7	0-0
Waterman	29	2-7	1-2
Grande	33	4-9	0-0
Santoro	19	2-7	0-0
Miller	18	0-5	0-0
Crooms	19	1-4	0-2
Queenland	21	2-4	1-2
Patty	22	2-9	0-0
Caretti	15	2-4	0-0
Totals	200	16-56	2-6

Percentages: FG: 28.6%. FT: 33.3%. **3-point goals:** 8-22 (Juhasz 0-1, Waterman 1-2, Grande 3-4, Santoro 2-5, Miller 0-2, Crooms 0-1, Queenland 2-3, Patty 0-2, Caretti 0-2). **Team rebounds:** 2. **Blocked shots:** 7 (Waterman 3, Patty 2, Juhasz, Caretti). **Turnovers:** 17 (Grande 4, Queenland 4, Juhasz 3, Patty 3, Santoro, Crooms, Caretti). **Steals:** 5 (Grande 2, Santoro, Miller, Patty).

Purdue	Total FG	FT	Reb.
Harris	36	4-11	4-6
McLaughlin	39	5-11	3-4
Oden	37	8-15	2-2
Traylor	32	2-8	0-0
Farquhar	36	2-7	3-4
Whilby	4	0-1	0-0
Hardin	7	0-1	0-0
Gony	9	0-0	0-0
Diagne	0	0-0	0-0
Totals	200	21-54	12-16

Percentages: FG: 38.9%. FT: 75.0%. **3-point goals:** 6-14 (McLaughlin 4-6, Oden 2-5, Traylor 0-2, Hardin 0-1). **Team rebounds:** 4. **Blocked shots:** 7 (Harris 5, Farquhar, Gony). **Turnovers:** 12 (McLaughlin 3, Harris 2, Oden 2, Traylor 2, Farquhar 2, Hardin). **Steals:** 10 (Traylor 3, Harris 2, Oden 2, Farquhar 2, McLaughlin). **Officials:** Dickerson, Hall, Thompson. **A:** 6,313.

Nebraska 78, Ohio State 69

Dec. 31, 2018
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio

	1	2	3	4	F
NEB (7-6, 2-0)	11	27	13	27	78
OSU (4-7, 0-2)	15	21	17	16	69

Nebraska	Total FG	FT	Reb.
Simon	20	7-10	2-3
Cain	16	0-1	0-0
Whitish	34	3-11	2-2
Eliely	21	5-9	2-3
Kissinger	20	1-4	0-0
Veerbeek	22	2-4	2-2
Mershon	21	0-3	2-2
Brown	19	4-9	9-12
Haiby	26	3-8	2-4
Totals	200	25-59	21-28

Percentages: FG: 42.4%. FT: 75.0%. **3-point goals:** 7-22 (Simon 0-3, Whitish 3-8, Eliely 2-2, Kissinger 0-2, Veerbeek 0-1, Mershon 0-1, Brown 3-5). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 2 (Cain, Veerbeek). **Turnovers:** 12 (Simon 4, Kissinger 2, Brown 2, Haiby 2, Cain, Whitish). **Steals:** 9 (Whitish 3, Kissinger 3, Eliely, Brown, Haiby).

Ohio State	Total FG	FT	Reb.
Juhasz	27	4-10	4-4
Waterman	35	3-11	8-11
Grande	39	2-9	2-2
Crooms	9	1-1	0-0
Santoro	33	2-9	2-2
Miller	4	1-1	0-0
Queenland	22	2-5	2-2
Patty	17	4-5	1-2
Caretti	14	1-3	2-2
Totals	200	20-54	21-25

Percentages: FG: 37.0%. FT: 84.0%. **3-point goals:** 8-18 (Juhasz 2-3, Waterman 0-2, Grande 1-3, Crooms 1-1, Santoro 1-4, Miller 1-1, Queenland 2-3, Caretti 0-1). **Team rebounds:** 5. **Blocked shots:** 3 (Waterman, Grande, Caretti). **Turnovers:** 20 (Crooms 4, Patty 4, Juhasz 3, Grande 3, Queenland 2, Caretti 2, Waterman, Santoro). **Steals:** 6 (Juhasz 2, Grande 2, Waterman, Caretti). **Officials:** Cross, Enterline, Pethel. **A:** 5,530.

Maryland 75, Ohio State 69

Jan. 5, 2019
XFINITY Center • College Park, Md.

	1	2	3	4	F
OSU (4-8, 0-3)	19	17	22	11	69
UMD (13-1, 2-1)	20	23	14	18	75

Ohio State	Total FG	FT	Reb.
Juhasz	37	8-12	1-2
Waterman	32	5-7	2-3
Grande	32	1-6	0-0
Crooms	31	4-9	2-2
Santoro	26	3-10	4-4
Caretti	2	0-0	0-0
Queenland	16	1-3	0-0
Patty	11	1-3	1-2
Miller	14	3-6	0-0
Totals	200	26-56	10-13

Percentages: FG: 46.4%. FT: 76.9%. **3-point goals:** 7-20 (Juhasz 1-3, Waterman 0-1, Grande 1-4, Santoro 2-5, Queenland 0-1, Patty 0-1, Miller 3-5). **Team rebounds:** 5. **Blocked shots:** 5 (Crooms 3, Juhasz, Waterman). **Turnovers:** 17 (Juhasz 4, Waterman 4, Grande 2, Crooms 2, Santoro, Caretti, Patty, Miller, TEAM). **Steals:** 6 (Juhasz, Waterman, Grande, Crooms, Queenland, Patty).

Maryland	Total FG	FT	Reb.
Austin	15	0-6	0-2
Jones	30	7-11	2-2
Charles	37	7-15	10-11
Mikesell	35	4-11	3-4
Watson	27	3-8	0-0
Myers	5	1-1	0-0
Fraser	20	3-7	1-2
Lewis	30	0-4	5-5
Totals	200	25-63	21-26

Percentages: FG: 39.7%. FT: 80.8%. **3-point goals:** 4-13 (Mikesell 2-5, Watson 1-5, Myers 1-1, Lewis 0-2). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 3 (Jones 2, Austin). **Turnovers:** 12 (Charles 4, Jones 2, Mikesell 2, Watson, Myers, Fraser, TEAM). **Steals:** 3 (Jones, Watson, Fraser). **Officials:** Roberts, Grinter, Knight. **A:** 6,731.

Ohio State 55, Indiana 50

Jan. 10, 2019
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio

	1	2	3	4	F
IU (14-2, 3-1)	14	10	12	14	50
OSU (5-8, 1-3)	5	15	10	25	55

Indiana	Total FG	FT	Reb.
Royster	15	0-2	0-0
Wise	38	1-9	3-3
Yeaney	36	4-10	1-2
Penn	34	4-10	4-4
Patberg	30	4-9	1-1
Marchese	2	0-0	0-0
Gulbe	25	2-9	2-2
Berger	21	4-8	0-0
Totals	200	19-57	11-12

Percentages: FG: 33.3%. FT: 91.7%. **3-point goals:** 1-13 (Wise 0-4, Yeaney 1-2, Penn 0-4, Patberg 0-1, Gulbe 0-2). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 2 (Wise 2). **Turnovers:** 19 (Penn 6, Patberg 6, Royster 2, TEAM 2, Yeaney, Gulbe, Berger). **Steals:** 6 (Yeaney 3, Patberg 2, Berger).

Ohio State	Total FG	FT	Reb.
Juhasz	26	4-9	0-0
Waterman	36	2-6	2-2
Grande	34	7-17	5-6
Crooms	25	5-9	2-6
Santoro	29	1-5	0-2
Caretti	15	3-4	0-0
Queenland	12	0-2	0-0
Patty	13	0-2	0-0
Miller	9	0-1	0-0
Totals	200	22-55	9-16

Percentages: FG: 40.0%. FT: 56.3%. **3-point goals:** 2-13 (Juhasz 1-4, Grande 0-4, Crooms 0-1, Santoro 1-3, Miller 0-1). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 5 (Waterman 3, Juhasz, Patty). **Turnovers:** 15 (Waterman 4, Grande 3, Santoro 3, Juhasz 2, Crooms, Queenland, Patty). **Steals:** 11 (Grande 5, Juhasz 3, Crooms, Santoro, Caretti). **Officials:** Napier, Dickerson, McConnell. **A:** 3,557.

spot anybody a 10-point lead and expect to have success."

The Buckeyes edged the Bulldogs again, 19-17, in the third quarter, using a 7-3 spurt in the frame's last 2:52 to bring the game within two possessions. Freshman guard Janai Crooms' three-pointer started the spurt, and Waterman's jumper with 1:30 left to make it 50-44 capped the momentum swing.

Butler began the final 10 minutes by immediately going back up 10 points, 54-44, with 8:27 to go, after scoring the first four points of the period. Ohio State got the score back to within eight points, the latest coming with 1:36 left on Queenland's 1-for-2 trip to the free-throw line to make it 61-53, but the Bulldogs closed out on a 5-0 run capped by Weaver's triple with 36 seconds left to ice the win.

Butler outscored the Buckeyes by a combined 34-16 in the first and final periods.

Dec. 21: Virginia Tech

Ohio State received a career-high 27 points on 10-of-14 shooting from Juhasz, but the Buckeyes blew their eight-point halftime lead in the fourth quarter as Virginia Tech dominated down the stretch in the Hokies' 81-73 win Dec. 21, ending the West Palm Beach (Fla.) Invitational without a victory for OSU.

Before 127 at Keiser University, OSU (4-5) opened strong against Virginia Tech (12-0). Ohio State kept pace with the Hokies in the first quarter, ending the final 2:13 on a 10-3 run capped by a three-pointer with three seconds left from

Adreana Miller (eight points) to take a 26-20 lead.

The Buckeyes kept the momentum into the second quarter, building their advantage to 16 points with 2:00 left after Crooms' layup made it 44-28. The Hokies hung around, however, with an 8-0 run closing the period and cutting the halftime margin to 44-36.

"The first half was really, really good," McGuff said. "Now I didn't like the way we ended it. I thought we gave them a little bit too much momentum."

In the third quarter, OSU neared a double-digit lead again when Grande's three-pointer at the 5:55 mark put VT down 55-46. Virginia Tech responded in the final 4:28 and cut Ohio State's lead to 61-58 going into the fourth quarter.

Down the stretch, the Hokies took over.

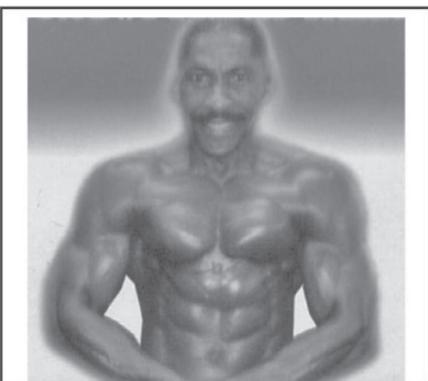
Trinity Baptiste's layup tied the game at 68-68 with 5:45 left, and Rachel Camp's free throws gave Virginia Tech its first lead of the second half at 70-68 seconds later. Virginia Tech never looked back from there, ending the final 4:38 of the contest on an 11-5 run to cap the win.

Jensen Caretti gave Ohio State 11 points of the bench and Juhasz was perfect on three shots from beyond the arc to help the Buckeyes to a 56.3 percent shooting night from long range.

Dec. 28: Purdue

Ohio State opened Big Ten play with a 60-42 loss at Purdue (10-4, 1-0) on Dec. 28 in front of 6,313 at Mackey Arena in West Lafayette, Ind.

Continued On Page 36



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Buckeyes Get Top-25 Victory Over Hoosiers

Continued From Page 35

The guard duo of Dominique Oden (game-high 20 points) and Karissa McLaughlin (17 points) paced Purdue with 37 combined, causing fits for McGuff.

"We had a big focus defensively on Oden and McLaughlin, and we didn't do a very good job," McGuff said. "They got off screens and got shots that we had worked on, and we didn't execute defensively there. So we allowed them to get too many easy shots."

The Boilermakers shot only 21 of 54 from the field (38.9 percent) with a 22-12 edge on points in the paint, but they were 6 of 14 behind the arc (42.9 percent).

Ohio State struggled to get going in the first quarter, falling behind 7-0 through the opening 1:30, but stormed back and closed the gap to 15-11 at the end of the period. The Buckeyes trimmed the deficit to 21-20 with 5:50 left in the second quarter on a basket by Patty, but Purdue closed the period a 13-5 run and OSU trailed 34-25 at halftime.

After a steady third quarter left Ohio State down 42-35, the Boilermakers broke

out in the fourth. Ohio State trailed by as few as six, 47-41, following a three by Queenland at the 6:56 mark, but Purdue closed the game on a 13-1 run in the last 6:01.

The Buckeyes (4-6, 0-1) shot just 16 of 56 from the floor (28.6 percent). Half of those made shots came from deep (8 of 22, 36.4 percent), with Grande, who led the team with 11 points, making three of her four from deep. Queenland added two three-pointers, finishing with seven points. Santoro and Waterman each added six points.

Juhasz had just two points on 1-of-7 shooting but pulled down seven rebounds to pace the Buckeyes.

Dec. 31: Nebraska

Ohio State's slow start to its Big Ten slate continued with a 78-69 defeat at the hands of Nebraska on Dec. 31 before 5,530 at Value City Arena.

The Cornhuskers (7-6, 2-0) controlled the contest behind Leigha Brown's game-high 19 points. Maddie Simon (16 points), Nicea Eliely (14 points) and Hannah Whitish (11 points) rounded out Nebraska's double-digit scorers.

"At the beginning of the game, I thought we had a chance to pull out and stretch, but we had way too many turnovers and we didn't capitalize on our opportunities," McGuff said. "Turning the ball over that much, we're not going to beat a good team like that."

The Buckeyes had 20 turnovers to 12 for the Huskers, and Nebraska turned those Ohio State miscues into 26 points.

OSU started up 12-6 after Grande's three-pointer with 2:44 left before the Huskers trailed 15-11 following Whitish's triple to end the first quarter. Nebraska took the 38-36 halftime lead after Brown's connection from long range at the second-quarter buzzer.

Ohio State opened the third quarter on an 8-0 run, taking a 44-38 lead at the 6:42 mark after Juhasz's three-pointer, but the Huskers cut the Buckeyes' lead to 53-51 by the end of the period.

A back-and-forth finish ensued in the fourth quarter before Nebraska took the lead for good, 64-62, on Whitish's triple at 6:13 and never looked back.

Eliely stuck the dagger in OSU with 2:11 to go, nailing a shot from long range to put

Nebraska up 76-65 – its largest lead of the game.

The forward duo of Juhasz and Waterman led the Buckeyes (4-7, 0-2) with 14 points apiece, while Patty pitched in nine points and Queenland added eight.

Much of the game was contested at the free-throw line as Ohio State was 21 of 25 from the stripe for 84.0 percent, while Nebraska was 21 of 28 (75.0).

Jan. 5: Maryland

Juhasz (18 points) and Crooms (10 points) combined for 28 points, but Ohio State was unable to pull off its upset attempt Jan. 5 at Maryland, where the Buckeyes dropped a 75-69 battle with the Terrapins.

"I thought both teams had good opportunities at the end of the game," McGuff said. "To their credit, they made some shots and we missed them."

Before its home crowd of 6,731 at XFINITY Center in College Park, Md., then-No. 4 UMD (13-1, 2-1) held off OSU (4-8, 0-3) down the stretch.

Nine of Maryland's points in the fourth quarter came from Taylor Mikesell (13

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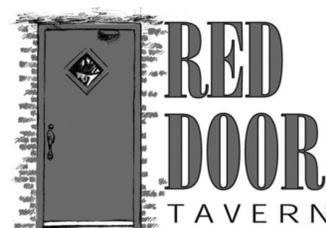
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points total), who with Stephanie Jones (16 points) and Kaila Charles (game-high 24 points) led the Terrapins as double-digit scorers.

Ohio State opened the game shooting 53.8 percent (7 of 13) from the floor in the first quarter and kept pace with Maryland, trailing 20-19.

The Buckeyes trailed the Terrapins 43-36 at halftime following a 5-0 Maryland run in the final 34 seconds that started on Jones' layup and ended on Channise Lewis' three free throws with 10 ticks left.

In the third quarter, though, Ohio State started with an 11-4 spurt to tie the score at 47 at the 7:02 mark on a three by Grande. The Buckeyes led 58-57 to start the fourth quarter.

OSU last led 62-61 on Queenland's layup with 5:25 left in the ballgame and last tied it at 66 at the 4:08 mark after Juhasz's layup.

Ohio State trailed 70-69 with 2:12 remaining after Santoro's second make from deep, but Maryland closed out the last 1:17 on a 5-0 run.

Jan. 10: Indiana

Ohio State came back from a 12-point first-quarter deficit against Indiana and knocked off the No. 25 Hoosiers 55-50 before 3,557 at Value City Arena in Columbus on Jan. 10.

"I'm happy for them, I'm really proud of them," McGuff said of his players. "We played really hard and competed for 40 minutes."

Grande gave Ohio State a game-high 19 points, while Juhasz pitched in nine points and 10 rebounds. Crooms came up big for the Buckeyes with eight of her 12 points in the final 10 minutes.

Ohio State started the first quarter down 14-2 until Juhasz's triple at the buzzer brought the deficit back to single digits.

The Buckeyes (5-8, 1-3) came out in the second quarter with four straight points from Grande and Caretti, who had six points on 3-of-4 shooting, creating momentum on an eventual 10-4 run into the 3:18 mark. Indiana (14-2, 3-1) closed on a 6-5 edge to lead 24-20 at halftime, but Ohio State hung around into the third quarter.

Grande's fastbreak layup closed the

Hoosiers' advantage to 29-26 at the 6:08 point in the third before IU pulled back out by as many as eight. Caretti's jumper at the 1:13 mark shrank the deficit to 36-30.

The Buckeyes began the fourth quarter with an 8-0 run, starting on Juhasz's jumper 17 seconds in and culminating with Grande's go-ahead layup at the 8:19 point to give OSU its first lead all game, 38-36.

Ohio State finally created separation on a 7-0 spurt into the 1:26 mark, building its lead to 51-45 – the largest of the night – on a three-point play by Crooms.

Indiana closed the gap to one point with the Buckeyes up 51-50 and 33 seconds left, but Grande polished off the victory with four straight points on four free throws.

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Coaching Carousel Highlights Start Of Offseason

With the end of the college football season came a plethora of coaching changes around the country and the Big Ten conference.

BIG TEN NOTES James Grega

After new Ohio State head coach Ryan Day hired Greg Mattison and Al Washington away from Michigan, Jim Harbaugh made a few hires of his own.

First, the Michigan head coach brought in Alabama co-offensive coordinator Josh Gattis to be the offensive coordinator for the Wolverines. Gattis spent one season at Alabama in 2018 and was previously the

passing game coordinator and wide receivers coach at Penn State from 2014-17.

"It is an honor and a privilege to join the University of Michigan football family under Coach Harbaugh, one of the most successful head coaches in all of football," Gattis said. "I am deeply humbled by the opportunity to serve as your offensive coordinator. This is the leadership challenge I've coveted. The football tradition at the University of Michigan is among the very best in college athletics. My family and I couldn't be more excited to arrive in Ann Arbor."

Gattis, 34, played at Wake Forest and has made previous coaching stops at Vanderbilt (2012-13), Western Michigan (2011) and North Carolina (2010).

On Jan. 11, Harbaugh made another addition by hiring Anthony Campanile away from Boston College to be a defensive assistant

for the Wolverines. Campanile had spent his previous three seasons with the Golden Eagles as a defensive backs coach and was promoted to co-defensive coordinator in 2018.

"Anthony has a strong reputation for developing all-conference performers and future NFL players," Harbaugh said. "Our student-athletes will benefit greatly from his mentorship. Anthony is an excellent addition to our coaching staff and provides great flexibility with his experience working on both sides of the ball and at multiple positions. Michigan football looks forward to having Anthony, Tracey and their children, Valentina and Serafina, join our University family."

Michigan's other rival, Michigan State, also made some coaching changes, although no one was fired or lost their job. Head coach Mark Dantonio simply shuffled his staff in

hopes of jump-starting the team, particularly the offense, in 2019.

Dantonio moved quarterbacks coach Brad Salem to offensive coordinator while moving co-offensive coordinator Dave Warner to quarterbacks coach. He also moved former Ohio State assistant Jim Bollman from his co-offensive coordinator role to offensive line coach and slid offensive line coach Mark Staten to coach the tight ends.

"I'm a foxhole guy," Dantonio said at a press conference. "I don't apologize for that in any respect. I believe in surrounding myself with loyal people. I believe in digging in when things get tough.

"Football is a game of execution and repetition," Dantonio added. "I've said that over and over. It's won on the inches. Sometimes it's players' mistakes. Sometimes it's a bad coaching mistake or maybe a missed step in teaching progression or something of that nature. But it's things I believe that we can correct in a very meaningful way."

Johnson Announces Transfer From PSU

One of the top receivers at Penn State will play his final year of college football elsewhere in 2019.

Juwan Johnson, who caught 79 passes for 1,053 yards and two touchdowns over the last two seasons with the Nittany Lions, announced he would pursue a graduate transfer for his final year of eligibility.

"PSU fans are second to none, and I greatly appreciated them for a tremendous journey," Johnson wrote in a statement posted to social media. "I want to thank Coach Franklin for helping me grow as a man and the staff for the opportunities I was able to enjoy."

Johnson's departure marks the ninth non-graduation exit from James Franklin's roster this offseason after Shareef Miller, Connor McGovern, Ryan Bates, Kevin Givens and Miles Sanders announced their decisions to leave early for the 2019 draft. Linebackers Brelin Faison-Walden and Dae'lun Darien and safety Isaiah Humphries all announced their decisions to transfer after the 2018 campaign, which ended in a loss to Kentucky in the Citrus Bowl.

More transfers could also be coming for the Nittany Lions, as Lamont Wade, Zach McPhearson and Brandon Polk all entered their names in the NCAA's transfer portal after the new year.

PSU's Chambers Suspended 1 Game For Shoving Player

Penn State basketball coach Pat Chambers earned himself a one-game suspension after shoving one of his players during a timeout in a 68-55 loss to Michigan on Jan. 3.

Chambers, who was already yelling at freshman guard Myles Dread in a timeout huddle, pushed Dread in the chest. The footage was captured by an ESPN camera crew, and Chambers was suspended for Penn State's 71-52 home loss to Wisconsin on Jan. 6.

"Coach Chambers and I have spoken about what occurred during the Michigan game, and he is very remorseful," said Penn State athletic director Sandy Barbour. "His actions were unacceptable, which he recognized, and he apologized to Myles Dread last night and his family today. His actions do not reflect the values of Penn State and the



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BIG TEN NOTES

expectations we set for our programs and must not occur again."

Chambers added; "I apologized to Myles after the game, and I have spoken with his family. My actions were inappropriate. That's not what Penn State stands for or what I stand for. I told Myles I was sorry that it happened. Sandy and I have spoken and agreed there are some things I need to address. I've assured her this won't happen again and understand my actions last night come with consequences."

Penn State (7-10, 0-6 Big Ten) has not won a game since the incident, with four straight losses to the Wolverines, Badgers, Nebraska and Michigan State.

Purdue Superfan Tyler Trent Passes Away At Age 20

Former Purdue student and superfan Tyler Trent, who earned national recognition for his battle with a rare form of bone cancer, died on Jan. 1, just days after flying to Nashville to attend Purdue's bowl game vs. Auburn.

Trent, who was given the Disney Spirit Award at the college football postseason awards show in Orlando in early December, was in attendance for Purdue's 49-20 upset of Ohio State on Oct. 20.

Multiple moments of silence have since been held at Purdue basketball games both home and on the road.

"First and foremost, we offer our condolences to Tyler's family and friends," read a statement from Purdue's athletic department. "While there are no words to ease the hurt at times like this, we hope some comfort can be found in knowing what an inspiration Tyler is to our student-athletes, coaches, staff and fans. The entire Purdue Athletics family has been touched by his courageous battle, positive spirit and unwavering faith. Tyler was the embodiment of a true Boilermaker who will live on in each of us. We will forever be #TylerStrong."

B1G Players Of Bowl Season

The Big Ten went 5-4 in bowl games, fall-

ing short of its 7-1 mark a year ago. However, the conference still saw its share of impressive performances.

In a rematch of the 2017-18 Orange Bowl, Wisconsin pasted Miami (Fla.), 35-3 in the New Era Pinstripe Bowl behind 205 rushing yards and a score from sophomore running back Jonathan Taylor. With his performance in the Big Apple, Taylor finished the season with

2,194 yards, the most of any player in the FBS in 2018.

Another notable performance included the game put together by Iowa quarterback Nathan Stanley in a 27-22 win over No. 18 Mississippi State in the Outback Bowl. Despite the Hawkeyes finishing with minus-15 rushing yards on 20 carries, Stanley completed 21 of 31 passes for 214 yards and three scores, carrying Iowa to a bowl win.



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Buckeyes At Their Best After Adversity Strikes

It's simplistic to say the Ohio State men's hockey team refuses to lose.

What the Buckeyes do is refuse to lose after a loss. The most recent example is Jan. 12 when OSU, down 2-1 in the third period and facing being swept at home by Michigan after a 2-1 defeat the previous night, roared back for a 4-2 win.

"I said to these guys after, it's the culture of this group," said Ohio State coach Steve Rohlik. "No one likes to lose a hockey game, especially two in a row."

IN THE CREASE Craig Merz

The No. 4 Buckeyes (13-5-4, 6-3-3-2 Big Ten) have proved that point. They are 4-0-1 after a loss and 3-0-1 after a tie.

Only twice this season have they gone more than one game without a win. OSU was pounded 8-2 at home by Bowling Green on Oct. 26 before rebounding the next night for a 2-2 draw in the Falcons' building. That was followed by a 1-0 win at Notre Dame.

Then there was the set at Minnesota Nov. 30 and Dec. 1. While the teams tied 2-2 on back-to-back nights, the Buckeyes on each occasion secured the extra conference point by winning in the 3-on-3 overtime, so they sure felt like victories. The next game they beat Mercyhurst.

"Certainly, there's the resiliency of this group," Rohlik said. "They've been around a long time. We've got a great leadership group. They're just determined not to let it happen back-to-back."

He's blessed with a veteran squad that has eight seniors and eight juniors – plus seven sophomores – who have been to the NCAA tournament the past two years, including last season's appearance in the Frozen Four.

That experience showed in the second game vs. the Wolverines when things got heated. OSU avoided taking any retaliatory penalties that would have given U-M an opportunity to extend the lead.

"When you're playing for your team it comes to the point where you don't want to be selfish," junior Tanner Laczynski said. "That puts us at a disadvantage. They've got a good power play over there. We can't afford to give them chances."

"I think it came down to us seeing the bigger picture and being the bigger man out there. They can do their things, but at the end of the day we've got to worry about us."

The Buckeyes kept their cool for the most part although there was one case of youthful indiscretion when freshman Quinn Preston, who grew up not far from Ann Arbor, scored at 13:03 of the third period for a 3-2 lead in the rematch and promptly celebrated in front of the U-M bench.

He later got knocked silly with an elbow to the head (no penalty called) while the Wolverines had an extra attacker. Preston somehow finished his shift, and another Michigan native, junior Ronnie Hein, secured the victory with an empty-net goal.

"It goes back to these guys not being denied," Rohlik said. "That's what it felt like on the bench. Even guys at the end eating pucks, blocking shots – it's truly what it takes to win hockey games."

By The Numbers

Ohio State leads the conference with 23 points halfway through the 24-game league schedule. Minnesota is second with 21 and U-M third with 18. ... Imagine how good the Buckeyes could be if they learn how to start a series. They are 5-4-2 on Fridays and 8-1-2 on Saturdays. ... Sophomore Tommy Nappier is 8-1-2 on the season, with a 1.58 goals-against average and .945 save percentage. He is 12-1-2 in his career.

Picking Up The Pace

The Buckeyes played six games since BSB last went to press, going 4-1-1.

For a complete recap of Ohio State's series with Mercyhurst, Michigan State and Michigan, go to BuckeyeSports.com, BSB's

24/7 website that is free to all print subscribers.

OSU finished its nonconference slate with a sweep of Mercyhurst at Value City Arena on Dec. 28 and 29. The Buckeyes won the opener 3-1 before rallying three times the following night to get the winner by senior defenseman Sasha Larocque in the third period for a 5-4 victory that also saw junior Carson Meyer score a pair of goals.

The Buckeyes next went to East Lansing, Mich., Jan. 4-5 and found the last-place Spartans ready for them. OSU, with one of the stingiest defenses in the country, somehow managed to blow a three-goal lead with five minutes left in the third period of the opener at Munn Arena.

MSU tied the score at 7, giving each team a point in the standings, but Michigan State grabbed the extra conference point by scoring in the 3-on-3 overtime.

OSU recovered from the humbling game to defeat the Spartans 6-0 in the rematch behind 29 saves by Nappier.

Senior Mason Jobst had seven points (two goals, five assists) in the series. A pair of Michiganders also led the way for the Buckeyes. Senior Dakota Joshua had two goals and two assists, and Preston, who entered the weekend with two points (goal, assist) in his career, had two goals and three assists in the two games.

As mentioned previously, the Buckeyes and Wolverines split the weekend Jan. 11 and 12 in a series that drew more than 19,000 fans to Value City Arena.

The Wolverines scored twice in the second period of game 1 after senior Freddy Gerard gave OSU the lead in the first.

In the rematch, junior defenseman Wyatt Ege and Laczynski each had a goal and an assist, Jobst had two helpers and Nappier made 26 saves in the feisty tilt.

Home Ice

Ohio State wants to finish first in the Big Ten regular season to earn a bye into the single-elimination semifinal and avoid the best-of-three quarterfinal rounds that will be hosted by seeds two through four against the fifth, sixth and seventh seeds.

If OSU does not finish first but hosts, the quarterfinal games will be played at Nationwide Arena in downtown Columbus because of the high school state wrestling tournament in Value City Arena.

The Big Ten has scheduled the quarterfinals for March 8-10, but Ohio State would play March 7 (Thursday), March 8 and March 10, if necessary, because the Blue Jackets have a home game that Saturday.

For the semifinal, OSU has altered its plans from last season when it hosted



Tanner Laczynski

BIG Men's Hockey

	Pts.	W	L	T	SW	GF	GA
Ohio State	23	6	3	3	2	39	24
Minnesota	21	6	3	3	0	36	27
Michigan	18	4	5	4	2	36	39
Penn State	17	5	6	1	1	51	51
Wisconsin	16	4	3	3	1	28	25
Notre Dame	15	5	6	0	0	24	32
Michigan State	13	3	7	2	2	31	47

Overall records – Ohio State 13-5-4, Minnesota 9-8-4, Michigan 8-9-6, Penn State 13-7-2, Wisconsin 8-9-3, Notre Dame 12-8-1, Michigan State 7-12-3.

Michigan at Nationwide Arena on a Saturday night while VCA was occupied with the girls basketball tournament.

This year it would be played on March 17, a Sunday, at Value City Arena at a time to be determined. The basketball tourney ends the night before.

The same scenario would be used the following week if the Buckeyes were to host the one-game championship. The game would be at noon on March 24 (Sunday) instead of the day before as scheduled because of the boys basketball tournament.

In previous years it would not be possible to play the title game on a Sunday because the NCAA tournament selection show was at noon that day, but the show has been moved to the evening.

Star Watch

Hours after announcing his retirement from the NHL because of unresolved issues from a concussion in March 2018, former Columbus Blue Jackets standout Rick Nash attended the OSU-Michigan game on Jan. 11.

Nash, 34, played his first nine seasons with the Blue Jackets and is the team's all-time leader in most offensive categories, including goals (289) and points (547) from 2002-12. He spent five seasons with the New York Rangers before joining the Boston Bruins late last season.

He and his family reside in nearby Upper Arlington.

Kearney's Corner

Senior forward Brendon Kearney is the Varsity Club Icer of the Month for December. The Northville, Mich., native had a goal and two assists in three games.

He had a goal in the 2-2 tie at Minnesota on Dec. 1 and a pair of assists during the 3-1 win over Mercyhurst on Dec. 28.

Next

The Buckeyes' next series is Jan. 18 and 19 at Penn State. They have an open weekend Jan. 25 and 26 before hosting Notre Dame on Feb. 1 (7 p.m.) and 2 (8 p.m.).

VARSITY CLUB ICER OF THE MONTH For December



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Singletary Steps Into Heavyweight Role For OSU

With the conclusion of the collegiate career of perhaps the best wrestler in program history, Ohio State was left with an apparent void in the heavyweight division.

ON THE MAT Joe Dempsey

Redshirt freshman Chase Singletary stepped into the heavyweight role for Ohio State, replacing Olympic champion Kyle Snyder, and defeated No. 9 Conan Jennings of Northwestern and No. 13 Matt Stencil of Central Michigan at the Cliff Keen Las Vegas Invitational in early December. Singletary's performance earned him the No. 17 spot in the country after previously being unranked.

"I think that's why I'm here," Singletary said of his ability to compete with highly rated opponents. "I think they know I can compete with the best guys in the country no matter who they are. And I believe that, so really it's just getting it all to come together in March."

Singletary is not shy about his lofty aspirations. The Buckeye heavyweight wants to be an NCAA champ, and his timetable is sooner than later. Ohio State has controlled the heavyweight title at the NCAA championships with Snyder's three consecutive first-place finishes from 2016-2018.

"The shadow of Snyder looms pretty large, but I don't think that's been anything that he's even put any more thought into than he needs to," said Ohio State associate head coach J Jagers. "It's not about trying to be Kyle, it's about trying to be Chase."

The Buckeye freshman embraces the opportunity to replace Snyder, taking on the situation with a calm demeanor and a perspective beyond his years.

"It's great – I love it, but I try not to think about it too much," Singletary said of stepping into Snyder's shoes. "It's just something I can't control. I know how good he is and what he's done and what he's left behind. And I want to carry it on of course, but some things are out of my control and then some things are, so I try to concentrate on the things I am in control of."

Singletary spent much of his redshirt season working with Snyder, who was a senior for the Buckeyes. Snyder finished his career as the first wrestler to win the NCAA, world and Olympic championships as a collegiate athlete, and Singletary benefited from training with the champ.

"All the time, little positions in the room – just like a little thing that you might not notice wrestling someone else, but him, he'll sit there, if you mess up even the smallest amount, it's exposed," Singletary said when asked how Snyder helped him. "So he's always corrected me, trying to get me to get to the next level and hopefully win an NCAA title."

A Naples, Fla., native, Singletary is no stranger to winning and the high expectations that come with the territory of being a champion. He won two state titles in Florida while still a junior high student. Then after losing in the state finals as a freshman, Singletary transferred to Blair Academy

in New Jersey, where he went 88-1 as an upperclassman and won two prep national titles.

Singletary shrugged off his impressive résumé, explaining that everybody at the D1 level was a good high school wrestler. The undersized heavyweight has experienced growing pains, showing a tendency to wrestle well early in matches and struggle as the matches wear on.

"He's used to winning," Jagers said of Singletary. "He's won his whole life. So it's just about closing out these matches where he's giving up some size, giving up some strength. He's dealing with a little bit more than some of these guys."

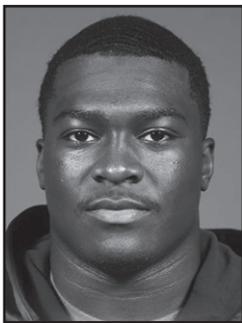
Jagers added that since Singletary's opponents often weigh much more than him, carrying their weight throughout the match can make him more fatigued. While taking on the daunting task of gaining size and strength and also improving his conditioning at the same time, Singletary knows he must be able to relentlessly attack for seven minutes to achieve the pinnacle of college wrestling.

"I'm confident – I want to keep on rolling and keep on getting some wins," said Singletary, who was 15-3 on the season through Jan. 13. "Opponents are going to get tougher, of course, but I just want to focus on the stuff I need to work on improving and not avoiding wrestling."

Campbell Embraces Competition

Ohio State senior Te'Shan Campbell returned from injury with a 4-1 victory that helped the Buckeyes secure a team win against No. 4 North Carolina State on Jan. 6.

The Pittsburgh transfer is especially eager to get back to work because he is entrenched in what head coach Tom Ryan described as a dogfight with redshirt freshman Ethan Smith for the 174-pound spot.



Te'Shan Campbell

Jagers said Campbell's performance against the Wolfpack did not convince the staff either way.

"They're neck and neck," Jagers said of the position battle. "Shan won the wrestle-off and Ethan won in the Ohio Intercollegiate Open Finals, and they both have some good wins. We love Shan. We're glad he's here, he's an asset to this program, and we hope that that little competition amongst them – one of them will step up and man that weight class and be the guy going forward."

After what Campbell considered a disappointing 19-12 season, the Pittsburgh native has begun his senior campaign 8-2, making him the No. 12 174-pounder in the nation. The younger wrestler contending for the 174 spot, Smith, has also impressed with an 12-4 record. Jagers said it's a good problem to have when you have two guys who look like top-12 guys vying for the same spot.

"Well you just hope it doesn't create any dissension, where you get into (cliques) or anything like that," Jagers said. "But that's why as a staff we've just got to handle it honestly. We're forthcoming with information."

Campbell, a former running back at Pittsburgh Penn Hills, enjoys the spirit of competition between him and Smith. The

two are close on and off the mat, understanding the nature of their sport at this level.

"It's good," Campbell said of the intrasquad competition. "I come in here, compete, get better – it pushes you to stay focused. Someone's on your heels the whole time, so you can't get really too comfortable. That's still my boy and you know, tough love, but nothing really changes. If we work out, we work out together. It's nothing about it. But that's all I can say. It's part of the sport honestly, it's part of the game."

The humble attitude of Campbell has resonated well within the Buckeye locker room, as the former Panther has found a home in Columbus.

"Shan's one of the most loved guys on this team – his personality and just the way he connects with a lot of different guys on the team," Jagers said.

Campbell came to Columbus after becoming an ACC champion as a sophomore. He said that title played a pivotal role in his decision to transfer.

"That was the first thing I really achieved in college, so it was kind of like maybe I can do more," Campbell recalled. "So I was able to reach out and get involved with Ohio State. I thought this would improve me and get some growth mentally as a man and improve my wrestling as well just being around more elite wrestling partners and things like that."

Martin's Hot Start

Ten months removed from his heartbreaking loss in the NCAA finals, Ohio State senior Myles Martin has been taking down elite talent on his way to an 10-0 start.

The Penns Grove, N.J., native's dominance earned him Most Outstanding Wrestler honors at the Cliff Keen Las Vegas Invitational on Dec. 1-2. Martin defeated No. 16 Louie DePrez of Binghamton 13-3, No. 8 Max Dean of Cornell 17-7 and No. 3 Taylor Venz of Nebraska 11-5 in the final rounds to win the event. Martin's performance earned him Big Ten co-wrestler of the week, but the 184-pounder's goals extend far beyond weekly awards. Martin seeks his second national title after winning at 174 pounds as a freshman then finishing fifth as a sophomore and second as a junior at 184 pounds.

"Myles is wrestling very well," Jagers said of Martin. "He's oozing confidence. He's making some hard wrestling matches look easy. He's doing a fantastic job."

"His goal obviously is to win his second national title, but also what we're drilling into him is, 'Dominate on your way to that. Dominate everybody on your way to that.' And he has that ability that he can really separate himself from the field, and he looks great right now."

For complete recaps of Ohio State's wrestling action, see the Monday Olympic sports roundup on BuckeyeSports.com, the 24/7 website free to all Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers.

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2018 FOOTBALL

(13-1, 8-1 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, W 49-26; **13** MINNESOTA, W 30-14; **20** at Purdue, L 49-20.

Nov. 3 NEBRASKA, W 36-31; **10** at Michigan State, W 26-6; **17** at Maryland, W 52-51 (OT); **24** (4) MICHIGAN, W 62-39.

Dec. 1 Big Ten Championship Game at Indianapolis vs. (21) Northwestern, W 45-24.

Jan. 1 Rose Bowl at Pasadena, Calif., vs. (9) Washington, W 28-23.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

(12-4, 2-3 BIG TEN)

Nov. 1 UNC PEMBROKE (exhibition), W 81-63; **7** at Cincinnati, W 64-56; **11** PFW, W 107-61; **15** at Creighton, W 69-60; **18** SOUTH CAROLINA STATE, W 89-61; **20** SAMFORD, W 68-50; **23** CLEVELAND STATE at St. John Arena, W 89-62; **28** SYRACUSE, L 72-62.

Dec. 2 MINNESOTA, W 79-59; **5** vs. Illinois at Chicago, W 77-67; **15** BUCKNELL, W 73-71; **18** YOUNGSTOWN STATE, W 75-56; **22** vs. UCLA at Chicago, W 80-66; **29** HIGH POINT, W 82-64.

Jan. 5 (8) MICHIGAN STATE, L 86-77; **9** at Rutgers, L 64-61; **12** at Iowa, L 72-62; **18** MARYLAND, 6:30 p.m.; **23** PURDUE, 7 p.m.; **26** at Nebraska, Noon; **29** at Michigan, 9 p.m.

Feb. 2 RUTGERS, Noon; **7** PENN STATE, 7 p.m.; **10** at Indiana, 1 p.m.; **14** ILLINOIS, 7 p.m.; **17** at Michigan State, 1 p.m.; **20** NORTHWESTERN, 8:30 p.m.; **23** at Maryland, 2 p.m.; **26** IOWA, 7 p.m.

March 2 at Purdue, 2 p.m.; **6** at Northwestern, 9 p.m.; **10** WISCONSIN, 4:30 p.m.; 13-17 Big Ten Tournament at Chicago.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

(5-8, 1-3 BIG TEN)

Oct. 28 IUP (exhibition), W 72-50.

Nov. 6 (22) USF, L 71-47; **9** DETROIT MERCY, W 55-41; **11** at (2) UConn, L 85-53; **16** at Sacramento State, canceled; **18** at Stanford, canceled; **29** NORTH CAROLINA, W 76-69.

Dec. 2 CINCINNATI, W 69-56; **5** at Washington, L 69-59; **16** FLORIDA at St. John Arena, W 46-41; **20** vs. Butler at West Palm Beach, Fla., L 66-53; **21** vs. Virginia Tech at West Palm Beach, Fla., L 81-73; **28** at Purdue, L 60-42; **31** NEBRASKA, L 78-69.

Jan. 5 at (4) Maryland, L 75-69; **10** (25) INDIANA, W 55-50; **14** MICHIGAN STATE, 7 p.m.; **17** at Penn State, 7 p.m.; **20** at Michigan, 3 p.m.; **24** MARYLAND, 8 p.m.; **28** at Minnesota, 7:30 p.m.; **31** ILLINOIS, 7 p.m.

Feb. 3 at Northwestern, 4:30 p.m.; **6** PENN STATE, 7 p.m.; **10** IOWA, 4 p.m.; **14** at Rutgers, 7 p.m.; **17** WISCONSIN, 2 p.m.; **21** at Michigan State, 6 p.m.; **28** at Wisconsin, 9 p.m.

March 3 RUTGERS, TBA; **6-10** Big Ten Tournament at Indianapolis.

MEN'S GYMNASTICS

Jan. 12 Rocky Mountain Open at

Colorado Spring, Colo., 4th/6 (398.500); **26** at Oklahoma, 8 p.m.

Feb. 2 at Michigan, 4 p.m.; **15/17** Winter Cup at Las Vegas.

March 2 ARNOLD CHALLENGE, 1:30 p.m.; **8** MINNESOTA/NEBRASKA, 6 p.m.; **16** at Iowa, 7 p.m.; **24** ILLINOIS, 5 p.m.

April 5-6 Big Ten Championships at Iowa City, Iowa; **19** NCAA Qualifier at Champaign, Ill.; **20** NCAA Championships at Champaign, Ill.

WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS

(1-1)

Jan. 5 at (7) Georgia, L 196.600-194.900; **12** at (25) N.C. State, W 196.025-194.550; **19** at Penn State, 3:30 p.m.; **27** at Michigan State, 4 p.m.

Feb. 2 IOWA, Noon; **8** at Maryland, 7 p.m.; **16** NEBRASKA, 4 p.m.; **23** Big Five Meet at Toledo, Ohio, 6 p.m.

March 2 WEST VIRGINIA, 4 p.m.; TEMPLE, 4 p.m.; **9** BOWLING GREEN, 4 p.m.; **17** at West Virginia, 2 p.m.; vs. N.C. State at Morgantown, W.Va., 2 p.m.; vs. Penn State at Morgantown, W.Va., 2 p.m.; **23** Big Ten Championships at University Park, Pa.

April 4 NCAA Regional First Round; **5** NCAA Regional Second Round; **6** NCAA Regional Final; **19** NCAA Semifinals at Fort Worth, Texas; **20** NCAA Championships at Fort Worth, Texas.

MEN'S ICE HOCKEY

(13-5-4, 6-3-3 BIG TEN)

Oct. 12-13 at Arizona State, W 3-2; W 3-0; **19-20** MASSACHUSETTS, L 6-3; W 3-1; **26** (15) BOWLING GREEN, L 8-2; **27** at Bowling Green, T 2-2 (OT).

Nov. 2-3 at (5) Notre Dame, W 1-0; L 2-1; **9-10** at Colgate, W 3-0; W 1-0; **16-17** WISCONSIN, W 4-0; W 3-1; **23-24** (6) PENN STATE, L 4-3; W 5-2; **30-Dec. 1** at Minnesota, T 2-2 (OSU 3x3 OT Win); T 2-2 (OSU 3x3 OT Win).

Dec. 28-29 MERCYHURST, W 3-1; W 5-4.

Jan. 4-5 at Michigan State, T 7-7 (OSU 3x3 OT Loss); W 6-0; **11-12** MICHIGAN, L 2-1; W 4-2; **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, 6 p.m.; 6 p.m.; **22-23** at Michigan, 6:30 p.m.; 6 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.

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

WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY

(15-7-0, 9-5-0 WCHA)

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

Oct. 5-6 COLGATE, W 4-3; L 5-2; **12-13** MINNESOTA STATE, W 4-0; W 2-1 (OT); **19-20** at Minnesota, L 3-0; W 3-2; **26-27** at St. Lawrence, L 3-2; W 6-1.

Nov. 2-3 ST. CLOUD STATE, W 3-2; W 3-2; **9-10** at Bemidji State, L 2-1; L 4-2; **16-17** MINNESOTA DULUTH, W 3-1; W 4-1.

Dec. 1-2 at Minnesota State, L 3-0; W 2-0; **15-16** MERCYHURST, W 2-1 (OT); W 9-2.

Jan. 5-6 MINNESOTA WHITECAPS (exhibition games), L 3-2 (OT); L 3-1; **11-12** (1) WISCONSIN, W 1-0; L 5-2; **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.

SWIMMING & DIVING

Sept. 27 ALABAMA, Men: W 156-144; Women: W 181-119.

Oct. 12/13 TEXAS A&M, Men: W 199-153; Women: L 209-142; **13** LOUISVILLE, Men: W 192-161; **27** vs. Virginia Tech at Christiansburg, Va., Men: L 182-171; Women: W 225-128; vs. Penn State at Christiansburg, Va., Men: W 250-103; Women: W 231-122.

Nov. 2 DENISON, Men: W 221-75; Women: W 224-75; AKRON, Women: W 174.5-124.5; **9** KENYON (exhibition); **10-11** ACC/Big Ten Challenge at West Lafayette, Ind., Men: Big Ten wins 179-174; Women: Big Ten wins 251-102; **15-17** OHIO STATE INVITATIONAL, Men: 1st/9; Women: 4th/11.

Jan. 4-5 at Florida, Men: L 317.50-263.50; Women: L 403-178; vs. Kentucky at Gainesville, Fla., Men: W 336-245; Women: L 375-206; **19** at Michigan, 2 p.m.; **25-26** Shamrock Invitational at Notre Dame, Ind.

Feb. 16-17 WINTER INVITATIONAL; **20-23** Women's Big Ten Championships at Bloomington, Ind.; **27-March 2** Men's Big Ten Championships at Iowa City, Iowa.

March 3 LAST CHANCE MEET (women); **10** Last Chance Meet at TBA (men); **14-16** CSCAA National Invitational at Cleveland; NCAA Zone Diving at West Lafayette, Ind.; **20-23** Women's NCAA Championships at Austin, Texas; **27-30** Men's NCAA Championships at Austin, Texas.

MEN'S TENNIS

Jan. 7 COLUMBUS CHALLENGER, NTS; **20** CLEVELAND STATE, 10 a.m.; XAVIER, 2 p.m.; **26** VCU, 10 a.m.; **27** ARKANSAS/CORNELL, TBA; TOLEDO, 6 p.m.

Feb. 2 STANFORD, Noon; **8** ARIZONA STATE, 6 p.m.; **10** GEORGIA, Noon; **12** SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, 6 p.m.; **15** ITA National Indoor Team Championships at Chicago; **20** KENTUCKY, 2 p.m.; **24** NOTRE DAME, Noon.

March 1 at Penn State, 4 p.m.; **11** at Texas A&M, 7 p.m.; **14** at Texas, 6:30 p.m.; **22** MICHIGAN STATE, 6 p.m.; **24** at Michigan, Noon; **29** WISCONSIN, 6 p.m.; **31** MINNESOTA, Noon.

April 5 at Nebraska, 7 p.m.; **7** at Iowa, Noon; **12** at Northwestern, 7 p.m.; **14** at Illinois, 1 p.m.; **19** PURDUE, 6 p.m.; **21** INDIANA, Noon; **26-28** Big Ten Tournament at Ann Arbor, Mich.

May 3 NCAA First & Second Round; **10** NCAA Regional; **16** NCAA Championships at Orlando, Fla.

WOMEN'S TENNIS

Jan. 19 Michigan Tournament at Ann Arbor, Mich.; **25** ITA Kickoff at Atlanta vs.

Georgia Tech; **27** ITA Kickoff at Atlanta vs. Auburn/Kentucky.

Feb. 1 TEXAS, 6 p.m.; **3** NOTRE DAME, Noon; **20** CLEVELAND STATE, 10 a.m.; AKRON, 6 p.m.; **23** vs. TCU at Tempe, Ariz.; **24** at Arizona State, Noon.

March 3 BAYLOR, Noon; **13** at UNLV, 10 a.m.; **17** PENN STATE, Noon; **22** at Nebraska, 5 p.m.; **24** IOWA, Noon; **29** at Michigan State, Noon; **31** at Michigan, 1 p.m.

April 6 WISCONSIN, 6 p.m.; **7** MINNESOTA, Noon; **12** PURDUE, 6 p.m.; **14** INDIANA, Noon; **20** at Northwestern, 11 a.m.; **21** at Illinois, Noon.

INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Jan. 11-12 Kentucky Invite at Lexington, Ky.; **19** at Michigan; **24-26** New Balance at New York.

Feb. 1-2 Rod McCravy Memorial at Lexington, Ky.; **7-9** Tiger Paw Invite at Clemson, S.C.; **15** BUCKEYE TUNE UP; **16** Alex Wilson Invitational at Notre Dame, Ind.; **22-23** Big Ten Championships at Ann Arbor, Mich.

March 8-9 NCAA Championships at Birmingham, Ala.

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

(2-2)

Jan. 4 CHARLESTON, W 3-0; **5** PENN STATE, W 3-1; **10** at (5) BYU, L 3-0; **12** at (11) Stanford, L 3-0; **18** GEORGE MASON, 7 p.m.; **19** ERSKINE, 7 p.m.; **26** at Ball State, 7 p.m.

Feb. 1 SAINT FRANCIS, 7 p.m.; **2** LINCOLN MEMORIAL, 8 p.m.; **5** at Purdue Fort Wayne, 7 p.m.; **8** at U.C. Santa Barbara, 7 p.m.; **9** at Long Beach State, 10 p.m.; **15** at Lindenwood, 8 p.m.; **16** at Quincy, 8 p.m.; **21** LEWIS, 7 p.m.; **23** LOYOLA CHICAGO, 5 p.m.

March 1/3 MCKENDREE, 7 p.m.; 2 p.m.; **8** at UCLA, 8 p.m.; **9** at USC, 11 p.m.; **15** LEES-MCRAE, 7 p.m.; **19** at Penn State, 7 p.m.; **22** LINDENWOOD, 7 p.m.; **23** QUINCY, 7 p.m.; **29** at Loyola Chicago, 8 p.m.; **30** at Lewis, 8 p.m.

April 4 PURDUE FORT WAYNE, 7 p.m.; **6** BALL STATE, 7 p.m.; **13** MIVA Quarterfinals; **17** MIVA Semifinals; **20** MIVA Finals; **26** NCAA Play-In Match at campus sites; **30** NCAA Play-In Match at Long Beach, Calif.

May 2 NCAA Semifinals at Long Beach, Calif.; **4** NCAA Finals at Long Beach, Calif.

WRESTLING

(7-0, 2-0 BIG TEN)

Nov. 3 vs. Navy at Owings Mills, Md., W 28-9; **11** Ohio Intercollegiate Open at Cleveland, NTS; **16** at California Baptist, W 42-0; **18** at Arizona State, W 22-17; **30-Dec. 1** Cliff Keen Las Vegas Invitational, 1st/43 (148).

Dec. 9 (19) WISCONSIN, W 23-13.

Jan. 6 (4) N.C. STATE, W 26-10; **11** at Indiana, W 43-3; **13** MICHIGAN STATE, W 37-4; **25** MICHIGAN, 7 p.m.

Feb. 1 at Illinois, 9 p.m.; **3** at Northwestern, 1 p.m.; **8** PENN STATE, 8:30 p.m.; **15** at Purdue, 7 p.m.; **17** NEBRASKA, 2 p.m.; **22** at Cornell, 6:30 p.m.

March 9-10 Big Ten Championships at Minneapolis; **21-23** NCAA Championships at Pittsburgh.

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Unusual Season Ended In Triumph For Buckeyes

The 2018 football season was indeed a strange one in a multitude of ways both on and off the field.

COACH'S CORNER With Bill Conley

In the spring of 2018 Buckeye fans and the coaching staff, due to the talent level of the players, were looking forward to the fall in hopes of capturing another Big Ten title and even making a national championship run. Three quality quarterbacks in Dwayne Haskins, Joe Burrow and Tate Martell gave the offense unusual depth and quality at the position. Gifted skill players with speed and athleticism filled the roster. The offensive line would finally have the experience to make their mark, and the defensive line was touted as perhaps the very best in the entire country.

Even when Burrow decided to transfer to LSU after spring practice, hopes were still high for an exciting 2018 campaign. The landscape started to change, however, as August camp approached.

What Went Wrong

The first wrench that was thrown into the works of the Buckeye football machine was how the university administration handled the Zach Smith situation. A successful mentor of young people and equally successful head football coach suddenly had his head on the chopping block over an issue that he had already reported to his superiors.

Even though Urban Meyer fumbled the Big Ten media day interview, surely he hadn't done anything that warranted losing his job. Still there were some in power who were ready to wield the ax and end the head coach's reign at Ohio State.

Thankfully, the sane ruled the day and Meyer kept his job, but his suspension from fall camp and the first three games did tremendous harm to team cohesiveness. It

also tarnished Meyer's reputation and stellar career at Ohio State and made him feel betrayed by a university he loved and gave so much to since being hired as its head football coach. It was his health issues that ultimately brought about Meyer's choice to retire, but one would have to be naive to think his treatment, or mistreatment, by university officials didn't play a major part in the decision.

On the field, the Buckeye offense was spectacular considering there was a first-year quarterback at the helm. Defensively it was a different story.

The loss of Nick Bosa was huge, but the real problem rested in the inconsistent play of the secondary and linebacking units. Too many missed tackles, busted assignments, and poor leverage on the ball carrier resulted in an uncharacteristic number of big plays against the Buckeye defense. Games that should not have been close ended up being nail-biters. Adjustments seemed to take too long, and the overall communication between players and staff was not as smooth as it should have been. The traditional "Silver Bullet" defense that prides itself on sound fundamentals and swarming to the football was practically nonexistent many times this season.

Many of the defensive issues were most likely due to youth and lack of playing experience at certain positions, but there also seemed to be systematic problems executing the defensive scheme. It came to no one's surprise Ryan Day made a number of coaching changes on the defensive side of the ball after the Rose Bowl.

The worst personnel decision of the year was the "Tate Martell Package." Martell is a very gifted athlete, but taking your best offensive player in Haskins off the field made little sense. It's hard enough for any player to come off the sideline cold, and for a quarterback it's even tougher. Martell was put into pressure situations in the red zone, and too many times it didn't work out. Opposing defenses had few problems stopping the limited number of plays Martell was called on to run.

What Went Right

Despite the preseason distractions regarding the Smith debacle, the loss of Bosa, the inconsistencies on the defensive side of the football and the devastating loss to Purdue, the 2018 Buckeyes put together a 13-1 record, destroyed archrival Michigan, won the Big Ten championship, beat Washington in the Rose Bowl and ended up third in the nation in the final AP poll. One heck of a successful season for a team that had more than its share of distractions.

No one knows what would have happened if Ohio State would have played Alabama or Clemson, but even the most avid Buckeye fans would have to agree the Tigers and the Crimson Tide were a step above the rest this season. With that being said, we can all be proud of what the Ohio State football team did accomplish during trying times.

The emergence of Haskins as one of the very best quarterbacks in college football this season put excitement into every game this fall. His statistics speak for themselves as he broke school and conference passing records nearly every Saturday. He displayed unusual poise and maturity for a first-time starting quarterback. Technically, his accuracy, quick release and the velocity at which he threw the football made everyone realize he is a special talent at the quarterback position. Though he is taking his talents to the NFL, we were lucky to have a chance to see him perform in Ohio Stadium even if was for just one year as a full-time starter.

The smooth transition from Meyer to Day as head coach was another positive for the Buckeye football program this year. Once Meyer decided this was going to be his last season as the head coach, the immediate hiring of Day to take his place made the transition seamless. It allowed the coaching staff to not lose much ground in recruiting, as proven with a successful early-signing class, and gave the players as little emotional distress as possible.

Day has big shoes to fill and will indeed have to prove himself as a head coach and recruiter, but the athletic administration handled the moment admirably.

The best personnel decision of the year was the starting of Brendon White at safety. He not only grew as a player once crowned as a starter, but he was a positive influence on the entire defensive unit. White is a quality young man and a true leader by example due to his football intelligence and the inten-

sity with which he plays. A very smart move by the coaching staff.

Major Offensive Concern

The most obvious concern for Ohio State going into this year's spring practice is the lack of depth at the quarterback position. The recent announcement by Martell to put himself into the NCAA transfer portal was a surprise to nearly everyone, especially after his rather boisterous comments at the Rose Bowl regarding incoming transfer Justin Fields.

Martell was going to get his first true shot at being the No. 1 guy at his position, and he didn't mind the competition even if Fields was declared eligible to play next fall. Things obviously changed in his mind or someone on the staff got into his ear and told him it would be better to look for a new home. Whatever the case, the Buckeyes will be faced with a new starter at quarterback next fall.

Whoever that player will be, there is little possibility they will have the success Haskins had this season. As with Day stepping into Meyer's shoes, so will the pressure be on the starting quarterback who has to replace Haskins.

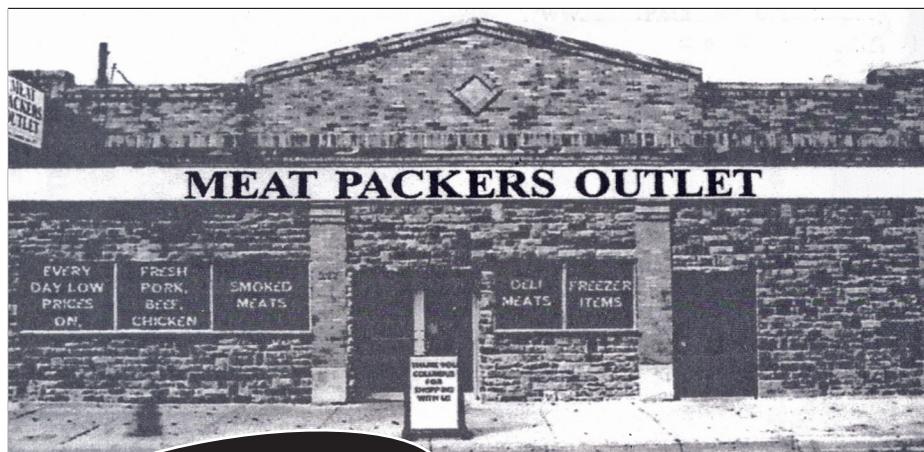
Major Defensive Concern

Defensively, it will be another year of new coaching faces on that side of the ball. The players will be introduced to a new philosophy and some new concepts once more. Fortunately, there will be a solid base of returning players who will undoubtedly be better just because of playing experience and overall athleticism.

Also, there seemed to something missing in terms of chemistry between the defensive coaches and the players this past fall. Hopefully we will get back to an Ohio State defense that is fundamentally sound, gives great effort every play, and prides itself on not giving up the big play.

It will be crucial for the 2019 Ohio State defense to be play to a higher standard due to the probability the offense will not be as explosive with the departure of Haskins. There is no reason to think the new coaches on the defensive side of the ball do not recognize the challenge.

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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Current CFP System Doesn't Fulfill Expectations

The college football playoff committee is perfect in its incompetence through its first five seasons. It has yet to accurately pick the best team in the country, raising questions about how good a job it does in even picking which teams should be in the playoffs.

EXNER POINT Rich Exner

The No. 1 seed, as determined by the playoff committee, has yet to win a national championship. Clemson, this season's champion, was the third No. 2 seed to win the title. The other two championships went to the fourth seeds.

In the five-year history of the playoffs, the top seed is 3-5 in playoff games.

That's worse than the bottom (No. 4) seeds. Those seeded last are a combined 4-3 in the playoffs, with the two titles being by Ohio State in 2014 and Alabama in 2017.

The second seeds have done best, going 7-2, including championships by Clemson in 2016 and 2018, and by Alabama in 2015.

The third seeds have been the worst, going a combined 1-5.

Why This Matters

Incompetent is an overstatement to make a point. What this really illustrates is that picking teams based on what any group of "experts" thinks is the wrong way to go.

Championships in every other sport are decided on the field of play. Regular-season champions of leagues, divisions or conferences get the chance to prove they are the best overall by being invited to play for the title, along with some at-large teams or wild cards.

Not so in NCAA major-college football.

This is why the playoffs need to be expanded, at the very least, to include the champions of every major league – teams that qualified by winning on the field, not the ballot box.

A Big Ten champion should not be left out, as has been the case each of the last two seasons. A Big 12 champion should not be left out, as was the case the first three years of the playoffs. And a Pac-12 champion should not be left out, as was the case in 2015, 2017 and 2018.

A New Playoff Bracket

It could be argued that the season was one game too short for Ohio State. The Buckeyes finished third in the final AP and coaches polls.

So if a playoff bracket were set by these polls, it would be No. 1 Clemson vs. No. 4 Oklahoma in one semifinal game, and No. 2 Alabama against No. 3 Ohio State in the other.

SEC & Alabama Overrated

I won't argue against Alabama being the best program in college football and the SEC being the best conference this season, but I will argue that both are overrated. The separation isn't nearly as wide as some would have you believe.

Take, for example, the case of Georgia. The playoff committee was so excited that a two-loss Georgia team played Alabama close that it actually ranked Georgia above conference champion and one-loss Ohio State.

In the bowl, Georgia got beat worse than

the final score of 28-21 showed against a four-loss Texas team. And don't forget that Georgia lost in midseason by 20 points to LSU, which ended up with three losses.

Yet Georgia still finished ranked seventh in one poll and eighth in the other, ahead of Texas in both polls.

And what about Alabama? Very good, indeed. Yet it would probably take two losses to keep the Crimson Tide out of the playoffs, and even that might not be enough. The assumption seems to be that one spot should be held each season for Alabama. No matter how good Alabama might seem, 'Bama has lost more playoffs than it has won.

During five seasons of making the playoffs, Alabama played five nonconference regular-season games against Power Five conference schools, beating Louisville in 2018, Florida State in 2017, USC in 2016, Wisconsin in 2015 and West Virginia in 2014.

Including the playoffs, Alabama is 10-3 against Power Five conference teams outside the SEC during this time period. This record includes 0-1 against Ohio State.

Meyer Vs. Saban & Swinney

Take longevity out of the equation, and there's really no question that Urban Meyer was the greatest coach in Ohio State history. He lost just nine games in seven seasons, never more than two in a season.

His winning percentage at Ohio State (90.2 percent) dwarfs that of both Woody Hayes (76.1 percent) and Jim Tressel (82.8 percent). He started with an undefeated season and finished with six straight wins. He won one national championship and was robbed of more opportunities by the OSU probation his first year and playoff committee decisions in other years.

Yet there is a separation in one regard between Meyer and Alabama's Nick Saban, and perhaps even Meyer and Clemson's Dabo Swinney – the other two champions in the five-year history of the playoffs.

Maybe it comes down to being willing to sub a winning quarterback out of the lineup in favor of a younger, unproven but more talented player.

Since probation kept OSU out of the national championship discussion his first year in Columbus, Meyer had six chances. In four of those six years, the quarterback all or most of the season was J.T. Barrett. Barrett was a winner. But was he national championship quality?

OSU won the title in 2014 after Barrett was hurt, replaced by Cardale Jones. For the most part since then, Meyer stuck with Barrett. This year, we learned Dwayne Haskins was better.

Would Ohio State have been better positioned to win a national championship if Haskins had played earlier?

We don't know. We certainly didn't have the benefit of seeing what Meyer could see in practice every day.

But we do know that Alabama won a national championship after benching two-year starter Jalen Hurts in favor of freshman Tua Tagovailoa in the 2017 title game after Hurts led Alabama there. Then Alabama returned to the title game this season with Tagovailoa as the starter and Hurts on the bench.

And we know that Clemson won the national title this season with freshman Trevor Lawrence at quarterback, having beat out senior returning starter Kelly Bryant, a quarterback who took Clemson to the 2017 semifinals.

Those aren't easy moves to make – benching a successful starting quarterback for someone who might be even better.

Alabama and Clemson did it and won the last two national titles.

Would Ohio State have been able to do the same by going to Haskins earlier?

The Final Top 10

Here's my final Top 10.

1. Clemson, 15-0 – This is obvious.
2. Alabama, 14-1 – Despite the national title beatdown, Alabama still had a better season than Ohio State.
3. Ohio State, 13-1 – Deserved to be ranked here, though a little surprised that the AP and coaches polls agreed.
4. Notre Dame, 12-1 – I'll give credit to ND for getting to the postseason undefeated; that's not easy, regardless of the schedule.
5. Oklahoma, 12-2 – Still unimpressed with the defense, but better overall than everyone below.
6. Texas, 10-4 – A nod to the strong finish, despite the total of four losses.
7. LSU, 10-3 – The team led by ex-Buckeye Joe Burrow had a lot of good wins, and some bad losses.
8. Washington State, 11-2 – The Cougars did rebound from their loss to Washington for a bowl win.
9. Kentucky, 10-3 – Impressed with Kentucky's bowl win over Penn State.
10. Central Florida, 12-1 – Though a bowl loser to LSU, I was more impressed with UCF after seeing how well it played in that game without injured star quarterback McKenzie Milton.

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Day Off To Whirlwind Start As OSU Head Coach

It was either William Shakespeare or Ferris Bueller who said, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while you could miss it."

THE FACTS MAN Mike Wachsman

I had this column pretty much written when news of Tate Martell putting his name into the NCAA's transfer portal surfaced. This on the heels of Martell saying that he was certain he would win the starting quarterback job in spring ball and that Georgia transfer Justin Fields should not "swing and miss ... a second time."

That news came on the heels of receiver K.J. Hill announcing he would return for his senior year. Which was preceded by the worst kept secret in Columbus, that quarterback Dwayne Haskins was making himself available for the 2019 NFL draft. Just before that, offensive lineman Michael Jordan announced he was leaving for the pros.

All this while Ryan Day assembled what amounted to an almost entirely new defensive coaching staff.

Whew.

Let me catch my breath.

To say that the days after the Buckeyes winning the Rose Bowl have been frantic would be an understatement.

Day, who loves to play tempo football, has been operating at a breakneck tempo himself. He's been recruiting, mining contacts to join the coaching staff, strengthening relationships with players on the team. Basically becoming the face of the program, which was the role of his predecessor, Urban Meyer.

Mining those contacts turned out to be gold – or maize, anyway – when Michigan staffers Greg Mattison and Al Washington were hired as OSU assistants.

Mattison has a history of coordinating strong defenses, including the 2011

Baltimore Ravens, who were top three in the NFL in most important statistics. Michigan has been known for its defenses over the years, and the 69-year-old Mattison still has the energy of someone 20 years his junior.

Washington mentored Michigan's linebackers, including All-America selection Devin Bush, and has been hailed as one of the Wolverines' best recruiters. Washington is a Columbus native – his dad, Alvin, is still among Ohio State's top 10 tacklers – and knows well how important the game with the rival from up north is.

They replace Greg Schiano, who left to "pursue NFL opportunities" and Alex Grinch, who left to run his own show at Oklahoma. Grinch was touted as a miracle worker after lifting Washington State's defense from the depths of college football to the top 40. But the secondary was a mess all season – one reason he is gone – and Grinch never really seemed to be on the same page with Schiano. There were personnel issues, scheme issues, things that plagued the Buckeyes all season.

So maybe fresh faces will help OSU's D return to top-10 status, where it was in 2016 and 2017.

The story on the minds of most in Buckeye Nation will be the quarterback saga.

Now, just because Martell put his name into the transfer portal, it isn't a guarantee that he is leaving. What this does is allows other teams to contact him without penalty. He can decide to take his name out and stay at Ohio State, or he could just decide to go.

Spring ball was going to be very interesting with Martell and Fields battling it out. Both highly touted prepsters, Martell seemed a better fit for Meyer's RPO heavy offense. Fields is more of the passer Day craves, though he can run a bit, too. Throw in Matthew Baldwin, a big-armed Texas gunslinger handpicked by Day, and you have the makings of a genuine quarterback derby.

Now that doesn't seem likely to happen. And compounding matters is the fact that Fields is not yet eligible to play at Ohio State.

He left Georgia after a racial incident

during a football game which involved a member of the Bulldogs baseball team, and he will claim to the NCAA that there are "mitigating circumstances that are outside the student-athlete's control and directly impact the health, safety and well-being of the student-athlete."

Now, I like Fields as much as the next guy. He was rated the No. 2 quarterback in the 2018 class, behind Clemson's Trevor Lawrence, who just led his team to the national championship. If Fields is anywhere near as good as Lawrence, the Buckeyes have a real keeper. But here is my problem.

The player was kicked off of the Georgia baseball team, and Fields' sister stayed at the school, where she plays softball. Could she not be in the same situation? It's a flimsy argument, but one that Fields will likely win because the NCAA doesn't want to deny someone who has experienced racism a chance to play. So, look for Fields on the field.

Which leads us to Martell.

A brash, dynamic athlete from Bishop Gorman High School in Las Vegas, Martell was on the radar of many big-time programs. Despite standing less than 6 feet tall, Martell was coveted because of the pressure he can put on a defense with his running ability. His passing skill was a work in progress, though he showed flashes while at Ohio State. However, there weren't many instances of him operating from the pocket, going through progressions and getting the ball out quickly and to the right guy. That's what Day will demand of a quarterback, so maybe Martell saw the writing on the wall shortly after Fields' arrival.

It also couldn't have helped that Fields was sitting courtside with Haskins and Meyer at a recent OSU men's basketball game while Martell was up in the 100 section. It appeared that Haskins was doing his best to entertain Fields, to tell him everything he needed to know about quarterbacking the Buckeyes. That had to be a blow to the brash Martell's considerable ego.

It doesn't bother me that Martell may leave – if a kid wants playing time but isn't going to get it at his current school, then he is by all means within his rights to transfer out. I have not been terribly impressed with Martell in his short stints of action and don't believe the Buckeyes would be championship material with him behind center.

But if he departs, and if Fields doesn't get his waiver – what then?

OSU would be looking at an untested freshman in Baldwin, with little depth behind him in the form of West Virginia graduate transfer Chris Chugunov. It's likely that the Buckeyes will secure a grad transfer or sign a quarterback in the normal recruiting period, because if they go into the season with just two quarterbacks, any designs on a return to the playoff are finished before they even start.

So, Day may indeed want to slow down – may need to slow down. But there's too much going on right now in Columbus for him to do so.

Classic Send-Off

It was well-documented in the lead-up to the Rose Bowl that Meyer had never coached in the Granddaddy of Them All. It was a bucket list thing for him, so it was fitting that he was doused with a Gatorade bucket as the clock hit zero and the Buckeyes were on the right side of a 28-23 contest that was closer than it needed to be.

It couldn't have done Meyer – who is fading into the background due to health concerns stemming from an arachnoid cyst in his brain – any good to see his team take its foot off the gas and let an offensively-challenged Huskies squad back into the game.

But whether it was five points or 50 points, the victory was enough to send Meyer out in style.

"I'm a very blessed man," he said afterward. "I'm blessed because of my family, this team this year, I love this group as much as any I've ever had."

And they loved him back – evidence of that coming via video presentation just prior to the championship trophy ceremony. Players talked about how much Meyer meant to them and the kind of lasting impact they would feel from having played for him. The public outside of Ohio State probably doesn't care much for Meyer, believing he's a shady opportunist who will be coaching again sooner rather than never.

But the players spoke volumes with their spoken words, and around these parts Meyer is revered. That will happen when you go 83-9, beat your rival seven straight times and win a national championship.

"Every week, every yard, every down, when we recruited these players, I just wanted to make sure that we made the great state of Ohio proud," Meyer said. "We weren't perfect, but we did a lot of good things."

The Buckeyes led 21-3 at halftime behind three TD strikes from Haskins – to Parris Campbell, Johnnie Dixon and Rashod Berry, the last with just 14 seconds left in the half. The lead was pushed to 28-3 after J.K. Dobbins – don't worry, he'll be back – burst into the end zone from 3 yards out with a little more than eight minutes remaining in the third quarter. Some fans started to leave the stadium, but Washington ended up making it very interesting.

As they have been prone to do under Meyer, the Buckeyes lost focus – and nearly the game.

First it was trickery as Washington's brilliant running back Myles Gaskin threw a 2-yard TD pass minutes into the fourth quarter. Gaskin then bulled in from a yard out with 6:42 to play, cutting the deficit to 28-17. It was a hat trick for Gaskin as he scored on a 2-yard run with under a minute to play, and suddenly the OSU faithful were wondering if this game might turn out the same as the one where Chicago Bears running back Gale Sayers dedicated the day to sick teammate Brian Piccolo – a loss.

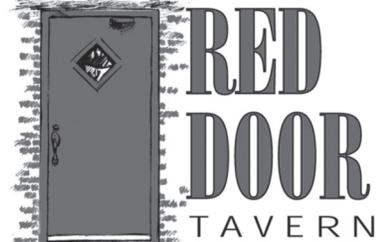
The Buckeyes managed to corral the outside kick, and the celebration began.

Though Meyer often wears his emotions on his sleeve, he doesn't always allow himself to enjoy the moment. He did this time. He smiled, looked around at the setting and embraced numerous players, a change of pace from his usual routine.

"He is a really tough guy," said running back Mike Weber, another player who is leaving early for the pros. "Sometimes you never really know what he is thinking. He really doesn't show a lot of emotion, but I felt him today. You could tell he was giving his all. It felt a little different."

It may have felt different, but it ended the same as most of Ohio State's games under Meyer. In victory.

As one chapter closes, and a coach finally walks away on his own terms, a new one begins.



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Rose Bowl Stood Out Amid Lackluster Bowl Season

Longtime readers of this column know that I have lamented what I perceive as the loss of prestige of the Rose Bowl for many years now in light of America's obsession with the College Football Playoff.

After this season's Granddaddy of Them All – the nickname alone should tell you something about this very special bowl game – I have slightly altered my view on this subject. I think the Rose Bowl still holds a special place for fans of Big Ten and Pac-12 teams. At least it appeared so among Buckeye fans this time around, as the disappointment of not making the final four seemed to give way to excitement about making the trip to Pasadena. I know I was excited.

As for the rest of the college football world beyond the two prestigious conferences that make up the bulk of the Rose Bowl's history, they were never privy to the special nature of the bowl in the first place. That's one of the things that made the Rose Bowl so special. No matter how good a football team you had, if you weren't a member of the Big Ten or the conference on the West Coast with the variety of names and numbers, you weren't going to Pasadena.

It was kind of snobby on our part, but who cares? No one in the Midwest or on the coast worried about the national championship back then. If you were voted champion after the Rose Bowl, that was icing on the cake. The quest was to make it to Pasadena.

So to Alabama or Clemson fans for example, now that there is a playoff, I am sure that the Rose Bowl is little different than my new favorite, the Bad Boy Mowers Gasparilla Bowl – just one in a vast wasteland of bowl games that guarantees postseason action for any team with a .500 record and programming for ESPN and the like for the entire final half of December.

As an aside, imagine my irritation when on a recent Sunday, a letter writer to Columbus Dispatch sports editor Ray Stein from nearby Lewis Center referred to the Rose Bowl as a "second-tier bowl game." The Rose Bowl is *not* second-tier. The current bowl system is second-tier. By the way, I looked the letter writer's name up, and he is not a BSB subscriber.

Now maybe there was a little more excitement in the air above Buckeye Nation because this edition of the Rose Bowl was going to be Urban Meyer's final game. Sure that added to it. But it was also a pleasant reminder of the days when the object in Columbus was to beat Michigan and make it to the Rose Bowl. And to go out there and win the game? That might just mean a national championship, as it did in 1954, 1957 and 1968.

And win in Meyer's last game, the Buckeyes did. There was, of course, no national championship. The CFP – and Ohio State's absence – had already guaranteed that.

But this whole scenario brings up the question of how successful Ohio State's 2018 season was. By the old standards, with an incredible 62-39 thrashing of Michigan, a victory over a scrappy Northwestern team to secure the Big Ten title, a Rose Bowl win over a scrappy Washington team, a 13-1 record and final ranking of No. 3 in the nation, the season would have been considered a rousing success in pre-CFP days.

By today's playoff-centric standards, maybe not so much.

But by my standards, when you consider where Ohio State was in August, trying to wade through Zachgate; in fact when you consider where they were as late as Nov. 17, following the fiasco at Maryland, and to come back from that – this was one of the more special seasons in Ohio State football history and a true testament to the team and coaches. Maybe some of the coaches on the defensive side of the ball could

THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH

Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

have done a better job putting a more polished product on the field, but from Meyer and Ryan Day to the assistant coaches, to the players, to the ball boys, everyone associated with the Ohio State football team deserves credit for avoiding what could have been a disaster of a season. Think 2011.

Everyone points to the stunning loss to Purdue as the reason Ohio State didn't make the playoff. I think that game against the Terps – along with the 39 points Ohio State gave up in their also stunning victory over the Wolverines – had just as much to do with the Buckeyes' ranking of No. 6 in the final CFP poll.

Keep in mind, however, that despite yielding 51 points and being taken to overtime by the Terrapins, the Buckeyes somehow won that game. No victory there and I am writing a completely different column right now. The next week Ohio State embarrasses its rival and the Buckeyes are on their way to Indianapolis and Pasadena.

Maybe this was a year to go old-school and take the traditional trip west. Some playoff-obsessed Ohio State fans would say that if the Buckeyes had made it to the playoffs, with Meyer at the helm and Dwayne Haskins under center, they could possibly have made some noise. Maybe, maybe not.

But I am perfectly content with an old-style happy ending and sending Meyer out with a win in the Rose Bowl, a place where, despite three national championships, the Ohio native had never coached. If you are going to ride off into the sunset, the sunsets don't get any more spectacular than the ones in Pasadena on Jan. 1.

Why All The Excitement?

The biggest question coming out of the Rose Bowl seems to be how was Washington able to come back and make the game way more interesting than it had to be. The consensus among Buckeye fans seems to be that Ohio State somehow took its foot off the gas after it got out to a 28-3 lead as the third quarter approached its midpoint.

One thing that I will point out is that in the first half, when Ohio State seemed to be playing pretty well on both sides of the ball, the Buckeyes didn't convert that good play into points. In fact, at the 1:21 mark of the second period, Ohio State led just 14-3. This despite the fact that the Buckeyes' much-maligned defense had given up just 147 yards and three points. Remarkably, the Huskies' longest play from scrimmage against the big-play susceptible OSU defense to that point was a 16-yard pass to Andre Baccellia.

That's when I believe one of the most crucial sequences of the game occurred.

Washington took over at its own 8 after a Drue Chrisman punt. The Huskies used all of 21 seconds and did not force Ohio State to use a timeout before punting the ball back to the Buckeyes at their own 43 with exactly a minute to play. It took Haskins and Co. – sparked by a 10-yard pass to Binjimen Victor, a 19-yard catch by Parris Campbell and a pass-interference call against the Huskies – just five plays and 51 seconds to march the 57 yards to make it 21-3 at the half. No touchdown there and the results after the late Washington rally could have been much different.

Ohio State recorded just 92 of its 364 total yards and gave up 293 of Washington's 444

yards in the second half. The Buckeyes had five first downs in the second half, while the Huskies had 18 in the final 30 minutes. Eighty of Ohio State's second-half yards and four of its first downs came on the Buckeyes' first possession after the break, which resulted in a J.K. Dobbins touchdown and the 28-3 lead. That score seemed to lead to complacency on the part of the players or a coach-not-to-lose attitude by Meyer, the supposed king of the pedal to the metal.

As John Cooper was fond of saying, and I am fond of quoting, "Sometimes we don't give enough credit to the other team. Their players are on scholarship too."

The Huskies could have tossed in the towel when they still trailed by the 28-3 margin at the start of the fourth quarter, just as many of their fans, who started streaming out of the Rose Bowl, did. But the Pac-12 champion and No. 9 team in the country fought back and fought back hard.

Much of the blame might go to the Ohio State defense, which yielded 170 yards, 10 first downs and 20 points in the final quarter. But the Huskies were not just battling the Buckeyes, they were battling the clock. If the OSU offense had picked up a key first down here or another critical one there, Washington would have run out of time much sooner than when the Huskies failed to cover an onside kick with 42 seconds remaining. Instead the Buckeyes moved the chains just once and gained only 15 yards in the fourth quarter.

It's a 60-minute game, however, and Ohio State held on for the satisfying – though not without its anxious final moments – victory.

A Final Tribute

While there are many outside the boundaries of Ohio and the extended Buckeye Nation who consider Meyer some sort of win-at-all costs miscreant, I have seen over the past seven years a true indicator of the coach's positive effect on the program by watching such things as the scholar-athlete list and, more importantly, the list of football graduates, a list that for many years was populated by bunches of reserves and walk-ons. That important list has been rapidly improving, with many major contributors earning the right to walk across the stage.

This fall's list of football graduates was small – just five – but nonetheless impressive.

Graduating on Dec. 15 were Campbell, Johnnie Dixon, Dre'Mont Jones, Malcolm Pridgeon and Brady Taylor. Nary a walk-on in the bunch. I am eager to see the list in the spring.

Your 1st Rose Bowl

I have always maintained that you never forget your first Rose Bowl. For BSB editor Tim Moody and staff writers James Grega and Garrett Stepien, this was their first trip to Pasadena, and I enjoyed reading their thoughts on *their* first Rose Bowl (see page 11).

Mine was after the 1984 season. The things I remember the most were off the field. There was an elaborate gala to which media members were invited and that featured the immortal Bob Hope as the headliner. Then there was the morning of the game. Media members were also invited to the Rose Bowl parade. I woke up around 5:30 and, boy, I just wanted to go back to sleep.

Fellow BSB staffer Rich Exner and his wife,

Janine, convinced me to get up and catch the shuttle bus to the parade. Boy, was it worth it, so spectacular that I recall that experience more than I do the actual game.

As for that game, I know that a team that featured the likes of Keith Byars, Cris Carter, Sonny Gordon, Eric Kumerow, Jim Lachey, Kirk Lowdermilk, Chris Spielman, Mike Tomczak, Tom Tupa, William White and many more should not have lost to a nondescript USC team with an even more nondescript coach in Ted Tollner.

Sometimes, back then, I felt like Ohio State spent so much energy and emotion defeating Michigan just to get to the Rose Bowl – the Buckeyes defeated the Wolverines 21-6 to earn the trip to Pasadena after being left for dead following losses to Purdue and Wisconsin – that the Rose Bowl was almost anticlimactic.

We are encouraging Buckeye Sports Bulletin readers to share their first experiences at the Rose Bowl. Either mail your thoughts to BSB at P.O. Box 12453 or email them to BSB@buckeyesports.com.

Forum Heating Up

Kudos to the regular posters on The Forum at our BuckeyeSports.com website. Along with members of the BSB staff, they have really spurred increased activity on this message board, access to which is free to all Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers.

We notice many more of you looking in but not participating. Jump in. Your opinion is as good as anyone else's, including the staff's, and posters frequently see items and post them before the staff does. As we like to say, "If you see something, say something."

If you are not already enjoying BuckeyeSports.com, with The Forum and its 24/7/365 coverage of Ohio State sports, see the simple instructions of page 5 of this issue.

Salary Inflation

In our "From the Pages of BSB" feature on page 2, we learn that 30 years ago, Earle Bruce jumped from Northern Iowa, to which he was relegated after being fired by Ohio State, to Colorado State at a starting salary of \$70,000. I know Colorado State was not the Big Ten, but it still seemed a small salary to me, even in 1989. But Earle obviously wanted to get back in on the bigger school action.

"I'm a Division I-A coach and I belong in Division I-A," Bruce said. "Sometimes you have to take control of your life and do what you have to do."

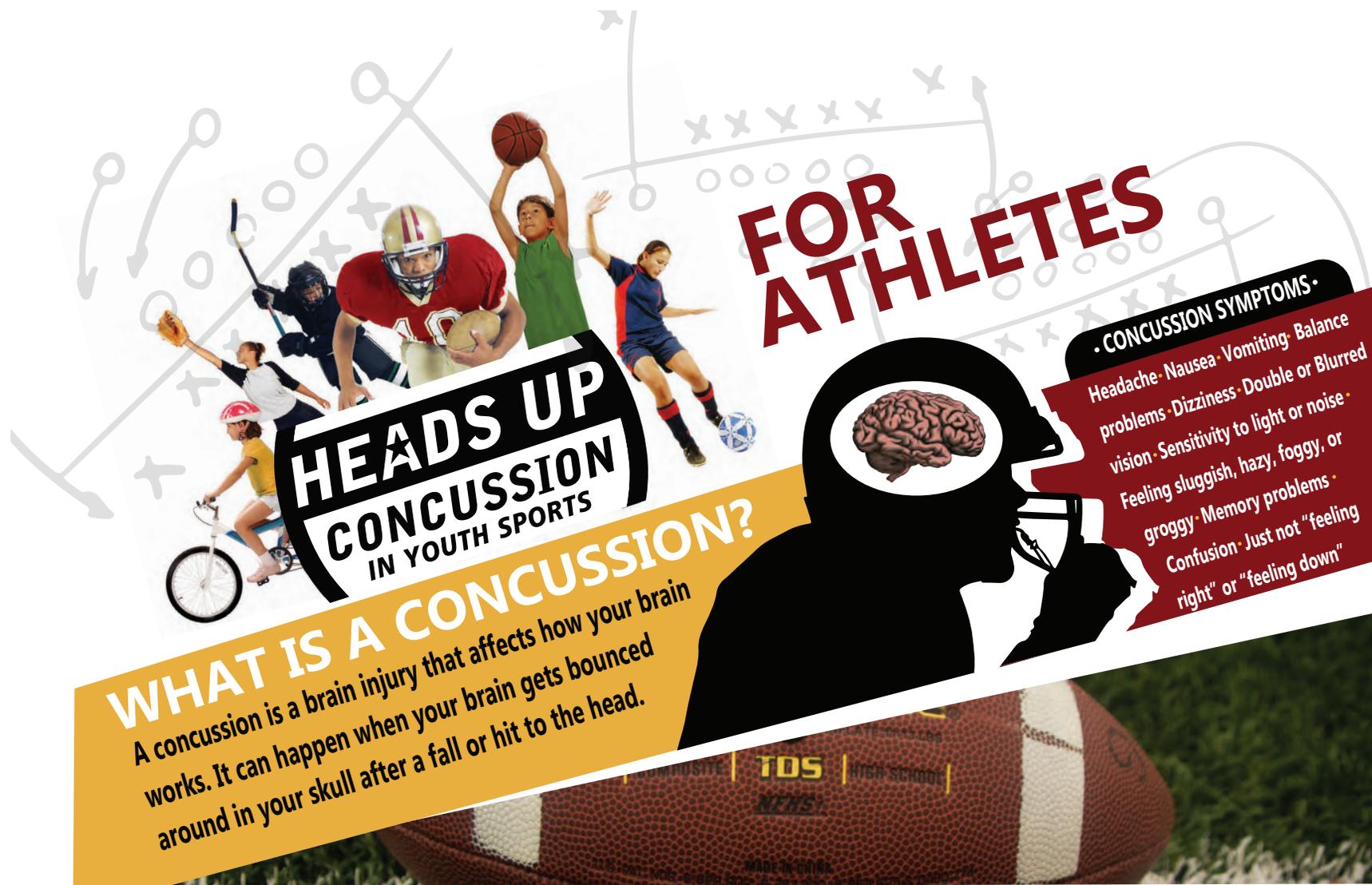
As a point of comparison, current CSU coach Mike Bobo recently declined an automatic \$100,000 raise in his salary after the Rams went 3-9. That left his stipend at a paltry \$1.8 million.

A Look At The QB Greats

We have been featuring Ohio State quarterbacks for some time now, starting with our poll to determine the greatest Buckeye signal caller of all time.

With Kliff Kingsbury in the news recently after he ended a very brief stay at USC to take the head job with the NFL's Arizona Cardinals, we decided to take a different direction with our ongoing feature. We are going to chronicle quarterback greats who have faced Ohio State during the Buckeye Sports Bulletin era as part of our Reprint Thursdays on BuckeyeSports.com. Kingsbury led Texas Tech against the Buckeyes in their national championship year of 2002, and his game was featured on Jan. 10.

Stanford's John Elway will be featured next on Jan. 17, and upcoming spotlight quarterbacks will include the likes of Peyton Manning, Drew Brees and Tom Brady.



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>

