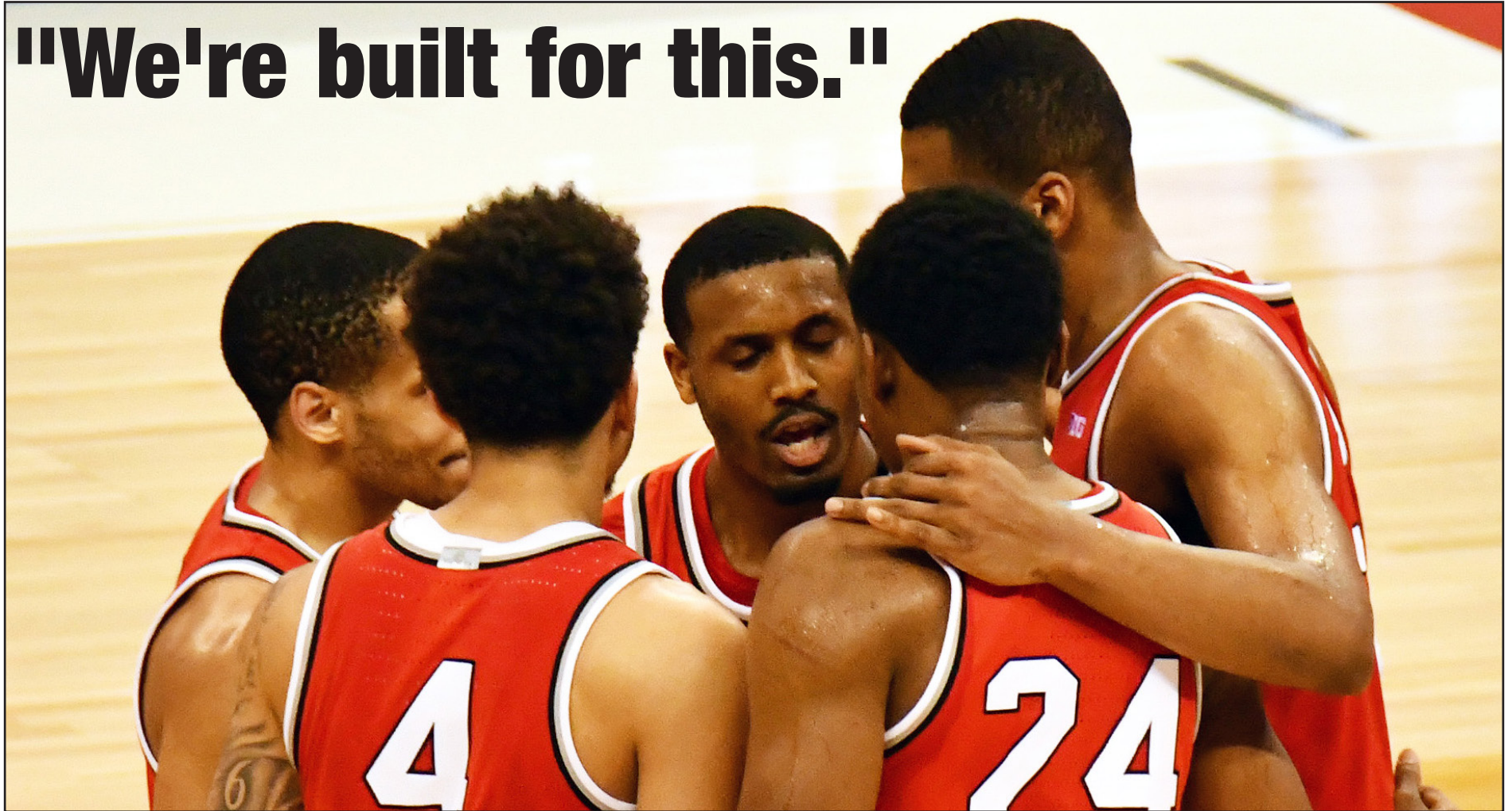


## "We're built for this."



SONNY BROCKWAY

**PEAKING AT THE RIGHT TIME** – Ohio State has overcome numerous obstacles this season, including an unexpected leave of absence from point guard D.J. Carton, to win eight of its last 10 games.

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## *Inconsistent Buckeyes Heating Up As Big Ten, NCAA Tournaments Loom*

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

After a great start to the season where the Ohio State men's basketball reached No. 2 in the Associated Press poll, it seemed like its once promising season might have been lost.

Following a heartbreaking loss to Minnesota at home on Jan. 23, the Buckeyes were defeated in six of seven games and held a 2-6 record in the competitive Big Ten.

"We realize plenty of people wrote us off when we were 2-6," said Ohio State head coach Chris Holtmann. "We had people making fun of us and putting all their sarcastic tweets out there. I've got them all saved."

Amid the losing skid, freshman guard D.J. Carton, who had been a spark for the Buckeyes, took a leave of absence from the team for personal reasons.

The Buckeyes bounced back, however, win-

ning eight of their next 10 games, including victories against tough Maryland and Michigan teams.

During the winning stretch, Ohio State also lost junior forward Kyle Young to a high ankle sprain during the game against the Terrapins. Despite missing two of their top contributors, the Scarlet and Gray continued their winning ways.

"We really wish they could be with us," sophomore guard Duane Washington said. "And you've got to make a choice: Are we going to sit back and be sad about it? Or are you going to attack the next day, the next practice, the next game?"

Junior guard C.J. Walker has stepped up in Carton's absence, leading the Big Ten in assist-to-turnover ratio in conference play. The Florida State transfer has become an important leader for the Buckeyes in his second year with the team and first on the floor.

"Our team is built for the moment, we're built

for this," Walker said. "Our coaches believe in all of us. We feel like we can play at any level with any team, so no matter if we have all 14 or nine that we have now, everybody is built for that moment. Just take advantage of it and play as hard as possible, and we're going to live with the results as long as we play hard."

Holtmann's squad has shown resilience during the stretch, coming closer as a team by bonding through tough times.

"We had to close ranks and find a way to try to come together, perform better and own why we were struggling and what we were doing to struggle – coaches, players owned it," Holtmann said. "That goes back to the guys in the locker room, particularly our captains. They've owned the fact that we have to perform better."

While many pundits had written off the Buckeyes when they dropped to 2-6, the belief in the locker room did not waver.

**Continued On Page 8**



## From The Message Board

**Following Ohio State's 77-63 win over Michigan on March 1, Buckeye Sports Bulletin asked the readers on BuckeyeSports.com, as well as the staff members, for their thoughts on whether the Buckeyes are back to their early-season form. Here are some of the responses:**

"I'll say 'they're back' if they beat Illinois and MSU. Without Young, I think they're about like ten other teams in the B1G in that there's a chance they could make the Sweet 16 but virtually no chance of the Final Four. If OSU loses to both Illinois and MSU and doesn't win at least one game in the B1G tournament, chances of much success in NCAA decline drastically."

– Terrier Buck

"Definitely have improved. If they play defense and hit timely shots like they did today they can go far."

– Tiffin Buckeye

"With the way this team has been up and down I am not going to even TRY to predict what they are going to do the rest of the season. Besides, you don't know who will be the next to be injured or have personal problems. I DO want to say that I am not sure

Kaleb Wesson is getting his due. He completely got under Maryland coach Mark Turgeon's skin with 15 points and nine rebounds, filled up the score book with 16 points and 18 rebounds against Nebraska and scored 14 more with nine rebounds against the rival Wolverines. That's an average of 15 points and 12 rebounds in three straight victories. If Kaleb keeps playing that way, the Buckeyes will be a factor."

– Mcarr

"Have definitely turned the corner. Guard play much improved. But unless Kyle Young makes it back it is going to be a struggle in the Big Ten tournament and the Big Dance with a six-man rotation."

– mrbigbux

"They do seem to have improved. A lot will depend on when Kyle Young is able to play again. I would guess that they could make it to the Sweet 16."

– LandeckBuck

## From The Pages Of BSB

### 35 Years Ago – 1985

Despite the ups and downs that the Ohio State basketball team had been experiencing, Ron Stokes had been on a tear in the latter half of the season.

His inspired play began with a career-high 24 points scored in February during a home loss to Iowa and blossomed from there. At Northwestern, the 5-11 senior guard helped ice a 63-60 Buckeye victory when he blocked a jump shot tossed up by 6-4 Milan Petrovic in the waning seconds of the second half. In addition to the 12 points that Stokes contributed in the game, he collected eight rebounds, matching his career mark, and was credited with 10 assists.

The Canton, Ohio, native followed up that performance with 19 points at Wisconsin in a 92-78 loss and continued his hot streak with 17 points in both a 72-63 win against Indiana and a 76-74 nonconference loss to Northeastern at the Meadowlands in New Jersey.

"I'm not doing anything differently," said Stokes. "It's just that my outside shot is falling a little bit more and I think I'm passing the ball a little better than I have been in my three previous years here."

### 30 Years Ago – 1990

Ohio State senior-to-be tailback Carlos Snow and sophomore-to-be linebacker Alonzo Spellman both denied a report in The Sporting News that they had considered entering the NFL draft.

"I don't know where these things come from," Snow told BSB. "I've got a lot more important things on my mind like getting ready for spring ball and things like that. The NFL is about the farthest thing from my mind right now."

Spellman said, "When somebody told me (about the report), I thought they were kidding. I'm working in the weight room right now, looking forward to spring ball and next season, and this comes along. You wonder who thinks up this stuff."

### 25 Years Ago – 1995

When a local reporter reminded senior point guard Doug Etzler that his Buckeyes moved out of the Big Ten cellar with a 73-65 win over Minnesota, Etzler could not help but crack a smile.

"That's a good feeling," he said, some of the strain from a losing season magically wiped from his brow. "We haven't shown as good as we are this year, I think. If we can do it against a lot of other teams. We just haven't been able to do it all year."

The win was one that Ohio State had long been waiting for, with several players stating before the season that they were going to "shock some people."

But other than a home win over last-place Northwestern, Ohio State had only shown flashes against league opponents. Early deficits against quality teams such as Indiana, Michigan

and Purdue had consistently proved to be too much to overcome.

### 20 Years Ago – 2000

With the Ohio State men's basketball team salting away a made-to-order win over Illinois in the team's final home game Feb. 27, Michael Redd toed the free-throw line with 1:06 to play.

That's when a group of students behind the Buckeye bench felt compelled to blurt out the chant, "One more year!"

Clang. The first free throw dinged the front rim as if it were shot by a nervous eighth-grader. But the second one was true. OSU had its biggest lead of the day at 64-48 and Redd could retreat to play defense, away from the forces that were making him think prematurely about his future.

That moment in time mirrored the entire week for Redd, the star junior guard who suddenly was forced to defend himself amid speculation that he was considering leaving a year early for the NBA.

Redd was simply trying to focus on the present.

"I approach each game the same," Redd said. "I've got to keep playing that way, keep playing tough. My team really needs me, and I've got to be there and step up my game."

### 15 Years Ago – 2005

Ohio State began 10 days of winter conditioning drills Feb. 22 one assistant coach short. Co-defensive coordinator and secondary coach Mel Tucker had joined the Cleveland Browns four days earlier after four seasons with the Buckeyes and left a vacant spot on Jim Tressel's coaching staff.

However, the vacancy didn't last long. Tressel told reporters that he hoped to have Tucker's replacement on board by the Feb. 26-27 weekend, and he was true to his word, announcing the addition of Paul Haynes to his staff.

Haynes, a Columbus native, had spent the past two seasons at Michigan State as defensive backs coach.

"Coming home like this is a dream come true for me," Haynes said. "From the day I began coaching, it was always a goal of mine to coach at Ohio State."

### 10 Years Ago – 2010

Jim Foster had assembled what could well have been the most talented of his eight Ohio State women's basketball teams, but what that meant as March began was anyone's guess.

On Feb. 11, the Buckeyes clinched an unprecedented sixth consecutive Big Ten championship, doing so earlier on the calendar and with more games remaining than any team in conference history, but that factoid looked a bit odd next to a capsule of the conference season.

Although the Buckeyes ran away with the title in terms of wins and losses, the action on the court told a different story. Seven of Ohio State's 15 wins and all three losses in league play were by five points or fewer.

Additionally, the team frequently frustrated Foster with lapses at one end of the of the floor or the other, producing a string of uneven performances.

"I look forward to being in the gym with this team with the mentality of knowing the next two tournaments are one-and-done," Foster said. "You just have to prepare every day to be ready to have the fun we alluded to. The fun comes with hard work."

### Five Years Ago – 2015

Ohio State had had 13 college basketball coaches, but really, the conversation started and ended with two.

With a 65-61 win over Purdue on March 1, Thad Matta moved within one win of matching legendary Buckeye coach Fred Taylor for the most victories in program history. The Ohio State head man had an opportunity to match Taylor at 297 wins against Penn State on March 4.

"I love where our program is," the 11th-year coach said Feb. 21. "We were talking about all the things that have happened in the time that we've been here, and it's been hard to get a real rhythm. I think just from the standpoint of one year you go 34-3 and you did lose the national player of the year who would have been a senior, we've had those issues."

"But I like just the culture of our program. I like the guys that we've got in our program, the guys we've had in the program, and I think that we've done a great job of rekindling the former players back in our program. To see our couple of NBA guys back in the gym working out this week because of the All-Star break, I'm proud of what we've done."

### One Year Ago – 2019

Chris Holtmann may have chosen the wrong profession.

In baseball and international soccer, for example, the person guiding the team is called a manager.

Holtmann was a coach, more specifically the second-year head coach of the Ohio State men's basketball team. Yet the title didn't accurately describe what he had been doing for much of the 2018-2019 season, when he was serving not just as a manager of people, but of expectations.

It was his own fault. His inaugural campaign after replacing Thad Matta was better than anyone could have imagined, as he took a program that had been 17-15 overall the year prior to a 25-9 record in his first season.

With several stars of that team gone, Holtmann warned that a repeat was unlikely, but he was still forced to deal with handling the struggles of a new team. Although it was still a work in progress with the fan base, Holtmann's team bought into the messaging entering the final stretch of the season sitting at 18-11.

"I don't think anyone took it for granted or thought it would be easy," said junior forward Andre Wesson. "We knew that we had a young team so there was going to be rough stretches. In any season there are ups and downs."



# Spring Camp Begins Second Season Under Day



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No. 2	Sept. 14	No. 14	Jan. 18
No. 3	Sept. 21	No. 15	Feb. 1
No. 4	Sept. 28	No. 16	Feb. 15
No. 5	Oct. 5	No. 17	March 7
No. 6	Oct. 19	No. 18	March 21
No. 7	Oct. 26	No. 19	April 4
No. 8	Nov. 9	No. 20	April 18
No. 9	Nov. 16	No. 21	May
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It seems like only yesterday when the Ohio State football team was video-replayed out of the College Football Playoff. Yet, by the time you read this, the Buckeyes will have already kicked off their spring practice schedule in preparation for the 2020 season.

Ryan Day enters his second full season as head coach, armed with a three-year contract extension that should not only take care of his children's future but those of his unborn grandchildren as well.

Whether or not you agree that Day – whose entire head coaching résumé consists of 17 games – is worth a commitment of somewhere north of \$40 million over the next several years is immaterial. Schools that fail to show a long-term commitment to their coaching staffs are doomed to watch recruiting take a hit, and when that train leaves the station, there is no getting it back. But you don't have to believe me. Ask Texas or USC or Florida State what happens when recruiting dips and the head coaching carousel begins to spin.

Of much more importance than how much money Day will be making through the better part of this new decade is the team over which he will preside Sept. 5 when Bowling Green comes to Columbus to get the 2020 season under way.

There is little doubt the Buckeyes will once again feature one of college football's most potent offenses.

Justin Fields returns at quarterback after a remarkable first season that saw him throw for 3,273 yards and 41 touchdowns and add another 484 yards and 10 TDs on the ground. Those totals led to a whole gaggle of honors and awards – Big Ten Offensive Player of the Year, second-team All-American, and a fourth-place finish in the Heisman Trophy balloting among them.

But still I get the feeling Fields has only begun to tap his vast potential. Playing behind a talented offensive line, the agile sophomore was sacked 31 times last season, many the direct result of Fields holding the ball too long while waiting for a receiver to get open. He also fumbled a team-high nine times and lost five of those – numbers much too high for a quarterback.

With Fields in firm control of the starting position, his spring practice sessions will likely be heavy with tutelage from Day and new quarterbacks coach Corey Dennis on ball security as well as the value of recognizing when to throw the ball away under duress.

Perhaps Day and Dennis will come to the same conclusion Jim Tressel did between the 2005 and 2006 seasons with regard to Troy Smith. During that offseason, Smith was transformed from a quarterback who would run at the first sign of danger to one who was much more comfortable throwing from the pocket. The result took Ohio State from mere title contender to the No. 1 team in the country, and Smith went from being just another running quarterback to the program's most recent Heisman Trophy winner.

If that history lesson isn't enough for Day and Dennis, perhaps they can learn from the recent past. Running quarterbacks are extremely prone to injury, especially in the Big Ten. The Buckeyes know the painful truth of that (i.e. Braxton Miller and J.T. Barrett) and it was hammered home again late last season when Fields hurt his knee against Michigan.

In the final two games of the season – against Wisconsin in the Big Ten Championship Game and vs. Clemson in the Fiesta Bowl – Fields went from a completion percentage of 68.2 to 63.6, and his rushing average fell from 4.2 yards per carry to 0.5. He also was sacked nine times in those two games, fumbled once and lost it,

and pitched two interceptions in 77 attempts. He had thrown just one pick in his previous 277 attempts.

There remains little doubt that Fields operating at 100-percent efficiency with regard to his health might likely have made the difference against Clemson. Just as importantly, there seems to be little doubt the Buckeyes need to protect their quarterback as much as possible if they entertain any notion of returning to the College Football Playoff this fall.

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Mark Rea

### Offensive Holes To Fill

Fortunately for Fields, three members of the starting offensive line return this season – left tackle Thayer Munford, center Josh Myers, and right guard Wyatt Davis, who earned first-team All-America honors. Davis is only the second OSU guard over the past two decades to win first-team honors. Billy Price was a unanimous selection in 2017.

Converted center Harry Miller appears to be the favorite to get first crack at filling Jonah Jackson's vacated left guard spot, and former five-star prospect Nicholas Petit-Frere seems primed to take over the right tackle position manned last season by Branden Bowen. But recruiting experts who envisioned Petit-Frere having an immediate impact on the program must be disappointed so far because the 6-5, 305-pound sophomore has spent most of his first two years on campus in development mode.

And now Petit-Frere has more on his mind than just his continued improvement. He'll be looking over his shoulder as guys such as gargantuan sophomore Dawand Jones (6-8, 359) and incoming five-star, all-everything Paris Johnson try to catch the coaching staff's attention.

Not only will the offensive line be in charge of keeping Fields upright, it will also have to create enough holes for a running game that is left without J.K. Dobbins, the first 2,000-yard rusher in program history. I never quite understood the knock against Dobbins two years ago when he ran for "only" 1,053 yards while splitting his playing time with Mike Weber. But it doesn't matter. Dobbins proved last season what he was capable of doing – both as a runner and a receiver – and some NFL team is very soon going to make him a rich young man.

If any team could absorb the loss of Dobbins, it would be the Buckeyes because of the way the program has recruited (there's that word again) in recent years. Master Teague might not have the raw speed that Dobbins possessed, but he runs with authority. The big question is can Teague be a home-run hitter? He rambled 73 yards for a touchdown against Northwestern and had a couple of other 40-plus runs throughout the season. But the final 21 carries of Teague's 2019 campaign produced only 45 yards, and none of those 21 attempts went for more than 8 yards.

Teague is not going to automatically be given the starting role, especially with Marcus Crowley and Steele Chambers in the mix. Crowley dined early last season on leftover carries until rushing for 52 yards on just two attempts against Northwestern and then two weeks later torching Maryland for 82 yards and a touchdown on only eight carries. But Crowley suffered what appeared to be a serious knee injury in the game against the Terrapins and never played the remainder of the season.

How much of Crowley will we see during spring ball? Probably very little if any, but the reps he misses will be eagerly taken by Chambers. The 6-1, 220-pounder rushed for 135 yards on only 19 carries last season (that's a tidy 7.1-yard average), but perhaps best of all, he totaled those numbers in only four games and therefore got to preserve his redshirt.

The receiving corps? Well, Ohio State loses K.J. Hill, Austin Mack and Binjimen Victor, who combined over their careers to catch 363 passes for 4,722 yards and 44 touchdowns. That is a whole bunch of production to replace.

And yet, the Buckeyes return veteran Chris Olave along with talented youngsters Garrett Wilson, Jaelen Gill and Jameson Williams. Add the likes of five-star prospects Julian Fleming and Jaxon Smith-Njigba as well as four-stars Gee Scott Jr. and Mookie Cooper already on campus, and you can begin to talk about an embarrassment of riches.

### Rebuilding A Defense

Normally, any team that loses the services of All-America defensive end Chase Young – the first defensive player in 10 years to earn the Big Ten's Silver Football trophy – as well as a trio of talented defensive tackles would be looking at a full-scale rebuild. But since OSU defensive line coach Larry Johnson has always favored a heavy rotation, the Buckeyes should be fine up front.

Zach Harrison, Tyreke Smith, Tyler Friday and Javontae Jean-Baptiste are ready to put their names alongside Young and the Brothers Bosa as the next great defensive ends at Ohio State. Meanwhile, Haskell Garrett, Tommy Toggai and Taron Vincent, a former five-star prospect who lost all of the 2019 season due to a right shoulder injury, are ready to replace the interior rotation that featured DaVon Hamilton, Robert Landers and Jashon Cornell.

If the Buckeyes are going to have any trepidation this fall, it's going to be in the back seven of the defense.

After a two-year dalliance with the NFL's Tennessee Titans, Kerry Coombs returns to the Buckeyes as defensive coordinator. But Coombs is also in charge of the secondary, a unit he and assistant secondary coach Matt Barnes must rebuild after multiyear starters Damon Arnette, Jordan Fuller and Jeff Okudah left for the NFL and potential 2020 starters Amir Riep and Jahsen Wint were dismissed from the team in mid-February after arrests on rape and kidnapping charges.

Cornerback Shaun Wade is the lone hold-over from last year's starting unit, and there are a handful of backups such as Sezyn Banks and Josh Proctor who have some game experience. But Coombs and Barnes might be in for some sleepless nights trying to ensure that Ohio State continues its reputation as Defensive Back University.

And, finally, we come to the linebackers. I don't think anyone reading this space over the last year or so will be surprised to see me opine (once again) that I believe the play of the Ohio State linebackers to have been average – at best – over the past couple of seasons. I realize the coaching staff sees these guys in practice and the film room every day and puts together a lineup based upon what they see.

But what I see from the OSU linebackers is a bunch of guys who constantly drift away from where they are supposed to be assignment-wise. That leads to an inability to set an edge, a tight end or running back getting loose down the middle of the field, or a mobile quarterback gashing the defense for big yardage.

Bottom line: If Ohio State's linebackers don't up their game, it really won't matter what's going on in the secondary.





**Day Receives Extension, Significant Pay Boost**

Ohio State head coach Ryan Day was rewarded for his 13-1 inaugural season that saw the Buckeyes fall just short of a national title berth. On Feb. 25, Ohio State announced that it had submitted a proposal for a raise and contract extension for Day, and on Feb. 27, the Ohio State board of trustees approved it.

Day's new contract extends his stay in Ohio State by three years, which, on top of his initial five-year deal, means that he'll be under contract at Ohio State through 2026.

It also came with a hefty pay raise, which will immediately kick into action, increasing Day's salary from \$4.5 million to \$5.4 million for the 2020 season, along with a \$1 million contribution to his retirement plan on Dec. 31.

That salary will see an increase with each passing year that Day stays in Columbus through 2022, at which point any further increases can be decided on by athletic director Gene Smith. Day will make \$6.5 million in total compensation in 2021, then \$7.6 million in 2022.

That 2022 figure will be equal to what former head coach Urban Meyer made in his final season in Columbus.

"Ryan Day's management of this football program, from mentoring and leading our student-athletes in their academic

pursuits and off-field endeavors to coaching them on the playing field, has been exceptional," Smith said in a statement. "I am appreciative of his work. And I want to thank President Michael V. Drake for his leadership and the board of trustees for its work with this extension."

The pay increase moves Day to second in the Big Ten in salary for the 2020 season, behind only Michigan's Jim Harbaugh, who is set to make \$8.05 million for the 2020 season. Penn State's James Franklin is third, with \$5.95 million in total compensation, though that figure may change as Franklin received an undisclosed extension in December.

With the new length and salary also came updated figures for Day's buyout, if he is to either leave Ohio State or have his contract terminated prior to 2026. If Day leaves before Jan. 31, 2021, the buyout sits at \$3.5 million. He would also have to pay "damages" defined as the amount that Ohio State would have to pay assistants who are terminated without cause as a result of Day's departure.

The buyout amount decreases each year by \$500,000 and will hit a minimum of \$500,000 from Feb. 1, 2026, to Jan. 31, 2027, when Day's extension is set to conclude.

Day won't be eligible for another raise until 2023, when any further extension and pay increase will fall to Smith and the board of trustees.

**Spring Sees Number And Measurement Changes**

The start of spring football brings with it the end of winter workouts, which means that Ohio State has new measurements for several players, along with several number changes as the Buckeyes begin preparation for the 2020 season.

Starting with weight changes, Ohio State players gained 3.8 pounds this season on average, increasing the average team weight from 235.2 to 239.0. Leading the way in weight gained is redshirt freshman offensive lineman Enokk Vimahi, who gained 42 pounds from the 263 that he entered last season with, as he's now listed at 305 pounds.

"He's a guy that we think can put on a

**Green Banana Savings Continue**

Many Buckeye Sports Bulletin readers have already taken advantage of the Reverse Green Bananas Special, aimed at attracting a younger reading audience. However, the Reverse Green Bananas Special, based on last year's wildly popular Green Bananas Special but with a twist, offers savings for virtually ever BSB reader.

With the Reverse Green Bananas Special, readers pay an annual price based on their age. A readers who is 50 will pay \$50 a year, a \$49.95 savings over the regular rate. A reader who is 35 will pay \$35 a year. If you are 21, you pay just \$21. Whatever your age, that's your price.

And there is a bonus especially directed at parents and grandparents. Buy a gift for any Buckeye or future Buckeye under the age of 21 and pay just \$14.95.

"That's not even enough to pay for the annual postage to mail BSB," Buckeye Sports Bulletin publisher Frank Moskowitz said of the \$14.95 price, "but it is an investment in the future of Buckeye Sports Bulletin and of newspapers. Many young people have never experienced the joy of reading newspapers, nor the excitement of receiving something in the mail each week. We call on our loyal readers to introduce the experience of reading BSB to children, grandchildren or any young Buckeye

fan you know.

"But this special offers savings for almost every reader," Moskowitz pointed out. "If you are 80, you still save almost \$20 per year.

"In fact, you would have to be 100 to not save on this promotion, and I have a very special offer to those Buckeye fans who are 100 or older. If you have been a Buckeye fan that long, send me your name, address, birthday and all-time favorite Buckeye and I will give you a year of BSB absolutely free. You've earned it! I will also publish your name and favorite Buckeye in BSB. We are proud to have you as a subscriber!"

Readers can lock in on Reverse Green Bananas savings for up to three years, so the savings opportunities are substantial.

To take advantage of the Reverse Green Bananas Special, just take your age or the age of the person you are giving a gift to (just \$14.95 for those under 21), multiply it by the number of years you wish (up to three years) and send a check or credit card information in that amount to Buckeye Sports Bulletin at P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio, 43212. If you are giving a gift, be sure to send the name and complete address. For even easier service, simply call (800) 760-2862 or (614) 486-2202 and order with your credit card during regular business hours.

**2020 Ohio State Football Schedule**

Date	Opponent	Time (ET)	TV	2019 Record
Sept. 5	BOWLING GREEN	TBA	TBA	3-9 (2-6 Mid-American)
Sept. 12	at Oregon*	TBA	TBA	12-2 (8-1 Pac-12)
Sept. 19	BUFFALO*	TBA	TBA	8-5 (5-3 Mid-American)
Sept. 26	RUTGERS	TBA	TBA	2-10 (0-9 Big Ten)
Oct. 10	IOWA*	TBA	TBA	10-3 (6-3 Big Ten)
Oct. 17	at Michigan State*	TBA	TBA	7-6 (4-5 Big Ten)
Oct. 24	at Penn State*	TBA	TBA	11-2 (7-2 Big Ten)
Oct. 31	NEBRASKA	TBA	TBA	5-7 (3-6 Big Ten)
Nov. 7	INDIANA*	TBA	TBA	8-5 (5-4 Big Ten)
Nov. 14	at Maryland	TBA	TBA	3-9 (1-8 Big Ten)
Nov. 21	at Illinois*	TBA	TBA	6-7 (4-5 Big Ten)
Nov. 28	MICHIGAN*	TBA	TBA	9-4 (6-3 Big Ten)
Dec. 5	Big Ten Championship**	8 p.m.	TBA	

\* 2019 bowl team  
 \*\* at Indianapolis (Lucas Oil Stadium)

lot of weight and get stronger," Day said of Vimahi following the season. "He's super athletic. His father is one of his coaches, and he from a young age has trained him to be an offensive lineman

but has done a lot of things with flexibility, with bodyweight stuff. And so he's very, very athletic, very agile, and with his lower half, we think he's got the ability to put on a lot of weight."

Next up is sophomore linebacker Craig Young, who jumped 28 pounds, from 200 to 228. Young's position was unknown for much of 2019, but it appears that Ohio State is comfortable with moving him to outside linebacker full time.

Redshirt freshman tight end Cade Stover and redshirt freshman safety Bryson Shaw both added 20 pounds, with Stover listed at 255 pounds and Shaw at 195. Redshirt freshman defensive end Noah Potter and sophomore wide receiver Jameson Williams checked in just below that 20 mark, gaining 19 each, with Potter weighing in at 271 pounds, while Williams moved into a sturdier 188 pounds.

There were several significant weight losses as well, starting with freshman lineman Trey Leroux, who dropped 20 pounds from his high school listed weight of 355 and now sits at 335 pounds, much closer to where Ohio State wants him. Senior linebacker Baron Browning dropped eight pounds as he eyes a move to the open outside linebacker spot, now sitting at 240 pounds.

Sophomore wideout Jaelen Gill lost seven pounds and is now 188. Junior wide receiver Elijah Gardiner lost five pounds and is down to 200, and redshirt senior linebacker Justin Hilliard lost four

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to move to 231.

Ohio State's players didn't just see physical changes, as a number of key contributors will also be donning new uniform numbers next season.

Wide receiver Chris Olave is now No. 2; linebacker Teradja Mitchell is No. 3, as is wideout Demario McCall; cornerback Sevyn Banks is living up to his namesake and has taken No. 7; defensive end Zach Harrison switched to No. 9; safety Josh Proctor is making a full-time move to No. 15; safety Marcus Hooker is now No. 23; halfback Marcus Crowley is No. 24; defensive tackle Jerron Cage is No. 55; and offensive lineman Harry Miller is No. 76.

Early enrollees were also assigned their numbers. Cornerback Lejond Cavazos and wide receiver Julian Fleming are No. 4; C.J. Stroud will take No. 7 while his quarterback counterpart, Jack Miller is No. 9; wideouts Mookie Cooper, Jaxon Smith-Njigba and Gee Scott Jr. are No. 10, 11 and 13 respectively; cornerback Ryan Watts is No. 16; safety Kourt Williams is No. 29; offensive lineman Luke Wypler is No. 58; defensive tackle Darrion Henry-Young is No. 59; Leroux took No. 69; Johnson is No. 77; and defensive end Jacolbe Cowan is No. 93.

Lastly, Stover is now a tight end (formerly linebacker), redshirt freshman Cormontae Hamilton is moving to the defensive line (formerly tight end) and McCall is listed as a wide receiver rather than an H-back.

"We think he projects into being a really good tight end," Day said of Stover.

### NCAA Considering Several Rule Changes

As part of its annual offseason review of rules, the NCAA is eyeing a few key changes to both on the field and transfer rules with its newest proposals, released on Feb. 28 by the NCAA Football Rules Committee. The rules will be considered by the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel on April 16, and they will decide which changes will be enacted.

The most significant proposal may actually come on the transfer front, with a rule that will be considered by the Transfer Waiver Working Group. The rule states that players would be permitted to transfer once with immediate eligibility at their new school, as long as they receive a transfer release, leave their previous school academically eligible, maintain that eligibility and leave under no disciplinary suspension.

"The current system is unsustainable," said working group chair Jon Steinbrecher, commissioner of the Mid-American Conference. "Working group members believe it's time to bring our transfer rules more in line with today's college landscape. This concept provides a uniform approach that is understandable, predictable and objective. Most importantly, it benefits students."

The rule would put baseball, basketball, football and men's ice hockey on the same immediate eligible criteria as all other sports.

"More than a third of all college students transfer at least once, and the Division I rule prohibiting immediate competition for students who play five sports hasn't discouraged them from transferring," Steinbrecher said. "This dynamic has strained the waiver process, which was designed to handle extenuating and extraordinary circumstances."

"We know that challenges will exist

with this concept, particularly as it relates to other coaches potentially tampering with currently enrolled student-athletes. The working group will continue to examine this, as well as any potential financial aid and academic impacts, so the council can make a fully informed decision."

Moving to rules impacting play on the field specific to football, the committee proposed four changes, starting with a rule that would eliminate the so-called "walk of shame" that players take to the locker room following an ejection for targeting. In the proposal, players would be allowed to stay on the sidelines in the team area, though the rest of the targeting rule was not touched by the committee. The walk to the locker room was initially added with the implementation of the targeting rule in 2013.

"In reviewing the trends in targeting, the committee is encouraged and pleased with how the rules have clearly had a positive impact on our game," said David Shaw, chair of the committee and head coach at Stanford University. "We are encouraged by the improvements in the way our officials, our coaches and our players have worked to keep our game exciting and make it safer. We will continue to look for ways to improve our approach to targeting, but we strongly believe we are on the right path."

On the topic of duplicate numbers, the committee stated that teams should only be allowed to have two players wearing a number, to prevent confusion in scouting for future opponents, as well as for referees and score keepers in games. To alleviate high demand for single digit numbers, the committee also stated that the No. 0 should become legal for players to wear.

An increase in pregame jurisdiction time for referees from the current 60 minutes up to 90 to prevent negative interactions between teams and a guideline to complete instant replay reviews in less than two minutes were also proposed.

The committee looked into changes to rules regarding both kickoffs and blocking below the waist but determined that no changes were needed at this time.

"The goal of the committee is to continue to enhance the safety aspects of the kickoff in order to maintain the play in our game," said Steve Shaw, secretary-rules editor and national coordinator of officials. "Preliminary results seem to be trending in a positive direction, which is encouraging to the committee."

### Ohio State Announces Spring Practice Schedule

Ohio State officially announced its spring football schedule on Feb. 27, with the Buckeyes kicking camp off on March 2 with an 8:30 a.m. practice that was open to the media.

Moving forward, Ohio State will practice 13 times prior to the April 11 spring game, taking a weeklong break for spring break from March 9-13.

Along with the spring practice slate, Ohio State announced that its annual Pro Day would take place on March 25.

### Kenny Parker Returns To Ohio State

Strength and conditioning director Mickey Marotti's staff took a hit this offseason, with former defensive coordinator Jeff Hafley taking longtime Marotti assistant Phil Matusz with him to Boston College.

## BSB Spring Football Coverage Set

Ohio State spring football is in full swing, and Buckeye Sports Bulletin will be offering extensive coverage, both in print and online, as the Buckeyes prepare for another run at the national championship. BSB will mail print issues on March 17, March 31, April 11 with coverage of the spring game and April 25 with our Spring Football Wrap-Up.

In between those print publications, the staff of BSB will be providing daily updates at our electronic BuckeyeSports.com website, free to BSB subscribers. Additionally, football recruiting is ongoing and covered at BuckeyeSports.com, and readers will also want to follow both basketball teams as they venture into the postseason.

Subscribers can also talk about spring football, recruiting and other events of the day with members of the BSB staff and other Buckeye fans on BuckeyeSports.com's Forum. Reprint Thursdays are another popular feature with an interesting mix of stories from the archives of Buckeye Sports Bulletin reprinted each week.

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It didn't take long for Marotti to find a replacement, however, and he did so with a familiar face. Kenny Parker served as an assistant under Marotti from 2012 to 2016 before leaving with another former defensive coordinator, Chris Ash, to take over as Rutgers' strength and coordinating director.

With Ash out and Greg Schiano in, Parker was not retained in Piscataway. He has rejoined Ohio State as the assistant director of strength and conditioning.

Parker initially came to Ohio State in 2012 following a two-year stint with Murray State as a defensive line coach and strength and conditioning coordinator.

He played for Florida from 2001-2005 as a defensive tackle before joining Meyer's staff in Gainesville as an intern and strength staff assistant from 2005-2010.

Continued On Page 6

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Continued From Page 5

**Covelli To Host The Basketball Tournament**

The Basketball Tournament, an annual event which hosts 64 independent basketball teams composed primarily of semiprofessional and former college basketball players, is headed to Ohio State's Covelli Center.

"We're excited to partner with The Ohio State University to bring TBT to the Covelli Center," TBT founder and CEO Jon Mugar said. "Watching Carmen's Crew dethrone Overseas Elite last year was unforgettable. It was especially meaningful for the thousand Carmen's Crew fans that shared in the two-million-dollar prize. There's no better place for the team and its fans to begin its march to defend its title than back on campus at Ohio State."

The tournament has had a Columbus regional since its inception in 2017, but the partnership with Ohio State is new, as games in the past had been played at Capital University. Ohio State's connections to the tournament are strong, with one of its best teams over the first three years, Carmen's Crew, consisting primarily of former Buckeyes.

The team, led by Aaron Craft, William Buford and Jon Diebler, won the tournament in 2019, taking home the \$2 million prize, which comes with a first-place finish.

Both Craft and Diebler are expected to return for the upcoming tournament this summer.

Joining those two will be two more familiar faces in Jared Sullinger and Evan Turner, who will help to coach the team.

"There's no better place to have the tournament," Turner said. "I think that it's going to be so special and fun to play at a place where we all became men. I think our guys are going to show up and show out and make the Buckeye faithful proud. This is definitely something I'm excited for and can't wait to be part of, and I know everybody in the city feels the same way!"

The partnership with Ohio State will bring quite a few games to the Covelli Center, including two games on both July 23 and 24 in the first round, two games on July 25, and the regional championship on July 26.

It also serves as an effort for Ohio State to connect with its basketball history.

"Our program prides itself on welcoming back our former players, and having Carmen's Crew back on campus for the Columbus Regional of The Basketball Tournament takes that to a new level," said Ohio State men's basketball head coach Chris Holtmann. "Buckeye Nation will once again be able to cheer on legendary Buckeyes in our newest modern facility, the Covelli Center. TBT will be yet another opportunity for Carmen's Crew to continue its success playing in Columbus in front of our tremendous fans."

The 64-team bracket will be unveiled on June 22, including Carmen's Crew's first-round matchup.

**Vonn Bell's Brother Killed In Accident**

The older brother of former Ohio State safety Vonn Bell, Volonte, was killed in a car accident on Feb. 23, in Chattanooga, Tenn. The Chattanooga police said that he was traveling on Interstate 24 when he failed to slow down for a truck in front of him that was hauling a trailer. He struck the trailer and was pronounced dead at the scene by Hamilton County EMS.

Volonte, 29, had worked as an assis-

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tant coach with the Chattanooga State Community College men's basketball team for the past three seasons. The team issued a statement on the loss.

"The Chattanooga State family is deeply saddened by the passing of Volonte Bell. Volonte was killed in a tragic car accident last night," the statement said. "He has been a valued member of our men's basketball coaching staff for the last three seasons and will be greatly missed."

Head coach Jay Price spoke glowingly of the departed assistant in an interview with the Free Press.

"This was probably his last year to coach with us because he was too good at such a young age not to be moving up," said Price. "His personality made him a perfect fit for the coaching world because he never met a stranger, he could talk to anybody and didn't mind working hard. He had such a bright future ahead of him. It's just hard to believe."

On Feb. 24, Vonn posted a Tweet thanking people who had sent their condolences to him and his family.

"Thanks to everyone for all the love and support to my family and I during this time," Bell said. "We're grieving right now, this one hits different."

**Withers Joins Texas As Analyst**

Yet another former Ohio State assistant is headed to Texas, this time in a consultant capacity. Former Buckeye defensive coordinator Everett Withers is following in the footsteps of head coach Tom Herman, defensive coordinator Chris Ash, running backs coach Stan Drayton, and offensive coordinator Mike Yurcich as former Buckeye coaches making the move to Austin.

Withers, who left Ohio State following the 2013 season to take over as the head coach at James Madison, has bounced around jobs since his departure. After two years with James Madison, Withers had a three-year stint at Texas State that ended in his firing before returning to the position coaching ranks at defensive back in 2019 with the New York Giants.

Now, Withers will be taking at least a year off from coaching on the field, spending the 2020 season with Texas as an analyst.

Texas has not announced his official role and likely won't, as analyst roles are rarely specified, but he's expected to assist Ash in defensive preparation.



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# Defensive Backs Arrested, Dismissed From Team

By ANDREW LIND  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Ohio State senior cornerback Amir Riep and fifth-year senior linebacker/safety Jahsen Wint were arrested and charged with rape and kidnapping by Columbus Police on Feb. 12 and subsequently dismissed from the football program by head coach Ryan Day.

"I am not making any statement on the criminal charges, but it is clear they did not live up to our standards and my expectations," Day said in a statement released that evening. "The athletics department will make sure they both continue to have access to the health and well-being resources available to students and student-athletes. Due to the ongoing criminal investigation, I will not be commenting further."

According to an affidavit filed by Columbus Police, the 19-year-old alleged victim visited the defendants' apartment on the night of Feb. 4 to watch a movie. She began to engage in consensual sex with Riep but moved away and said she did not want to continue.

Wint is then accused of entering the room and restraining the woman while both defendants forced her to have non-

consensual vaginal and oral sex.

After the encounter had ended but before he drove her home, Riep made the woman shower and record a video stating the encounter was consensual, although reportedly she can be seen crying in the video.

Bond was set at \$100,000 for Riep and \$75,000 for Wint by judge Cynthia Ebner at the Franklin County Municipal Court

on Feb. 13 under the condition that neither contact each other or the victim or discuss the case on social media.

"Perhaps the judge felt that one of them was more culpable than the other given the facts that were presented by the attorneys at the arraignment hearing," Eric Hoffman, an experienced criminal defense lawyer in Columbus, told Buckeye Sports Bulletin. "Bond is based upon a number of factors, and they all relate

to risk of flight, their criminal history and also the severity of the offense. Obviously, a felony of this level – which is very severe – has a bond that is much higher than less-serious offenses. They may look at past records, like if they ever had warrants for their arrest or if they've failed to appear in court before.

"If everything else was equal and these guys have no record and have never been charged before, the only distinguishing

factor may be some of the facts that relate to their culpability in regard to this offense. The judge may be thinking one of them is more culpable, more responsible or more involved than the other for whatever reason, and even then, that's probably one of the least-serious factors to consider. They're looking at all of the factors together – a totality of circumstances evaluation."

Riep was previously convicted of disorderly conduct in Hamilton County June 22, 2018. Accompanying charges of assault and endangering children were dismissed, however.

Both men were then indicted by the Franklin County grand jury during a preliminary hearing on Feb. 21 on two counts of rape and one count of kidnapping, both first-degree felonies.

"If convicted on these charges, both men face a maximum consecutive term of 33 years of incarceration, as well as registration as sex offenders," Franklin County prosecutor Ron O'Brien said in a statement.

Riep – a 6-1, 185-pounder from Cincinnati Colerain – was expected to compete for a starting spot at slot corner this fall after backing up Shaun Wade at the position last season. Defense attorney Karl Schneider told those gathered at the courthouse on Feb. 21 that his hope is his client will be exonerated.

"This is a process, but we're confident that that's the way it will play out," Schneider said. "I'm not a lawyer that wants to give too many extrajudicial comments or try the case in the media, so we'll let 12 men and women decide that, if it gets that far."

The 6-0, 198-pound Wint, meanwhile, was expected to compete for playing time at the Bullet position manned by senior Pete Werner. His attorney, Sam Shamansky, said Wint consented to a DNA swab and has accurately and honestly answered all questions asked of him.

"I can tell you based on what I know, and based on my client's alleged involvement, that once this case is fully reviewed, I'm going to submit that there was absolutely no crime committed," Shamansky told the court. "Most rapists don't hang around, answer

questions and then turn themselves in. "The reason that Mr. Wint did all of those things is because he is most certainly not a rapist."

Both men are scheduled to be arraigned in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas on March 6 at 1:30 p.m.

Asked during his press conference on March 2 if either player could return to the team if they were exonerated, Day simply replied, "No."



Amir Riep



Jahsen Wint



HONORING MARTY BRENNAMAN

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# Ohio State Continues To Roll Despite Adversity

Continued From Page 1

"It's a lot of stuff that you guys haven't seen," Washington said. "A lot of the work that we've put in and a lot of the time off the floor that we spend with each other, it's stuff like that that shows in moments like this. It's something that we say to each other all the time: 'We're built for this. This is what we're made for. This is why we came to Ohio State, for moments like this.' Preaching that and believing in that 100 percent is why we're playing well right now."

The Buckeyes are second best in the Big Ten in scoring margin at plus-9.9, which trails only Michigan State at plus-11.3. They have played well on both ends of the floor, ranking fourth in the conference in field-goal percentage at 44.7 percent and third in field-goal percentage defense with opponents shooting just 39.2 percent against them through games of March 1.

"Coach Holtmann always tells us, 'One possession at a time.' That's been our big emphasis," Walker said. "We just take one possession at a time, do the best you can on that possession and worry about whatever else later. Just worry about that moment, specifically, and go as hard as you can. That's what we've been doing, whether teams are making shots, or we're not making shots, just one possession at a time and go from there."

Ohio State has played better all-around basketball since the losing skid, even with a lack of depth. With a short rotation, the Buckeyes have had to prepare for more minutes. While some teams might dial back practice to save the players' legs, Ohio State players have ramped it up to



SONNY BROCKWAY

**THE FACILITATOR** – Junior point guard C.J. Walker leads the Buckeyes in assists (3.5) and steals (1.3) per game.

build endurance.

"We practice hard every day," Walker said. "It starts in practice, pushing each other every day, knowing that we're going to have to do it in games, so why not do it in practice? Try to build that and prepare for the moment."

From the suspensions of Washington

and sophomore guard Luther Muhammad earlier in the season to the absences of Carton and Young to the stretch of six losses in seven games, the Buckeyes have faced significant adversity. After responding with eight wins in 10 games, Holtmann addressed the resolve of his group.

"I've just been really pleased with the

character of this group given some of those things," Holtmann said. "I'm just really pleased. We've battled, and I hope we can continue that this last week going into the Big Ten tournament. It's been really good to see. I've been really proud of them. We'll see how we move forward."

## Liddell Steps Up In Young's Absence

When Young went down against Maryland, Ohio State was left thin in the frontcourt. Senior forward Andre Wesson, junior big man Kaleb Wesson and freshmen forwards Alonzo Gaffney, Ibrahima Diallo and E.J. Liddell represented the only healthy frontcourt players on schol-

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The Wesson brothers were already two of the top contributors for the Buckeyes, playing most of every game. Gaffney and Diallo have shown that they have a bit of growth to do before Holtmann relies on them for significant minutes.

That left Liddell, who was coming off a career night in a loss at Iowa Feb. 20, where he scored 17 points, grabbed eight rebounds and blocked two shots. The freshman forward rose to the occasion in Young's absence against Maryland. In 12 minutes off the bench, Liddell grabbed five rebounds, including three on the offensive boards, and played solid defense in the paint.

"E.J. Liddell was critical in the second half," Holtmann said of the 79-72 OSU victory. "He was critical with offensive rebounding against the zone, and then he challenged three attempts from a couple of their guys. E.J. will have to be that for us."

Liddell followed up his excellent play against the Terrapins with an all-around performance at Nebraska, where the Belleville, Ill., native scored eight points, blocked five shots and grabbed five boards, including four on the offensive glass.

"Kyle brings a lot of energy, and I try to duplicate that energy," Liddell said. "When Kyle's not there, I have to bring that energy at that position. When Kyle's not in, we all have to bring some type of energy, aggressiveness and extra hustle."

Filling in for a high-energy player like Young, who does all of the little things for the team and makes hustle plays on a consistent basis, is no small task. Liddell has brought added effort and helped earn extra possessions for the Buckeyes since Young's injury.

"I'm really pleased with E.J.'s progression, but he's just got to keep growing," Holtmann said. "Like any freshman, there are ups and downs, but he's giving us quality minutes. He got frustrated with a couple shots he missed the other day. I told him he's just got to keep fighting through it. He's got a really good approach right now."

While Holtmann has noticed Liddell's progress, his teammates also have witnessed tremendous growth from the former two-time Illinois Mr. Basketball winner.

"He's learned a lot," Washington said of Liddell. "In practice he goes really hard, pays attention and locks into stuff that's important. He works on his game every day. For him, just getting better little by little has been huge for him and huge for us. Especially with Kyle and his ankle, he's going to have to fill a role and maybe do a little more – whatever Coach asks him to do. And he's ready for it."

Expressing the same confidence in Liddell, Walker offered specific examples of how the talented freshman has impacted the game on both ends of the floor.

"His energy off the bench, blocking shots, getting offensive rebounds, finishing around the rim, making midrange shots," Walker said of Liddell's contributions. "I just feel like he brings a lot to our team on both sides of the ball. He's prepared for the moment."

### Living By The Three, Thriving By The Three

The old saying goes 'live by the three, die by the three.' And right now, the Buckeyes are not just living, they're thriving from deep.

Ohio State leads the Big Ten in three-

point shooting at 37.8 percent, which is more than 2.5 percent ahead of second-place Michigan and ranks No. 16 nationally. The Buckeyes have also hit the most three-pointers of any team in the conference with 253.

After the Buckeyes shot 10 for 25 (40.0 percent) from distance against the Terrapins, Holtmann explained the importance of making three-pointers for his team.

"I don't know if we can beat really good people without making a number of threes," Holtmann said, "because that's the strength of several guys on our team."

Holtmann's squad has five players shooting 40.0 percent or higher from three, though Washington is the only Buckeye with enough attempts to qualify for the Big Ten leaderboard. The sophomore guard has hit exactly 40.0 percent (52 of 130) of his tries from deep, ranking third in the conference.

"We like to play inside-out, whether that's throwing the ball into the paint or creating opportunities for kick-out threes," Washington said. "It's something that we work on every day in practice. We just try to knock down as many as we can and take good looks."

Andre Wesson leads the team at 44.3 percent (43 of 97) from deep, with his brother Kaleb ranking second at 43.0 percent (43 of 100). Sophomore wing Justin Ahrens is known for his shooting and has hit 41.1 percent (23 of 56) of his attempts from beyond the arc this season.

Carton, who has been away from the team since Jan. 30, made 40.0 percent (24 of 60) of his three-point attempts before taking the leave of absence to address his mental health.

The other two primary three-point shooters for the Buckeyes are Muhammad and Walker, who are shooting 34.4 percent (32 of 93) and 32.9 percent (27 of 82) from three-point range, respectively.

"It's one of the important things for our team," Walker said. "When we're making threes, it just opens up our offense and creates other opportunities, getting into the paint, getting into the post and just being able to create in different ways. If we're hitting threes, it means a lot to our offense."



SONNY BROCKWAY

**GO-TO OPTION** – Junior big man Kaleb Wesson leads Ohio State in scoring and rebounding, averaging 14.0 points and 9.6 rebounds per game. He also ranks second in three-point shooting at 43.0 percent.

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# Top Prospects Remain High On Ohio State

With in-person contact between coaches and prospects forbidden, you would think football's newly implemented February dead period would signify a break in the seemingly year-round recruiting calendar.

That was hardly the case, though, as several of the nation's best players used the time to assess their long lists of scholarship offers and announce their top schools.

Among them, Suwanee (Ga.) North Gwinnett four-star linebacker Barrett Carter

## RECRUITING OUTLOOK Andrew Lind

included Ohio State in his top 11 on Feb. 12 alongside Alabama, Auburn, Clemson, Duke, Florida, Florida State, Georgia, Georgia Tech, LSU and Oklahoma.

The 6-1, 210-pound Carter is considered the fourth-best linebacker and No. 54 prospect overall in the class of 2021, recording 76 tackles, nine sacks and nine tackles for loss to lead the Bulldogs to the state semi-finals last season.

The Buckeyes extended a scholarship offer to Carter last April, and he and his teammate, 2021 four-star cornerback Jordan Hancock, made their first trip to Columbus for the 38-7 win over Wisconsin in late October.

Carter – who is originally from Chicago but moved to the Atlanta suburb when he was 7 years old – is being recruited heavily by head coach Ryan Day, defensive coordinator/area recruiter Kerry Coombs and linebackers coach Al Washington. All three stopped by North Gwinnett in January to check on him and Hancock.

The duo is expected to return to Columbus for an unofficial visit that coincides with a spring practice in March. They have also tentatively scheduled their official visits for June 12-14.

Pulling Carter away from the home-state Bulldogs will not be an easy task for Ohio State, which views Carter as the perfect fit for its Bullet position thanks to his abilities in coverage and in the box. But the Buckeyes are widely viewed as the favorite for Hancock, and there's talk about them being a package deal.

### Ohio State Finalist For Carolina Running Back

The following day, Cornelius (N.C.) William Amos Hough four-star running back Evan Pryor narrowed down his list of nearly three dozen scholarship offers to a final six of Georgia, North Carolina, Ohio State, Oklahoma, Penn State and USC.

The 5-10, 190-pound Pryor – who is considered the fifth-best running back and the No. 84 prospect overall in the 2021 recruiting class – has amassed 3,674 yards and 42 total touchdowns in his three-year varsity career.

The Buckeyes are expected to take two running backs this cycle, and Pryor has been among the staff's top priorities at the position since assistant coach Tony Alford extended a scholarship offer last February. The two have become close in the meantime, with Pryor receiving one-on-one instruction from Alford during an

instructional camp in Columbus in mid-June and then returning to campus for an unofficial visit for the 28-17 win over Penn State in late November.

Alford, offensive coordinator Kevin Wilson and wide receivers coach Brian Hartline also stopped by Pryor's high school on separate occasions during the January contact period. Hartline's involvement is noteworthy because it suggests Ohio State views Pryor as a versatile weapon who could make an impact in both the running and passing game.

Pryor has indicated he'd like to make his college decision in April, so it goes without saying his expected but unscheduled visit in March looms large – especially with the Tar Heels making a significant push in his recruitment following a pair of trips to Chapel Hill in the last two months.

If Pryor ultimately does commit to the Buckeyes, the staff will look to pair him with Garland (Texas) Lakeview Centennial five-star Camar Wheaton; Hopewell, Va., five-star TreVeyon Henderson; Matthews (N.C.) Weddington five-star Will Shipley; West Bloomfield, Mich., four-star Donovan Edwards; Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy four-star Lovasea Carroll; Lilburn (Ga.) Parkview four-star Cody Brown; or Cincinnati Roger Bacon four-star Corey Kiner.

But if Pryor goes elsewhere, there are plenty of other options – unlike last cycle when Alford thought he had a pair of elite running backs committed in June and ultimately settled for a three-star in-state prospect late in the process.

### Missouri Cornerback Lists OSU Among Top Schools

Similarly, St. Louis De Smet Jesuit four-star cornerback Jakailin "J.K." Johnson placed Ohio State in his top six on Feb. 14 alongside Clemson, Florida, Missouri, Oklahoma and USC.

The 6-0, 168-pound Johnson is considered the fourth-best cornerback and No. 59 prospect overall in the class of 2021. He recorded 42 tackles and seven interceptions to help the Spartans to their second state title in school history.

Johnson – the cousin of Buckeyes sophomore wide receiver Jameson Williams – landed an offer from Ohio State last May but was considered a heavy Notre Dame lean at the time. He took an unofficial visit for the program's inaugural Buckeye Bash and BBQ a few weeks later and returned to campus again for the 34-10 win over Michigan State in October.

The sudden departure of cornerbacks coach Todd Lyght, who left the Fighting Irish in January after five seasons to pursue opportunities in the NFL, allowed Ohio State to get back in the picture with Johnson, and the subsequent hiring of Coombs thrust the Buckeyes to the forefront of his recruitment.

Notre Dame reportedly interviewed Johnson's head coach at De Smet, Robert Steeples, for the vacant position. Whether it was an attempt to rekindle the flame proved irrelevant, though, after the Fighting Irish hired former Cincinnati assistant Mike Mickens instead.

Coombs, Hartline and assistant secondary coach Matt Barnes each visited Johnson in late January, meanwhile, and he's set to return to campus in an unofficial capacity for the annual spring game on April 11. A decision does not appear immi-



COURTESY OF EVAN PRYOR

**CLOSE TO A DECISION** – Evan Pryor, one of the top-rated running backs in the 2021 recruiting class, included Ohio State among his final six schools as he heads toward an April commitment.

### OSU Football Verbal Commitments

Players in the class of 2021 who have issued a verbal commitment to play football at Ohio State.

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Jayden Ballard	WR	6-3	175	★★★★	Massillon (Ohio) Washington
Reid Carrico	LB	6-3	225	★★★★	Ironton, Ohio
Ben Christman	OT	6-6	299	★★★★	Richfield (Ohio) Revere
Michael Hall	DT	6-3	290	★★★★	Streetsboro, Ohio
Marvin Harrison	WR	6-4	184	★★★★	Philadelphia St. Joseph's
Sam Hart	TE	6-5	225	★★★	Aurora (Colo.) Cherokee Trail
Donovan Jackson	OT	6-4	308	★★★★	Bellaire (Texas) Episcopal
Jaylen Johnson	S	6-1	205	★★★	Cincinnati La Salle
Kyle McCord	QB	6-3	204	★★★★	Philadelphia St. Joseph's Pre
Jack Sawyer	DE	6-5	220	★★★★★	Pickerington (Ohio) North



# ASK AN ANALYST

## With Buckeye Grove's Marc Givler

While Michigan has long been considered the favorite to land a commitment from West Bloomfield, Mich., four-star running back Donovan Edwards, Ohio State appears to be making a significant push in his recruitment. What are the chances the Buckeyes are able to pull him away from the home-state Wolverines?

"I think it's a three-team race between Ohio State, Michigan and Georgia at this point. Ohio State has recruited him as hard as any program and will get him back on campus soon. I would give Michigan a slight edge, but the Buckeyes have been pretty relentless here and are certainly in the mix to land him."

Ohio State has signed just two players from the state of Washington in running back/wide receiver Kevin Griffin in 1994 and wide receiver Gee Scott in 2020. The Buckeyes could double that if they land Sammamish Eastside Catholic five-star defensive tackle J.T. Tuimoloau and Steilacoom five-star athlete Emeka Egbuka this cycle. How likely is that to happen?

"I would bet against Ohio State landing both of the

Washington guys, but they seem to be right there in the top two or three for each. Tuimoloau needs to visit. Ohio State is perceived to be the biggest threat to in-state Washington here, and once he visits, that could potentially turn things the Buckeyes' way. Egbuka is a national battle with Alabama, Clemson, Stanford and Washington, with the Tigers and Huskies perhaps being the Buckeyes' biggest competition. Ohio State has a chance for both guys, but odds would probably dictate they don't land both. I think they end up pulling off one of these, though."

Although Ohio State already holds a commitment from one tight end for the class of 2021 in Colorado three-star Sam Hart, the staff plans to take two this cycle. Who are some players at the position to keep in mind moving forward?

"Tight end recruiting is pretty unpredictable at this point. I think the Buckeyes would love to finish things out with Savannah (Tenn.) Hardin County four-star Hudson Wolfe, but that won't be an easy pull. Bowling Green, Ky., three-star Jordan Dingle has expressed serious interest, has an offer, has

visited multiple times and should be on the short list of candidates. Hilliard (Ohio) Bradley three-star Jack Pugh could be a dark-horse candidate as a local prospect with a lot of upside and now finally focusing on football after not playing the sport for a few years to focus on basketball."

With Ironton, Ohio, four-star Reid Carrico already in the fold and limited turnover expected following the 2020 season, the linebacker position isn't one of great need for Ohio State this cycle. How many players do you expect the Buckeyes to take, and who are some notable targets?

"I'd be a little bit surprised if Ohio State took more than one more linebacker. Carrico is in and three-star commit Jaylen Johnson from Cincinnati La Salle is a hybrid safety/linebacker. He's more Pete Werner than Jordan Fuller, though. That should allow Ohio State to be very picky and focus on landing just one more and perhaps even passing on taking another linebacker this cycle if they can't get a guy they love."

ment, though it's not something to rule out if the staff pushes for a commitment in the near future.

Ohio State is looking to reload once again at the cornerback position with Marcus Williamson set to graduate and Shaun Wade, Sevyn Banks and Cameron Brown all eligible to enter the NFL draft following the 2020 season. In addition to Johnson, the Buckeyes' top targets at the position include the previously-mentioned

Hancock; Virginia Beach (Va.) Princess Anne five-star Tony Grimes; Nashville Ensworth four-star Andre Turrentine; and IMG Academy four-star Kamar Wilcoxson, a two-time Florida commit who has already scheduled an official visit to Ohio State for June 12-14.

### Another Wideout Shows Interest In Buckeyes

Also on Feb. 14, Atlanta Pace Academy

four-star wide receiver Jayden Thomas listed Ohio State in his top 11 alongside Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, LSU, Michigan, North Carolina, Notre Dame, Tennessee and Virginia Tech.

The 6-1, 198-pound Thomas – who is considered the 34th-best wide receiver and No. 182 prospect overall in the 2021 recruiting class – appeared in just five games last season while battling a turf toe injury but otherwise has hauled in 83 passes for 1,224

yards and eight touchdowns in his high school career.

Thomas was among the first prospects in his class to land an offer from the Buckeyes during a satellite camp at Clark Atlanta University in June 2018 and made his first and only trip to campus for the 62-39 win over Michigan the following November.

Continued On Page 12



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# Buckeyes To Welcome Top Targets During Spring

Continued From Page 11

But since Ohio State just signed four of the nation's top 16 wide receivers from the class of 2020 in Julian Fleming, Jaxon Smith-Njigba, Gee Scott and Mookie Cooper and has two commitments at the position for 2021 in Philadelphia St. Joseph's Prep four-star Marvin Harrison and Massillon (Ohio) Washington four-star Jayden Ballard, Hartline can be a bit more selective as he looks to add just two more players this cycle.

Steliacoom, Wash., five-star Emeka Egbuka and Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) Cardinal Gibbons four-star Troy Stellato are at the top of the list, so Thomas' only hope of ending up in the class is if the Buckeyes miss out on one or both. However, he's in no rush to make a decision on his future, and he plans to return to campus this spring in hopes of furthering his relationship with Hartline and the rest of the staff.

## Top Offensive Linemen Trims List To 10 Schools

Clarkston, Mich., four-star offensive guard Rocco Spindler was the most recent prospect to narrow down an extensive list of scholarship offers, listing Ohio State in his top 10 alongside Alabama, Arizona State, Florida, LSU, Michigan, Notre Dame, Oklahoma, Penn State and Tennessee on March 2.

The 6-5, 295-pound Spindler – who is considered the second-best offensive guard and No. 49 prospect overall in the class of 2020 – is considered a heavy lean to the in-state Wolverines, with the Buckeyes and Fighting Irish both making a significant push, as well.

Although Ohio State is recruiting him as an offensive lineman, co-defensive coordinator Greg Mattison is Spindler's lead recruiter. Their relationship dates back to Mattison's time as Michigan's defensive line coach and when Spindler was unsure if his future was along the offensive or defensive line.

The Buckeyes already hold commitments from Bellaire (Texas) Episcopal four-star guard Donovan Jackson and Richfield (Ohio) Revere four-star tackle Ben Christman and hope to add three or four more players at the position this cycle. Other top targets include Fairfax (Va.) Robinson Secondary five-star tackle Tristan Leigh; Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy four-star tackle J.C. Latham; and Lexington (Ky.) Frederick Douglass four-star offensive guard Jager Burton.

Spindler was last on campus for the Buckeyes' 28-17 win over Penn State on Nov. 23 and is set to return for his official visit on May 1-3.

## Defensive Tackle Continues To Show Interest In OSU

Seemingly lost in the hoopla of National Signing Day festivities, Belleville, Mich., five-star defensive tackle Damon Payne included Ohio State in his top 10 on Feb. 4 alongside Alabama, Arizona State, Kentucky, LSU, Michigan, Oklahoma, Oregon, Penn State and USC.

The 6-4, 297-pound Payne is considered the third-best defensive tackle and No. 27 prospect overall in the class of 2021, as he recorded 59 tackles, 22 tackles for loss and eight sacks to lead the Tigers to the state semifinals last season.

Payne has visited Ohio State numerous



COURTESY OF TRAVION FORD

**PACKED SCHEDULE – St. Louis four-star defensive end Travion Ford, pictured with Ohio State head coach Ryan Day during his unofficial visit last March, is among the handful of prospects from the class of 2021 set to attend one of the Buckeyes' practices this spring.**

times in the last year, most recently for the 38-7 win over Wisconsin on Oct. 26.

The Buckeyes already hold commitments along the defensive line from Pickerington (Ohio) North five-star end Jack Sawyer and Streetsboro, Ohio, four-star tackle Michael Hall, and hope to add one or two more this cycle. Other notable targets include Sammamish (Wash.) Eastside Catholic five-star defensive tackle J.T. Tuimoloau and Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy four-star defensive tackle Tunmise Adeleye.

## Busy Spring Ahead For Buckeyes

With spring practice opening on March 2, Ohio State will welcome dozens of prospects from the 2021 and 2022 recruiting classes to campus to watch practice or the spring game.

Buckeye Sports Bulletin has confirmed visits for 2021 Ohio State five-star quarterback commit Kyle McCord on March 18 and 2021 four-star safety pledge Jaylen Johnson on March 28, as well as 2021 St. Louis Lutheran North four-star defensive end Travion Ford on March 6.

Other 2021 prospects planning visits are Katy, Texas, four-star cornerback Hunter Washington and 2021 Cincinnati La Salle three-star cornerback Devonta Smith on March 28, as well as Henderson and IMG Academy teammates Adeleye and four-star offensive tackle J.C. Latham on April 11.

Others from the 2021 class who are set to visit but have not yet set an exact

date include Carter, Edwards, Hancock, Kiner, Pryor and Tuimoloau; Rosenberg (Texas) Lamar Consolidated four-star running back Brandon Campbell; Winnetka (Ill.) New Trier four-star offensive tackle David Davidkov; Oak Park, Mich. four-star offensive tackle Rayshaun Benny; Gaithersburg (Md.) Quince Orchard four-star defensive end Demeioun Robinson and four-star defensive tackle Marcus Bradley; Monroeville (Pa.) Gateway four-star safety Derrick Davis; Fort Washington (Md.) National Christian Academy four-star defensive end Monkell Goodwine; Clemmons (N.C.) West Forsyth three-star offensive guard Jared Wilson; Nashville Pearl-Cohn three-star offensive tackle William Griffin; and Hyattsville (Md.) DeMatha Catholic three-star defensive end Colin Mobley.

Among 2022 prospects, Marysville, Ohio, linebacker Gabe Powers and Westerville (Ohio) South athlete Kaden Saunders have both indicated they plan to visit Ohio State but have not yet set dates.

## Recruiting Notes From Around The Country

• Egbuka was named the Alpha Dog of the Las Vegas Pylon 7-on-7 tournament on Feb. 22 after scoring nine touchdowns in three games to lead Heir Black to the championship. Ohio State freshman wide receiver Gee Scott took home the same honors last spring.

• Grimes, the top-rated cornerback in the 2021 recruiting class, has scheduled an unofficial visit to North Carolina for Nov.

20. He included the Tar Heels in his top 13 back in September alongside Alabama, Clemson, LSU, Maryland, Ohio State, Oklahoma, Penn State, South Carolina, Texas, Texas A&M, Virginia and Virginia Tech.

• Ohio State has picked up several 247Sports Crystal Ball Predictions in recent weeks for West Bloomfield, Mich., four-star running back Donovan Edwards and has pulled even with the home-state Wolverines at 50 percent apiece. 247Sports director of football recruiting Steve Wiltfong, 247Sports national recruiting analyst Allen Trieu, 247Sports recruiting insider Clint Brewster and Irish Illustrated recruiting analyst Tom Loy are the four who placed their prediction in favor of the Buckeyes.

• Adeleye and Latham went head-to-head during the Under Armour All-America Camp in Orlando on March 1, and the latter walked away from the event as the Alpha Dog. Adeleye was also among the top performers.

• Multiple sources have told Buckeye Sports Bulletin that Ohio State is no longer recruiting 2021 Dublin (Ohio) Coffman three-star safety A.J. Kirk – the younger brother of former Buckeye three-time All-American safety Mike Doss. Kirk missed his entire junior season after transferring schools.

*For the latest in Ohio State football recruiting news, be sure to check out BuckeyeSports.com, free to all BSB print subscribers, daily.*



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

### 35 Years Ago – 1985

Defense and size were key for Ohio State in the 1985 recruiting class.

“This is a better defensive recruiting class than last year,” said OSU recruiting coordinator Bob McNea. “It’s faster. We didn’t get as many skill-position players, but we already had skill players.

“We did get two good running backs,” he added, referring to Everett Ross and Vince Workman.

When McNea talked of the class being strong on defense, he was sure to talk about linebackers, of which Ohio State signed eight. They included Dennis Gossett, Dee Dee Howard, Derek Isaman, Jim Palmer, Paul Soltis, John and Mike Sullivan and Srecko Zizakovic.

“You play four linebackers,” McNea pointed out. “And some of these guys are on the verge of becoming big. They could end up playing as down linemen. And sometimes a kid is fast enough that he can play a linebacker and also be a nickel defensive back.”

### 30 Years Ago – 1990

Ohio State’s football coaching staff received much of the credit for luring in-state stars such as running back Robert Smith and quarterback Joe Pickens.

However, the toughest recruit to land was neither Smith nor Pickens, but rather Larry Kennedy of Riverview High School in Sarasota, Fla., rated the No. 1 defensive back in the country by Super Prep magazine.

Ohio State beat out Florida, Florida State, Miami and Notre Dame among others for Kennedy’s services.

“I just like Ohio State better,” Kennedy told BSB. “There is more social life than at Notre Dame and more opportunities to choose from. If I am going to be that far away from home, I will need something to keep my mind off of home.”

### 25 Years Ago – 1995

The signing of JUCO quarterback Joe Germaine sparked criticism in Columbus that Ohio State was without a true replacement for former quarterback Bobby Hoying, who was set to graduate following the 1995 season. The criticism rubbed Germaine’s former coach, Scottsdale (Ariz.) Community College’s Land Jacobsen, the wrong way.

“They don’t have a clue,” Jacobsen said of disappointed Buckeye backers. “He’ll be special. Bobby Hoying is a heck of a player, but before Joe is done there, people are going to forget about Bobby Hoying.”

While the words seemed strong, Jacobsen was not new to questions of Germaine, as he had once had them himself.

“We started him right away and after his first two games he really struggled,” Jacobsen said. “We were thinking about making a change for the next game, but we stuck with him and

– boom! – he came on right when we needed it.”

For Germaine, the focus was not on the critiques, but on finding his fit at Ohio State after cycling through several offenses early in his career.

“My whole life I’ve been a quarterback,” Germaine said. “I just feel very comfortable with it and I love doing it. Over the years, I’ve had the opportunity to run the wishbone, the option, the pro set, a run-and-shoot offense and even ball control. Hopefully I fit in with the program at Ohio State.”

### 20 Years Ago – 2000

Ohio State’s football recruiting class for 2001 doubled in size, as Dublin (Ohio) Coffman junior center Adam Olds was offered a scholarship and accepted.

Olds (6-5, 270) committed during a visit to campus. He spent time at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, visiting with new offensive line coach George Belu and recruiting coordinator Bill Conley.

“I talked to Coach Belu and he explained his coaching philosophy, and I liked that,” Olds told BSB. “We talked for about half an hour. Then I went to Coach Conley and he asked if I was ready to be a Buckeye.

“I said, ‘Yeah.’”

Olds joined Ironton, Ohio, linebacker Redgie Arden in OSU’s class of 2001.

### 15 Years Ago – 2005

Jim Tressel had nothing but support for his soon-to-be freshman recruits participating in high school all-star games.

That was the message to Canton (Ohio) GlenOak’s Brian Hartline, one of nine future Buckeyes selected to play in the prestigious Big 33 Football Classic, which was set to be played in Hershey, Pa., on July 23.

“He encouraged it,” Hartline said. “He said, ‘You go out there. You play your best and you make a statement for Ohio State and let everybody know the caliber you need to be to play here.’ He’s all for it.”

Hartline was joined in receiving an invitation by quarterback Rob Schoenhoft; wide receiver/defensive back Andre Amos; defensive lineman Todd Denlinger; linebacker Fred Lenix; safety Jamario O’Neal; wide receiver Brian Robiskie; linebacker Austin Spittler; and defensive lineman Lawrence Wilson. Offensive tackle Alex Boone was selected as well but opted not to play.

### 10 Years Ago – 2010

Ohio State extended a flurry of new scholarship offers for its class of 2011. Although the action did not result in any immediate commitments, the Buckeyes appeared to be on the cusp of breaking their dry spell.

No one had committed to Ohio State since October when

defensive end Steve Miller joined the 2011 class, but atop the list of potential soon-to-be verbal commitments were safety Jeremy Cash of Plantation, Fla., and Toledo Rogers cornerback DerJuan Gambrell.

Cash, a three-star prospect according to Scout.com, was reportedly at Ohio State on Feb. 27 but did not issue a commitment. Gambrell, an unranked prospect, had planned to be there as well but could not make it because of inclement weather.

### Five Years Ago – 2015

What started with a tweet appeared to have ended with a tweet.

Detroit Cass Tech four-star running back Mike Weber signed with Ohio State on Feb. 4, but OSU running backs coach Stan Drayton accepted the same position with the Chicago Bears one day later. Weber, disappointed by the loss of one of his primary recruiters and his future position coach, posted on Twitter, “I’m hurt as hell.”

The drama was compounded when his high school coach, Thomas Wilcher, lashed out on a radio show in Detroit, speaking up for his player at what he perceived to be intentional deceit from the Ohio State coaching staff. Speculation surfaced as to whether Weber would request a release from his National Letter of Intent and whether Ohio State would grant it if requested.

Just as soon as the storm came, it passed. Weber took to Twitter to extend a welcome to new running backs coach Tony Alford, ending any question of whether he’d try to seek a way out of Ohio State.

“(I) want to say congrats to Coach Drayton (and) wish nothing but the best, but excited to have @CoachTonyAlford aboard #GoBucks,” he wrote.

### One Year Ago – 2019

Ohio State saw the departure of a longtime pledge, dropping the 2020 class size to six pledges following the decommitment of four-star halfback and Akron native Darvon Hubbard.

Hubbard had committed July 25 to the Buckeyes, but his recruitment changed following the retirement of former head coach Urban Meyer. He announced his change of heart on Feb. 21.

“Thank you to all the fans and support I have received throughout this process from family and friends, coaches and all,” Hubbard posted on Twitter. “Much love to the Ohio State staff for believing in my ability to play the game and being from Ohio it’s been a dream of mine to play for Coach Urban Meyer.

“With the changes to the coaching staff I think it is best if I open my recruitment up. I will be decommitting from Ohio State. This is especially hard for me to say but OSU will still be a top school of mine, but right now I feel it’s best to explore my options.

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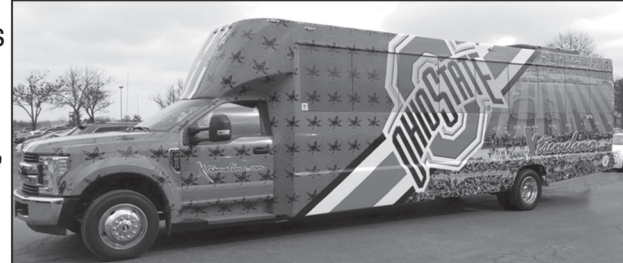


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# Analyzing Ohio State's Pre-Spring Depth Chart

By **ANDREW LIND**  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

With Ohio State opening spring practice on March 2, Buckeye Sports Bulletin has conducted a position-by-position breakdown of the roster.

Plenty of talent returns from last year's squad, which won the Big Ten championship and participated in the College Football Playoff semifinals. But there are also several question marks on the depth chart, as the Buckeyes must replace several starters and key contributors.

What follows is BSB's pre-spring projection of Ohio State's depth chart, which will be updated throughout the spring as various position battles begin to clear up in the weeks leading up to the annual spring game on April 11.

## Quarterback

Unlike the last two springs, Ohio State will not hold a competition this year to determine a new starting quarterback.

Instead, junior Justin Fields (6-3, 228) returns to Columbus following a season in which he completed 67.2 percent of his passes for 3,273 yards, scored 51 total touchdowns (41 passing and 10 rushing) and finished third in the Heisman Trophy voting. He also led the Buckeyes to their third straight Big Ten title and a berth in the College Football Playoff and is one of the biggest reasons they're among the early favorites to win the national championship in January 2021.

"I thought from game one all the way to that last game, he really improved," head coach Ryan Day said on Jan. 15. "It's exciting that we're going to have him back. I feel like over the last few, I haven't had a quarterback that's started and then come back and had another year with them. This is the first time I've had it since I can remember, so that's exciting."

On the other hand, the battle for the No. 2 spot on the depth chart will be one of the more intriguing storylines of the spring.

Fifth-year senior Gunnar Hoak (6-4, 215), who spent last season as Ohio State's third-string quarterback behind Fields and the now-departed Chris Chugunov after transferring from Kentucky, is the Buckeyes' one other returning scholarship quarterback. He saw limited playing time in that role and completed all six of his passing attempts for 104 yards and one score.

Ohio State signed a pair of four-star quarterbacks from the class of 2020 in Jack Miller (6-3, 215) and C.J. Stroud (6-3, 205), and it's probably safe to assume one of them will be the starter in 2021 upon Fields' expected early departure for the NFL. First-year quarterbacks coach Corey Dennis may be best served by giving them valuable reps in blowout wins as opposed to playing Hoak, given he'll exhaust his eligibility after this season.

## Running Back

Running back coach Tony Alford's biggest challenge last year was finding a backup to starter J.K. Dobbins, who went on to produce the greatest single-season rushing effort in school history with 2,003 yards and 21 touchdowns. But with Dobbins off to the NFL draft, where he's expected to be a late-first- or early-second-round pick, Alford will have his work cut out for him this spring.

The Buckeyes return four running backs

from last season, including fifth-year senior Demario McCall (5-9, 195); sophomores Master Teague (5-11, 225) and Marcus Crowley (6-1, 205); and redshirt freshman Steele Chambers (6-1, 220). But, for the most part, none of them saw meaningful carries, entering most games with the result well in hand.

"Obviously in the running back room, those guys will be pretty green," Day said. "Master played some this year, but we're going to have to replace J.K."

Teague certainly has a leg up on the competition after he rushed for 789 yards and four touchdowns on 135 carries last fall. However, it's worth noting his production dropped in the final four games of the season. He carried the ball just 21 times for 45 yards against Penn State, Michigan and Clemson and didn't see a single snap in the Big Ten Championship Game against Wisconsin.

Crowley, meanwhile, had 237 yards rushing and one touchdown in seven games last season but suffered a season-ending leg injury in the win over Maryland. If healthy, he appears to be Teague's biggest challenger. But if not, that opens the door for Chambers, who appeared in just four games – and rushed for 135 yards and one score – last season in order to retain a red-shirt year.

That leaves McCall, who has had quite the enigmatic career battling injuries and position changes, as the only other realistic option to start at running back. It's much more likely he'll be a situational back, though, after carrying the ball 18 times for 122 yards and two touchdowns last year.

## Wide Receiver

With starting wide receivers K.J. Hill, Austin Mack and Binjimen Victor off to the NFL, Ohio State will rely on junior Chris Olave more than ever, both in terms of his on-field production and as the leader in a room full of young but talented players.

Olave (6-1, 188) established himself as Fields' go-to target last fall, producing a team-leading 849 yards and 12 touchdowns on 49 catches while splitting time with Mack at the "Z" (flanker) position. However, his otherwise spectacular season was overshadowed by his self-admitted route-running mistake in the Fiesta Bowl that led to Clemson's game-sealing interception.

"Chris is the ultimate competitor," Day said. "Nobody cares more than Chris, and I know he's going to come back even more hungry. I think he's going to be a leader in that room. The only guy that's really been a starter is Chris, so all those other guys have to step up."

Sophomore Garrett Wilson (6-0, 193) is the only other returning receiver with double-digit catches last season, hauling in 30 passes for 432 yards and five touchdowns while rotating with Victor. He's now in line to be the starter at the "X" (split end) position, where he'll be backed up by classmate Jameson Williams (6-2, 188). Williams caught six passes for 112 yards as a freshman last season, including a 61-yard catch-and-run touchdown reception where he sped past would-be defenders.

Replacing Hill – who finished his career as the school's all-time leader in receptions with 201 catches – will be much more difficult, however.

Sophomore Jaelen Gill (6-0, 188) played sparingly last season but flashed his tal-

ent with a spectacular 32-yard touchdown catch when he made four defenders miss on his way to the end zone in a late-season win over Rutgers. This is a big spring for him, though, as early enrollees Mookie Cooper (5-10, 195) and Jaxon Smith-Njigba (6-0, 196) are eager to make an immediate impact.

One incoming freshman who figures to see playing time is five-star prospect Julian Fleming (6-2, 200), who is the program's third-highest rated commit ever behind quarterback Terrelle Pryor in 2008 and cornerback Ted Ginn Jr. in 2004. If he makes the necessary progress throughout the spring and summer, he'll likely follow Wilson's path from one year ago.

Other players hoping to crack the rotation include senior Jaylen Harris (6-5, 215), Elijah Gardiner (6-3, 200), sophomore Kamryn Babb (6-0, 197) and early enrollee Gee Scott (6-3, 210). The Buckeyes are also awaiting word on a sixth year of eligibility for slot receiver C.J. Saunders (5-10, 190), who – like Babb – missed all of last season with a knee injury.

## Tight End

This year might finally be the one in which Ohio State makes the tight end position an integral part of the offense.

The Buckeyes return their top two players at the position in senior Luke Farrell (6-6, 258) and junior Jeremy Ruckert (6-5, 253), and the lack of experience at wide receiver would suggest the duo will be more involved in the passing game than they were last season when Farrell caught seven passes for 119 yards and two touchdowns and Ruckert hauled in 14 passes for 142 yards and four scores – including a spectacular one-handed touchdown grab that seemingly turned the tide in the Big Ten Championship Game.

Most of the tight end position's contributions will still come in the form of blocking. That's where fifth-year senior Jake Hausmann (6-4, 255) comes into the equation.

Redshirt freshman Cade Stover (6-4, 255) hopes to make an impact with the tight ends, as well, after switching positions from defensive end.

## Offensive Line

With three returning starters and plenty of depth to replace the departed, Ohio State's offensive line should once again be one of its strongest units this season.

The Buckeyes welcome back senior left tackle Thayer Munford (6-6, 315), junior center Josh Myers (6-5, 312) and junior right guard Wyatt Davis (6-4, 315) from a group that helped the offense to 266.8 rushing yards per game and 39 rushing touchdowns, good for fifth and sixth in the country, respectively.

Davis garnered the most recognition of anyone along the line last season, being named first-team All-Big Ten and a first-team All-American by Sporting News and The Associated Press in his first season as a starter.

Munford, who enters his third and final season as the starter, dealt with separate ankle and back injuries, meanwhile, but managed to earn second-team all-conference honors nonetheless. Myers was also a second-team All-Big Ten selection as a first-year starter and will be the first multiyear starter at center for Ohio State since Jacoby Boren in 2014-15.

All three would have been selected in this year's NFL draft had they declared, but they instead opted to return to school for another season and another shot at a national title.

The Buckeyes lost two fifth-year seniors in left guard Jonah Jackson and right tackle Branden Bowen, but there are several young players champing at the bit to replace them.

Sophomore Nicholas Petit-Frere (6-5, 305) started one game last season in place of an injured Munford and should take over for Bowen after playing a total of 240 snaps between the two tackle spots.

Sophomore Harry Miller (6-4, 315), meanwhile, appeared in 13 games as Ohio State's second-team center. It's likely he moves to guard with Myers firmly entrenched in the middle, though, and then takes over at center when Myers heads to the next level.

Early enrollee Luke Wypler (6-3, 295) will likely be listed as Myers' backup for the time being.

Other linemen who saw considerable playing time last fall include fifth-year senior Gavin Cupp (6-4, 308) at right guard, sophomore Matthew Jones (6-4, 310) at left guard and sophomore Dawand Jones (6-8, 359) at right tackle. They should be the backups at their respective positions, while early enrollee Paris Johnson (6-6, 305) – the top-rated offensive tackle in the 2020 recruiting cycle – is next in line at left tackle.

## Defensive Line

There are no bigger shoes to fill than the ones left by unanimous All-American, Heisman Trophy finalist and presumed top-five pick Chase Young, who set the program single-season sack record with 16½ from his defensive end spot last year. But if there's one program in the country that can replace him with yet another elite prospect, it's Ohio State.

The Buckeyes will trot out fifth-year senior Jonathon Cooper (6-4, 257), a team captain who played in just four games and took a redshirt last season after dealing with a nagging ankle injury, and four others who were part of defensive line coach Larry Johnson's deep rotation at end last fall.

Juniors Tyreke Smith (6-4, 267) and Tyler Friday (6-3, 265) and sophomores Javontae Jean-Baptiste (6-5, 250) and Zach Harrison (6-6, 265) all played at least 200 snaps last season, so there's no shortage of experience at the position.

Redshirt freshmen Noah Potter (6-6, 271) and Cormontae Hamilton (6-2, 265) could also find playing time, as the latter moved from tight end during winter workouts.

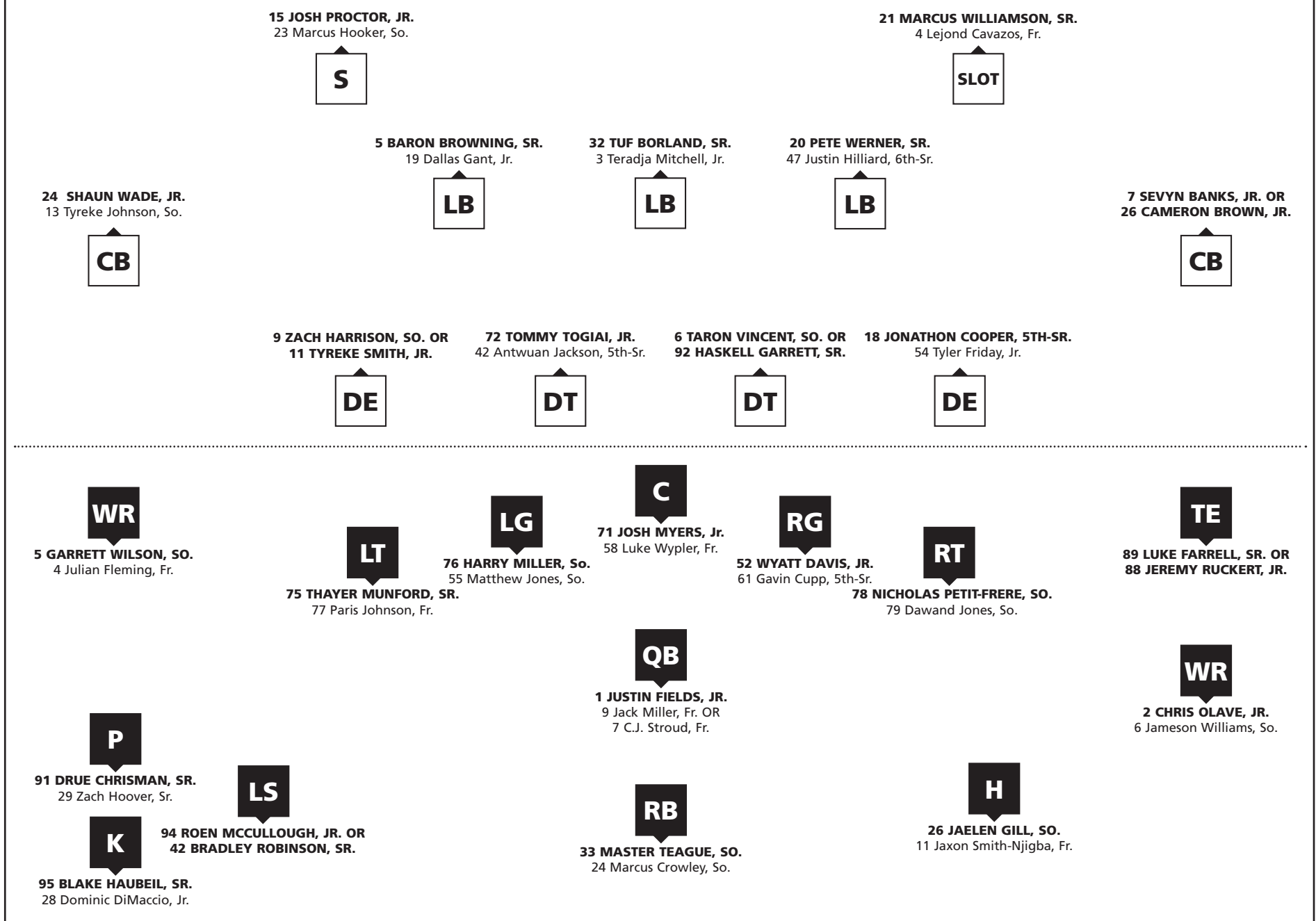
Ohio State also lost its top three defensive tackles from last season in DaVon Hamilton, Jashon Cornell and Robert Landers. But Johnson rotates his players inside, too, so seniors Haskell Garrett (6-2, 299) and Antwan Jackson (6-2, 295) and junior Tommy Togia (6-2, 300) all saw meaningful snaps last season.

Sophomore Taron Vincent (6-2, 295) will also return to action this spring after missing all of last season with a torn labrum.

Other returning defensive tackles include junior Jerron Cage (6-2, 299) and redshirt freshman Jaden McKenzie (6-2, 290), while early enrollees Jacolbe Cowan (6-4, 275) and Darrion Henry-Young (6-5, 275) will aim to make an early impact somewhere along the defensive front.



## PROJECTED 2020 SPRING TWO-DEEP DEPTH CHART

**Linebacker**

After allowing a school-record 403.4 yards and 25.5 points per game in 2018, Ohio State's defense bounced back in a big way last season. Thanks in part to improved play from the linebacker corps under the direction of first-year assistant Al Washington, the Buckeyes climbed to No. 1 in total defense (259.7 yards per game) and allowed just 13.7 points per game, good for fourth in the country.

The most interesting part of that defensive revival was that all three starting linebackers remained intact, with Tuf Borland manning the middle and Pete Werner and Malik Harrison on the outside. Harrison is now off to the NFL, but both Borland (6-1, 234) and Werner (6-3, 242) are back for one final season to lead an experienced group of linebackers.

After splitting time with Borland at middle linebacker last season, senior Baron Browning (6-3, 240) figures to slide out to his natural position at weakside linebacker. But if Washington keeps him inside, it will give juniors Dallas Gant (6-3, 232), Teradja Mitchell (6-2, 242) and K'Vaughan Pope (6-1, 231) an opportunity to start instead, while all three should see rotational snaps at the minimum this season.

If Browning does switch positions, Gant and Pope could back him up. Mitchell would then be the likely candidate to spell Borland, who has a great chance at joining former quarterback J.T. Barrett (2013-2017) as the only three-time captains in school history.

It remains to be seen how sixth-year senior Justin Hilliard (6-1, 231) fits into the Buckeyes' plans, as he's dealt with numerous injuries throughout the course of his career and saw the field last season only in four-linebacker packages.

Sophomore Craig Young (6-3, 228) and redshirt freshman Tommy Eichenberg (6-2, 238) also return from last season, though the two-deep depth chart will be difficult to crack with the experienced players ahead of them.

**Defensive Back**

With starting cornerbacks Damon Arnette and Jeff Okudah and safety Jordan Fuller off to the NFL, Ohio State's most obvious roster flaw heading into spring practice is the lack of experience and depth in the secondary.

That problem was exacerbated by the dismissal of senior cornerback Amir Riep and fifth-year senior linebacker/safety Jahsen Wint, who were arrested and charged with felony rape and kidnapping on Feb. 12, as detailed on page 7.

The Buckeyes are fortunate to have projected first-round pick Shaun Wade (6-1, 195) back for his redshirt junior season, as he spurned the NFL in an effort to improve his coverage on the outside after starting exclusively in the slot last season. He'll likely be backed up by his high school teammate Tyreke Johnson (6-1, 195), a former five-star prospect who has yet to make an impact beyond special teams during two seasons in Columbus.

If not Johnson, early enrollee freshman Ryan Watts (6-3, 195) figures to be in the conversation for immediate playing time.

Juniors Sevyn Banks (6-1, 200) and Cameron Brown (6-0, 192) will compete to start opposite Wade, though it's probably safe to assume new-defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs will rotate them throughout the game as he did during his previous tenure as cornerbacks coach (2012-17).

There's also a chance whoever comes second in that competition moves inside to play the slot, where Ohio State's depth is lacking with Riep no longer on the roster.

He was the first player off the bench when Wade was sidelined during the 56-27 win over Michigan and was expected to step into that spot this fall.

Senior Marcus Williamson (5-10, 186) is now the most likely player to assume that role, though he'll have to earn it after playing sparingly in lopsided victories and on special teams for much of the last three seasons. Early enrollee freshman Lejond Cavazos (6-0, 195) could also make a push for the spot after playing a similar role at Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy.

Safety, meanwhile, is a little more cut-and-dried following the departure of team captain and starter Jordan Fuller.

Junior Josh Proctor (6-2, 202) has long been considered the heir apparent at the single high safety spot and played meaningful snaps late in the season, while sophomore Marcus Hooker (5-11, 200) will also be in line for playing time after contributing on special teams last fall – especially if the Buckeyes opt for more two-safety sets under Coombs than they did under the direction of former co-defensive coordinator and secondary coach Jeff Hafley. That's where Wint, who recorded two interceptions in last year's spring game, likely figured into the equation.

**Special Teams**

Ohio State's special teams unit is once again pretty straightforward, with fifth-year senior punter Drue Chrisman (6-3, 222) and senior kicker Blake Haubeil (6-3, 230) back for their final seasons.

The Buckeyes did lose long snapper Liam McCullough to graduation, however, which means his younger brother Roen (6-1, 230) will compete with senior Bradley Robinson (6-1, 230), who was the backup for the last two seasons, for the starting spot this fall.



# Okudah, Young Highlight 11 Buckeyes At Combine

By WYATT CROSER & PATRICK MAYHORN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The 2020 NFL Scouting Combine was held at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis from Feb. 23-March 2, and 11 Ohio State players made their return to the location of the Big Ten Championship Game to take part.

The 11 members was second only to LSU's 16 players, and what follows is a breakdown of how each of the former Buckeyes performed during their time at the combine.

The NFL draft will take place from April 23-25.

## Damon Arnette

Arnette came into the NFL Scouting Combine this year with an added level of experience he would not have had if he had elected to leave Ohio State following last season. But former Buckeye wide receiver Cris Carter stepped in and told him he should stay at Ohio State for his redshirt senior season.

"Every day I think about that decision that I made to come back and how it could have been, and I'm just thankful that I did come back," Arnette said during his Feb. 28 interview session. "I'm more confident. I feel like I'm more technically sound. I'm smarter, I'm more mature on and off the field, and I feel like overall, I'm just more ready now than I was last year."

The corner, who measured at 5-11½ and 198 pounds, participated in only one event, the 40-yard dash, which he ran in 4.56 seconds, ranking No. 21 out of 29 corners.

But combine numbers aside, Arnette knows he made the right decision back around this time in 2019, and he is ready to take that added experience with him to the professional level.

"I feel like my mentality is so much different than it was a year ago to now," Arnette said. "I'm just proud of the way I changed my mentality so quickly, because without changing my mentality, I don't think I would be where I am today."

## J.K. Dobbins

After heading to Indianapolis unsure what he would be able to do, Dobbins ultimately decided to sit out the on-field workouts due to a high ankle sprain the running back suffered in Ohio State's 28-23 loss to Clemson in the College Football Playoff semifinal.

"If I'm not 100 percent, then I don't want to go out there and be not 100 percent and not show my full potential," Dobbins said.

That ankle sprain, which limited Dobbins' production against the Tigers after an explosive start, may have completely changed the outcome of the game, according to the former Ohio State back.

"We definitely win that game," Dobbins said on if he had not been injured. "I thought we were the better team. We just didn't execute like we should have."

But Dobbins did participate in the bench press, where he put up 23 reps of 225 pounds, tied for fifth best among participating running backs.

Dobbins measured in at 5-9½, 209 pounds, and made sure to talk about all that he brought to Ohio State in three seasons as a primary back.

"I think I have tremendous vision. I could do it all," Dobbins said. "I can be explosive. I can grind it out. And I'm also a leader. I think I make everyone around them play better, when they're playing with me."

## Jordan Fuller

Fuller was a safety net at safety during his time at Ohio State, and the veteran defensive back for the Buckeyes came in hoping to prove he is more than a leadership figure.

"The main thing I'm trying to prove is just my athleticism and versatility," Fuller said. "This year, I was used in the middle of the field, and I showed I could do more. It's like my sophomore year when I played the nickel."

"The teams can tell I'm a smart player. I think they just want to see my athletic ability and I'm ready to do that."

The safety, who measured out at 6-1½ and 203 pounds with 31-inch arms, did not have the greatest showing in combine drills. His best effort was in the vertical jump, where Fuller jumped 35½ inches, which was tied for No. 9 and put him in the middle of the pack among safeties.

But from there he struggled. His 4.27-second 20-yard shuttle was fourth best in the safety group, but out of only six participants. Elsewhere, his 122-inch broad jump was tied for fifth worst and his 4.67-second 40-yard dash was the third worst at his position.

Still, Fuller's experience is a big thing to be able to fall back on, and he knows that it is a great quality that coaches will be looking for.

"I would say they are getting a leader. They are getting someone who is always going to be in the right spot at the right time. That is what I pride myself on," Fuller said. "Also, a versatile guy that you can plug into a ton of different places and he is going to get the job done at a really, really high level."

## DaVon Hamilton

Hamilton left the combine as one of the biggest winners of the weekend, following a strong performance in the testing portion of the event. The biggest showing from Hamilton came when he put up 33 reps of 225 pounds in the bench press, the best number of any defensive lineman at the event. Nebraska's Khalil Davis and Michigan State's Kenny Willekes both finished one rep behind Hamilton at 32 reps.

Elsewhere, Hamilton jumped 29½ inches in the vertical leap, 19th of all defensive linemen but the best of any defensive tackle. His 5.14 40-time put him in the back half of the defensive tackle group, but given his measurables (checked in at 6-4 3/4, 320 pounds), his time was right around the expected range.

Hamilton's 7.72-second run in the three-cone put him in third place among tackles, tied with Michigan State's Raequan Williams. His worst performance came in the broad jump, with a 102-inch jump that put him near the back of the tackle class, but it was still a very good weekend for Hamilton, who spoke briefly about his jump into the elite ranks as a senior.

"I'm a lot different," Hamilton said. "I've learned a lot. I really exploded onto the scene and I'm just really blessed."

Hamilton's strongest praise came from his former teammate, offensive lineman Jonah Jackson.

"You saw him at the Senior Bowl – what he was doing to some people," said Jackson. "I was like, 'Hopefully not me' ... I'm kidding. We actually got to rep against each other. He's just another ferocious competitor and he's a great guy, and he'll be a great fit for whatever team picks him up."

## Malik Harrison

Harrison was frequently touted as a work-

out warrior during his time at Ohio State, and he showed that off in a big way at the combine. The outside linebacker weighed in at 247 pounds and measured in just below 6-3 (6-2½). Despite being nearly 250 pounds, Harrison had the best three-cone time of all linebackers, at 6.83 seconds. That's good enough for sixth overall at the combine.

Harrison's 36-inch vertical leap was tied for eighth among linebackers, while his 4.32-second 20-yard shuttle tied for 11th. His 122-inch broad jump put him at 13th, and his worst drill, a 4.66 second 40-time, saw him finish 15th of 31 linebackers.

He also had the chance to showcase his attitude during the interview portion of the event.

"People like me, we're hungry," Harrison said. "Coming out of high school, I was real hungry. I wasn't big-time, and I blame that on myself. I was just out there trying to get a scholarship. So people like me, I'm just hungry to come out and be on this platform."

Despite his fire to improve, Harrison detailed his approach when he was entering college and explained that he never saw himself in this position.

"I didn't think I'd be here," Harrison said. "I actually thought I'd be an average player who went to Ohio State and probably got drafted in the late rounds or whatever. I didn't expect this at all. Coach (Luke) Fickell really got in my ear and was like, 'You can compete with these guys, these guys who were highly recruited.' And my dad, if I stunk or not, he'd tell me I'm the best player out there."

He also took the chance to compliment two of his former teammates, while mentioning himself as someone who has been overlooked a bit.

"Jeff (Okudah) and Chase (Young) are some of the best players in this draft," Harrison said, "but definitely I've been overlooked. But I never lost sight that it's a team thing. As long as the right people see me, I'm good."

## K.J. Hill

Ohio State's all-time leader in receptions came into the NFL Scouting Combine with the hope of showing his versatility.

"I feel like, in the one-on-ones, I didn't lose a rep," Hill said. "I played outside. I won inside. I had one drop that whole week. So I feel like I proved how versatile I can be."

"You can plug me anywhere. I don't have to be stuck in the slot and only come in on this play or this package. A lot of teams have been talking about using me everywhere."

But the five-year Buckeye struggled in a variety of drills in his time in Indianapolis.

His best moment was on the bench press, where Hill put up 17 reps of 225 pounds, tied for sixth best among wide receivers.

Aside from that, however, Hill finished in the bottom 10 among wideouts in all three of the other drills he participated in.

Hill's 4.60-second 40-yard dash was tied for the eighth-worst time in the wide receiver group, and his 32½-inch vertical was fifth worst. The drill that he struggled the most in, though, was the broad jump, where he managed a 114-inch jump, second worst among receivers, only edging out Rhode Island's Aaron Parker, who had a 112-inch broad jump.

Despite the lackluster combine numbers, former Ohio State teammate and fellow wide receiver Binjimen Victor said he knows Hill has the talent and consistency to be a great prospect at his position.

"A lot of people don't think he's that fast, but he's real fast and quick," Victor said. "Overall K.J.'s just a playmaker. He's been consistent all five years. So the team that picks him up is going to be real lucky."

Hill's measurables were 5-11½ and 196 pounds, with 29½-inch arms and 9¼-inch hands.

## Jonah Jackson

The lone member of Ohio State's offensive line at the NFL Scouting Combine had some up-and-down numbers in the various drills.

Jackson, who was only with the Buckeyes for one season following a transfer out of Rutgers, had measurements of 6-3½ and 306 pounds, and said that this whole experience following that transfer has been everything he could have hoped.

"It's been a blessing," Jackson said. "It's crazy how much can happen in a year."

"Just training and getting there in May and working out with coach Mick (Marotti) and then the season and then the Senior Bowl and now it's the NFL combine. All my dreams are coming to fruition, and this is something I dreamed about as a little kid so it's awesome."

With all of his dreams coming true, Jackson had a few drills in which he shone. On the bench press, Jackson's 28 reps was tied for sixth among offensive linemen, and his 7.83-second three-cone drill was ninth.

His 5.23-second 40-yard dash was tied for No. 23, and his 26-inch vertical was tied for No. 26, both of which were close to middle of the pack.

Where Jackson struggled was in the broad jump (98 inches) and 20-yard shuttle (5.02 seconds), drills he finished with the fifth-worst and fourth-worst efforts, respectively.

## Austin Mack

"This is the time to really get out there and you have an opportunity to increase your stock or drop it," Mack said on Feb. 24. "I'm definitely looking forward to this opportunity."

If that is the case, Mack, who measured in at 6-1½, 208, may have dropped his stock.

Aside from a 4.42-second 20-yard shuttle, which he finished in the middle of the pack (15th), Mack was toward the bottom in every drill he participated in.

His 4.59-second 40-yard dash placed him tied for 11th worst among receivers, while his 31½-inch vertical and 117-inch broad jump were the third worst put up by any wideout.

But Mack said in his interview section prior to participating in the drills that there was a lot of competition between him, Hill and Victor, and that the experience in itself was a great moment for him.

"I think it's just really cool, just to see where our room is. We're able to put out a lot of talent out of our room," Mack said. "There's a lot of competition and they're all my boys, so it's awesome to be here. We pushed each other and we're excited to see how we all run. There's a couple bets on the line, so definitely looking forward to it, man, but it's just great to see all the Buckeyes here."

## Jeff Okudah

Before he even took the field for drills, Okudah had one of the highlight moments of the combine when a reporter questioned the three-year Ohio State corner on the sloppiness in his game.

"Sometimes you have a tendency to get kind of sloppy. How are you looking to improve that?" the reporter asked.

"Sloppy in what way?" Okudah replied. "Sloppy like kind of penalties and stuff like



**Buckeyes At The 2020 NFL Combine**

NAME	POS	HT	WT	Arm (In.)	Hand (In.)	40-Yd. (Sec.)	Bench (Reps 225)	Vert (In.)	Broad (Ft.)	3-Cone Drill (Sec.)	20-Yd. Shuttle (Sec.)	60-Yd. Shuttle (Sec.)
<b>Damon Arnette</b>	CB	5-11 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	195	30	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	4.56	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>J.K. Dobbins</b>	RB	5-9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	209	29 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	—	23	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Jordan Fuller</b>	S	6-1 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	203	31	9	4.67	—	35 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	10-2	—	—	—
<b>DaVon Hamilton</b>	DT	6-3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	320	33	9 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	5.14	33*	29 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	8-6	7.72	—	—
<b>Malik Harrison</b>	LB	6-2 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	247	32 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	4.66	—	36	10-2	6.83*	4.32	—
<b>K.J. Hill</b>	WR	5-11 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	196	29 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	4.60	17	32 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	9-6	—	—	—
<b>Jonah Jackson</b>	OG	6-3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	306	33 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	10 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	5.23	28	26	8-2	7.83	5.02	—
<b>Austin Mack</b>	WR	6-1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	208	33 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	10	4.59	—	31 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	9-9	—	4.42	—
<b>Jeff Okudah</b>	CB	6-1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	205	32 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	9 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub> right 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> left	4.48	11	41*	11-3*	—	—	—
<b>Binjimen Victor</b>	WR	6-3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	198	34 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	9 <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	4.60	9	35	10-8	7.10	—	—
<b>Chase Young</b>	DE	6-4 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	264	33 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

\* – First or tied for first in position group.

that,” the reporter said.

“I had zero pass interferences, zero hold-ings. So cut the tape again. I think you might see something else,” Okudah said.

And once it became time to take the field for the workouts, he impressed there, too.

Okudah finished No. 1 among all corner-backs with a 41-inch vertical and 136-inch broad jump. The vertical ended up being a tie for first place with Temple’s Harrison Hand.

“Coming to the combine is a dream, so just being here is a dream come true,” Okudah said Feb. 28 during his interview session. “I watched Jalen Ramsey’s combine video, Patrick Peterson’s combine video. I want someone down the road to say, ‘Let me turn on Jeff Okudah’s combine video.’”

Okudah also impressed in the 40-yard dash, with his 4.48-second time finishing tied for No. 12 in his group. The only place Okudah faltered was in the bench press, where his 11 reps of 225 pounds tied for the fourth worst at his position.

Above all, Okudah said he went into the NFL Scouting Combine confident and prepared to show what he can bring as far as his craftiness and his movement.

“I want to prove that my footwork is real-

ly, really good for someone that’s my size,” Okudah, who was measured at 6-1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> and 205 pounds, said. “Going to the field work, showing really good footwork, really loose hips and putting that on film for you all to watch.”

**Binjimen Victor**

Victor, who measured in at 6-3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> and 198 pounds with 31<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch arms, did not fare much better than the other two Ohio State wideouts.

He did impress in two of the five drills he participated in, putting up a 7.10-second three cone that placed him No. 10 among receivers and a 128-inch broad jump that placed him tied for No. 6.

Victor said that the NFL Scouting Combine is important for showing off the capabilities he has as a player.

“This is where you show you’re a ballplayer,” Victor said. “You’ve just got to come here because not too many people have the opportunity to be here, and you’ve just got to take advantage of it.”

But Victor struggled elsewhere, with a 4.60-second 40 time that tied Hill and placed him tied for eighth worst. His nine reps on the bench press was tied for second worst, beating only Notre Dame receiver Chris Finke’s seven

reps. His 35-inch vertical was also tied for 12th worst in the wide receiver group.

Coming into the combine, Victor said he learned a lot from Ohio State wide receivers coach Brian Hartline, who went through this process on his way to a fruitful NFL career.

“It helps you a lot, because he’s been through it,” Victor said. “He’s been through this process, he’s been through everything. I talked to him a little bit about that, and coming in, you feel a lot of confidence because he’s been through it. He helped prepare you for this moment.”

**Chase Young**

Young’s combine was over before it ever started. The defensive end, projected as a top-three pick in essentially every mock draft, opted not to compete in any of the on-field events in Indianapolis. He is going to participate in defensive line drills at Ohio State’s Pro Day, which will be held March 25.

“Me and my team, we decided that because that first day of camp, when I step on the field, I want to be the best player I can be,” Young explained. “I don’t want to waste time trying to be a combine athlete. When I step on the field, I need to know that I put my best foot forward

at being the best player I can be.”

In the interview portion, Young’s confidence was on full display, as he declared himself the best player in the draft.

“I definitely think I’m the best player in the draft,” Young said. “I think I showed it on my tape. You go to every game, I think I showed it. I definitely think I put my best foot forward this year. I grinded hard. Two of my biggest things are hard work and dedication, and I’m going to bring those two to the NFL with me.”

Young did still participate in the measurement portion of the event, checking in at 6-4<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> and 264 pounds. He also took the time to defend his statistical output in Ohio State’s final games, where his sack numbers saw a decrease.

“Being the best defensive end isn’t about sacks, it’s about being the most disruptive player on the field,” Young said. “You can do that without having a sack. I had a lot of quarterback hits, a lot of pressures. If you study (the tape), you would see that. You’ll see how they changed their whole offensive game plan for one guy.”

“A lot of people might not know how to really study a tape or may not know how to watch football, but I made an impact in those games.”



# Is The 2019 Team Among Best To Not Win It All?

By WYATT CROSER  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Ohio State's recent 2019 football season did not end the way many hoped it would.

After claiming the No. 1 seed in multiple iterations of the College Football Playoff Rankings, the Buckeyes ultimately ended as the No. 2 seed and fell to No. 3 Clemson 29-23 in the semifinal.

That Ohio State team was filled with talent from top to bottom and went into that game undefeated, never having a final score finish within single digits. But was it the best Ohio State football team in the program's history to not end the season with a national championship?

Buckeye Sports Bulletin asked former 36-year Ohio State golf coach and long-time football observer Jim Brown, Ohio State football historian Jack Park and BSB managing editor emeritus Mark Rea their thoughts on this question, and the trio came up with a variety of answers on the group of teams that they believe belong in consideration.

## Not Allowed To Travel: 1961

• *Record: 8-0-1 | Blemish: 7-7 Tie to TCU*

The 1961 team opened its season with a tie to TCU then proceeded to win its next eight games by a combined score of 214-83, including a 50-20 defeat of Michigan in the final game.

But that opening tie to the Horned Frogs actually did not stop Ohio State from getting a chance at the national title. Instead, it was a 28-25 vote by the Ohio State University faculty to not travel to Pasadena, Calif., for the Rose Bowl that stopped the Buckeyes from facing off against UCLA.

"We won, we were supposed to go to the Rose Bowl," Brown said. "We didn't go, and all the students, including yours truly, marched down High Street to the statehouse protesting."

Bob Ferguson led the charge for Ohio State in the '61 season, rushing for 938 yards and 11 touchdowns on 202 carries. Also in the backfield was Paul Warfield, who carried the ball 77 times for 420 yards and five scores, while also adding nine catches for 120 yards and a touchdown.

Ohio State recognizes the 1961 team as national champions because of a selection by the Football Writers Association. BSB does not recognize this distinction.

"I think they could have gone out there and, if they had won that game, maybe made a bigger statement on winning," Rea said, "not just a piece of the national championship."

## The Super Sophomores: 1969-70

• *1969 Record: 8-1 | Blemish: 24-12 Loss to No. 12 Michigan*

• *1970 Record: 9-1 | Blemish: 27-17 loss to No. 12 Stanford*

Woody Hayes' run at the 1969 national title is one of Ohio State's largest misses, according to Brown, Rea and Park.

The '69 team was special for its dominance on the field, a dominance that came from the majority of the production returning as juniors after a national championship year in 1968.

"When those guys played, of course you could only play three years of eligibility back in that time, so the super sophomores of '68 were '68, '69 and '70 for their three years," Park said.

During the first eight games of the 1969 season, Ohio State outscored its opponents 371-69, never scoring fewer than 34 points and never having a margin of victory less than 27 points.

This team, fresh off a championship, rolled through the first eight games of its schedule before attempting to end the regular season perfect in Ann Arbor, Mich.

"Ohio State had a 22-game winning streak going into that game, 17-point favorites," Park said. "All we had to

do was beat Michigan and we would have our second consecutive undefeated national championship."

Against the Wolverines, Ohio State opened up a 12-7 lead in the second quarter on a score from a yard out by running back Jim Otis and a 22-yard connection from quarterback Rex Kern to wide receiver Jan White. The Buckeyes missed the first extra point and then missed a two-point attempt on the second score.

But Michigan responded with 17 unanswered points to take a 24-12 lead into halftime, a lead that would hold throughout the rest of the game.

"Michigan won the game 24-12, the scoring all took place in the first half, no scoring in the second half, which means that Ohio State had the entire halftime and the second half to get its act together and could not do it," Park said. "I mean Michigan just really, they were a good team, very, very, very good team, and of course they outplayed us that day."

The key to the game was turnovers, eight of which were committed by Ohio State compared to one by Michigan. Six of the eight turnovers were interceptions as the Buckeye quarterbacks combined to complete 10 of 28 passes for 155 yards, a touchdown, and six picks.

"Woody was so famous for running the ball, and every once in a while he gets into a game and he decides to throw it. Well, that was a perfect example," Rea said. "Woody went through seasons where he didn't throw the ball six times in a game, much less six interceptions."

The 12-point win was the first win, and first game, in the rivalry for Michigan head coach Bo Schembechler, and the win came against one of Ohio State's most talented football teams of all time.

"I would say maybe the best Ohio State team not to win the national title was 1969," Park said

Those sophomores from the '68 title were back for one more run in 1970, and once again they fell short, except if you ask the National Football Foundation, which named the Buckeyes champs despite the defeat, allowing Ohio State to recognize the honor.

But BSB does not, with the Buckeyes failing again to follow through on their high potential in the final game of the season, this time falling to Stanford.

"In '70, Ohio State went undefeated again, up until the last game of the season, and they got the revenge over Michigan in '70 by beating Michigan here at home," Park said. "We won at home, a real revenge game, 20-9. It's the first time both teams were undefeated and untied going into the game since the series was moved to the last game of the regular season in 1935 for both teams. Then we went to the Rose Bowl, big favorites over Stanford, and lost."

Against Stanford, Ohio State held a 17-13 lead going into the fourth quarter, but, led by 265 passing yards in the game from Heisman-winning quarterback Jim Plunkett, the Cardinal erased the deficit with a pair of touchdowns to take the win.

Ohio State rushed 67 times for 380 yards in the matchup but did not have the same level of success through the air, completing only seven of its 20 passes for 75 yards.

Rea said that defeat may have been due to some over-conditioning that was

put in place by Hayes ahead of the game.

"I've talked to Rex Kern, I've talked to Jim Stillwagon before he passed, and Woody just had them at such a fever pitch that he wasn't going to let the same thing happen in '70 that did in '69 against Michigan," Rea said. "I remember Jim Stillwagon telling me they're flying to Pasadena and Woody sent the trainers up and down the aisles to start taping them, because they were going to practice just right as they got off the plane."

"He said that by the time they got to the game, they were just dead tired, they had nothing left, so they lost to Stanford."

Exhaustion or not, the group of sophomores who made up much of that 1968 team were expected to go on to win multiple championships but fell just short at the end of both of their next two seasons.

"I remember they won as their sophomore year and we thought, 'Well they're going to run like three in a row off' and didn't," Brown said.

Park said the two losses, despite already having a title to their name, is what many of those players will always remember.

"I know many of those guys," Park said. "When they get together for their reunions, they have a 27-2 record over three years, and the games that they still talk about and lament are those two games that they didn't win, because they really could have had three perfect seasons there, probably should have."

## The Archie Years: 1973-75

• *1973 Record: 10-0-1 | Blemish: 10-10 tie to No. 4 Michigan*

• *1974 Record: 10-2 | Blemish: 16-13 loss to Michigan State, 18-17 loss to No. 5 USC*

• *1975 Record: 11-1 | Blemish: 23-10 loss to No. 11 UCLA*

Archie Griffin is one of the best college football players of all time and finished his Ohio State career with 5,589 rushing yards, which remains the most in program history. He is college football's only two-time Heisman Trophy winner.

But what Griffin did not finish his Ohio State career with was a national championship.

That does not mean he wasn't close. In fact, Griffin's final three years were mentioned by either Brown, Park or Rea as some of the most talented groups to not win a title.

Rea specifically mentioned '73, a team that won every game by three scores or more. Well, every game except one.

"They just bludgeoned people all year long, four shutouts that year and outscored them 413-64," Rea said. "Then they come up against Michigan again and that's the 10-10 tie. Cornelius Greene got a hurt thumb in that game. He couldn't throw the ball."

"It's just one of those things where it's just excruciating, and you look at the season and look at the players they had on that team, and it's like 'How in the world could that happen?' Because Michigan, they had a good team that year, but nowhere near Ohio State."

Greene did not attempt a pass against the Wolverines, and backup Greg Hare threw just four passes, all of which fell incomplete. Griffin did the best he could, rushing 30 times for 163 yards, but the

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Buckeyes blew a 10-0 lead in the fourth quarter to suffer the tie. Ohio State ended up dominating USC 42-21 the following game.

In 1974, Griffin returned and earned his first Heisman Trophy, but Ohio State fell twice, once to an unranked Michigan State team by a field goal and then again to the Trojans, who got their revenge with an 18-17 win in the Rose Bowl.

In that '74 season, Ohio State won by at least 15 points in nine of the 10 victories, with the lone close game being a 12-10 win over No. 3 Michigan in Columbus.

But none of that mattered in the fourth quarter against USC, when the Buckeyes gave up their 17-10 lead on a 38-yard touchdown pass by Pat Haden, who then completed another on a two-point conversion to give the Trojans a lead they would hold on to with 2:03 to go.

"That's the one I remember," Brown said of the Rose Bowl loss, "because I remember Neal Colzie intercepted a pass and ran it back to the 9-yard line and spiked it and we got a 15-yard penalty and didn't score."

Griffin's production may have dipped slightly in 1975 (1,450 rushing yards compared to 1,695 in 1974), but he still picked up another Heisman and had his team in a great position to win it all.

The Buckeyes ran the table in the regular season, shutting out three opponents and scoring 30 or more seven times. Ohio State also got past the No. 4 Wolverines on the road, 21-14, to retain its No. 1 record and earn a trip to Pasadena to face UCLA.

Despite dominating the Bruins in a matchup earlier that season, Ohio State came out the loser in a 23-10 defeat, sending Griffin to the NFL without a title.

"You have 1975, Archie's senior year, No. 1 team in the country, undefeated, he had just won a second Heisman Trophy, and then UCLA beat us in that game," Park said. "We had defeated UCLA 41-20 earlier in the year, but UCLA, that was a huge upset in the Rose Bowl and that cost us a national title."

#### Cooper's Shortcomings: 1996, 1998

- 1996 Record: 11-1 | Blemish: 13-9 loss to No. 21 Michigan
- 1998 Record: 11-1 | Blemish: 28-24 loss to Michigan State

John Cooper had some of the most talented teams Ohio State has ever had, according to Brown, Rea and Park. But Cooper never found a way to put it all together and win a championship.

"God bless Coop, I love the guy, but he just, for whatever reason, he was just so star-crossed he couldn't ever get it completely done, and you talk about talent, I mean holy smokes," Rea said. "I mean he's got Eddie George and David Boston and guys like that. For whatever reason, at least once a year Coop's teams just got so tight that they couldn't play."

Many of those talented teams lost to Michigan, a team that Cooper went 2-10-1 against in his Ohio State coaching career. That includes 1996, a team that finished in the top 10 in both scoring offense and scoring defense but could not finish the job against a lesser Wolverines team in Ohio Stadium.

"We lost that Michigan game by a score of 13-9 after leading 9-0 at the half, and we had to settle for three field goals in that first half, we so dominated the first half and probably should have been

up 21-0, at least 17-0," Park said. "And then they came back. They scored, and even though Ohio State was still ahead 9-7, you could just feel that the air had kind of gone out of the balloons so to speak."

While Stanley Jackson and Joe Germaine split the passing game that season, it was running back Pepe Pearson who was the star of the offense in 1996. Pearson ran 299 times for 1,484 yards and 17 touchdowns while such players as Andy Katzenmoyer, Damon Moore, Mike Vrabel and Antoine Winfield led the defense.

The talent was there, but the Buckeyes fell short to Michigan once again before defeating No. 2 Arizona State in the Rose Bowl 20-17 on a game-winning touchdown catch by Boston with 19 seconds to play.

"It seems like some of those Michigan games during the Cooper years were more mental than they were physical," Park said. "We just couldn't win, and we definitely had a better team that year."

Brown agreed, citing the impressive recruiting ability of Cooper that never quite translated to a full season of title-winning football.

"I just remember we had all the talent in the world, the man could recruit like crazy, but they just couldn't seem to get over the hump, and they were right there," Brown said. "I mean we had a good coaching staff, we had great players, I mean jiminy Christmas."

The 1998 season was much of the same: Ohio State had the No. 12 scoring offense and No. 2 scoring defense and all 11 of its wins were by double digits. And, as it had in 1996, it came down to one home loss to a Michigan-based team that left the Buckeyes out of the championship.

This time, it was the Spartans, who came to Columbus, overcame a 24-9 deficit in the third quarter and came out on top with 19 unanswered points to win by four.

"I think John Cooper's 1998 team would have won the national title had we not been upset by Michigan State," Park said.

#### The Other Side Of Meyer: 2006

- 2006 Record: 12-1 | Blemish: 41-14 loss to No. 2 Florida

Four years removed from a title-winning campaign, head coach Jim Tressel again led Ohio State to an undefeated season, dominating for much of the season with marquee wins against a pair of No. 2 teams at the time of victory, Texas and Michigan.

The Wolverines game in particular is one of the greatest in the history of the rivalry, with the Buckeyes taking down Michigan 42-39 behind a 316-yard, four-touchdown passing effort by Heisman Trophy winner Troy Smith.

Smith won the Heisman by the largest majority in history, a percentage only recently surpassed by 2019 winner Joe Burrow.

Ohio State was ranked No. 1 all season heading into the title game against the Gators, despite some outcry that Michigan did enough in the final week of the season to warrant a rematch.

"There was a lot of sentiment to have them replay in the championship game," Rea said. "But no, they had to send Florida, dad-gummit, and some guy

named Urban Meyer."

Meyer led the Gators to the title game in his second season at the helm, and his team shellacked Ohio State, 41-14, out-gaining the Buckeyes 370-82.

The blowout was enough for Rea to debate if the '06 team was even worthy of being in this list of most talented teams to not win a title.

"A lot of people say the 2006 team, Troy Smith won the Heisman, and that was a talented roster, too, but they got so blown out in the title game that I really can't count that one," he said.

Ohio State was not helped in the championship game after star wide receiver Ted Ginn injured his ankle in the celebration following a 93-yard kickoff return for a touchdown to start the game. Following the injury, the Buckeyes would score just seven points, and Smith, fresh off the Heisman, went 4 of 14 for 35 yards and an interception, while also rushing 10 times for minus-29 yards.

"I remember they jumped on him and he hurt his ankle and couldn't play the rest of the game," Brown said. "They're celebrating and they twisted his ankle and he couldn't play the rest of the game."

#### Day's Debut Falls Short: 2019

- 2019 Record: 13-1 | Blemish: 28-23 loss to No. 3 Clemson

Ryan Day had just three interim games as head coach for experience to build on once it was announced he would be head coach in 2019 due to Meyer's retirement.

After those games he would win 13 more to start 2019 and land Ohio State a place in the College Football Playoff.

"I had a guy ask me (at the end of the 2018 season), he goes, 'Well what are you expecting for next year?'" Brown said. "I said, 'We got a new coach, we got a new quarterback that we know nothing about, we got a new coach that we don't know a whole lot about, and you know we lost a lot of guys on defense.' I go, 'How do you know, man? We're like starting from scratch.'"

"So I wasn't that disappointed in that team. I mean I was disappointed we lost the game. All that happened, and we still had a chance to win. It was amazing to me."

Despite ending with the No. 3 scoring offense and No. 4 scoring defense, the Buckeyes could not quite finish the job, falling to the Tigers by six, 29-23, in the semifinal.

But with two Heisman Trophy finalists, the best single-season rusher in program history, and two surefire top-10 picks in the upcoming NFL draft, does this team deserve its place as one of the best to not win a championship?

"Without a doubt," Brown said. "Wait until the draft comes out. Look at how many guys are going to get drafted."

Park, while less confident, agrees with Brown's sentiment and has more problems with the questionable penalty calls in the game against Clemson than he has problems with how the Buckeyes played.

"I think 2019 could go into that too, had we beaten Clemson as I think we should have," Park said. "I think it was the most poorly officiated Ohio State game I've ever watched basically, I mean I really do, and I don't complain much."

"Every call just seemed to go against Ohio State. I mean it was almost like the game was fixed, and had we won that game, I would have liked our chances maybe against LSU. I don't know."

Rea said he can't fully give an answer this recently to the season being over.

"It's probably too close to tell. Too close to the end of that season to really give it any kind of a perspective," Rea said. "I can sit here and talk about the 1969 team 50 years ago, you're all nostalgic about how great they were, and I can sit here a couple of months removed from 2019 and nitpick it to death, so maybe a couple of years from now, I'll look back on 2019 and be a little more wistful about it."

So which team, among them all, is the most talented group to be held without a national championship in Ohio State history?

Brown leans toward one of the teams led by Cooper in the '90s as the most disappointing, stating the amount of talent on those rosters that could not finish the job.

Rea and Park went back further, with Rea saying it is between the groups in 1969 and 1973.

"I just think, up and down the roster, those teams were just probably head and shoulders above a lot of the other ones," Rea said.

But to Park, there is really no debate. There is one team that stands above all the others as the best non-title-winning team.

"It's 1969," Park said. "When we went to Michigan, the closest anybody had come to that team was 27 points. And to go up there and lose, and have all the scoring take place in the first half and not be able to recover, and it was because of the coaching of Bo Schembechler, no question about it. I mean, he was a rookie coach that year, first year at Michigan, and he had that team ready. He had prepared that team all season long."

"I mean they started working on Ohio State in spring practice in 1969. Mentally, he had that team ready to win. They weren't as good as Ohio State. They were good, but that one day, they played the game of their lifetime, and that's what sometimes happens."

"In my opinion, I'm not sure (any other Ohio State team) is even too close to that really."

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# Former Buckeye Fullback Broadnax Sees Sport Evolve

By JOE DEMPSEY  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Football has evolved over time, with new strategies and play styles developing throughout the years. With the prominence of the spread offense and up-tempo passing attacks, one casualty in the evolution of football is the fullback position.

Buckeye Sports Bulletin discussed the changing game and how the fullback position has become a rarity with one of the best Buckeyes to ever play the position, Vaughn Broadnax.

"When I played, the fullback was an integral part of the offense and he was multifaceted because he could block, which was generally his primary function, he could run, and he could be a receiver," Broadnax told BSB. "It was a weapon in the backfield that allowed, when given the ball, get those short-yardage runs and an occasional long one.

"And in situations where you needed

that lead blocker to block a linebacker, an outside linebacker, or a defensive end, he was there to provide that, also. It was an integral position that has kind of faded away with the multiple-receiver sets and things like that."

When speaking with Broadnax about the position he calls a "dying breed," it quickly becomes clear the former Ohio State fullback has thought a lot about its dwindling usage in modern offenses.

Broadnax offers an interesting perspective as a former standout at fullback from when the position was more prevalent. Broadnax scored 15 touchdowns during his final three seasons (1981-83), including nine rushing scores as a junior.

Although he found the end zone as much as some running backs do, the highlight of Broadnax's career came on a block against Michigan as a sophomore in 1981.

"When we got down toward the Michigan end zone, it was called a play-pass 28, and a play-pass 28 is where the tailback gets a fake and runs out to the

flat. You're basically flooding an area with three receivers – a tight end, the back and the wide receiver – and your quarterback is running to the right. The fullback is the primary blocker.

"On that play, I was able to get (Michigan linebacker) Carlton Rose, may he rest in peace, I had him locked up and I was able to drive him into a couple other Wolverines to extend the play. When you don't know what's happening behind you, you've just got to do your job and whatever that is, you try to do it as long as you can.

"And fortunately, my block was able to free (Ohio State quarterback) Art (Schlichter) and he was able to scamper into the end zone, which turned out to be the winning score. It was a great play, but it was a team effort getting down to that point where we were able to have a chance to win the game."

The gargantuan block by Broadnax helped Schlichter score the game-winning touchdown in a 14-9 victory against archrival No. 7 Michigan at Michigan Stadium.

While Broadnax may have been known best as a hard-hitting blocker, he also offered a formidable option in the offense. He rushed for 1,079 yards and 14 touchdowns in his Buckeye career while adding five receptions for 37 yards and one score in the passing game.

Despite his success as a playmaker, there was always a more special part in Broadnax's heart for the fullback's primary role, blocking.

"It was kind of weird," he explained. "I enjoyed blocking because my goal was to get rid of the defender and I enjoyed it because a lot of times it pissed the other guy off if I got a good block on him or I drove him to wherever. And they were confounded about, 'How do I get around this big guy to even make a tackle?' And I enjoyed the frustration that I caused defensive players.

"And of course, getting thrown a bone or two getting to run the ball was great, too, because I enjoyed trying to punish people. But I enjoyed to block just because it was contact and I loved the contact back then. It's not the same contact today, but I just enjoyed throwing a block that somebody else could benefit from, and the guys that I blocked for appreciated me."

Broadnax is quite open about his affinity for the fullback position and old-school, hard-hitting football. This may come as no surprise to those who watched the powerful 6-2, 252-pound lead blocker don No. 38 in scarlet and gray.

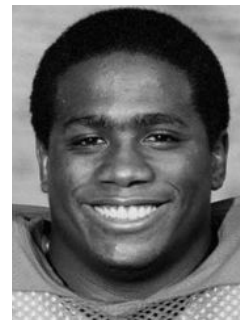
Despite being 37 years removed from his playing days at Ohio State, Broadnax has stayed involved in the Alumni

Association as a vice chair of the board of directors and remains one of the most passionate Buckeye supporters. Although he works as a district sales manager for the United States Postal Service in Indianapolis, Broadnax estimated he has missed probably five Ohio State home games in the past 30 years.

An avid fan of his Buckeyes and football in general, Broadnax watches an abundance of games and has seen the game evolve since his time in pads. He holds an interesting perspective on the advantages and disadvantages of using a fullback in a modern offense.

"It's hard to say because defenses morph to battle against the offenses they face," Broadnax said. "If you have a spread offense, you're going to have basically a spread defense. Now if you can somehow run an offense with a fullback against a spread defense, the advantage you have is size and numbers because you're going to have a larger running back in the backfield instead of a receiver. And that matchup is either going to be on a linebacker, or a defensive back, who is not going to be able to handle that.

"The running back will have the advantage of having that lead blocker and not having to worry about a defensive end, or



Vaughn Broadnax

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having a quarterback reading a defensive end because that defensive end is going to be blocked by a fullback. That's the advantage in that situation. But then again, you can run a fullback into a defense when maybe the defense is looking for a block, and the blocker ends up going out for a short route, either a 5-10 yard curl or an out route underneath the linebackers or in between the linebackers and the safeties.

"So, there are still some advantages with the fullback, it's just how do you want to attack a defense? You can catch them off-guard or you can just line up and bulldoze over them, so there are still some advantages left for the fullback."

Broadnax brings up good points, including how the fullback can confuse defenses, given the versatility of the position and how rare it is in modern offenses.

The former Buckeye fullback enjoys watching his old position still mix into modern football, but he understands the appeal of spreading it out. Broadnax cautions that the offense should be based on the team's personnel, though.

"Don't get me wrong, I enjoy watching a run-and-shoot offense, with the offense spreading it out and the quarterback passing the ball," Broadnax said. "But you have to balance that with how effective your quarterback is passing the ball, how effective your receivers are, because there are a lot of offenses that gain a lot of yards and score a lot of points."

A qualm Broadnax has with modern offenses is the insistence on lining up in shotgun formations near the goal line, as former Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer did during his tenure.

"It's always been my thought when you're in those short-yardage situations, if you snap the ball back in a shotgun situation, it allows penetration of the defensive line or defense across the line of scrimmage," Broadnax said. "Whereas, if you snap it quickly to the quarterback and he hands it off, that eliminates some of that penetration and still allows the offense to have an advantage on the penetration."

"I'm often confused when teams line up in shotgun to get 1 or 2 yards, or they're at the goal line and they snap it back 6 yards or 7 yards, and then they hand it off to a back to go another 5 or 6 yards just to get back to the line of scrimmage. Within that time frame, the defense has gotten penetration, or something has happened where you lose that advantage of time. A lot of coaches just talk about numbers, but when you're on the goal line in short-yardage situations, it's more of the man-on-man competition. And if it's a stalemate, the defense wins."

Another way the game has changed has come in the way teams line up prior to the snap. In the past, teams would huddle up between nearly every play before lining up in their formation. Broadnax sees advan-

tages to both the huddle and no-huddle strategies.

"I can imagine being a quarterback running a huddle, and just from me being in a huddle and looking in a player's eyes when his number is called, what kind of reaction he gives," Broadnax said. "Or if a play is called to your side, how do those linemen look when they know their numbers are being called, and they may be playing against an All-American, how do they accept that challenge? Those are the things, the communication you hear in a huddle, 'Hey this guy's doing that, this guy's doing that,' those little things, that's why I see an advantage of the huddle."

On the flip side, Broadnax sees an advantage to the no-huddle offense as well. However, teams often waste that edge, according to him.

"I joke about the no-huddle offenses, they line up and then they do the prairie-dog dance," Broadnax said. "They stand up and look to the sidelines and they may get hand signals, or they may have some goofy sign collection to call the play. That can be an advantage if you're running quick plays and you know what you're running. And sometimes it can be a disadvantage because it allows the defense to get set."

"When I was playing no huddle, you might have had two or three plays called, knowing what you were going to do immediately after the end of the play and run it quickly. Or there were some check-with-me verbalization with the quarterback for the plays to be called. That kept the defense on their heels, and that's the advantage to the no-huddle, if you're running the plays immediately, or you're running quick plays. You're really kind of losing that advantage once you line up and then do the prairie-dog dance looking to the sideline."

The game has changed significantly since Broadnax's tenure in Columbus, with his position being found on the field less and less. Even though fewer and fewer offenses utilize the fullback, the selfless nature of the position can be translated elsewhere on the field.

"That's the key, helping the team," Broadnax said. "If you're given a role, you've got to meet the requirements of that role or position. At Ohio State, you'll notice we have some top-notch receivers - they can catch the ball, they can run great routes, but they can also block. I was always taught that every play was designed to get a touchdown, and one of those guys who has that ball generally has to make one guy miss if everybody is doing his role."

"I looked at the fullback position as a role player but part of the team. And for me, for our team to be successful, I needed to do everything that was required of my role. And if more players looked at it that way, you'll have a lot more success."



FILE PHOTO

A DIFFERENT GAME - Vaughn Broadnax thrived at fullback during his Ohio State career (1980-83) but calls the position a "dying breed."

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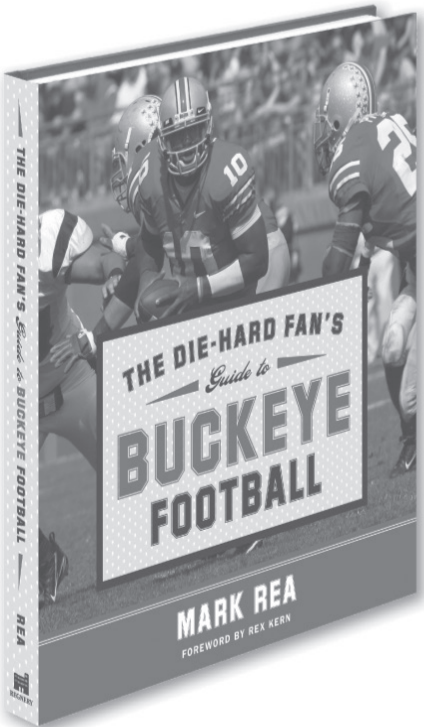
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# Buckeye Cruise Once Again Sets Fundraising Record

By CRAIG MERZ  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Craig Patterson had been on cruises before but nothing like the Feb. 21-26 sojourn on Royal Caribbean's Explorer of the Seas.

"This one was a little unique," he said. "The concept of the cruise was a little bit different. Instead of having shows and whatnot, there were auctions and raffles with everything benefiting cancer research, which is a super cause."

The transplanted Ohioan now living in Orlando, Fla., enjoyed the 2020 Buckeye Cruise for Cancer as the winner of Buckeye Sports Bulletin's annual contest.

The 13th edition of the cruise was a record-setter with \$4.25 million raised to support the Urban and Shelley Meyer Fund for Cancer Research at the Ohio State University Comprehensive Care Center Arthur G. James Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute.

The figure surpassed the previous best fundraiser of \$3.25 million in 2019, said Cruise founder Lisa Cisco, president of Travel Partners in Dublin.

"We have an absolutely amazing staff, volunteer staff, cruisers, athletes, just a family of Buckeye Cruise that makes it happen," she said. "The new athletes were incredible. Johnnie Dixon, Parris Campbell, Terry McLaurin, they were probably the best first-timers we've ever had."

There were 3,000 patrons when the liner left the Port of Miami and toured the Caribbean, including Cococay Island, before returning.

Patterson said the weather was great and the camaraderie excellent among the passengers but the highlights, of course, were anything Buckeye. In fact, it was Buckeyes all the time.

You couldn't turn a corner without seemingly running into former Ohio State stars from a variety of sports, not just football.

"I met Katie Smith," Patterson said of the women's basketball legend.

The star, though, was Meyer and his wife.

"I met Urban several times," Patterson said. "I kept calling him 'Shelley's husband.' He wanted to be called that. He was very accessible. He was very engaged. He was always around."

Cisco said she noticed the former Buckeye coach was more relaxed than previous cruises.

Patterson moved from Columbus 33 years ago and has relocated to Florida, then Texas, Colorado and back to Florida, but his allegiance has never wavered.

"I'm still a Buckeye after all those years," he said.

His wife, Candy, is native Floridian and a University of Central Florida graduate.

"My wife is not a big Buckeye fan. She was kind of skeptical, but she said she'd go back in a heartbeat," Patterson said. "I appreciate BSB putting us on it. It was the perfect trip."

The cruise had auctions, the alumni band and cheerleaders, raffles, poker and slot tournaments, a cornhole tournament, and a three-mile run/one-mile walk among the many activities.

"I did one of the autograph sessions," Patterson said. "I got a jersey signed by



COURTESY OF CRAIG PATTERSON

**PAY IT FORWARD – Craig Patterson, Buckeye Sports Bulletin's contest winner for the annual Buckeye Cruise for Cancer, was among those who helped raise more than \$4.25 million during this year's cruise.**

12 or 13 folks. The auction was great. The money they raised for The James is phenomenal. They've got a good thing going here. Every year it gets better and better."

Horse races where Buckeye fans bid on rides to represent them raised \$234,000, with half going to the winning bidder, who donated it back to the Cruise.

Cisco said the horse for Ezekiel Elliott brought in \$75,000 in bids, of which \$25,000 came from the Dallas Cowboys running back.

A memorable event was Grammy-winning country singer Darius Rucker, also front man for Hootie & the Blowfish, performing a concert in Cococay the next-to-last night.

"That blew everybody away," Cisco said. "Then he sailed with us back to Miami and he mingled."

In addition to Meyer, football players such as Keith Byars, Bobby Carpenter, Tom Cousineau, Dustin Fox, A.J. Hawk, Raekwon McMillan and Joshua Perry were on board.

Patterson said he was thrilled to meet Rex Kern, quarterback of the 1968 national champions.

He also mentioned Robert Smith ("taller than I thought"), Kirk Herbstreit ("very engaging"), J.T. Barrett ("good guy") and seeing Ryan Shazier continue his recovery from a spinal injury sustained while playing for the Pittsburgh Steelers in December 2017.

"It was good to see him walking around a little bit," Patterson said.

He added that the most engaging personality he encountered during the cruise was Tyvis Powell. Anyone who remem-

bers interviews of the former Buckeye safety (2013-15) would not be surprised.

The Cruise has raised \$25 million over the years.

"I want to cry right now saying it out loud," Cisco said.

Next year's Buckeye Cruise for Cancer is going to Jamaica and Labadee, Haiti, (Royal Caribbean's private island) from Feb. 16-21, 2021, on the same ship as this year, which is now undergoing \$122 million in renovations.

The goal is to raise \$4.5 million, but Cisco knows that will be a challenge.

"Every year we want to top the previous one, but this is one of those years where I go, 'I don't know if we can,' " she said. "But I can never feel bad if we raise \$3 million, \$3.5 million. You shouldn't feel bad for any amount raised."



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**"Your Head to Toe Buckeye Source"**



# 1960 NCAA Champions Set Standard For Hoops

When Ohio State honors seniors Danny Hummer and Andre Wesson are recognized at the men's basketball home finale on March 5, some senior citizens will be recognized as well. But these are no ordinary seniors. Members of the 1960 NCAA cham-

## COURT REPORT Craig Merz

pionship team, the lone one for the program, will be introduced at halftime of the game against Illinois.

The 1959-60 Buckeyes under coach Fred Taylor were 25-3 overall and 13-1 in the Big Ten, and they won it all by defeating defending champion California, 75-55, before a partisan Bears crowd in San Francisco's Cow Palace.

Ohio State would also reach the championship game the next two seasons, losing each time to Cincinnati.

In that three-year span the Buckeyes won three Big Ten titles, were 78-6 and never lost a home game.

"There was a great deal of chemistry both on the floor and off," said Mel Nowell in a 2010 interview with Buckeye Sports Bulletin. "We liked each other. That was a part of it, and we had great leadership both in the coaching staff and among the players."

Nowell, 81, who lives in Columbus near where he attended East High School, was part of a senior class in 1962 that included Jerry Lucas, John Havlicek, Bobby Knight and Gary Gearhart.

Gearhart died in 2001 and Havlicek, who went on to have a stellar 16-year career with the Boston Celtics, passed away on April 25, 2019.

Many members of the 1960 team are expected at the Illinois game, possibly even Knight, who ended a 20-year feud with Indiana on Feb. 8 by attending the Hoosiers' game vs. Purdue. It was his first time at Assembly Hall in Bloomington, Ind., since he was fired in 2000. He was also seen at a women's basketball game there on Feb. 27.

Knight and his Ohio State teammates were last honored in January 2010 for the 50th anniversary of their title.

"Coach Taylor was the architect of the national championship basketball team here, and he did it in the absolutely right way," Knight said at the reunion 10 years ago. "That's the thing all of us can take the most pride in. Plus, no team ever had a better group of seniors than we had on that team. They were exceptional. No team had better leadership than Dick (Furry) and Joe (Roberts)."

Said Lucas at the time, "This team doesn't get justice for the type of team it was and how good it was. We had five players from that team play in the NBA. We were the first school in the history of college basketball to have that many players go on and play in the NBA."



FILE PHOTO

**BEST TEAM IN SCHOOL HISTORY** – On March 5, Ohio State will honor its 1960 national championship team, which included the late John Havlicek.

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## 2019-20 Ohio State Men's Basketball Statistics

### 20-9 Overall (10-8 Big Ten) Statistics through games of March 1

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	29-29	851-29.3	128-287	.446	43-100	.430	108-150	.720	70-207	277-9.6	88-2	59	76	29	20	407-14.0
Duane Washington	26-13	632-24.3	100-244	.410	52-130	.400	44-54	.815	5-65	70-2.7	29-0	39	33	2	10	296-11.4
D.J. Carton	20-3	478-23.9	71-149	.477	24-60	.400	41-54	.759	10-46	56-2.8	38-0	59	52	8	13	207-10.4
Andre Wesson	27-21	824-30.5	84-179	.469	43-97	.443	39-49	.796	33-73	106-3.9	69-4	51	39	12	9	250-9.3
C.J. Walker	29-28	833-28.7	85-200	.425	27-82	.329	45-55	.818	8-78	86-3.0	70-1	101	48	2	38	242-8.3
Kyle Young	25-25	571-22.8	72-123	.585	2-13	.154	42-64	.656	51-93	144-5.8	48-0	23	14	13	8	188-7.5
Luther Muhammad	28-26	687-24.5	59-151	.391	32-93	.344	48-56	.857	10-49	59-2.1	48-1	38	31	2	26	198-7.1
E.J. Liddell	29-0	459-15.8	60-136	.441	4-24	.167	55-78	.705	31-71	102-3.5	57-0	12	27	28	10	179-6.2
Justin Ahrens	24-0	253-10.5	26-61	.426	23-56	.411	1-2	.500	8-26	34-1.4	22-0	6	10	1	2	76-3.2
Alonzo Gaffney	17-0	114-6.7	13-23	.565	1-6	.167	3-8	.375	5-19	24-1.4	21-1	2	12	4	1	30-1.8
Ibrahima Diallo	7-0	39-5.6	5-12	.417	0-0	.000	0-2	.000	7-7	14-2.0	6-0	0	4	3	0	10-1.4
Danny Hummer	12-0	38-3.2	3-10	.300	2-7	.286	1-2	.500	1-2	3-0.3	4-0	5	3	0	4	9-0.8
Harrison Hookfin	7-0	21-3.0	1-5	.200	0-1	.000	0-0	.000	3-2	5-0.7	0-0	0	5	0	1	2-0.3
TEAM									50-50	100				20		
<b>Ohio State</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5800</b>	<b>707-1580</b>	<b>.447</b>	<b>253-669</b>	<b>.378</b>	<b>427-574</b>	<b>.744</b>	<b>292-788</b>	<b>1080-37.2</b>	<b>500-9</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>2094-72.2</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5800</b>	<b>635-1618</b>	<b>.392</b>	<b>210-636</b>	<b>.330</b>	<b>328-480</b>	<b>.683</b>	<b>265-650</b>	<b>915-31.6</b>	<b>539-11</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>1808-62.3</b>

"It was a remarkable run we had here, but the thing I remember the most is friendships we developed here and lifelong friendships. I say this all the time: The picture of this team is prominently displayed in my home. I walk past it several times a day and say audibly 'hello' to my teammates as I pass that picture."

So much has changed over the years. With today's players leaving early for the NBA or more willing to transfer, it's rare for a group to spend four seasons together in college.

"This team set the standard for excellence for the university for other scholar-athletes to follow," Roberts said in 2010. "Everybody graduated. We don't have any criminals on our team. We're all good citizens. We all have jobs, and we all have nice families."

It's a legacy that's immortalized across the Olentangy River and Lane Avenue from their home in St. John Arena with a banner in the rafters of Value City Arena.

"We were an extraordinary group," Havlicek during the reunion a decade ago. "We had great players and great academics, and we were student-athletes."

#### Off The Mark

You must wonder what those "old-timers" were thinking when they heard the incessant whining of Maryland basketball coach Mark Turgeon after the Terrapins' 79-72 loss to the Buckeyes in VCA on Feb. 23. His complaints about physical basketball would have been laughed at in a bygone era for sure.

Rarely does an opposing coach make it personal when he went after Ohio State junior forward Kaleb Wesson for his play against Maryland forward Jalen Smith.

"He was allowed to be the bully offensively today," Turgeon said in his post-game press conference. "I mean, he stuck a forearm right in (Smith's) chest twice. I guess you're allowed to do that here in this building."

Ohio State coach Chris Holtmann was diplomatic, if not incredulous, immediately after the game when told of Turgeon's remarks about Wesson: "He was described as being a bully? Oh, Mark said that? To each his own. His opinion can be his opinion. I thought Kaleb was physical and well within the rules and played hard and played tough and played physical."

Turgeon's words could be written off as a heat-of-the-moment thing following a tough defeat. He was also upset that star guard Anthony Cowan Jr. was given a flagrant foul, his fifth foul, with 3:54 to play.

Cowan drove to the basket and was

### OSU Men's Basketball Signees & Verbal Commits

Players in the class of 2020 who have signed a letter of intent to play basketball at Ohio State. (Star ratings are from the 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Eugene Brown	SG	6-6	185	★★★★	Decatur (Ga.) Southwest DeKalb
Zed Key	PF	6-7	215	★★★	Glen Head (N.Y.) Long Island Lutheran

Players in the class of 2021 who have issued verbal commitments to play basketball at Ohio State. (Star ratings are from the 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Kalen Etzler	PF	6-8	195	★★★★	Convoy (Ohio) Crestview
Meechie Johnson	CG	5-11	160	★★★★	Willoughby (Ohio) Andrew Osborne

bumped by Wesson and Wesson fell on him. Cowan kicked the air, near Wesson's head, in disbelief that a foul wasn't called.

Turgeon had the opportunity to cool down over the next few days but instead ramped the volume with more comments directed at Wesson. He also said the officials in the game should have been suspended.

"Complaining (in any official capacity) is a waste of time for me. It doesn't do me any good," he said while meeting with the media three days later. "But it was really like the big brother picking on the little brother, and the parents were just letting him do it. Guys have got to do a better job. I complained the whole game. Didn't do any good."

Holtmann wasn't as forgiving at his media session on Feb. 26, the day after Turgeon's latest tirades.

"I continue to take issue with the comments," Holtmann said. "I have a ton of respect for Mark and the Maryland team and the Maryland program, but I just continue to take issue with the way he characterized Kaleb's play. I just think it's inappropriate. I've never seen this much conversation after a loss. ... I thought that those comments afterwards were just, quite honestly, a little bit out of place."

Wesson told The Columbus Dispatch after the Buckeyes' 75-54 win at Nebraska on Feb. 27 that he appreciated his coach sticking up for him.

"Me and Coach have a special relationship," he said. "He does stuff like that because he really cares about us and he doesn't want our names to be tarnished in any way."

During the Nebraska game on ESPN, analyst Robbie Hummel, who played at Purdue, was critical of Turgeon.

"This is the Big Ten Conference," Hummel said. "Jalen Smith is 6-10, 230. He can defend himself. This is not the Boys and Girls Club. So, I do have an issue with that, because if you're saying Kaleb Wesson (6-9, 270) is bullying someone, you're saying that

his character is not great. And just because he went out and was extremely physical in the game, I really disagree with that statement."

Hummel applauded Holtmann's push-back after Turgeon kept the issue alive.

"It wasn't once. It wasn't twice. It was three or four times," Hummel said. "At some point, you get to, 'What are we doing?' This is the Big Ten. This is college basketball."

Holtmann tried to defuse the situation on Feb. 29.

"Mark's a good guy so that's all in the past for him and for me," he said.

The teams don't face each other the rest of the regular season, but a conference tournament matchup would be must-see TV.

#### Touché

Holtmann took a subtle dig at Turgeon during the peak of the Wesson feud after the Maryland boss complained of a 9 p.m. ET start at Minnesota on Feb. 26.

The Buckeyes' game at Nebraska started the same time the following night.

"It was obviously a later tip, a 9 p.m. tip, which was great," Holtmann said. "Gave our guys a chance to get in here, get a shoot-around. I feel great about it being a 9 p.m. tip."

#### Carton Update

Freshman guard D.J. Carton, who took an indefinite leave of absence Jan. 30 to address mental health issues, returned to Columbus from his home in Bettendorf, Iowa, on Feb. 20.

Carton, third on the team at 10.4 points per game, will not rejoin the team until going through medical protocol and receiving clearance.

Holtmann said Feb. 29 there is no timetable for when, or if, Carton will return this season.

"He's back in class, back at school," he said. "No news to report but we're excited to have him back."

## BIG Men's Basketball

	Conf.			Overall		
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
Maryland	13	5	.722	23	6	.793
Michigan State	12	6	.667	20	9	.690
Illinois	12	6	.667	20	9	.690
Wisconsin	12	6	.667	19	10	.655
Penn State	11	7	.611	21	8	.724
Iowa	11	7	.611	20	9	.690
<b>Ohio State</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>.556</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>.690</b>
Michigan	9	9	.500	18	11	.621
Rutgers	9	9	.500	18	11	.621
Indiana	8	10	.444	18	11	.621
Purdue	8	10	.444	15	14	.517
Minnesota	7	11	.389	13	15	.464
Northwestern	2	16	.250	7	21	.250
Nebraska	2	16	.111	7	22	.241

#### Feb. 11 Scores

Penn State 88, Purdue 76  
Maryland 72, Nebraska 70  
Michigan State 70, Illinois 69

#### Feb. 12 Scores

**Ohio State 72, Rutgers 66**  
Michigan 79, Northwestern 54

#### Feb. 13 Score

Indiana 89, Iowa 77

#### Feb. 15 Scores

**Ohio State 68, Purdue 52**  
Penn State 77, Northwestern 61  
Wisconsin 81, Nebraska 64

Rutgers 72, Illinois 57  
Maryland 67, Michigan State 60

#### Feb. 16 Scores

Michigan 89, Indiana 65  
Iowa 58, Minnesota 55

#### Feb. 18 Scores

Illinois 62, Penn State 56  
Wisconsin 69, Purdue 65  
Maryland 76, Northwestern 67

#### Feb. 19 Scores

Michigan 60, Rutgers 52  
Indiana 68, Minnesota 56

#### Feb. 20 Scores

**Iowa 85, Ohio State 76**  
Michigan State 86, Nebraska 65

#### Feb. 22 Score

Michigan 71, Purdue 63

#### Feb. 23 Scores

Indiana 68, Penn State 60  
Wisconsin 79, Rutgers 71  
Minnesota 83, Northwestern 57

#### Ohio State 79, Maryland 72

#### Feb. 24 Score

Illinois 79, Nebraska 59

#### Feb. 25 Score

Michigan State 78, Iowa 70

#### Feb. 26 Scores

Penn State 65, Rutgers 64  
Maryland 74, Minnesota 73

#### Feb. 27 Scores

Wisconsin 81, Michigan 74  
Purdue 57, Indiana 49  
Illinois 74, Northwestern 66

#### Ohio State 75, Nebraska 54

#### Feb. 29 Scores

Iowa 77, Penn State 68  
Michigan State 78, Maryland 66

#### March 1 Scores

Illinois 67, Indiana 66  
**Ohio State 77, Michigan 63**

Northwestern 81, Nebraska 76  
Wisconsin 71, Minnesota 69

#### March 3 Games

Michigan State at Penn State, 7 p.m.  
Maryland at Rutgers, 7 p.m.  
Purdue at Iowa, 9 p.m.

#### March 4 Games

Minnesota at Indiana, 7 p.m.  
Northwestern at Wisconsin, 9 p.m.

#### March 5 Games

Nebraska at Michigan, 6 p.m.  
**Illinois at Ohio State, 7 p.m.**

#### March 7 Games

Wisconsin at Indiana, 1 p.m.  
Rutgers at Purdue, 2 p.m.  
Penn State at Northwestern, 4 p.m.

#### March 8 Games

Michigan at Maryland, 12 p.m.  
Nebraska at Minnesota, 1 p.m.  
**Ohio State at Michigan State, 4:30 p.m.**  
Iowa at Illinois, 7 p.m.



# Buckeyes Surging As Season's End Draws Near

By JOE DEMPSEY  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

## Ohio State Defeats Rutgers Behind Explosive 1st Half

The Ohio State men's basketball team used a strong first half to defeat Rutgers 72-66 in front of 15,552 fans at Value City Arena on Feb. 12. The Buckeyes held a surging Scarlet Knight squad to nail down the victory.

"Shoot, a win is a win in the Big Ten," said junior big man Kaleb Wesson. "They're not going to look pretty in the Big Ten. A win is a win."

Wesson, along with brother Andre, led the Buckeyes (16-8, 6-7) to the victory, assisted by excellent play from sophomore guards Duane Washington and Luther Muhammad.

Andre scored 13 points and grabbed a game-high 10 rebounds, and Kaleb added 16 points and five boards on 5-of-7 shooting. Washington provided 10 points and five assists off the bench, while Muhammad posted 10 points on 3-of-4 shooting with a pair of three pointers.

"They were big," Andre Wesson said of Washington and Muhammad. "They put together a couple good days of practice, and it led over to the game. Obviously, we're happy Lu's playing better, and Duane was facilitating the ball."

Kaleb Wesson calmly drained two foul shots for a 69-63 edge with 37 seconds remaining, but Rutgers junior guard Geo Baker drilled a three-pointer to cut the lead in half.

"Kaleb's free throws were huge," said Ohio State head coach Chris Holtmann. "(He) stepped up there like an older guy, great poise and confidence."

Andre Wesson split a pair of free throws, but Baker, who tallied 13 points with three from deep for the game, missed his next triple, and C.J. Walker sealed the game with two free throws.

"We kept saying that to our guys, the second half is going to be a different half, and it certainly was that," said Holtmann, whose team had jumped out to a 45-30 halftime lead. "We survived against a really good team. Credit to our captains for leading the way there down the stretch."

Prior to the late-game free throws, Kaleb Wesson knocked down a three-pointer to push Ohio State's second-half lead to 61-44 with 7:36 left, but Rutgers responded with a 19-6 run to make it the four-point game with 37 seconds until the final whistle.

After Kyle Young opened the second half by splitting a pair at the line to make it 46-30, Baker connected on a triple to cut Ohio State's lead to 13. Muhammad answered Baker's triple with one of his own before Ohio State extended its lead to as many as 20 on its way to a sixth Big Ten win.

Rutgers (17-8, 8-6) outplayed Ohio State in the second half, shooting 48.1 percent (13 of 27) from the floor and 50.0 percent (6 of 12) from beyond the arc, while holding the Buckeyes to just 31.8 percent shooting (7 of 22) and 33.3 percent (3 of 9) from three. The Scarlet Knights outscored Ohio State 36-27 during the game's final 20 minutes.

"I did not love our defensive approach in the second half," Holtmann said. "I just didn't. But overall, we've got to do some things better, but give them credit. We were sloppy with the ball a few times late. And I just didn't love our defensive connectiveness."

"And I didn't think, offensively, we finished enough plays in the second half. Sometimes you've got to survive games like this. You've got to make just enough plays, and we did that. It's a credit to our guys."

In the first half, Ohio State built a 33-18 lead at the 4:40 mark on an Andre Wesson jumper, but the Scarlet Knights cut the Buckeyes' lead to 39-30 with just over a minute to the break. Andre and sophomore wing Justin Ahrens hit back-to-back three pointers in the final 41 seconds, however, giving the Buckeyes their 15 point halftime edge.

Solid shooting carried Ohio State through the first half. They knocked down 15 of 29 field goals (51.7 percent) and 7 of 17 triples (41.2 percent). The Buckeyes held Rutgers to 42.9 percent (9 of 21) from the floor and 33.3 percent (3 of 9) from beyond the arc.

When asked if the poor second-half performance spoiled the victory, Holtmann was quite candid about how that was not his perspective.

"It's too hard to win in this league," Holtmann said. "You think I'm going to come

## Ohio State 72, Rutgers 66

Feb. 12, 2020												
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio												
		1		2		F						
Rutgers (17-8, 8-6)		30		36		66						
Ohio State (16-8, 6-7)		45		27		72						
Rutgers												
		Total FG FT		Reb.								
		Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.				
Yeboah	28	0-3	6-6	1-5	4	2	6					
Johnson	18	1-4	0-0	1-2	0	3	2					
McConnell	16	0-3	0-0	1-3	0	1	0					
Mathis	18	2-7	2-2	0-2	0	2	7					
Harper	21	3-6	1-2	0-2	0	1	9					
Baker	28	4-9	2-2	0-5	0	0	13					
Mulcahy	25	5-6	0-1	1-1	3	2	12					
Doucoure	7	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	2	0					
Carter	15	0-1	0-2	0-2	0	3	0					
Young	24	7-9	2-3	1-1	1	4	17					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>22-48</b>	<b>13-18</b>	<b>5-23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>66</b>					
<b>Percentages: FG: 45.8%. FT: 72.2%. 3-point field goals: 9-21 (Yeboah 0-2, McConnell 0-1, Mathis 1-5, Harper 2-4, Baker 3-6, Mulcahy 2-2, Young 1-1). Team rebounds: 0. Blocked shots: 2 (Yeboah, Johnson). Turnovers: 12 (Young 3, Baker 2, Carter 2, Johnson, Mathis, Mulcahy, Doucoure, TEAM). Steals: 4 (Yeboah, Johnson, Mathis, Young).</b>												
Ohio State												
		Total FG FT		Reb.								
		Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.				
A. Wesson	36	5-10	1-2	2-8	0	2	13					
Young	26	0-4	4-6	3-2	0	1	4					
K. Wesson	34	5-7	3-3	1-4	1	3	16					
Muhammad	23	3-4	2-2	1-3	1	2	10					
Walker	31	1-9	4-4	0-4	5	2	6					
Washington	26	4-9	2-2	0-1	5	0	10					
Ahrens	12	3-4	0-0	0-0	1	1	9					
Liddell	12	1-4	2-2	0-1	0	3	4					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>22-51</b>	<b>18-21</b>	<b>8-24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>72</b>					
<b>Percentages: FG: 43.1%. FT: 85.7%. 3-point field goals: 10-26 (A. Wesson 2-6, K. Wesson 3-3, Muhammad 2-3, Walker 0-6, Washington 0-2, Ahrens 3-4, Liddell 0-2). Team rebounds: 2. Blocked shots: 2 (Young, K. Wesson). Turnovers: 11 (A. Wesson 3, Washington 2, Young, K. Wesson, Walker, Ahrens, Liddell, TEAM). Steals: 4 (Walker 2, A. Wesson, Muhammad).</b>												
<b>Officials: Wymer, Carstensen, Eades. Attendance: 15,552.</b>												

## Ohio State 68, Purdue 52

Feb. 15, 2020												
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio												
		1		2		F						
Purdue (14-12, 7-8)		20		32		52						
Ohio State (17-8, 7-7)		29		39		68						
Purdue												
		Total FG FT		Reb.								
		Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.				
Boudreaux	23	6-8	4-4	2-1	1	5	17					
Williams	24	2-6	0-0	3-5	3	4	4					
Hunter	25	3-8	0-0	0-0	1	4	8					
Proctor	31	6-12	2-2	0-3	0	2	15					
Eastern	25	0-4	0-0	0-2	2	2	0					
Wheeler	15	0-3	0-0	0-4	0	2	0					
Thompson	18	0-5	0-0	0-0	0	1	0					
Haarms	16	1-4	4-5	2-1	1	0	6					
Stefanovic	23	1-4	0-0	0-2	0	1	2					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>19-54</b>	<b>10-11</b>	<b>7-19</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>52</b>					
<b>Percentages: FG: 35.2%. FT: 90.9%. 3-point field goals: 4-20 (Boudreaux 1-2, Williams 0-2, Hunter 2-5, Proctor 1-4, Wheeler 0-1, Thompson 0-2, Haarms 0-1, Stefanovic 0-3). Team rebounds: 1. Blocked shots: 3 (Haarms 2, Williams). Turnovers: 16 (Hunter 4, Boudreaux 3, Eastern 3, Wheeler 2, Stefanovic 2, Williams, Proctor). Steals: 9 (Hunter 2, Proctor 2, Williams, Eastern, Thompson, Haarms, Stefanovic).</b>												
Ohio State												
		Total FG FT		Reb.								
		Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.				
A. Wesson	35	3-7	1-2	1-6	2	1	8					
Young	34	6-9	4-4	1-6	1	3	16					
K. Wesson	30	3-8	5-9	2-6	4	3	13					
Muhammad	31	3-5	2-2	0-3	1	3	11					
Walker	30	3-6	2-4	1-2	4	2	9					
Washington	18	3-5	0-0	0-2	2	2	7					
Ahrens	10	1-2	0-0	0-1	0	0	3					
Liddell	11	0-3	1-2	0-0	0	1	1					
Hummer	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>22-45</b>	<b>15-23</b>	<b>5-28</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>68</b>					
<b>Percentages: FG: 48.9%. FT: 65.2%. 3-point field goals: 9-20 (A. Wesson 1-4, Young 0-3, K. Wesson 2-3, Muhammad 3-5, Walker 1-2, Washington 1-1, Ahrens 1-2). Team rebounds: 2. Blocked shots: 0. Turnovers: 16 (K. Wesson 6, A. Wesson 3, Washington 2, Liddell 2, Young, Muhammad, Ahrens). Steals: 10 (K. Wesson 4, Walker 2, A. Wesson, Muhammad, Ahrens, Liddell).</b>												
<b>Officials: Ek, Green, Oglesby. Attendance: 18,809.</b>												

in here with a sour, 'Oh man!' Nick Saban might, but I'm not going to."

Jacob Young led Rutgers with 17 points.

## Ohio State Defeats Purdue For 2nd Straight Win

Ohio State defeated Purdue 68-52 at Value City Arena for its second straight win and fifth in six contests on Feb. 15.

"Just compete, to be honest," Muhammad said of Holtmann's message before the game. "We knew it was going to be a fight from start to finish. We had to come out and play hard, play together. And our coach was just hitting on competing, executing and toughness."

The Buckeyes (17-8, 7-7) used a balanced attack to take down the Boilermakers (14-12, 7-8), led by Young and Kaleb Wesson. Young led the team with a career-high 16 points while grabbing seven rebounds, and Wesson recorded 13 points with eight boards, four assists and four steals.

"More than anything he impacts the game in ways that are not always on the stat sheet, but today it really was on the stat sheet with his rebounds and his scoring," Holtmann said of Young. "His activity and his ability to guard different bodies in different positions – he was really good."

In the first half, Kaleb Wesson knocked a three-pointer to start the scoring for Ohio State, which Purdue senior guard Jahaad Proctor answered with a triple of his own. Then the Buckeyes fired off a 7-0 run in under a two-minute span to take a 10-3 lead with 16:00 until halftime.

The Buckeyes and Boilermakers battled back and forth, with Evan Boudreaux cutting Ohio State's lead to 16-12 on a rebound putback with 9:42 until the intermission. The Buckeyes responded with an 8-0 run, where they held the Boilermakers scoreless for 6:15.

The Scarlet and Gray took a 29-20 lead into the break.

The Buckeyes shot 45.5 percent (10 of 22) from the field and from beyond the arc (5 of 11) in the first half, while the Boilermakers shot 32.0 percent (8 of 25) and 22.2 percent (2

of 9), respectively.

Ohio State opened the second half on a 7-0 run with a three-pointer by Muhammad sandwiched between layups from Young and Kaleb Wesson.

Purdue used an 8-3 spurt sparked by a three-pointer and old-fashioned three-point play from Boudreaux to cut Ohio State's lead to 39-28 with 15:11 to play.

Eleven points was the closest Purdue would get until the Boilermakers ripped off a 6-0 run to cut a 45-30 Buckeye lead to nine points with 10:17 remaining. Kaleb Wesson and Muhammad answered that with back-to-back triples, and Wesson hit a pair of foul shots to put Ohio State back up 53-36.

Boudreaux, who ultimately fouled out with a game-high 17 points with 2:10 left, converted another traditional three-point play, but Young responded with the most exciting play of the game. Walker surveyed the floor from the right wing and threw a lob pass to Young, who stuffed home a powerful dunk, igniting the sellout crowd of 18,809.

"It felt good," Young said of the slam. "I always like those kind of plays, hype plays, get people going. I probably should have dunked the one coming down the lane on that fastbreak – my teammates were mad at me for that – so I had to get one back."

Overall, Ohio State shot 48.9 percent (22 of 45) on field goals and 45 percent (9 of 20) on three-pointers, while holding Purdue to 35.2 percent (19 of 54) shooting and 20.0 percent (4 of 20) on triples.

"Our defense was as good and as sound as we've played all year," Holtmann said. "And they're a little bit different when they play at home vs. on the road in a lot of ways. Offensively, their numbers are a little bit different, but still, they're very difficult to guard."

Muhammad finished the game with 11 points on 3 of 5 three-pointers and 2 of 2 free throws, while Andre Wesson contributed eight points and seven rebounds.

"He was great, made shots, took good ones, took clean ones, kind of played off other guys, played really solid," Holtmann said

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# OHIO STATE MEN'S BASKETBALL

of Muhammad. "And then he impacted the game on the other end. He was as good as maybe he's been."

Muhammad's starting backcourt mate, Walker, scored nine points and dished four assists with no turnovers.

"He made the right play a lot," Holtmann said of Walker. "Steadiness, solid defense – he was really solid today."

## No. 25 Ohio State Falls At Garza-Led No. 20 Iowa

National player of the year candidate Luka Garza led No. 20 Iowa to an 85-76 victory against No. 25 Ohio State in front of a crowd of 14,001 at Carver-Hawkeye Arena on Feb. 20.

"I didn't feel like from the jump we were near tough enough or sound enough or engaged enough defensively," Holtmann said. "That was the biggest issue. We missed some shots. We missed some shots around the basket and that led to some frustration, but it was more on the defensive end, for sure."

Freshman forward E.J. Liddell excelled off the Buckeye bench with career highs of 17 points and eight rebounds, along with two blocks in 26 minutes, but it was not enough to overcome a dominant performance by Garza.

"He was physical in his post-ups, and he was good getting in and out of their zone," Holtmann said of Liddell. "Various times he was aggressive. There were a couple times he could have been more aggressive. It was a really good effort from him in terms of offense. He came in and gave us a great lift."

Garza finished with 24 points, six rebounds and a career-high four assists on 9-of-15 shooting, including 7 of 8 on two-pointers for Iowa (19-8, 10-6).

"He's a hard matchup," Holtmann said of Garza. "He's got the ability to really score it and obviously play inside and out. Their ability to shoot it tonight created some opportunities for him and some space for him."

Both teams had four players with double-digit scoring outputs, and Walker turned in a strong effort in defeat with 11 points and seven assists to one turnover for Ohio State (17-9, 7-8).

The Hawkeyes, who improved to 13-1 at home, opened the game with back-to-back three-pointers from unlikely sources in third-year sophomore guard Connor McCaffery and Toussaint, who entered shooting 31.1 percent and 21.4 percent from three, respectively.

Walker drilled a triple of his own from Muhammad to make it 6-3, but Iowa fired off a 12-0 run, spanning 3:29 and giving the Hawkeyes a 15-point advantage.

"They kind of jumped us from the start, so give their staff and players credit," Holtmann said. "That was really the difference – the first five minutes. We couldn't climb back and cut it to two possessions – close a couple times but just couldn't get it done."

Liddell ended the Black and Gold run with an old-fashioned three-point play coming off an offensive rebound. The freshman forward

from Bellville, Ill., helped bring the Buckeyes back into the game with 11 first-half points on 5-of-7 shooting.

After Liddell cut Iowa's lead to 18-6, the home team stayed hot and extended the margin to 19 points with a 27-8 lead with 10:08 until halftime.

The Buckeyes clawed themselves back to cut the deficit to 43-35 with 41 seconds until intermission behind the play of Liddell and Young, who grabbed four offensive boards in the first frame. Hawkeye sophomore guard Joe Wieskamp connected on a three-pointer with 17 seconds until the break, sending Iowa into the locker room up 46-35.

Ohio State shot 43.8 percent (14 of 32) from the floor in the first half and 23.1 percent (3 of 13) from beyond the arc. Led by 17 first-half points on 7-of-9 shooting from Garza, the Hawkeyes hit 62.1 percent (18 of 29) of their field goals and 42.9 percent (6 of 14) of their three-pointers.

After the intermission, Ohio State trailed 51-42 on a Walker triple with 17:13 left. The Scarlet and Gray stalled out, however, failing to score for a critical 3:13 stretch, though Iowa's lead pushed to just 56-42.

The Hawkeye lead swelled to 69-50 with 6:43 remaining, but the Buckeyes battled back with a 6-0 run. Iowa continued its success on offense and led 80-67 with 1:12 left before Ohio State cut the deficit to 83-76 with 17 seconds left. The hosts closed the game out with a pair of Evelyn Bakari free throws.

Despite an 0-for-7 start, Washington hit his next five shots and finished with 15 points and no turnovers.

Kaleb and Andre Wesson both fouled out late in the second half, finishing with 10 points and seven rebounds, and nine points and five assists, respectively.

After committing six turnovers in the first half, Ohio State gave away eight possessions in the second half.

"They're good here," Holtmann said of Iowa at home. "They haven't lost since November. But we gave them life early, and they kind of rode that all the way."

## Ohio State Defeats Maryland Behind Shooting, Sound Defense

The No. 25 Buckeyes defeated No. 7 Maryland 79-72 behind timely shooting and sound defense in front of a sellout crowd of 18,809 at Value City Arena on Feb. 23.

Muhammad led Ohio State (18-9, 8-8) to victory over Maryland with 22 points, hitting 4 of 8 three-pointers and all eight of his foul shots. Muhammad also held Maryland stand-out guard Anthony Cowan to 10 points on 1-of-4 shooting, which led him to be asked which part of his performance he was most proud of.

"I don't really pay too much attention to that," Muhammad said. "I'm happy we won. I'm happy we all played hard, we all stayed together. They made a lot of runs, they dug themselves back into the game, and we just stayed together, played as one and continued to work hard on defense."

Kaleb Wesson gave the Buckeyes a great

## Iowa 85, Ohio State 76

Feb. 20, 2020										
Carver-Hawkeye Arena • Iowa City, Iowa										
	1	2	F							
<b>Ohio State (17-9, 7-8)</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>76</b>							
<b>Iowa (19-8, 10-6)</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>85</b>							
<b>Ohio State</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>FG</b>	<b>FT</b>	<b>Reb.</b>						
	<b>Min.</b>	<b>M-A</b>	<b>M-A</b>	<b>O-D</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>Pts.</b>			
A. Wesson	32	4-6	0-0	0-2	5	5	9			
Young	25	2-4	4-4	6-1	1	3	8			
K. Wesson	26	4-10	1-2	1-6	3	5	10			
Muhammad	24	1-4	0-0	0-1	1	1	3			
Walker	31	4-11	1-1	0-3	7	2	11			
Gaffney	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	0	0			
Washington	26	5-13	2-2	2-3	1	1	15			
Ahrens	9	1-3	0-0	0-3	0	1	3			
Liddell	26	5-11	7-9	3-5	0	3	17			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>26-62</b>	<b>15-18</b>	<b>14-24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>76</b>			
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b>	<b>41.9%</b>		<b>FT:</b>	<b>83.3%</b>		<b>3-point</b>			
<b>field goals:</b>	9-30 (A. Wesson 1-2, K. Wesson 1-5, Muhammad 1-4, Walker 2-7, Washington 3-8, Ahrens 1-3, Liddell 0-1). <b>Team rebounds:</b> 2.									
<b>Blocked shots:</b>	3 (Liddell 2, A. Wesson). <b>Turnovers:</b> 14 (K. Wesson 4, TEAM 3, Young 2, Liddell 2, A. Wesson, Muhammad, Walker). <b>Steals:</b> 5 (K. Wesson 2, Walker 2, A. Wesson).									
<b>Iowa</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>FG</b>	<b>FT</b>	<b>Reb.</b>						
	<b>Min.</b>	<b>M-A</b>	<b>M-A</b>	<b>O-D</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>Pts.</b>			
Kriener	26	3-4	5-6	0-4	0	5	12			
Garza	35	9-15	4-9	2-4	4	2	24			
Toussaint	19	3-6	1-1	1-2	3	3	9			
Wieskamp	37	4-12	4-4	1-3	1	1	13			
McCaffery	35	1-3	0-0	0-1	4	1	3			
Evelyn	30	5-8	2-2	0-0	3	1	15			
Pemsl	18	4-4	1-3	1-7	3	3	9			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>29-52</b>	<b>17-25</b>	<b>5-24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>85</b>			
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b>	<b>55.8%</b>		<b>FT:</b>	<b>68.0%</b>		<b>3-point</b>			
<b>field goals:</b>	10-25 (Kriener 1-2, Garza 2-7, Toussaint 2-2, Wieskamp 1-6, McCaffery 1-3, Evelyn 3-5). <b>Team rebounds:</b> 3. <b>Blocked shots:</b> 2 (Kriener, Evelyn). <b>Turnovers:</b> 10 (Toussaint 3, Garza 2, Kriener, McCaffery, Evelyn, Pemsl, TEAM). <b>Steals:</b> 6 (McCaffery 2, Pemsl 2, Toussaint, Wieskamp).									
<b>Officials:</b>	Dorsey, Kimble, Wymer. <b>Attendance:</b> 14,001.									

## Ohio State 79, Maryland 72

Feb. 23, 2020										
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio										
	1	2	F							
<b>Maryland (22-5, 12-4)</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>72</b>							
<b>Ohio State (18-9, 8-8)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>79</b>							
<b>Maryland</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>FG</b>	<b>FT</b>	<b>Reb.</b>						
	<b>Min.</b>	<b>M-A</b>	<b>M-A</b>	<b>O-D</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>Pts.</b>			
Scott	29	4-5	1-1	1-3	0	4	10			
J. Smith	29	3-8	2-3	2-5	0	3	8			
Cowan	31	1-4	8-9	0-3	7	5	10			
Ayala	34	5-12	3-4	0-3	2	2	16			
Morsell	33	3-6	2-2	1-2	3	3	8			
Wiggins	28	7-15	0-0	1-2	0	2	20			
Lindo	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
S. Smith	0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0			
Hart	5	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	2	0			
Marial	10	0-0	0-0	1-1	0	3	0			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>23-51</b>	<b>16-19</b>	<b>6-21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>72</b>			
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b>	<b>45.1%</b>		<b>FT:</b>	<b>84.2%</b>		<b>3-point</b>			
<b>field goals:</b>	10-29 (Scott 1-2, J. Smith 0-3, Cowan 0-1, Ayala 3-8, Morsell 0-1, Wiggins 6-13, Hart 0-1). <b>Team rebounds:</b> 2. <b>Blocked shots:</b> 3 (J. Smith 3).									
<b>Turnovers:</b>	10 (J. Smith 4, Cowan 3, Morsell 2, Wiggins). <b>Steals:</b> 3 (J. Smith, Ayala, Wiggins).									
<b>Ohio State</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>FG</b>	<b>FT</b>	<b>Reb.</b>						
	<b>Min.</b>	<b>M-A</b>	<b>M-A</b>	<b>O-D</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>PF</b>	<b>Pts.</b>			
A. Wesson	40	4-10	2-2	3-0	2	3	12			
Young	10	1-3	1-3	2-1	0	1	3			
K. Wesson	37	5-10	3-5	2-7	3	3	15			
Muhammad	35	5-11	8-8	0-5	2	4	22			
Walker	31	4-7	2-3	0-0	3	3	12			
Washington	27	3-8	7-8	0-4	0	0	13			
Ahrens	8	0-1	0-0	0-1	0	1	0			
Liddell	12	1-4	0-0	3-2	0	3	2			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>23-54</b>	<b>23-28</b>	<b>13-23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>79</b>			
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b>	<b>42.6%</b>		<b>FT:</b>	<b>82.1%</b>		<b>3-point</b>			
<b>field goals:</b>	10-25 (A. Wesson 2-5, Young 0-1, K. Wesson 2-4, Muhammad 4-8, Walker 2-3, Washington 0-3, Ahrens 0-1). <b>Team rebounds:</b> 6. <b>Blocked shots:</b> 0. <b>Turnovers:</b> 10 (K. Wesson 2, Walker 2, TEAM 2, A. Wesson, Young, Muhammad, Liddell). <b>Steals:</b> 6 (K. Wesson 2, Muhammad, Walker, Washington, Liddell).									
<b>Officials:</b>	Eades, Pfeifer, Scirotto. <b>Attendance:</b> 18,809.									

two-way effort, keeping Maryland standout forward Jalen Smith in check (eight points) and adding 15 points, nine rebounds, three assists and two steals. Andre Wesson played all 40 minutes for Ohio State and scored 12 points.

"Our players really competed and really played well," Holtmann said. "Players win games. They did a great job today. Our older guys led the way."

The Buckeyes led by 11 points with 11:09 left, but the Terrapins (22-5, 12-4) battled back with a 10-2 run to cut the Ohio State lead to 58-55 with 5:52 to play.

Holtmann's squad responded with a 6-2 stretch to put Ohio State up 64-57 with 4:15 to play, sparked by a slam dunk by Kaleb Wesson on an assist from Andre.

Cowan cut the deficit to five with a layup but received a technical foul for kicking in Kaleb Wesson's direction while on the ground, giving him five fouls and disqualifying him with 3:54 left.

The Terrapins would not go away, though, with sophomore guard Aaron Wiggins cutting Ohio State's lead to four twice on three-pointers (68-64 with 2:41 left, 76-72 with 30 seconds left). Muhammad and Washington iced the game for Ohio State at the charity stripe, however, finishing 8 for 8, and 7 of 8 on foul shots, respectively.

Ohio State began the second half with a 7-0 run on a Kaleb Wesson triple and buckets from Andre Wesson and Walker, carrying over a strong first-half finish for an extended 17-3 stretch overall.

"Our last four minutes and our first four minutes were critical," Holtmann said. "We were able to get to the line a little bit, we were able to keep them off the line a little bit, and we made some shots. Luther had a stretch there that really helped us late in the first half."

"And that opening stretch – we talked about it at halftime – this is going to say something about us, how we start this second half against one of the best teams in the country."

The Scarlet and Gray defense held the Terrapins without a field goal during the long run, with the visitors' only three points coming on foul shots by Cowan while the Buckeyes built their lead to 47-33 with 17:56 to play.

Superb three-point shooting and rebounding led to the Buckeyes' 40-33 halftime advantage. Ohio State knocked down 8 of 16 shots from beyond the arc and grabbed 19 rebounds, including seven on the offensive end, compared to Maryland's 4-of-12 mark on triples and 14 rebounds.

The Buckeyes shot 44.8 percent (13 of 29) from the floor and 6 of 10 (60.0 percent) from the free-throw line in the game's first 20 minutes, while the Terrapins made 41.7 percent (10 of 24) of their first-half shots and 81.8 percent (9 of 11) of their foul shots.

Washington provided 13 points off the Buckeye bench, while Walker scored 12 points and dished three assists as starting point guard.

With 4:29 left in the first half, Young came

Continued On Page 28

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# Point Guard Walker Catching Fire At Right Time

Continued From Page 27

down with a rebound but landed awkwardly with his right foot rolling underneath him. He did not return with a high ankle sprain, but the Buckeyes answered the bell in his absence.

"It shows the world how tough we are," Kaleb Wesson said. "It lets you all know how tough we are. We knew how tough we are, what we've been doing, how hard we've been working - it shows you all."

Ohio State was 17 of 18 from the line (94.4 percent) in the second half and 23 of 28 for the game (82.1 percent). The Buckeyes cooled off from beyond the arc in the second half, hitting just 2 of 9 (22.2 percent), but still finished at 40.0 percent for the game (10 of 25).

Wiggins led the Terrapins, who shot 45.1 from the floor (23 of 51), with 20 points.

## Ohio State Scores Shorthanded Victory At Nebraska

The No. 23 Ohio State men's basketball team defeated Nebraska 75-54 for its second straight victory on Feb. 27 in front of a crowd of 15,611 at Pinnacle Bank Arena in Lincoln, Neb.

Kaleb Wesson controlled the paint against the Cornhuskers (7-21, 2-15), scoring 16 points and grabbing a career-high 18 rebounds along with one block and one steal.

Ohio State rode a hot start to a comfortable victory, leading by double digits for the final 31:37 and by at least 14 points throughout the entire second half.

Walker provided 15 points, five rebounds and three assists for the Buckeyes (19-9, 9-8) in the 21-point victory, while Washington added 14 points.

The Buckeyes dominated the Cornhuskers in their own building during a 43-27 first half, led by Washington, who scored all of his 14 points in the first 20 minutes. Walker did a little bit of everything with 11 points, three rebounds and three assists in the first half.

Washington hit his first three triples of the game and Ohio State made nine of its first 11 shot attempts to take a 26-12 lead with 10:50 until intermission.

"He has helped us in a couple games right now get off to really good starts, and he's got a good mind-set about him whether he starts or comes off the bench," Holtmann said of Washington, who started against the Huskers. "And those threes that he hit really gave us some confidence early."

The Buckeyes cooled off, though, going

4:45 without a field goal following the hot start, but the Cornhuskers won that stretch by only two points to cut the deficit to 30-18.

Despite winning by 21 points, Ohio State shot a forgettable 0 for 12 from three-point range in the second half after a 6-for-13 total in the first frame.

"We missed some open ones tonight," Holtmann said. "They do a good job of flying at your shot, too."

After starting 5 of 6 from deep, the Buckeyes made just one of their final 19 three-point attempts.

"I thought we had some patchiness offensively that I didn't like," Holtmann continued.

Filling in for Young (ankle sprain), Liddell scored five points and blocked four shots in the game's first 20 minutes. Liddell finished with eight points, five boards and five blocks.

The Buckeyes stifled the Huskers' efforts in the paint, blocking nine shots as a team, with Andre Wesson, Kaleb Wesson, Washington and freshman forward Ibrahima Diallo joining Liddell's block party.

Kaleb Wesson helped the Buckeyes hold Nebraska at bay in the second half, scoring 10 of his points and pulling down 13 of his rebounds despite 2-of-8 shooting in the final stanza. He was 6 of 8 from the line in the second frame, however.

Andre Wesson scored nine points and grabbed five boards while Muhammad added nine points and six rebounds in a game where Ohio State was also without freshman forward Alonzo Gaffney (illness).

On the game, Ohio State shot 40.3 percent (25 of 62) from the floor, 24.0 percent (6 of 25) from beyond the arc and 79.2 percent (19 of 24) from the free-throw line. Nebraska struggled from every level, shooting 35.6 percent (21 of 59) from the field, 18.8 percent (3 of 16) from deep and 64.3 percent (9 of 14) from the foul line.

"It's a credit to our older guys," Holtmann said. "You're led this time of year by your older guys. Our captains - Kyle's obviously one of them - they're the ones that deserve the credit."

## Buckeyes Ride Strong Finish To Victory Against Michigan

Ohio State defeated Michigan 77-63 in front of a sold-out crowd of 18,809 at Value City Arena on March 1.

"Our team is built for the moment, we're built for this," Walker said. "Our coaches believe in all of us. We feel like we can play at any level with any team,

## Ohio State 75, Nebraska 54

Feb. 27, 2020												
Pinnacle Bank Arena • Lincoln, Neb.												
	1		2		F							
Ohio State (19-9, 9-8)	43	32	75									
Nebraska (7-21, 2-15)	27	27	54									
Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.								
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
A. Wesson	34	3-7	3-4	3-2	1	2	9					
K. Wesson	29	3-10	10-13	5-13	0	4	16					
Muhammad	35	4-7	0-0	2-4	1	2	9					
Washington	35	5-14	0-0	0-3	1	2	14					
Walker	34	5-9	4-4	0-5	3	4	15					
Ahrens	9	0-2	0-0	0-3	0	0	0					
Diallo	2	1-1	0-0	0-1	0	0	2					
Liddell	20	3-10	2-3	4-1	0	3	8					
Hummer	2	1-2	0-0	0-0	0	0	2					
Hookfin	0+	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>26-62</b>	<b>15-18</b>	<b>14-24</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>75</b>					
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b> 40.3%	<b>FT:</b> 79.2%	<b>3-point field goals:</b> 6-25									
(A. Wesson 0-2, K. Wesson 0-2, Muhammad 1-4, Washington 4-10, Walker 1-3, Ahrens 0-2, Liddell 0-1, Hummer 0-1). <b>Team rebounds:</b> 2. <b>Blocked shots:</b> 9 (Liddell 5, A. Wesson, Washington, Diallo). <b>Turnovers:</b> 9 (Muhammad 4, Washington 3, K. Wesson, Walker). <b>Steals:</b> 5 (Washington 2, K. Wesson, Muhammad, Walker 2).												
Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.								
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
Ouedraogo	19	1-3	2-2	4-2	0	3	4					
Mack	32	4-8	3-4	0-3	2	3	12					
Burke	31	5-13	2-4	2-1	1	3	13					
Cheatham	29	4-14	0-0	0-4	1	3	8					
Thorbjarnarso	34	2-4	0-0	0-4	4	3	4					
Arop	4	1-2	0-0	0-1	0	0	2					
Cross	21	1-7	0-1	0-4	0	0	2					
Green	22	3-8	2-3	0-3	0	1	9					
Easley	8	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>21-59</b>	<b>9-14</b>	<b>9-24</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>54</b>					
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b> 35.6%	<b>FT:</b> 64.3%	<b>3-point field goals:</b> 3-16									
(Mack 1-2, Burke 1-2, Cheatham 0-2, Thorbjarnarso 0-2, Cross 0-4, Green 1-2). <b>Team rebounds:</b> 5. <b>Blocked shots:</b> 4 (Cross 2, Cheatham, Easley). <b>Turnovers:</b> 11 (Ouedraogo 3, Mack 3, Burke, Cheatham, Cross, Green, Easley). <b>Steals:</b> 5 (Mack, Burke, Cheatham, Thorbjarnarso, Green). <b>Officials:</b> Ek, Carstensen, Oglesby. <b>Attendance:</b> 15,611.												

so no matter if we have all 14 or nine that we have now, everybody is built for that moment."

Walker and Washington led the Scarlet and Gray (20-9, 10-8) to victory over the Maize and Blue (18-11, 9-9), while all five starters posted double-digit scoring performances. Walker scored 15 points, dished seven assists and grabbed six rebounds, while Washington totaled 20 points, six boards and three assists.

"C.J. was great at attacking and finding lanes," Holtmann said. "His floor game has been outstanding."

After Michigan tied the game at 54 with 6:51 left, the Buckeyes outscored the Wolverines 23-9 down the stretch. Walker made a shot to take the lead, then Andre Wesson, who scored 14 points, extended the lead to five by banking in a three-pointer, bringing the crowd to its feet.

Following his older brother's lead, junior big man Kaleb Wesson sent the sold-out home crowd into a frenzy with a three-pointer of his own to push the lead to 62-54 with just over five minutes left.

"They were playing good defense," Holtmann said of the banked three. "Fortunately we got it up on goal. Both guys, Andre and Kaleb, played really solid games."

Michigan freshman forward Franz Wagner ended the run with a layup, but Muhammad, who finished with 10 points, made a midrange jumper before an Austin Davis dunk cut the lead to 64-58 with 3:55 to play.

Ohio State answered with six straight points on two free throws from Muhammad and a pair of baskets from Walker and Kaleb Wesson, who added 14 points and nine rebounds, to make it 70-58 with 2:19 remaining.

Wagner answered with a layup, but Kaleb Wesson knocked down a three. Then, Muhammad and Walker knocked down a pair of foul shots each before

## Ohio State 77, Michigan 63

March 1, 2020												
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio												
	1		2		F							
Michigan (18-11, 9-9)	29	34	63									
Ohio State (20-9, 10-8)	32	45	77									
Michigan	Total	FG	FT	Reb.								
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
Livers	34	2-11	0-0	1-2	3	4	6					
Teske	24	3-8	2-2	0-1	0	4	8					
Simpson	38	6-10	0-0	0-5	7	1	12					
Wagner	36	7-12	0-0	2-8	2	1	18					
Brooks	28	3-8	0-0	0-7	2	3	7					
DeJulius	14	0-1	2-2	1-1	2	0	2					
Castleton	2	0-1	2-2	0-0	0	2	2					
Johns	9	0-1	0-2	0-1	0	0	0					
Davis	15	4-4	0-0	0-1	0	3	8					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>25-56</b>	<b>6-8</b>	<b>4-26</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>63</b>					
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b> 44.6%	<b>FT:</b> 75.0%	<b>3-point field goals:</b> 7-26									
(Livers 2-8, Teske 0-2, Simpson 0-1, Wagner 4-8, Brooks 1-4, DeJulius 0-1, Castleton 0-1, Johns 0-1). <b>Team rebounds:</b> 0. <b>Blocked shots:</b> 3 (Teske, Wagner, Castleton). <b>Turnovers:</b> 12 (Simpson 4, Teske 3, Davis, Livers, Wagner). <b>Steals:</b> 5 (Wagner 2, Livers, Teske, Simpson).												
Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.								
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
A. Wesson	34	5-6	2-2	0-2	1	3	14					
K. Wesson	33	5-14	0-0	1-8	0	2	14					
Muhammad	34	3-7	4-4	0-3	1	2	10					
Washington	37	6-14	3-4	0-6	3	2	20					
Walker	37	6-12	3-3	1-5	7	2	15					
Ahrens	8	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0					
Liddell	17	2-4	0-0	2-2	1	0	4					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>27-57</b>	<b>12-13</b>	<b>4-26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>63</b>					
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b> 47.4%	<b>FT:</b> 92.3%	<b>3-point field goals:</b> 11-21									
(A. Wesson 2-3, K. Wesson 4-5, Muhammad 0-3, Washington 5-7, Walker 0-2, Liddell 0-1). <b>Team rebounds:</b> 2. <b>Blocked shots:</b> 3 (A. Wesson 2, K. Wesson). <b>Turnovers:</b> 9 (K. Wesson 3, Washington 3, A. Wesson, Walker, Liddell). <b>Steals:</b> 4 (Muhammad 2, Washington, Walker). <b>Officials:</b> Szclz, Riley, Wymer. <b>Attendance:</b> 18,809.												

Wagner, who had 18 points and 10 boards, ended the game with a meaningless three-pointer.

The Big Ten rivals had battled through a back-and-forth first half, with the Buckeyes leading by as many as eight points and the Wolverines in front by as many as four.

Ohio State took a 30-22 lead on a jumper from Liddell with 4:39 left until the break but committed two turnovers while making only one shot the rest of the half. The cold spell allowed Michigan to trail just 32-29 at the midway point.

Walker pushed the Buckeye lead to five points to open the second half, but the visiting Wolverines fired off a 9-0 run to take a 38-34 lead with 17:32 yet to play.

Ohio State ripped off an 8-0 run in response, sparked by a traditional three-point play by Walker and capped by a triple from Kaleb Wesson to take a 42-38 lead with 15:26 left.

Michigan cut the Ohio State lead to two twice in the next 5:26, with the Buckeyes extending their lead to six points twice in that span as well. Washington knocked down two triples with a Michigan basket in between to give Ohio State a 52-46 edge with exactly 10 minutes remaining.

Wagner tied the game at 52 with back-to-back makes from beyond the arc. Walker made a basket to take the lead, but Michigan tied it at 54 with a dunk by senior big man Jon Teske, setting up the final Buckeye surge.

Overall, Ohio State shot 47.4 percent (27 of 57) from the field and 52.4 percent (11 of 21) from beyond the arc including 6 of 9 in the second half, while Michigan shot 44.6 percent (25 of 56) from the floor and 26.9 percent (7 of 26) from deep.

Holtmann was happy to see his team take down its rivals.

"It's different in basketball, but it matters," Holtmann said of the rivalry. "It matters to everybody that cares about this place, to everybody that's been here. It matters to our former players. It matters to our former coaches. It matters. I'd be naive to say it didn't feel good."



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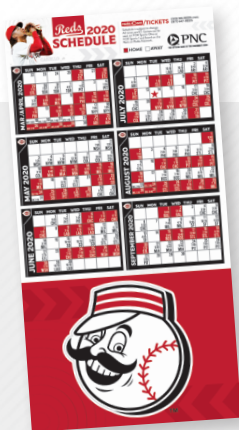
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## MARCH 26-29



### THURSDAY // 4:10

- **Reds Community Fund Block Party, presented by Budweiser**
  - Free Block Party - 11 a.m.
  - Live entertainment from DJ Etrayn and the Naked Karate Girls
- **Reds Magnetic Schedule/Car Magnet, presented by PNC Bank** (all fans)

### SATURDAY // 2:10

- **Kids Opening Day, presented by Frisch's Big Boy**
  - Free Block Party - 10 a.m.
  - Player Parade
  - Over 30 Mascots, Live Music, Games and More!
- **Kids Reds Cap, presented by Frisch's Big Boy** (kids 14 & younger)



### SUNDAY // 1:10

- **Family Sunday, presented by Klosterman Bakery - FAMILY OFFER\*** 1 Full-Price Ticket + 3 Half-Price Tickets
- **Kids Reds Tattoos presented by PNC Bank** (kids 14 & younger)

## APRIL 6-7



### MONDAY // 6:40

### TUESDAY // 6:40

## APRIL 9-12



### THURSDAY // 6:40

### FRIDAY // 7:10

### SATURDAY // 4:10

- **Team Calendar, presented by Kroger** (first 20,000 fans)

### SUNDAY // 1:10

- **Family Sunday, presented by Klosterman Bakery - FAMILY OFFER\*** 1 Full-Price Ticket + 3 Half-Price Tickets
- **Tucker Barnhart Fathead® Wall Decal presented by Texas Roadhouse** (kids 14 & younger)



## APRIL 14-16



### TUESDAY // 6:40

### WEDNESDAY // 6:40

### THURSDAY // 12:35

- **Senior Citizen Special, presented by Humana** - Fans 50 and older may purchase tickets at half-price\* and get free same-day admission to the Reds Hall of Fame and Museum, presented by Dinsmore



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## APRIL 24-26



### FRIDAY // 7:10

### SATURDAY // 4:10

- **Queen City Sluggers Triple Bobblehead, presented by St. Elizabeth Healthcare** (first 20,000 fans)

### SUNDAY // 2:10

- **Reds Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, presented by PNC Bank**
- **Commemorative Marty Brennaman Microphone, presented by Kahn's** (first 20,000 fans)



## APRIL 27-29



### MONDAY // 6:40

### TUESDAY // 6:40

- **Bark in the Park**
  - Enjoy the game with your furry friend!
  - Reds.com/DogDay

### WEDNESDAY // 12:35

- **Business Day Special**
  - \$20 View Level Ticket + \$10 Concession Credits\*
  - Reds.com/Skipwork



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\*Some restrictions apply. Schedule and promotions subject to change.



# Jayaraman Makes Impact Off Court As Senior

All season long, Ohio State has used 10 or fewer players in its rotation, six of whom are freshmen. Those numbers dropped to nine and five on Feb. 6 with Kaelynn Satterfield

## DOUBLE DRIBBLE Wyatt Crosher

entering the transfer portal, but there has always been an extra player on the sidelines who has had an effect on the team as a whole.

Enter Savitha Jayaraman, the team's lone senior, whose contributions off the court were finally given their proper respect on Feb. 25, the team's senior night which ended in a 69-55 loss to Northwestern.

"There's a lot of emotions going on," Jayaraman said prior to the game. "I'm excited. I'm a little sad that it's ending."

Though Jayaraman has not been able to make the impact she was hoping for on the court in her senior campaign due to a bulging disc in her spine, as well as the desire by the team to give its young core some much-needed experience, she has embraced her opportunity to be a leader.

Jayaraman is not only the one senior on the team, she is the only player with at least three years of experience at Ohio State, with junior Braxtin Miller transferring over from Oklahoma State in the offseason.

"It's been definitely a transition not being able to contribute and lead on the floor,"

Jayaraman said. "I've tried to kind of be the team mom, if you will. I try to herd them in the right direction. I know what's expected of being an Ohio State student-athlete, so I try to make sure everyone knows."

Becoming the "team mom" has entailed plenty of important duties, all of which involve bringing a young team together and making sure that they are adapting to the college level in all aspects.

"It's just like making sure, OK, we know where we're supposed to be at this time, this is what we're supposed to look like, how to present yourself, making sure everyone's on time for practice," Jayaraman said. "Like on time is not on time. On time is 15 minutes early, stuff like that where you're a freshman, you might not know the expectations, so just making sure that everyone's aware of how we're supposed to be as an Ohio State athlete."

The impact Jayaraman has made has not gone unnoticed. Freshman guard Jacy Sheldon, who played against Jayaraman "at least once" in high school while Sheldon was at Dublin Coffman and Jayaraman was at Olentangy Liberty, said she got to know the now-senior forward on her visit to Ohio State and that she has been a big help in getting acclimated to Ohio State.

"She's definitely someone I look up to, not just in basketball but in life, too. She's an amazing person and a great teammate, and I think that she didn't necessarily get the impact on the floor that she wanted because of her injury, but she found ways to make a good impact on all of us," Sheldon said. "She was always there for us when we needed her. We knew she was someone we could go to if

## OSU Women's Basketball Signees

Players in the class of 2020 who have signed letters of intent to play basketball at Ohio State. (Star ratings are from the ESPNW rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Stars	High School
Gabby Hutcherson	F	6-2	★★★	Westerville (Ohio) South
Anyssa Jones	G	5-9	★★★	Westerville (Ohio) South
Kateri Poole	G	5-8	★★★★★	Bronx (N.Y.) South Shore

we needed anything."

Her influence did not stop with first-year players. Sophomore forward Dorka Juhasz, one of Ohio State's leaders on the court, said the team appreciates Jayaraman, and that her contributions to the team, even when not traveling or attending every practice, have been impressive to see.

"We love Savy a lot, even if she can't be with us with the practices and everything," Juhasz said. "It's hard because you're not traveling with the team, you're basically just coming sometimes to do rehab during practice and just coming to the games. It's pretty hard to manage to be in the team, and she's doing a very good job and she's obviously very active in this, so we love her a lot."

Before this season, Jayaraman found game action but never saw consistent minutes.

Coming in as a walk-on during her sophomore academic year, Jayaraman played in 19 games and tallied 10 points and a pair of rebounds in 53 total minutes. Her second year with the team, she played just three minutes in three games and was held scoreless.

Still, that experience with a variety of players in a pair of seasons with a ton of roster turnover has been valuable to such a young core.

"I've just seen so many different teams," Jayaraman said. "My first year was Kelsey Mitchell, Stephanie Mavunga, one of the most talented teams ever, and so that was definitely a year where I was learning a lot and just kind of watching them run the show."

"Then last year with all the grad transfers and everything, that was, again, learning a lot, but also I stepped into a small leadership

role. And then with this year, having seven freshmen, I definitely had to step up and be a leader, and since I can't do it on the court, I'm trying to do it in the locker room and during timeouts and stuff like that."

And with that leadership come the team-mom qualities.

"She's the oldest on the team right now, and she was always responsible for everything," Juhasz said. "She always texted us when we had 6 a.m. lifts: 'Hey, guys, make sure you guys are awake.' She was always there for, 'Guys, you can't miss this,' or if there was some problem, she was always the one that tried to solve it."

Though Jayaraman has never had that dramatic effect on the court she was looking for when she walked on, she did enough to impress head coach Kevin McGuff, who eventually granted Jayaraman a full-time scholarship for her efforts.

"I was excited to do it," McGuff said. "She's a great kid, and I wanted to reward her for all the great things she brought to the program. She's always a voice of reason, she's very bright and she really understands basketball. She understands people and brings a lot of maturity to our program and is a great example for our younger kids to look at."

As much as she has embraced taking on a role behind the scenes, it was not a completely seamless process.

Jayaraman, who has taken her time recovering from the back injury to "be conservative, because the long-term health of my back's important," said she had to mentally adjust to the realization that her efforts would almost completely come from the sidelines

## Plank's Cafe



**Dorka Juhasz**  
Sophomore Forward  
Pecs, Hungary

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# OHIO STATE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

## 2019-20 Ohio State Women's Basketball Statistics

### 18-11 Overall (11-7 Big Ten) Statistics through games of March 1

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.						
Dorka Juhasz	27-27	816-30.2	139-287	.484	33-85	.388	48-89	.539	81-165	246-9.1	42-1	29	43	29	36	359-13.3
Kierstan Bell	26-10	543-20.9	111-274	.405	47-146	.322	20-30	.667	23-97	120-4.6	47-1	41	55	20	34	289-11.1
Jacy Sheldon	29-20	769-26.5	97-204	.475	37-108	.343	35-41	.854	25-52	77-2.7	59-0	42	40	1	39	266-9.2
Braxtin Miller	29-28	913-31.5	80-246	.325	25-94	.266	40-57	.702	20-76	96-3.3	49-0	97	42	8	42	225-7.8
Aaliyah Patty	29-27	591-20.4	92-188	.489	16-54	.296	24-39	.615	38-119	157-5.4	82-2	27	41	30	26	224-7.7
Rebeka Mikulasikova	29-1	476-16.4	80-159	.503	25-54	.463	37-45	.822	26-58	84-2.9	49-1	17	46	10	9	222-7.7
Madison Greene	29-17	689-23.8	65-160	.406	19-58	.328	63-82	.768	18-32	50-1.7	58-1	69	43	5	30	212-7.3
Janai Crooms	28-10	670-23.9	75-170	.441	8-42	.190	26-52	.500	24-91	115-4.1	61-1	92	84	27	29	184-6.6
Kaelynn Satterfield	18-0	145-8.1	16-43	.372	2-11	.182	10-11	.909	10-22	32-1.8	16-0	5	21	0	3	44-2.4
Aixa Wone	25-5	237-9.5	17-45	.378	2-14	.143	5-9	.556	12-21	33-1.3	30-1	17	25	1	8	41-1.6
Savitha Jayaraman	1-0	1-1.0	0-1	.000	0-1	.000	0-0	.000	0-0	0-0.0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0-0.0
TEAM									44-48	92		15				
<b>Ohio State</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5850</b>	<b>772-1777</b>	<b>.434</b>	<b>214-667</b>	<b>.321</b>	<b>308-455</b>	<b>.677</b>	<b>321-781</b>	<b>1102-38.0</b>	<b>493-8</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>2066-71.2</b>
<b>Opponents</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5850</b>	<b>682-1739</b>	<b>.392</b>	<b>168-579</b>	<b>.290</b>	<b>378-528</b>	<b>.716</b>	<b>327-740</b>	<b>1067-36.8</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>1910-65.9</b>

## BIG Women's Basketball

	Conf.			Overall		
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
Maryland	16	2	.889	25	4	.862
Northwestern	16	2	.889	26	3	.897
Iowa	14	4	.778	23	6	.793
Indiana	13	5	.722	23	7	.767
Rutgers	11	7	.611	21	8	.724
<b>Ohio State</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>.611</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>.621</b>
Michigan	10	8	.556	19	10	.655
Michigan State	9	9	.500	16	13	.552
Purdue	8	10	.444	17	13	.567
Nebraska	7	11	.389	17	12	.586
Minnesota	5	13	.278	15	14	.517
Wisconsin	3	15	.167	11	18	.379
Illinois	2	16	.111	11	18	.379
Penn State	1	17	.056	7	22	.241

#### Feb. 10 Scores

Michigan 77, Minnesota 52  
Northwestern 85, Michigan State 55

#### Feb. 13 Scores

Maryland 93, Iowa 59  
Northwestern 66, Michigan 60  
Michigan State 57, Rutgers 53

#### Ohio State 99, Minnesota 76

Indiana 59, Illinois 54  
Nebraska 75, Penn State 58  
Purdue 62, Wisconsin 59

#### Feb. 16 Scores

Rutgers 62, Michigan 41  
**Ohio State 80, Indiana 76**  
Maryland 106, Penn State 69  
Purdue 70, Illinois 58  
Iowa 97, Wisconsin 71

#### Northwestern 60, Nebraska 56

#### Feb. 17 Score

Michigan State 66, Minnesota 54

#### Feb. 19 Scores

Michigan 80, Illinois 59

#### Ohio State 65, Nebraska 52

Northwestern 82, Rutgers 65  
Maryland 85, Wisconsin 56

#### Feb. 20 Score

Michigan State 65, Purdue 63

#### Feb. 22 Scores

Northwestern 82, Wisconsin 66

#### Rutgers 59, Ohio State 57

Iowa 100, Penn State 57  
Nebraska 80, Illinois 58  
Indiana 75, Minnesota 69

#### Feb. 23 Score

Michigan 65, Michigan State 57

#### Feb. 25 Scores

**Northwestern 69, Ohio State 55**  
Maryland 88, Purdue 45

#### Feb. 26 Score

Michigan State 72, Illinois 58

#### Feb. 27 Scores

Indiana 81, Nebraska 53  
Michigan 80, Penn State 66  
Rutgers 63, Wisconsin 43  
Iowa 90, Minnesota 82

#### Feb. 29 Scores

Northwestern 75, Illinois 58

#### Ohio State 77, Purdue 56

#### March 1 Scores

Indiana 78, Michigan 60  
Rutgers 78, Iowa 74  
Michigan State 99, Penn State 80  
Maryland 99, Minnesota 44

#### March 4 Games

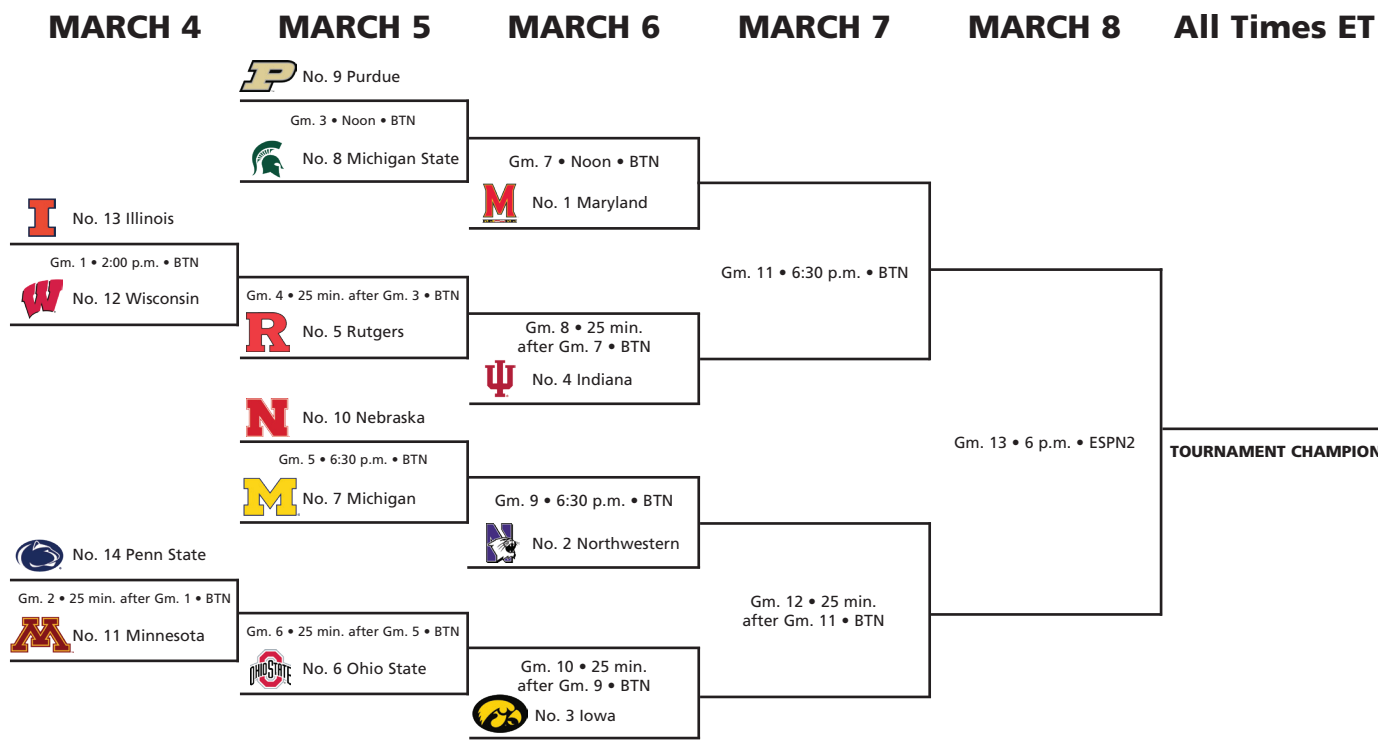
Illinois vs. Wisconsin, 2:00 p.m.  
Penn State vs. Minnesota, 4:30 p.m.

#### March 5 Games

Purdue vs. Michigan State, 12:00 p.m.  
TBA vs. Rutgers, 2:30 p.m.  
Nebraska vs. Michigan, 6:30 p.m.

#### TBA vs. Ohio State, 9:00 p.m.

## BIG Women's Basketball Tournament March 4-8, 2020 • Bankers Life Fieldhouse • Indianapolis



instead of on the court.

"Definitely difficult, because this year I really thought I would be able to contribute on the floor and have an impact in that way," Jayaraman said. "But I wasn't going to sit around and be sad about it because I knew I could still contribute, and I wanted to have an impact in some way."

"So, I was like 'Well whatever I can do, I'm going to do.' If it's in the locker room, if it's during timeouts telling them 'Hey, I see this,' with my experience, if you will. Whatever way I can make an impact, I still want to do that."

Jayaraman said she has been impressed with the continued growth that this young team has made throughout the season and that she will "definitely have to stick around and follow them next year."

But instead of sticking around for her final year of eligibility, which she could have elected to do because she walked on during her sophomore season, Jayaraman is moving on once she graduates this spring and following her business major into a position at Abercrombie & Fitch.

"I'll be a merchant in their leadership development program," she said. "I'll be working with their designers and their business analysts and kind of 'What are we going to make? Where are we going to send it?' All that good stuff."

There is still a Big Ten tournament and potential NCAA tournament to play for the

team she is currently making a difference with behind the scenes, but Jayaraman's senior year will not go without any time on the floor.

On senior night, Jayaraman checked into the game with less than a minute to play. She attempted a deep three, but it just missed, rattling out of the rim. But Jayaraman has had plenty of memories to look back at during her tenure, her favorite coming from her first season with the team.

"When we won the Big Ten tournament and there was the confetti going off," Jayaraman said when asked about her favorite memory. "To be my first year, too, on the team to have that kind of success was insane."

When Jayaraman elected to commit to Ohio State, it was a commitment to its academics and nothing more. Four years later, Jayaraman went from a walk-on to an on-scholarship member of the roster and an integral component to what the Buckeyes have done this season, even if the stats don't display it.

#### Satterfield Chooses Xavier For Transfer

After entering the transfer portal earlier in the month, Satterfield made the exit out of Ohio State official on Feb. 28, announcing on Twitter that she will be heading to Xavier.

"The year wasn't anything as expected and I started to lose myself," Satterfield wrote

in the tweet. "Fortunately for me I have since found a school and program that made me feel at home."

Satterfield came to Ohio State as a four-star guard out of Christ The King High School in New York City. She appeared in 18 games but saw limited action, averaging 2.4 points per game and 1.8 rebounds per game in 8.1 minutes per contest.

"I appreciate Kae's time and contributions this year," McGuff said in a press release announcing Satterfield's transfer. "I wish her nothing but great success moving forward."

Ohio State is down to six of its seven freshmen from the coveted 2019 recruiting class that was ranked in the top five nationally.

Xavier is struggling mightily this season, boasting a 3-26 record overall and a 2-16 record in the Big East.

#### Juhasz A Double-Double Machine In February

Juhasz was a big part of Ohio State's strong February, ending the month with four double-doubles to earn the Plank's Lady Buck of the Month honor.

In February, Juhasz played in eight of the nine games for the Buckeyes and averaged 13.8 points and 10.8 rebounds per game while shooting 45.9 percent from the field and 40.6 percent from three.

The sophomore forward continued to lead the team in both points and boards.



# OSU Wins 4 Of 6 Heading Into Big Ten Tournament

By WYATT CROSER  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

## Buckeyes Thrash Gophers For Fourth Straight Win

Ohio State played some of the best 40 minutes of basketball it had put together this season on Feb. 13, dominating Minnesota 99-76 for its fourth straight win, the longest win streak of the season. The Gophers were the same team the Buckeyes had beaten by just three points earlier this year.

An 18-4 run in the second quarter put the Buckeyes up 45-32 and in the driver's seat early on.

But after the Buckeyes took a 49-37 lead into halftime before 3,721 in Value City Arena, Minnesota (15-10, 5-9) cut the deficit to six, 51-45, following an 8-2 run to open the third quarter. Later in the quarter, though, freshman guard Madison Greene converted a pair old-fashioned three point plays to put the Buckeyes back up 12.

The two attempts were part of five and-1 attempts for Greene on the game, a team high this season. She converted on four of them and ended the game with 25 points, seven assists and zero turnovers.

"She was really great tonight," said Ohio State head coach Kevin McGuff. "She played aggressively, she took care of the ball, she got other people involved, she scored herself, so it's just really fun to watch her continue to grow and get better."

On the five attempts for a three-point play, Greene said it was a little bit of luck, but freshman guard Jacy Sheldon disagreed.

"It was crazy," Greene said, "I mean I had no control over that."

"Yeah, you did, are you kidding me?" Sheldon jokingly interjected. "That was all you. what are you talking about?"

Ohio State continued to add to the lead from there, taking a 73-57 lead into the fourth quarter, a lead that would not get any closer the rest of the game, ballooning to as much as 27 three different times.

Freshman guard Kierstan Bell had another strong performance, tallying 15 points and six rebounds in only 14 minutes after not playing in the fourth quarter due to foul trouble.

That trouble came with 2:19 in the third quarter when Bell was whistled for a questionable reach-in foul. She then pointed to the Jumbotron and told the ref to watch the play, which proceeded to get her a technical foul.

"You have to remember it's getting to February now, and the refs, they've reffed a lot of games this year and so they're a little worn out," McGuff said on what he told Bell after the technical foul. "You just have to, regardless of if you agree with the call or not, you just have to keep playing and leave them alone."

"She's just young and she's just passionate, she just really wants to do well and so it's just a great opportunity to learn for her."

Sophomore forward Dorka Juhasz returned to action after missing the previous game due to a right ankle injury. Juhasz struggled for a lot of the game and was jumping around and stretching out the ankle much of the time she was on the sidelines.

But she finished strong, making a pair of three-pointers early in the fourth quarter to help push the Ohio State lead to 81-59. Juhasz ended the game with eight points and eight rebounds on 3-of-10 shooting during 29 minutes of action.

From there, the Buckeyes cruised, ending with a 23-point victory, the largest against any Big Ten team other than Illinois, which is mired in the depths of the conference standings.

On the night, Ohio State shot 55.7 percent (34 of 61) from the floor, 43.5 percent (10 of 23) from three and 84.0 percent (21 of 25) from the charity stripe. It also held Minnesota to just 31.1 percent shooting (19 of 61) overall and 28.0 percent (7 of 25) from deep, although the Gophers hit 31 of 35 (88.6 percent) from the free-throw line.

Sheldon said the strong shooting night for the team was aided by Greene's inside presence.

"She created driving lanes, she got shooters open, so that definitely helped," Sheldon said. "We shot it well tonight, so that helped too. So that balance of being able to create those driving lanes and those threes, too, was really helpful for us tonight."

Ohio State led by 12 at halftime on the back of three players scoring in double figures: Bell (14), Sheldon (11) and Greene (11).

Sheldon also had a strong outing overall for the Buckeyes, finishing with 19 points on 6-of-8 shooting (3 of 5 from three) and seven rebounds.

The win against the Gophers moved Ohio State (15-9, 8-5) into sole possession of fifth place in the Big Ten.

"We're starting to play really well together, and we're gaining some confidence too," Sheldon said. "It's our fourth win, so we really want to keep that going, keep playing together, keep playing really hard, and hopefully we can carry that on."

## Hot Fourth Quarter Allows Ohio State To Upset Hoosiers

Hot shooting down the stretch was the key for Ohio State sealing a crucial 80-76 road win against No. 20 Indiana in front of 6,142 on Feb. 16, giving the Buckeyes five straight victories, adding to what was already the longest winning streak of the season.

"It's a really big win," McGuff said. "We beat a great team today in a tough environment. I'm really proud of our kids, but this is certainly a big one."

But it did not look good for the underdogs heading into the final quarter.

Both of Ohio State's sophomore forwards — Juhasz and Aaliyah Patty — had four fouls after three quarters, and their foul troubles seemed to be a problem down the stretch for the Buckeyes.

Still, the Buckeyes trailed by just six, 55-49, after Bell beat the buzzer with a three to end the third quarter. And the fourth quarter was when Ohio State got red hot.

Indiana (20-7, 10-5) pushed its lead to 10 at the beginning of the final frame until seven straight makes from the field by Ohio State gave the Buckeyes the lead by one, 67-66.

But on Indiana's next possession, Juhasz fouled out, and the split free throws by Hoosier forward Aleksa Gulbe tied the game.

Gulbe shot only three times from the floor in the game but finished with 14 points after making nine of her 12 attempts from the charity stripe.

Ohio State (16-9, 9-5) would get to the free-throw line itself on the next possession and go up two on a pair of makes by Greene.

Coming off career highs in points and assists, Greene again put on a terrific performance, ending with 22 points and also doing much of her work from the line, hitting 10 of her 14 free-throw attempts to go with her

## Ohio State 99, Minnesota 76

Feb. 13, 2020												
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio												
Minnesota (15-10, 5-9)												
Ohio State (15-9, 8-5)												
Minnesota												
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
T. Bello	30	5-12	4-4	1-6	1	3	14					
K. Bello	17	0-1	0-0	1-5	0	3	0					
Powell	29	3-11	14-15	0-2	1	3	21					
Scalia	35	5-13	0-0	0-5	0	2	14					
Hubbard	32	2-9	4-6	1-4	3	3	10					
Adashcyk	21	3-9	4-4	3-0	3	2	10					
Sconiers	7	0-0	2-2	1-1	0	3	2					
Brunson	27	1-6	3-4	0-1	1	2	5					
Tomancova	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>19-61</b>	<b>31-35</b>	<b>10-25</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>76</b>					
<b>Percentages: FG: 31.1%. FT: 88.6%. 3-point field goals: 7-25 (T. Bello 0-1, Powell 1-6, Scalia 4-9, Hubbard 2-5, Adashcyk 0-3, Brunson 0-1). Team rebounds: 4. Blocked shots: 0. Turnovers: 10 (K. Bello, Powell 6, Scalia, Brunson 2). Steals: 2 (Hubbard).</b>												
Ohio State												
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
Juhasz	29	3-10	0-0	0-8	2	3	8					
Patty	12	3-6	0-0	0-3	1	4	7					
Greene	37	8-11	9-11	0-3	7	0	25					
Sheldon	27	6-8	4-4	2-5	0	4	19					
Miller	35	2-8	4-4	0-5	4	1	9					
Bell	14	6-9	1-2	0-6	1	4	15					
Crooms	21	5-6	0-0	0-1	1	2	10					
Mikulasikova	11	1-3	3-4	2-1	1	0	6					
Wone	14	0-0	0-0	0-1	2	5	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>34-61</b>	<b>21-25</b>	<b>4-35</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>99</b>					
<b>Percentages: FG: 55.7%. FT: 84.0%. 3-point field goals: 10-23 (Juhasz 2-6, Patty 1-2, Greene 0-3, Sheldon 3-5, Miller 1-3, Bell 2-3, Mikulasikova 1-1). Team rebounds: 2. Blocked shots: 2 (Miller, Crooms). Turnovers: 8 (Sheldon 2, Miller, Crooms 4, Wone). Steals: 6 (Juhasz 2, Sheldon, Miller 2, Crooms).</b>												
<b>Officials: Napier, Zentz, Seales. Attendance: 3,721.</b>												

5-of-8 shooting.

"She and (Bell) and Jacy (Sheldon) and our freshmen, they've played in so many big minutes this year, it's like I don't even look at them as freshmen anymore," McGuff said.

Ohio State did not stop with seven straight makes. It also made its eighth, ninth and 10th straight attempts to put the Buckeyes up 76-70 with 1:12 to go.

"The biggest thing is we finally started getting some stops because we weren't stopping them," McGuff said on the key to the hot shooting. "We kept putting them at the free-throw line. We couldn't get any rhythm offensively, and once we started getting some stops and were able to get in transition, then we kind of broke the game open."

But the Hoosiers were not done yet. Indiana's star guard, Ali Patberg, who was a problem all game for the Buckeyes with 22 points and six assists on 8-of-12 shooting, hit two crucial free throws to make it a two-point game, 76-74, with 38 seconds to go.

And once again, when Ohio State needed a big shot, it turned to Greene. The freshman guard delivered, icing the game with a difficult shot with just seven seconds to go, the 11th straight make for Ohio State from the field, and then a pair of free throws with a second to go to send the Buckeyes back home with the victory.

Ohio State shot 48.2 percent (27 of 56) from the field and 40.9 percent (9 of 22) from three while holding Indiana to 42.3 percent shooting (22 of 52) and just 26.7 percent (4 of 15) from deep.

Aside from Greene, another freshman guard in Sheldon played a big role in the win. She ended the day with 16 points on 7-of-10 shooting.

## Buckeyes Win Sixth Straight With Victory Over Nebraska

The last time Ohio State and Nebraska faced off, the Cornhuskers held the big halftime lead and it was the Buckeyes who came back to win. But on Feb. 19, Ohio State was up 33-20 with 20 minutes to play, and the teams had a chance to flip roles in the

## Ohio State 80, Indiana 76

Feb. 16, 2020												
Simon Skjodt Assembly Hall • Bloomington, Ind.												
Ohio State (16-9, 9-5)												
Indiana (20-7, 10-5)												
Ohio State												
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
Juhasz	26	4-10	3-4	4-4	1	5	13					
Patty	8	0-1	0-0	0-1	0	5	0					
Greene	33	5-8	10-14	0-0	3	1	22					
Sheldon	28	7-10	0-0	0-2	0	3	16					
Miller	33	2-7	4-4	0-3	7	2	8					
Mikulasikova	28	3-8	0-0	0-5	0	2	6					
Crooms	22	2-4	0-0	1-5	2	2	4					
Bell	21	4-8	0-0	0-5	1	4	11					
Wone	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>27-56</b>	<b>17-22</b>	<b>6-26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>80</b>					
<b>Percentages: FG: 48.2%. FT: 77.3%. 3-point field goals: 9-22 (Juhasz 2-5, Greene 2-2, Sheldon 2-4, Miller 0-2, Mikulasikova 0-2, Crooms 0-1, Bell 3-6). Team rebounds: 2. Blocked shots: 2 (Mikulasikova, Crooms). Turnovers: 13 (Juhasz 2, Greene, Sheldon 2, Miller, Crooms 3, Bell 3, Wone). Steals: 5 (Juhasz, Greene 2, Crooms, Bell).</b>												
Indiana												
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
Gulbe	31	2-3	9-12	2-3	1	2	14					
Wise	28	0-4	4-4	1-4	0	3	4					
Penn	37	4-12	5-6	1-7	1	2	14					
Patberg	37	8-12	5-6	1-2	6	3	22					
Berger	38	4-11	4-6	1-6	1	5	12					
Holmes	16	3-7	1-2	0-1	0	3	7					
Warthen	3	1-1	0-0	0-0	0	1	3					
Waggoner	3	0-1	0-0	1-0	0	0	0					
Allen	6	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
Wilson	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>22-52</b>	<b>28-36</b>	<b>9-26</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>76</b>					
<b>Percentages: FG: 42.3%. FT: 77.8%. 3-point field goals: 4-15 (Gulbe 1-1, Wise 0-3, Penn 1-5, Patberg 1-3, Berger 0-1, Warthen 1-1, Waggoner 0-1). Team rebounds: 5. Blocked shots: 3 (Gulbe, Patberg, Holmes). Turnovers: 13 (Gulbe, Penn 5, Patberg 3, Berger 2, Holmes 2). Steals: 5 (Wise, Penn 2, Patberg, Berger).</b>												
<b>Officials: Gulbeyan, Bird, Cross. Attendance: 6,142.</b>												

rematch.

Instead, the Buckeyes continued to put on the pressure, going up 20 after three quarters and ultimately defeating the Cornhuskers 65-52 for their sixth straight win in front of 3,896 in Value City Arena.

"Honestly, how we played there and they got us in the first half, they were up by 15 in the first half, so this time before the game we were talking about how we can't start how we started there," Juhasz said. "We had that idea in our head that we have to be really strong, we have to fight for every ball and everything, and we started off really well."

The third quarter proved to be the backbreaker in the game, with Ohio State (17-9, 10-5) going on a 12-2 run to go up 47-25 at the 4:18 mark, a lead that would never get back into single digits.

But Nebraska (16-11, 6-10) did not go down without a fight, going on a 9-0 run in the final frame to cut the lead to just 11 at 56-45 with over half of the fourth quarter still to go.

The big lead would prove too much to overcome, though, as makes by Patty and junior guard Braxtin Miller pushed the lead back to 15, 60-45 with 3:49 to play.

"We were just, not lackadaisical, but just too confident that, not the game was over, that we were going to win," Miller said on the fourth-quarter performance. "I mean that's always good, to have confidence that you're going to win, but we still have to keep pushing and keep fighting and keep working."

Miller, who finished with 13 points and three steals, also hit a three with 2:55 to play to get the lead back to the 15-point margin at 63-48.

"She was really good," McGuff said. "She was really steady. We really moved the ball when she was in there. She took good shots, and she was very efficient on the offensive end."

Patty was also solid all game and ended with 11 points and seven rebounds, hitting 5 of 9 attempts.

Nebraska had held an early 16-14 advan-



# OHIO STATE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

tage in the second quarter before the Buckeyes put together a 14-0 run to go up by 12. Nine of the points in the run came from Juhasz, who managed a double-double (12 points, 10 rebounds) before the first half was even over.

The sophomore forward had all 12 of her first-half points in the second quarter, shooting a perfect 5 of 5 in the frame after starting 0 of 4 from the field.

"I didn't start out very good offensively, so the shots weren't going in," Juhasz said. "I was just trying to get rebounds and help the team like that, and then in the second quarter finally my shots got in, but I was just working hard."

Juhasz was less productive in the second half but still finished with 16 points and 16 rebounds on 6-of-13 shooting.

Thanks to the 14-0 run, the Buckeyes were up 33-20 at the break, outscoring Nebraska 21-8 in the second quarter after a 12-12 first quarter.

"We got out in transition and we were moving the ball," McGuff said of the run. "We got really good shots during that stretch, either in transition or in the half court."

Even with the lead, Ohio State shot just 38.9 percent (14 of 36) from the field in the first half but did hit 4 of 10 three-point attempts. Instead, it was defense that led the way, with Nebraska shooting 28.6 percent (10 of 35), while missing all 13 attempts from deep.

"Our defense was good," McGuff said. "We held them to 20 points in the first half. They're really good off ball screens. I thought we were much better defending the ball screens than we were in Lincoln."

By the end, Ohio State hit 27 of 66 attempts (40.9 percent) overall and 8 of 21

from three (38.1 percent). Nebraska hit 21 of 61 from the field (34.4 percent) and hit on 2 of 20 (10.0 percent) from behind the arc.

## Ohio State's Win Streak Snapped Against Rutgers

Ohio State's defense was very successful stopping seven of the eight players who saw time on the court for Rutgers on Feb. 22. Those seven players scored 23 points, did not hit a single three-pointer in six attempts and shot 11 of 36 (30.6 percent) from the floor.

But that eighth player, junior guard Arella Guirantes, put Rutgers on her back, finishing with a career-high 36 points on 15-of-21 shooting, just enough for the Scarlet Knights to take down Ohio State 59-57 in front of a Rutgers faithful crowd of 2,281.

"She was a great player, she really played excellent today," McGuff said. "I felt like we played decent defense, she just made really great offensive plays."

The Buckeyes took a 50-44 lead into the fourth quarter, a lead capped off by a contested buzzer beater by Miller. But Rutgers amped up the defense mightily in the final frame, holding Ohio State without a field goal (0 of 12) and allowing just seven makes from the free-throw line on eight attempts to make the comeback.

"We got a little worn out and we quit moving without the ball like we were the first three quarters," McGuff said.

Guirantes, who started the game by matching Ohio State's first-quarter input by herself with 12 points in the first 10 minutes, really did not slow down from there. In the fourth, Guirantes scored 13 of her team's 15 points, including the game-winning shot to go up two with 4.3 seconds to play.

## Ohio State 65, Nebraska 52

Feb. 19, 2020												
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio												
	1	2	3	4	F							
<b>Nebraska (16-11, 6-10)</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>52</b>							
<b>Ohio State (17-9, 10-5)</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>65</b>							
Nebraska	Total	FG	FT	Reb.								
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
Veerbeek	17	2-7	0-0	1-2	1	1	4					
Cain	26	5-6	3-3	1-8	0	1	13					
Whitish	26	1-4	0-0	0-0	3	0	2					
Haiby	29	5-12	1-2	1-1	1	1	12					
Eliely	27	1-5	2-2	1-2	1	1	4					
Bourne	17	1-5	2-2	2-2	1	3	4					
Brown	21	4-12	0-0	0-3	3	0	9					
Brady	12	1-5	0-0	0-1	0	1	2					
Hudson	2	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	0	0					
Mershon	13	1-4	0-0	2-7	1	2	2					
Helms	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
Mitchell	6	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>21-61</b>	<b>8-9</b>	<b>9-29</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>52</b>					
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b> 34.4%	<b>FT:</b> 88.9%	<b>3-point field goals:</b> 2-20 (Veerbeek 0-3, Whitish 0-2, Haiby 1-2, Eliely 0-3, Bourne 0-1, Brown 1-4, Brady 0-3, Mershon 0-1, Mitchell 0-1).	<b>Team rebounds:</b> 3.	<b>Blocked shots:</b> 4 (Cain 2, Bourne 2).	<b>Turnovers:</b> 16 (Whitish 3, Haiby 2, Eliely 2, Bourne 2, Brown 4, Hudson, TEAM 2).	<b>Steals:</b> 7 (Veerbeek, Haiby, Eliely, Mershon 2, Helms, Mitchell).					
Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.								
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
Juhasz	31	6-13	3-3	5-11	2	1	16					
Patty	22	5-9	0-0	2-5	0	0	11					
Greene	27	0-5	0-0	1-2	4	3	0					
Sheldon	29	3-9	0-0	0-2	2	1	8					
Miller	35	6-9	0-2	0-1	1	2	13					
Mikulasikova	18	3-6	0-0	1-1	0	0	7					
Crooms	16	1-4	0-2	0-3	4	2	2					
Bell	18	3-11	0-0	0-5	0	2	8					
Wone	4	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>27-66</b>	<b>3-7</b>	<b>12-32</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>65</b>					
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b> 40.9%	<b>FT:</b> 42.9%	<b>3-point field goals:</b> 8-21 (Juhasz 1-3, Patty 1-1, Sheldon 2-6, Miller 1-3, Mikulasikova 1-2, Crooms 0-1, Bell 2-5).	<b>Team rebounds:</b> 5.	<b>Blocked shots:</b> 2 (Patty, Miller).	<b>Turnovers:</b> 14 (Juhasz 2, Patty, Greene 2, Sheldon 2, Miller 3, Mikulasikova 3, Bell).	<b>Steals:</b> 8 (Juhasz, Sheldon 3, Miller 3, Crooms).	<b>Officials:</b> Kantner, Cross, McConnell.	<b>Attendance:</b> 3,896.			

## Rutgers 59, Ohio State 57

Feb. 22, 2020												
Rutgers Athletic Center • Piscataway, N.J.												
	1	2	3	4	F							
<b>Ohio State (17-10, 10-6)</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>57</b>							
<b>Rutgers (19-8, 9-7)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>59</b>							
Ohio State	Total	FG	FT	Reb.								
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
Juhasz	39	6-10	2-2	4-6	1	1	17					
Patty	13	2-4	0-0	2-0	0	3	4					
Greene	39	0-7	2-2	0-4	7	0	2					
Sheldon	24	2-5	0-0	0-0	1	4	6					
Miller	34	4-12	6-6	2-4	1	1	16					
Mikulasikova	24	4-6	1-2	2-2	0	0	11					
Crooms	24	0-5	1-2	0-6	2	1	1					
Wone	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>18-49</b>	<b>12-14</b>	<b>12-22</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>57</b>					
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b> 36.7%	<b>FT:</b> 85.7%	<b>3-point field goals:</b> 9-20 (Juhasz 3-4, Greene 0-2, Sheldon 2-4, Miller 2-4, Mikulasikova 2-3, Crooms 0-3).	<b>Team rebounds:</b> 2.	<b>Blocked shots:</b> 4 (Juhasz 2, Mikulasikova, Crooms).	<b>Turnovers:</b> 19 (Juhasz 3, Greene, Sheldon, Miller, Mikulasikova 5, Crooms 4, TEAM 4).	<b>Steals:</b> 7 (Juhasz 2, Greene, Sheldon 2, Miller 2).					
Rutgers	Total	FG	FT	Reb.								
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF	Pts.					
Gilles	35	2-4	0-0	0-1	1	2	4					
Wallace	33	4-11	1-1	3-3	0	2	9					
Sanders	32	0-6	0-0	0-3	2	3	0					
Guirantes	38	15-21	3-6	0-4	3	2	36					
Mack	38	3-9	0-2	2-4	0	1	6					
Broughton	15	2-5	0-0	1-0	3	2	4					
Singleton	8	0-1	0-0	1-0	0	1	0					
Davenport	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>26-57</b>	<b>4-9</b>	<b>10-19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>59</b>					
<b>Percentages:</b>	<b>FG:</b> 45.6%	<b>FT:</b> 44.4%	<b>3-point field goals:</b> 3-9 (Gilles 0-1, Sanders 0-2, Guirantes 3-3, Mack 0-1, Broughton 0-2).	<b>Team rebounds:</b> 7.	<b>Blocked shots:</b> 6 (Gilles 2, Wallace, Sanders, Guirantes, Mack).	<b>Turnovers:</b> 11 (Wallace, Sanders 2, Guirantes 3, Mack, Broughton 2, TEAM 2).	<b>Steals:</b> 12 (Gilles 2, Wallace, Sanders, Guirantes 3, Mack 3, Broughton 2).	<b>Officials:</b> Garland, Cruse, Morris.	<b>Attendance:</b> 2,281.			

Though no one could reach the heights of Rutgers' star guard, Ohio State got a strong contribution from Miller, who ended the game with 16 points, including four crucial late free throws to keep the Buckeyes in it.

Continued On Page 34

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# Buckeyes Finish Season With Dominant Road Win

Continued From Page 33

Also strong on the day for the Buckeyes was Juhasz, who finished with a double-double (17 points, 10 rebounds), with 15 of her points coming in the first half.

Juhasz hit on three of her four tries from deep in the opening 20 minutes and helped Ohio State get out to a 34-30 lead at the break.

Turnovers were a big problem for Ohio State, finishing with 19 compared to only 11 from the Scarlet Knights. Rutgers turned that advantage into an 18-9 edge on points off turnovers.

"They're really long and athletic and really aggressive," McGuff said. "I thought one of the keys, our turnovers late were allowing them to get transition baskets, that was a huge problem for us."

On the day, the Buckeyes shot 36.7 percent (18 of 49) from the field and 45.0 percent (9 of 20) from three. Rutgers finished shooting 45.6 percent (26 of 57) overall and 33.3 percent (3 of 9) from deep.

Bell missed the game for the Buckeyes due to personal reasons, according to an Ohio State spokesman.

## Cold Shooting Hands Buckeyes Defeat On Senior Night

Ohio State was given a tough task on its senior night, going up against the No. 14 team in the country in Northwestern in front of a home crowd of 4,403 on Feb. 25.

After a tight battle for much of the game, it was the Wildcats who went on a big run at the end of the third quarter to pull away from the Buckeyes, handing Ohio State its second straight loss with a score of 69-55.

With 3:46 to play in the third, the Buckeyes trailed by just one, 44-43, after a basket by Patty. But Northwestern took off from there, going on a 12-2 run to end the frame, capped off by a deep buzzer-beater three by junior guard Pulliam.

The Wildcats were never up by less than double digits the rest of the game.

Pulliam, fresh off winning NCAA Player of the Week honors, struggled a bit shooting from the field but still ended the night with 16 points on 4-of-14 shooting, including 1 of 5 from deep. She did much of her damage at the free-throw line, hitting 7 of 9 attempts.

"She's a great player, one of the best in the country," McGuff said. "You're not going to stop her, but you have to try and slow her down. I thought we did a decent job making her score over us, but she's really an excellent player and really hard to guard."

Ohio State opened the game with a 7-3

lead, with all seven points coming from Juhasz. She ended the game with her third straight double-double, 15 points and 12 rebounds, in 32 minutes of play.

After taking a 19-17 lead into the second quarter, the Buckeyes began to hit a shooting slump, not making a field goal for the final 4:33 of the first half.

"We have to give them credit because their zone is really funky," Juhasz said. "Obviously we had some open looks, and we just couldn't make it. We weren't focused enough to get in the key, and we couldn't get the offensive rebounds back."

Sheldon was a bright spot for Ohio State during the slump, scoring, like Juhasz, seven straight points, this time coming at the end of the half. Sheldon finished with 12 points and a pair of steals.

The shooting did not get better for the Buckeyes to open the second half, going another 3:06 without a field goal. But it wasn't until that Northwestern run late in the frame that the lead was pushed to double digits, 56-45.

The fourth quarter held more shooting problems, with Ohio State playing the first 7:44 of the frame without a basket.

"We need to make easy shots, because a lot of shots we just missed under the basket, and our shot selection is not always the best choice," said Rebeka Mikulasikova, who had 12 points. "Sometimes we wait until the last second, and then we don't take the right shot."

Bell, who had missed the previous game against Rutgers, also missed the matchup despite warming up normally with the team.

"She was away last weekend and in a good place coming back," McGuff said. "We just wanted to make sure we didn't rush her back out there, but we're in a good place moving forward."

The lone senior on the team, forward Savitha Jayaraman, was put into the game with 43.8 seconds to play, her first game action of the season. She missed a late three-point attempt.

On the game, the Buckeyes shot 34.5 percent from the field (19 of 55) and 28.0 percent (7 of 25) from three. Northwestern hit on 56.3 percent (27 of 48) of its shots and 46.2 percent (6 of 13) of its attempts from deep.

Pulliam had a strong game, but it was senior forward Abi Scheid who made the difference on offense for the Wildcats. Scheid, the nation's top three-point shooter coming in at 48.1 percent, hit seven of her 11 shots and 5 of 7 from deep for a game-high 19 points.

## Northwestern 69, Ohio State 55

		Feb. 25, 2020 Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio				
		1	2	3	4	F
Northwestern (25-3, 15-2)		17	19	20	13	69
Ohio State (17-11, 10-7)		19	14	12	10	55
Northwestern		Total FG FT Reb.				
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF Pts.
Wolf	25	4-7	0-0	0-5	1	2 8
Scheid	39	7-11	0-0	0-3	2	1 19
Wood	31	5-6	2-2	4-5	3	1 12
Pulliam	38	4-14	7-9	0-5	2	1 16
Burton	33	2-3	0-2	1-2	4	2 4
Hamilton	18	2-3	0-0	0-0	3	3 4
Shaw	15	3-4	0-1	1-2	0	3 6
Galtnik	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0 0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>27-48</b>	<b>9-14</b>	<b>8-24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13 69</b>

Percentages: FG: 56.3%. FT: 64.3%. 3-point field goals: 6-13 (Scheid 5-7, Pulliam 1-5, Hamilton 0-1).

Team rebounds: 4. Blocked shots: 3 (Scheid, Shaw 2). Turnovers: 15 (Wolf 3, Scheid, Wood 4, Pulliam 2, Burton 2, Hamilton 2, Shaw). Steals: 4 (Scheid, Wood 2, Burton).

		Ohio State				
		Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A PF Pts.
Juhasz	32	6-15	2-2	5-7	1	3 15
Patty	30	2-4	2-3	1-3	1	2 6
Greene	33	0-5	3-4	3-0	1	4 3
Sheldon	35	4-12	2-2	2-1	1	1 12
Miller	34	3-12	0-0	0-1	1	1 7
Crooms	18	0-1	0-0	0-3	2	2 0
Mikulasikova	18	4-5	1-2	1-0	1	0 12
Jayaraman	1	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0 0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>19-55</b>	<b>10-13</b>	<b>13-15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13 55</b>

Percentages: FG: 34.5%. FT: 76.9%. 3-point field goals: 7-25 (Juhasz 1-6, Greene 0-2, Sheldon 2-8, Miller 1-4, Mikulasikova 3-4, Jayaraman 0-1).

Team rebounds: 1. Blocked shots: 4 (Patty, Greene, Sheldon, Crooms). Turnovers: 14 (Juhasz 3, Patty, Greene 2, Sheldon, Miller, Crooms 3, Mikulasikova 2, TEAM). Steals: 5 (Patty, Greene, Sheldon 2, Miller). Officials: Roberts, Gulbeyan, Grinter. Attendance: 4,403.

## Buckeyes Finish Regular Season In Dominant Fashion

Ohio State started off Big Ten play with one of its most lopsided losses of the season: a 66-50 defeat at the hands of Purdue.

It was only fitting, then, that the Buckeyes ended their regular season on Feb. 29 against the Boilermakers with one of their most lopsided wins, dominating Purdue from start to finish before 6,753 at Mackey Arena in a blowout 77-56 win to clinch a top-six seed in the Big Ten tournament.

"That first game of the (Big Ten) year, Purdue was significantly better than us, in general, and on that day for sure," McGuff said of that Dec. 28 loss. "We've grown a lot since then, and that was the theme for us, with such a young team, is if we could just keep getting better, I thought we could kind of shoot toward playing our best basketball here at the end of the year."

Ohio State finishes the regular season with an 18-11 record, an 11-7 record in Big Ten play and a six seed in the conference tournament.

"I thought our kids competed really well on both ends of the floor," McGuff said. "Purdue is a great team and it's a hard environment to play in, but we played really hard, kids shared the ball, and it was a really good win for us here in the last game of the year."

The game started out strong for Ohio State, which went up 18-9 after the first quarter, and got better by halftime, with the Buckeyes leading 41-26. But Ohio State was not satisfied at leaving it there.

Up 13 early in the third period, Ohio State went on a 14-0 run to go up 57-30, helping seal the win against a Purdue team (17-13, 8-10) fighting for its NCAA tournament life. The Buckeyes led by as much as 29 points in the final quarter.

Bell returned for the Buckeyes after a two-game absence due to personal reasons. She scored 15 seconds into her first possession, hitting a three to put Ohio State up 11-6. She finished the game with 11 points on 4-of-11 shooting, providing a major spark

## Ohio State 77, Purdue 56

		Feb. 29, 2020 Mackey Arena • West Lafayette, Ind.				
		1	2	3	4	F
Ohio State (18-11, 11-7)		18	23	19	17	77
Purdue (17-13, 8-10)		9	17	13	17	56
Ohio State		Total FG FT Reb.				
	Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A	PF Pts.
Juhasz	29	6-9	4-6	3-10	1	1 16
Patty	21	7-10	2-2	2-6	3	3 16
Greene	31	1-4	2-2	1-4	2	3 4
Sheldon	29	6-10	0-0	0-1	0	1 12
Miller	31	2-7	3-4	1-3	4	1 7
Crooms	15	1-4	1-2	0-1	2	3 4
Mikulasikova	18	2-3	3-4	2-1	1	2 7
Bell	24	4-11	1-2	1-5	4	2 11
Wone	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0 0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>29-58</b>	<b>16-22</b>	<b>12-33</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16 77</b>

Percentages: FG: 50.0%. FT: 72.7%. 3-point field goals: 3-16 (Juhasz 0-1, Greene 0-2, Sheldon 0-2, Miller 0-3, Crooms 1-1, Mikulasikova 0-1, Bell 2-6).

Team rebounds: 4. Blocked shots: 10 (Juhasz 3, Patty 3, Greene, Mikulasikova, Bell 2). Turnovers: 13 (Juhasz, Patty 3, Greene, Sheldon 3, Miller 2, Mikulasikova 2, TEAM). Steals: 7 (Juhasz 2, Patty 2, Sheldon 2, Crooms).

		Purdue				
		Min.	M-A	M-A	O-D	A PF Pts.
Grant	14	0-6	1-2	4-0	2	3 1
Harris	31	4-13	1-1	1-3	3	2 9
McLaughlin	34	6-18	2-2	1-2	1	1 18
Oden	38	5-14	5-6	2-4	2	3 15
Traylor	36	1-7	0-2	0-7	3	2 2
Diagne	16	2-5	0-0	3-0	0	2 4
Hardin	7	0-3	0-0	0-0	0	0 0
Whilby	14	1-2	0-0	1-0	1	0 3
Gony	8	1-2	2-2	3-2	0	2 4
Makolo	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0 0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>20-70</b>	<b>11-15</b>	<b>18-18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15 56</b>

Percentages: FG: 28.6%. FT: 73.3%. 3-point field goals: 5-24 (Grant 0-2, McLaughlin 4-12, Oden 0-3, Traylor 0-2, Hardin 0-3, Whilby 1-2).

Team rebounds: 3. Blocked shots: 2 (Harris). Turnovers: 10 (Grant, Oden 3, Traylor 2, Diagne, Hardin, Whilby, TEAM). Steals: 10 (Harris 3, Oden 6, Traylor). Officials: Knight, Camy, Krommenhoek. Attendance: 6,753.

off the bench early on. She also pulled down six rebounds and passed out four assists

"Her energy was great, she really competed hard defensively, she used her length and really bothered them," McGuff said. "She made some big shots in that second quarter to kind of help us stretch the lead out."

Juhasz again came up big, racking up her fourth straight double-double with 16 points and 13 rebounds, and was a team-high plus-31.

"Today, I thought she did a great job around the basket," McGuff said of Juhasz. "Especially in the second quarter, we executed, they went with a smaller lineup and we executed to get them the ball around the basket, and she did a great job."

Juhasz had eight points and three rebounds in the second frame.

After Purdue cut a 12-point deficit down to 23-19 in the second quarter on the back of a 10-2 run, the Buckeyes immediately went on a 9-1 run to bring the difference back to 12 points.

That lead expanded even further by halftime, with Ohio State up 15, helped along by 10-point first-half showings from Juhasz and Bell.

Juhasz was not the only sophomore forward to play a big role for the Buckeyes. Patty had a great performance, ending the day with a season-high 16 points, eight boards, three assists and three blocks in just 21 minutes.

It was a strong outing on both sides of the floor for Ohio State. The team shot 50.0 percent (29 of 58) overall but only 18.8 percent (3 of 16) from three, while holding Purdue to 28.6 percent (20 of 70) from the field and 20.8 percent (5 of 24) from deep.

Purdue couldn't get much done offensively, but guard Dominique Oden made her impact on defense, finishing with six steals despite shooting 5 of 14 and ending with 15 points. Karissa McLaughlin led all scorers with 18 points.



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# Buckeyes And Badgers To Battle Again In Playoffs

The good news is that the Ohio State men's hockey team earned home ice for the quarterfinals of the Big Ten tournament by finishing in second place. The bad news is the No. 10 Buckeyes will face the same Wisconsin team that prevented them from winning a second straight regular-season conference title on the final weekend.

## IN THE CREASE Craig Merz

Value City Arena will be the site for the best-of-three series March 6, 7 and, if necessary, 8 with all games at 7 p.m.

Wisconsin will be very comfortable in the building after spoiling OSU's hopes Feb. 28 and 29.

The Badgers, who looked nothing like the last-place team they are, stunned the Buckeyes (18-11-5, 11-9-4-1 Big Ten) with a 3-2 victory in the opener to eliminate Ohio State from winning the title then rallied from a three-goal deficit the next night for a 3-3 tie.

Wisconsin (14-18-2, 7-15-2-2) took the extra conference point by winning the 3-on-3 overtime to ruin Senior Night for the crowd of 9,152.

"Disappointing," is how OSU coach Steve Rohlik described the series. "Losing hurts. You go into the weekend, you want to play your best hockey and you want to come out with wins and give yourself a chance, and for whatever reason this weekend just wasn't our weekend."

The Buckeyes entered the series tied for second with Minnesota at 37 points, four behind idle Penn State, who owned the tiebreaker against each team if they all finished at 41 points.

OSU had the tiebreaker over the Golden Gophers, so all the Buckeyes had to do to win the title was match Minnesota if each surpassed 41 points.

As it turned out, Minnesota took only one point in its series vs. Michigan so the Buckeyes, Gophers and Wolverines all finished at 38. OSU was awarded the second seed by virtue of a 3-1-0 season mark vs. the Wolverines.

It gets simpler from here. The Buckeyes are 10th in the PairWise rankings, which mimics the selection of the 16-team field

for the NCAA tournament. If the Buckeyes get past the Badgers to the semifinals, they will likely have sealed their fourth straight NCAA bid. Losing the series should knock them out.

"We've been very good at home all year," Rohlik said. "I love our group. I like our captains. I like our seniors, and I like our group. I'm just looking forward to having a great week."

By winning the quarterfinal series, Ohio State would host a semifinal game March 15 at 5:30 p.m. at Nationwide Arena in downtown Columbus because of the high school state wrestling tournament at Value City Arena.

If the Buckeyes win that game and No. 1 seed Penn State loses its semifinal, Value City Arena would be the site for the title game at noon on March 22.

### Blood Feud

The Badgers and Ohio State don't like each other, so it was a bitter feeling for the Buckeyes after the two games.

OSU freshman Tate Singleton had a warning for the Badgers.

"I think they've got to watch out what's coming from us," he said. "I mean, after the game, they're chirping, and I think we're just going to come in and we're going to play our game and they better watch out."

Wisconsin's record belies its talent. It's a young team that is jelling at the right time, going 4-1-1 in the past six games, all against top-15 opponents.

The Badgers have 12 NHL draft picks, including first-round selections Alex Turcotte (2019 fifth overall to the Los Angeles Kings), Cole Caufield (2019, 15th, Montreal Canadiens) and K'Andre Miller (2018, 22nd, New York Rangers).

Ohio State has five NHL draftees, with the highest being freshman defenseman Layton Ahac (2019, 86th, Vegas Golden Knights).

### Old Is New

Longtime college hockey enthusiasts, especially those in the Midwest, have pined for the old Central Collegiate Hockey Association (CCHA) – a league which Ohio State was a member of except for a two-year season hiatus (1973-74, 1974-75) when they were independent – from 1971-72 to its disbandment after the 2012-13 season when the Big Ten's hockey conference was created.

The CCHA through its years had a mix of Big Ten teams such as OSU, Michigan and Michigan State; Mid-American Conference

programs such as Bowling Green and Miami (Ohio); and universities such as Lake Superior State and Ferris State that competed at lower divisions of the NCAA in other sports.

The formation of the Big Ten irked a lot of people across the land. Minnesota and Wisconsin supporters, for example, are still bitter that the Golden Gophers and Badgers, respectively, had to leave the Western Collegiate Hockey Association. There was something special about the CCHA tournament at Joe Louis Arena ("The Joe") in Detroit, and the league was competitive nationally.

Now, the CCHA is back, at least in name because of the first of what could be several restructurings of conferences.

Alas, Ohio State will not be a part of it.

Seven schools in the current configuration of the WCHA are leaving after the 2020-21 season to form a new CCHA: Bemidji State, Bowling Green, Ferris State, Lake Superior State, Minnesota State, Michigan Tech and Northern Michigan.

Interestingly, Bowling Green, a charter member of the original CCHA, retained all properties associated to the conference.

The three remaining WCHA schools are out in the cold, literally, in two of the instances. Alaska, Alaska-Anchorage and Alabama-Huntsville will be without conference affiliations after next season, and it's unknown what they will do, although it could be the death of the two Alaskan programs.

The seven departing schools cited travel costs as a major issue with the WCHA.

"I think it's the start of the changing landscape," Rohlik said. "Get back to like areas. With the travel, why not put those teams in the same area geographically together? That's important."

"How's this going to unfold? I don't know where it's going to go from here, but I just think it's the first snowball coming down."

Both the CCHA and the Big Ten will have seven teams, not an ideal situation. Illinois is toying with starting a Division I program to even out the Big Ten.

There's talk of Miami jumping from the National Collegiate Hockey Conference (NCHC) to the CCHA.

## BIG Men's Hockey

	Pts.	W	L	T	OTL
Penn State	41	12	8	4	1
<b>Ohio State</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
Michigan	38	11	10	3	2
Minnesota	38	9	8	7	4
Notre Dame	37	9	9	6	4
Michigan State	35	11	11	2	0
Wisconsin	25	7	15	2	2

### A Look Back

In addition to the Wisconsin series, the Buckeyes also played Michigan State since the last issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin. OSU defeated the Spartans 1-0 and 4-2 on Feb. 21 and 22 at Munn Ice Arena in East Lansing, Mich.

Senior defenseman Matt Miller scored the lone goal in the opener to back 25 saves from junior Tommy Nappier. Miller scored at 2:24 of the second period.

In the second game, sophomore Quinn Preston, from Trenton, Mich., scored twice, and senior Tanner Laczynski potted the winner and added an assist. Freshman Jaedon Leslie also scored for the Buckeyes, who trailed 2-1 entering the third period.

In the Wisconsin series opener, Laczynski and senior Ronnie Hein scored, but Max Zimmer broke a 2-2 tie with 5:09 left in the third period.

The Buckeyes jumped to a 3-0 lead in the rematch on goals from Singleton, senior Carson Meyer and Laczynski before Wisconsin scored three straight, the last by Tyler Inamoto with 3:09 left in regulation. Ty Pelton-Byce scored the winner during the 3-on-3.

### February Favorite

Preston is the Varsity Club Icer of the Month for February. The Trenton, Mich., native had six points (three goals, three assists) in six games.

*For a complete recap of Ohio State's series against Michigan State and Wisconsin, go to BSB's BuckeyeSports.com website, free to all Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers.*

## VARSAITY CLUB ICER OF THE MONTH For February



**Quinn Preston**  
*Sophomore Forward*  
*Trenton, Mich.*

### BIG Men's Hockey Tournament

March 6-22, 2019 • Games On Campus Of Higher Seed

MARCH 6-8	MARCH 15	MARCH 21	All Times ET
<p>Best-Of-Three Series</p> <p> No. 2 Ohio State</p> <p>All games at 7:00 p.m.</p> <p> No. 7 Wisconsin</p> <p> No. 3 Michigan</p> <p>7:00 p.m.; 7:00 p.m.; 5:00 p.m.</p> <p> No. 6 Michigan State</p> <p> No. 4 Minnesota</p> <p>8:00 p.m.; 8:00 p.m.; 6:00 p.m.</p> <p> No. 5 Notre Dame</p>	<p>Single Elimination</p> <p> <b>No. 1 Penn State</b></p> <p>Time TBA • BTN</p> <p>Lowest Advancing Seed</p> <p>Highest-Advancing Seed</p> <p>Time TBA • BTN</p> <p>Second-Highest Advancing Seed</p>	<p>Single Elimination</p> <p>Time TBA • BTN</p>	<p><b>TOURNAMENT CHAMPION</b></p>



# OSU Wrestlers Enter Postseason Behind Rivals

Ohio State's regular-season losing streak to Penn State was extended by another year on Feb. 15, as the Buckeyes fell to the Nittany Lions 20-16 in front of a raucous Penn State home crowd. The win for Penn State marked its fifth in a row over the Buckeyes, going back to the 2015-2016 season.

## ON THE MAT Patrick Mayhorn

Ohio State's last win over Penn State came back in 2015, 22-15, when the Buckeyes were led by Logan Stieber, Nathan Tomasello, Bo Jordan and Kyle Snyder.

In the most recent showing, Ohio State managed to split the dual in wins, grabbing five of the 10 individual bouts, but was unable to make up for a gap in bonus points that ultimately handed Penn State the victory.

Of Ohio State's winners, two came as little shock, with No. 1 Kollin Moore (197 pounds) and No. 1 Sammy Sasso (149) both claiming victories, Moore by major decision, 14-6 over No. 18 Shakur Rasheed and Sasso by a 3-1 sudden victory over Jarod Verkleeren.

Elsewhere, Ohio State netted significant wins from two unranked wrestlers, with 125-pound Malik Heinselman defeating Brandon Meredith, 5-3, and 157-pound Quinn Kinner toppling Brady Berge, 4-3.

The signature win actually came after the match was out of reach for the Buckeyes, when heavyweight Gary Traub showed off the effort level that has earned him the "Gas Tank Gary" moniker. After a year of success without a truly defining moment to show for it, Traub found his chance to shine in the final seconds of his final regular-season match, keeping with that high-energy approach that has

endeared him to so many.

With 27 seconds to go, Traub trailed No. 13 Seth Nevills 4-3, and was facing a riding-time deficit that would have given his opponent a bonus point. Traub fired off a shot, snagged Nevills and lifted him into the air before a slam and ride-out that erased the riding-time disadvantage and ultimately gave Traub a 5-4 victory.

Following the loss, Ohio State will enter the Big Ten championships – which open in Piscataway, N.J., on March 7 and carry through the weekend – as the obvious No. 3 in the conference, trailing national title favorite Iowa and a surging Penn State team.

While the Buckeyes will not be favorites at the championships, they will enter with three title contenders – if not outright favorites – along with several wrestlers who are seemingly just a good run of form away from competing with the very best at their respective weight classes.

As it has done all season, Ohio State will depend heavily on the top of its lineup and will need Luke Pletcher (141), Sasso and Moore to all either win their weight classes outright or come very close to it.

Pair all of that with strong showings from borderline top-10 wrestlers nationally in Kaleb Romero at 174 pounds, Ethan Smith at 165, Traub and Rocky Jordan at 184, and the Buckeyes would have a chance to pull off the upset, given that the team's strength is usually in tournaments.

Without those ideal circumstances, however, Ohio State will likely head to the NCAA championships on March 19 following a third-place finish in Piscataway.

### Covelli Produces Sellout Run

Ohio State's 28-10 victory over Northwestern on Feb. 9 marked the conclusion of the inaugural season for the Buckeyes in their new home, the Covelli Center, which opened just prior to the start of the season. By anecdotal accounts, the new arena has been a sweeping success for the teams that have been moved in – providing a significantly louder environment than that of years past – but the end of the

wrestling team's home slate also provided some objective data to back that up.

According to an official release, Ohio State sold out each of its final four home matches, toppling the 4,177-person capacity against Rutgers on Jan. 10 (4,263), Illinois on Jan. 19 (4,236) and Maryland on Jan. 31 (4,359) and setting a season high of 4,657 against the Wildcats.

"This is the biggest crowd we've had," head coach Tom Ryan said after the meet against Northwestern. "There were no tickets left, and that's a tribute to how much this region loves wrestling and loves the Buckeyes."

The demand for finale tickets was so great that Buckeyes not competing or participating in senior day festivities were moved to the upper deck office area, to free up extra seats for sale.

On the year, the Buckeyes averaged 4,118 attendees over the eight-game home schedule, a number that rose rapidly in recent months following a bit of a lull to open the season (3,856 average over the first four meets, 4,379 over the final four). Ryan noted that the crowd's impact was obvious for the Buckeyes.

"Shout-out to the crowd, definitely a difference throughout the season," Ryan said.

Ohio State's total attendance on the season, 32,940, is the second highest in school history behind just 2018-2019's 34,900. The average was roughly on par with recent seasons, though past years did see Ohio State benefit significantly from blockbuster matchups in the much larger St. John Arena and occasionally the Schottenstein Center.

Ryan has confirmed that Ohio State has locked down eight home meets already for the 2020-2021 season and could look to move meets with Penn State and Iowa into the Schottenstein Center to take advantage of the extra space.

### NCAA Releases Allotment Info

The NCAA released allotment information on Feb. 27 for the upcoming NCAA championships, and the news is very good for Ohio State and the Big Ten. Of the 283

## BIG Wrestling

	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
Iowa	9	0	1.000	13	0	1.000
Penn State	8	1	.889	12	2	.857
<b>Ohio State</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>.667</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>.714</b>
Illinois	6	3	.667	10	4	.714
Nebraska	6	3	.667	11	3	.786
Purdue	5	4	.556	12	5	.706
Michigan	5	4	.556	7	6	.539
Minnesota	4	5	.444	9	8	.529
Rutgers	4	5	.444	10	7	.588
Wisconsin	4	5	.444	11	5	.688
Northwestern	3	6	.333	6	7	.462
Michigan State	2	7	.222	8	10	.444
Indiana	1	8	.111	2	10	.167
Maryland	0	9	.000	2	17	.105

automatic qualifier spots, 79 will be given according to the Big Ten championships, more than any other conference. The final 47 at-large qualifiers will be announced following all conference tournaments on March 10.

According to the NCAA release, the weight class auto-bids are as follows for the Big Ten: eight bids for 125-pounds, seven for 133, eight for 141, 10 for 149, six for 157, eight for 165, nine for 174, 10 for 184, six for 197 and seven for heavyweight. The bid allotment is based on current year data for each individual wrestler in three ways: Division I winning percentage at the weight class, ratings percentage index (RPI) and coaches' ranking.

For every wrestler who meets the threshold in two of three categories, the conference is awarded a bid.

Along with the allotment announcement, the NCAA released data for coaches panel rankings and the RPI.

Leading the way for the Buckeyes, as they have all year, are Moore (No. 1 in coaches/No. 1 in RPI), Sasso (No. 1, No. 5) and Pletcher (No. 2/No. 1). Next up is Romero (No. 8/No. 4), Smith (No. 13/No. 11), Jordan (No. 14/No. 9), Traub (No. 18/No. 15), Jordan Decatur (133 pounds, No. 31/No. 28) and Elijah Cleary (157 pounds, No. 33/No. 32).

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# BUCKEYE SCOREBOARD

## 2020 FOOTBALL

April 11 SPRING GAME.

Sept. 5 BOWLING GREEN; 12 at Oregon; 19 RUTGERS.

Oct. 10 IOWA; 17 at Michigan State; 24 at Penn State; 31 NEBRASKA.

Nov. 7 INDIANA; 14 at Maryland, 21 at Illinois; 28 MICHIGAN.

Dec. 5 Big Ten Championship Game at Indianapolis.

### MEN'S BASKETBALL (20-9, 10-8)

Oct. 30 CEDARVILLE (exhibition), W 95-52.

Nov. 6 CINCINNATI, W 64-56; 10 UMASS-LOWELL, W 76-56; 13 VILLANOVA, W 76-51; 18 STETSON, W 86-51; 22 PURDUE FORT WAYNE, W 85-46; 25 KENT STATE, W 71-52; 29 MORGAN STATE, W 90-57.

Dec. 4 North Carolina, W 74-49; 7 PENN STATE, W 106-74; 15 Minnesota, L 84-71; 17 SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE, W 80-48.; 21 Kentucky at Las Vegas, W 71-65; 29 West Virginia at Cleveland, L 67-59.

Jan. 3 WISCONSIN, L 61-57; 7 Maryland, L 67-55; 11 Indiana, L 66-54; 14 NEBRASKA, W 80-68; 18 Penn State, L 90-76; 23 MINNESOTA, L 62-59; 26 Northwestern, W 71-59.

Feb. 1 INDIANA, W 68-59; 4 Michigan, W 61-58; 9 Wisconsin, L 70-57; 12 RUTGERS, W 72-66; 15 PURDUE, W 68-52; 20 Iowa, L 85-76; 23 MARYLAND, W 79-72; 27 NEBRASKA, W 75-54.

March 1 MICHIGAN, W 77-63; 5 ILLINOIS, 7 p.m.; 8 Michigan State, 4:30 p.m. 11-15 Big Ten Tournament at Indianapolis.

### WOMEN'S BASKETBALL (18-11, 11-7)

Nov. 3 Urbana (exhibition), W 131-50; 10 Valparaiso in Springfield, Ohio, W 89-38; 13 Cincinnati, W 78-73 (OT); 17 OHIO, L 74-68; 21 Kent State, W 75-65; 24 UCONN, L 73-62; 29 South Dakota in Las Vegas, L 68-53; 30 Northern Iowa in Las Vegas, W 64-46.

Dec. 5 LOUISVILLE, W 67-60; 8 RADFORD, W 70-57; 15 Stanford, L 71-52; 17 Sacramento State, W 104-74; 28 PURDUE, L 66-50; 31 Minnesota, W 66-63.

Jan. 6 Maryland, L 72-62; 9 MICHIGAN, W 78-69; 12 PENN STATE, W 80-70; 16 Michigan State, L 68-65; 19 ILLINOIS, W 77-47; 23 Iowa, L 77-68; 30 MARYLAND, L 85-65.

Feb. 2 Nebraska, W 80-74 (OT); 6 Illinois, W 78-58; 9 WISCONSIN, W 82-74; 13 MINNESOTA, W 99-76; 16 Indiana, W 80-76; 19 NEBRASKA, W 65-52; 22 Rutgers, L 59-57; 25 NORTHWESTERN, L 69-55; 29 Purdue, W 77-56.

March 4-8 Big Ten Tournament at Indianapolis.

### BASEBALL (3-6, 0-0)

Feb. 14 Saint Joseph's in Port Charlotte, Fla., L 7-3; 15 Pittsburgh in North Port, Fla., W 4-1; 16 Indiana State in Port Charlotte, W 10-6 (10); 21 Georgia Tech, L 12-4; 22 Georgia Tech, L 5-2; 23 Georgia Tech, L 12-2; 28 Lipscomb, W 11-6; 29 Lipscomb, L 5-4.

March 1 Lipscomb, L 4-2; 6 Stetson in DeLand, Fla., 6:30 p.m.; 7 Harvard in DeLand, Fla., 2 p.m.; 8 Fairfield in DeLand, Fla., 7 p.m.; 10 North Florida, 6:05 p.m.; 11 North Florida, 3:05 p.m.; 13 LIBERTY, 5:05 p.m.; 14 LIBERTY, 3:05 p.m.; 15 LIBERTY, 1:05 p.m.; 17 Wright State, 5 p.m.; 20 RUTGERS, 5 p.m.; 21 RUTGERS, 3:05 p.m.; 22 RUTGERS, 1:05 p.m.; 25 BOWLING GREEN, 5:05 p.m.; 27 Indiana, 7 p.m.; 28 Indiana, 2:30 p.m.; 29 Indiana, 1 p.m.

April 1 TOLEDO, 6:35 p.m.; 3 MICHIGAN STATE, 6:35 p.m.; 4 MICHIGAN STATE, 3:05 p.m.; 5 MICHIGAN STATE, 1:05 p.m.; 7 MOREHEAD STATE, 6:35 p.m.; 10 Michigan, 6 p.m.; 11 Michigan, 2 p.m.; 12 Michigan, 12 p.m.; 15 DAYTON, 6:35 p.m.; 17 ILLINOIS, 6:35 p.m.; 18 ILLINOIS, 3:05 p.m.; 19 ILLINOIS, 12 p.m.; 24 THE CITADEL, 6:35 p.m.; 25 THE CITADEL, 3:05 p.m.; 26 THE CITADEL, 1:05 p.m.; 29 MIAMI (OHIO), 6:35 p.m.

May 1 Nebraska, 6:30 p.m.; 2 Nebraska, 2 p.m.; 3 Nebraska, 4 p.m.; 5 OHIO, 6:35 p.m.; 6 Cincinnati, 6 p.m.; 8 MARYLAND, 6:35 p.m.; 9 MARYLAND, 3:05 p.m.; 10 MARYLAND, 1:05 p.m.; 12 Xavier in Mason, Ohio, 8 p.m.; 14

Northwestern, 3:30 p.m.; 15 Northwestern, 3:30 p.m.; 16 Northwestern, 1 p.m.

### SOFTBALL (6-7, 0-0)

Feb. 7 South Carolina, L 3-2; 8 North Dakota State in Columbia, SC, W 13-5; 8 Southern Illinois in Columbia, W 5-0; 9 UNC Greensboro in Columbia, W 5-4 (10); 14 NC State, L 5-3; 15 Notre Dame in Raleigh, NC, L 7-1; 15 NC State, L 5-3; 16 Notre Dame in Raleigh, L 6-4; 21 UC Santa Barbara in Fresno, Calif., W 5-1; 21 Fresno State, L 9-4; 22 UC Santa Barbara in Fresno, L 5-2; 22 Pacific in Fresno, W 6-2; 23 University of Illinois at Chicago in Fresno, W 4-2.

March 6 Oregon State in Tempe, Ariz., 4 p.m.; 7 Wright State in Tempe, 11 a.m.; 8 Oregon State in Tempe, 4 p.m.; 8 Arizona State, 9 p.m.; 9 Lehigh in Tempe, 4 p.m.; 13 Lehigh in Phoenix, Ariz., 2:30 p.m.; 13 Grand Canyon, 7:30 p.m.; 14 Lehigh in Phoenix, 11 a.m.; 14 South Dakota in Phoenix, 4 p.m.; 15 Pacific in Phoenix, 11 a.m.; 18 TOLEDO, 3 p.m.; 20 MINNESOTA, 6 p.m.; 21 MINNESOTA, 2 p.m.; 22 MINNESOTA, 1 p.m.; 24 PITTSBURGH, 4 p.m.; 27 Indiana, 6 p.m.; 28 Indiana, 2 p.m.; 29 Indiana, 12 p.m.

April 1 KENTUCKY; 3 Illinois, 6 p.m.; 4 Illinois, 2 p.m.; 5 Illinois, 1 p.m.; 7 Ohio, 6 p.m.; 10 MICHIGAN STATE, 6 p.m.; 11 MICHIGAN STATE, 2 p.m.; 12 MICHIGAN STATE, 1 p.m.; 14 PENN STATE, 4 p.m.; 14 PENN STATE, 6:30 p.m.; 17 Michigan, 6 p.m.; 18 Michigan, 2 p.m.; 19 Michigan, 1 p.m.; 24 WISCONSIN, 6 p.m.; 25 WISCONSIN, 2 p.m.; 26 WISCONSIN, 3 p.m.; 29 Kent State, 2 p.m.; 29 Kent State, 4 p.m.

May 1 Rutgers, 3 p.m.; 2 Rutgers, 3 p.m.; 3 Rutgers, 1 p.m.; 7-9 Big Ten Tournament in Champaign, Ill.

### FENCING

Jan. 4 January NAC at Charlotte, N.C., NTS; 12 Detroit Mercy Invitational; NTS; 15 DENISON, NTS; 18 St. John's Duals at New York, N.Y., NTS; 19 Philadelphia Invitational; NTS.

Feb. 1-2 Northwestern Duals, NTS; 22-23 MIDWEST CHAMPIONSHIPS.

March 7-8 NCAA Quarterfinals at Detroit, Mich.; 19-22 NCAA Championships at Detroit, Mich.

### MEN'S GYMNASTICS (1-2, 0-2)

Jan. 18 ARIZONA STATE & OKLAHOMA, 2nd (398.600); 25 Penn State, L 405.900-405.000.

Feb. 1 MICHIGAN, L 409.600-408.500; 8 Arizona State & California at Tempe, Ariz., 2/5; 21-23 Winter Cup at Las Vegas, NTS; 29 NAVY, W 408.900-397.200;

March 7 IOWA & NORTHERN ILLINOIS, 1:30 p.m.; 13 Minnesota & Nebraska at Minneapolis, Minn., 6 p.m.; 21 Illinois, 1:30 p.m.

April 3-4 Big Ten Championships at Minneapolis, Minn.; 17-18 NCAA Championships at Ann Arbor, Mich.

### WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS (3-4, 2-3)

Jan. 11 North Carolina State, W 194.025-193.800; 18 Michigan State, L 195.450-195.275; 25 CENTRAL MICHIGAN & MARYLAND, 1st (195.500).

Feb. 1 MINNESOTA, L 197.400-195.550; 9 Michigan, L 197.350-195.900; 14 PENN STATE, W 195.350-195.150; 21 Big Five at Toledo, 3/5; 28 Missouri, 4/4.

March 8 Arizona, 2 p.m.; 14 PITT, 4 p.m.; 21 Big Ten Championship at Columbus.

April 4 NCAA Regionals; 16-18 NCAA Nationals.

### MEN'S ICE HOCKEY (18-11-5, 11-9-4)

Oct. 6 WESTERN (exhibition), W 5-2; 11 Western Michigan at Toledo, T 2-2; 12 RIT at Toledo, W 3-1; 18 OMAHA, W 3-2; 19 OMAHA, L 2-1; 25 Mercyhurst, W 7-2; 26 Mercyhurst, W 3-1.

Nov. 1 MICHIGAN, W 3-2; 2 MICHIGAN, W 2-1; 8 Notre Dame, L 3-2 (OT); 9 Notre Dame, L 2-1; 22 Penn State, L 5-4; 23 Penn State, W 4-3; 30 MICHIGAN STATE, W 3-1.

Dec. 1 MICHIGAN STATE, W 2-0; 6 MINNESOTA, W 3-2 (OT); 7 MINNESOTA, T 1-1 (L 3x3); 27 COLGATE, W 3-2; 28 COLGATE, W 3-0.

Jan. 3 Cornell at Las Vegas, L 5-2; 4 Army

at Las Vegas, W 2-1 (OT); 10 Wisconsin, W 4-2; 11 Wisconsin, L 5-2; 17 NOTRE DAME, T 4-4 (L SO); 18 NOTRE DAME, W 2-1; 24 Minnesota, L 6-3; 25 Minnesota, L 4-1; 31 Michigan, L 3-2.

Feb. 1 Michigan, W 4-1; 7 PENN STATE, T 2-2 (OTW) 8 PENN STATE, L 6-3; 21 Michigan State, W 1-0; 22 Michigan State, W 4-2; 28 WISCONSIN, L 3-2; 29 WISCONSIN, T 3-3 (OTL).

March 6-8 Big Ten Tournament First Round; 14 Big Ten Tournament Semifinals; 21 Big Ten Tournament Championship.

### WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY (22-8-6, 13-6-5)

Sept. 27-28 ST. LAWRENCE, W 4-1; W 3-2.

Oct. 4 St. Cloud State, W 5-2; 5 St. Cloud State, W 6-2; 11 WISCONSIN, L 3-0; 12 WISCONSIN, L 3-1; 18 Minnesota State, T 1-1; 19 Minnesota State, T 3-3; 25 MINNESOTA, W 4-3; 26 MINNESOTA, L 4-2.

Nov. 1 Bemidji State, W 4-3 (OT) 2 Bemidji State, W 3-1; 15 MINNESOTA DULUTH, W 3-1; 16 MINNESOTA DULUTH, T 1-1; 22 Colgate, W 6-2; 23 Colgate, T 1-1; 29 CORNELL, W 3-1, 30 CORNELL, L 5-1.

Dec. 14 Princeton at Las Vegas, L 4-2; 15 Princeton at Las Vegas, W 5-2.

Jan. 10 MINNESOTA STATE, W 6-0; 11 MINNESOTA STATE, W 8-4; 17 Minnesota, W 4-1; 18 Minnesota, L 2-1; 24 QUINNIPIAC, W 2-1; 25 QUINNIPIAC, W 3-2; 31 BEMIDJI STATE, W 7-2.

Feb. 1 BEMIDJI STATE, T 2-2; 7 Minnesota Duluth, L 5-4 (OT); 8 Minnesota Duluth, L 4-1; 15 Wisconsin, W 3-1; 16 Wisconsin, T 1-1; 21 ST. CLOUD STATE, W 3-0; 22 ST. CLOUD STATE, W 6-3; 28 WCHA First Round vs. Minnesota State, W 4-2; 29 WCHA First Round vs. Minnesota State, W 1-0.

March 7 WCHA First Round vs. Minnesota, 5 p.m.l 8 WCHA Final Faceoff; 14 NCAA Quarterfinal; 20 NCAA Frozen Four; 22 NCAA Championship.

### SWIMMING & DIVING (4-3, 1-1)

Oct. 18-19 Texas A&M, Men, L 153-147; Women, L 174-124.

Nov. 1 Virginia Tech & Penn State at State College, Pa., Men L 97-70, W 91.70-74.50; Women L 174-124, L 102-65; 2 Virginia Tech & Penn State at State College, Pa., Men L 185-168, W 193.50-158.50; Women W 247-106, W 198-155; 8 KENYON, Men, W 207-87 8 KENYON & AKRON, Women W 213-85, W 254-40; 15 DENISON, Men, W 215-80.5; Women, W 214.5-78; 21-23 OHIO STATE INVITATIONAL, Men 1/5; Women 1/9.

Dec. 4-7 AT&T Winter National Championship at Atlanta, NTS.

Jan. 3-4 KENTUCKY, Men, W 175.5-142.5; Women, W 163-156; 18 MICHIGAN, Men L 190-110; Women, L 165-135; 24-25 Shamrock Invitational at South Bend, Ind., Men 3/4; Women 2/4; 31 Pittsburgh, NTS.

Feb. 14-16 OHIO STATE WINTER INVITATIONAL; 19-22 Women's Big Ten Championship at Iowa City, Iowa, 1/12; 26-29 Men's Big Ten Championship at Bloomington, Ind., 2/10.

March 1 LAST CHANCE MEET (women's); 8 LAST CHANCE MEET (men's); 14-16 CSCAA National Invitational at Cleveland & NCAA Zone Diving at West Lafayette, Ind.; 19-21 NCAA Championships (women's); 25-28 NCAA Championships (men's).

### MEN'S TENNIS (13-2, 0-0)

Jan. 15 NORTHERN KENTUCKY, W 7-0; 15 DAYTON, W 5-0; 19 XAVIER, W 7-0; WRIGHT STATE, W 7-0; 25 PURDUE, W 4-0; 26 TULSA, W 4-0; 26 TOLEDO, W 4-0.

Feb. 1 TEXAS, W 4-1; 7 ARIZONA STATE, W 7-0; 9 USC, W 4-2; 11 TEXAS A&M, W 4-1; 14 Wisconsin, W 4-0; 15 Wake Forest, W 4-3; 16 North Carolina, L 4-0.

March 1 Georgia, L 4-0; 4 Stanford, 6 p.m.; 8 PENN STATE, 12 p.m.; 15 Michigan State, 12 p.m.; 20 MICHIGAN, 6 p.m.; 27 NEBRASKA, 6 p.m.; 29 IOWA, 12 p.m.

April 3 Purdue, 4 p.m.; 5 Indiana, 12 p.m.; 10 NORTHWESTERN, 6 p.m.; 12 ILLINOIS, 12 p.m.; 17 Wisconsin, 4 p.m.; 19 Minnesota, 12

p.m.; 23 Big Ten Tournament.

### WOMEN'S TENNIS (8-3, 1-0)

Jan. 17 Michigan Invitational at Ann Arbor, Mich., NTS; 25 ITA Kickoff at Stillwater, Okla., W 4-0; 31 DUKE, W 4-2.

Feb. 7 National Indoors at Chicago vs. Georgia Tech, L 4-1; 8 National Indoors at Chicago vs. Michigan, W 4-3; 16 Vanderbilt, L 5-2; 21 KENTUCKY, W 4-1; 23 ARIZONA STATE, W 5-0; 27 Purdue, W 5-2.

March 1 Florida State, W 4-3; 7 NORTHWESTERN, 12 p.m.; 13 MICHIGAN STATE, 6 p.m.; 15 MICHIGAN, 12 p.m.; 20 Penn State, 2 p.m.; 27 Wisconsin, 5 p.m.; 29 Minnesota, 10 a.m.

April 3 Baylor, 6 p.m.; 5 Penn State, 12 p.m.; 11 Iowa, 12 p.m.; 12 Nebraska, 12 p.m.; 17 MARYLAND, 6 p.m.; 19 RUTGERS, 12 p.m.; 23 Big Ten Tournament at West Lafayette, Ind.

May 1 NCAA Regionals; 8 Super Regionals; 14 NCAA Championships at Stillwater, Okla.

### INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Jan. 10 Kentucky Invite at Lexington, Ky., NTS; 17-18 Michigan Invite at Ann Arbor, Mich., Men 2/3; Women NTS; 23-25 Columbia Challenge at New York, NTS; 30-31 Texas Tech Invitational at Lubbock, Texas, NTS.

Feb. 1 Texas Tech Invitational at Lubbock, Texas, NTS; 7 Midwest Open at Geneva, Ohio, NTS; 13-15 Iowa State Classic at Ames, Iowa; 14-15 Tiger Paw Invite at Clemson, S.C.; 22 Kent State Tune Up at Kent, Ohio; 22 Alex Wilson Invitational at South Bend, Ind.; 28-29 Big Ten Championships at Geneva, Ohio, Men 5/12; Women 1/13.

March 13 NCAA Championships at Albuquerque, N.M.; 27-28 Power-5 Trailblazer Challenge at Oxford, Miss.; 27-28 Raleigh Relays at Raleigh, N.C.

April 4 Battle On The Bayou at Baton Rouge, La.; 9-11 Tennessee Relays at Knoxville, Tenn.; 17-18 Gamecock Invitational at Columbia, S.C.; 24-25 JESSE OWENS CLASSIC.

May 1-2 Kentucky Open at Lexington, Ky.; 15-16 Big Ten Championships at Madison, Wisc.; 29-31 NCAA Regional Championships at Lexington, Ky.

June 10-13 NCAA Championships at Austin, Texas.

### MEN'S VOLLEYBALL (10-7, 2-4)

Jan. 4 North Greenville, W 3-0; 7 Urbana, W 3-0; 9 Saint Francis, W 3-0; 16 LINCOLN MEMORIAL, W 3-1; 17 KING, W 3-0; 24 USC at University Park, Pa., W 3-0; 26 UCLA at University Park, Pa., L 3-1; 31 Saint Francis, W 3-0.

Feb. 1 Penn State, W 3-0; 7 UCSB, L 3-1; 8 LONG BEACH STATE, L 3-1; 13 LEWIS, L 3-0; 15 McKENDREE, W 3-0; 21 Loyola Chicago, L 3-1; 22 Purdue Fort Wayne, L 3-1; 28 Quincy, W 3-0; 29 Lindenwood, L 3-1.

March 4 BALL STATE, 7 p.m.; 8 PENN STATE, 3 p.m. 12 NJIT, 6 p.m.; 14 George Mason, 5 p.m.; 21 Ball State, 7 p.m.; 27 LINDENWOOD, 7 p.m.; 28 QUINCY, 7 p.m.

April 2 McKendree, 8 p.m.; 4 Lewis, 8 p.m.; 9 PURDUE FORT WAYNE, 7 p.m.; 11 LOYOLA CHICAGO, 5 p.m.; 18 MIVA Quarterfinals, 7 p.m.; 22 MIVA Semifinals, 7 p.m.; 25 MIVA Finals, 7 p.m.

May 1 NCAA Play-In Match, 7 p.m.; 5 NCAA First Round at Fairfax, Va., 6 p.m.; 7 NCAA Semifinals at Fairfax, Va., 6 p.m.; 9 NCAA Finals at Fairfax, Va., 8 p.m.

### WRESTLING (10-4, 6-3)

Nov. 2 Michigan State, NTS; 10 STANFORD, W 29-6; 15 Pittsburgh, W 23-12; 17 VIRGINIA TECH, L 21-15.

Dec. 1 CORNELL, W 23-9; 6-7 C.K. Invitational at Las Vegas, 2/32.

Jan 6 ARIZONA STATE, W 17-16; 10 RUTGERS, W 22-13; 17 Wisconsin, W 24-13; 19 ILLINOIS, W 28-6; 24 Iowa, L 24-10; 26 Minnesota, W 22-13; 31 MARYLAND, W 43-3.

Feb. 2 Nebraska, L 19-14; 9 NORTHWESTERN, W 28-10; 15 Penn State, L 20-16.

March 7-8 Big Ten Championship; 19-21 NCAA Championship.



# Michigan State Hires Tucker To Replace Dantonio

Michigan State hired Mel Tucker to replace Mike Dantonio as head coach of the Spartan football team.

Tucker, 48, spent 2019 as head coach at Colorado, where he went 5-7, following three seasons as Georgia defensive coordinator.

Michigan State ended an eventful seven-day search to replace Dantonio, who abruptly retired on Feb. 4 after 13 seasons at the helm of the Green and White football program.

## BIG TEN NOTES Joe Dempsey

Tucker became head coach No. 25 in program history, barely four days after he initially interviewed with Michigan State's search party and announced he was staying at Colorado for a second season.

According to The Athletic, the contract will double Tucker's \$3.2 million salary pool for assistant coaches, increase the Michigan State strength and conditioning staff budget and increase Tucker's \$2.675 million salary, so that he will make at least \$5.5 million per year during his six-year contract.

Tucker's new deal raises him to just outside the top 10 among college football coaches in the Football Bowl Subdivision in total pay and fourth in the Big Ten, according to USA Today.

The only Big Ten coaches who made more than Tucker's deal entails in 2019 were Michigan's Jim Harbaugh (\$7.5 million), Purdue's Jeff Brohm (\$6.6 million) and Penn State's James Franklin (\$5.65 million).

Tucker's buyout at Colorado dropped to \$3 million on Dec. 31, according to his five-year contract with the Buffaloes.

After the Spartans failed to bring in front-runner Luke Fickell, who elected to remain Cincinnati's head coach instead of a return to the Big Ten, where he played (1993-96) and coached (1999, 2002-2016) at Ohio State, they turned all their attention to Tucker.

"We are disappointed to see Coach Tucker leave," said Colorado athletic director Rick George. "We are excited about the upward trajectory of our football program, and we'll get to work immediately hiring the next head coach to build on our momentum and lead our young men."

Before taking the job, Tucker initially declined and took to Twitter to state his commitment to the Buffaloes.

"While I am flattered to be considered for the HC job at Michigan State, I am committed to Colorado for the #TheBuild of our program, its great athletes, coaches & supporters. #UnfinishedBusiness #GoBuffs

"We are #Relentless #Culture #TheBuild"

Colorado ultimately hired Karl Dorrell, who was an assistant with the NFL's Miami Dolphins and had been head coach at UCLA.

Tucker is a Cleveland native who starred at Cleveland Heights before play-



MICHIGAN STATE FOOTBALL/TWITTER

**NEXT MAN UP – Michigan State hired Colorado's Mel Tucker to be its next head coach on Feb. 11, one week after Mark Dantonio abruptly resigned from the position.**

ing defensive back at Wisconsin. He began his coaching career as a graduate assistant for the Spartans in 1997-98 with Dantonio and then-head coach Nick Saban.

After coaching defensive backs at Miami (Ohio) and LSU in 1999 and 2000, respectively, he took a job in the same position at Ohio State.

Tucker worked with both Dantonio and Fickell on the 2003 Buckeye staff, serving as Dantonio's defensive backs coach under then-head coach Jim Tressel. He was promoted to take Dantonio's spot with a share of the defensive coordinator job in 2004 before leaving for the NFL.

After coaching defensive backs for the Cleveland Browns from 2005-07, Tucker received a promotion to defensive coordinator for the 2008 season. Then he joined the Jacksonville Jaguars as defensive coordinator from 2009-12, including a 2-3 record as an interim head coach in 2011.

Next, Tucker spent two seasons as defensive coordinator of the Chicago Bears from 2013-14 before reuniting with Saban at Alabama.

He served as associate head coach and defensive backs assistant for a year before moving within the conference to become Georgia's defensive coordinator from 2016-18.

### MSU Staffers Step Down Following Dantonio's Exit

None of Dantonio's former staffers will remain with the Spartan football program following Tucker's hiring.

Among them, longtime offensive line

coach Jim Bollman decided to retire in the wake of Dantonio's departure and Tucker's hiring. Bollman served as the Spartans' co-offensive coordinator and offensive line coach after rejoining Michigan State in 2013.

Bollman played at Ohio University (1972-76) and then coached for 43 years. He coached offensive linemen and served as co-offensive coordinator at Ohio State from 2001-11.

Overall, Bollman coached in 11 Bowl Championship Series/New Year's Six games, including the Buckeyes' 2002 national title victory.

### PSU Reaches Resolution Of Paterno Issues

Penn State reached a "resolution of the outstanding issues" between the university and the family of the late head football coach Joe Paterno.

The resolution came eight years after a university report blamed Paterno, who died in 2012 at age 85, and others for allegedly assisting in a cover-up regarding the Jerry Sandusky scandal.

The Paterno family dropped all outstanding claims, including a 2014 lawsuit against Penn State by Paterno's son.

"The University recognizes and takes great pride in the many contributions made by Joe Paterno, not just to the football program, but to the academic advancement of this institution and to countless charitable causes in the community as well," said the chair of the Penn State board of trustees, Mark Dambly. "We are pleased that the Paterno family

has indicated that they will not support public or private advocacy efforts to revisit the past, through further review or release of investigative materials, or otherwise."

The university agreed to pay some expenses for the Paterno family, while Paterno's widow, Sue Paterno, said she and her family want to put the scandal behind them.

"With this resolution, my family and I want to move forward with the University community and University leadership," Sue Paterno said in a statement. "Building on the strong foundation established by hundreds of thousands of alumni and supporters, including Joe, his coaches and players, I want to help create a new chapter of opportunity for students and faculty. It is time for my family and for the Penn State community to move forward."

"A mutual resolution seldom satisfies everyone. The multiple wounds from this tragic period will take a long time to heal but we must begin now."

"Victims of abuse suffered extraordinary harm from one individual, and everyone associated with the Penn State community has suffered as well. We can't undo past crimes, but we can never forget the victims of such abusive behavior."

Joe Paterno was fired after Sandusky was arrested on child sex abuse charges in November 2011, with the university funding a review of the scandal led by former FBI director Louis Freeh.

In a 267-page review, Freeh blamed Paterno, along with former university



president Graham Spanier, suspended athletic director Tim Curley and ex-vice president Gary Schultz, for allegedly taking part in a cover-up to avoid bad publicity. The review came to the conclusion that Penn State's top administrators had "empowered" Sandusky to continue his abuse, citing more than 430 witnesses.

Months later, the Paterno family released a review disputing allegations in the Freeh report, deeming it false that Paterno had participated at all. The Paternos criticized Freeh's report for failing to interview key witnesses, allowing some to testify anonymously and using an incomplete string of e-mails for evidence, while also expressing concern over how Paterno was depicted.

Thomas Kline, who was an attorney for a man identified as "Victim No. 5" in the Sandusky trial, said in 2013 that Paterno should have taken action after reports of Sandusky's behavior.

According to Kline, the family's complaints about anonymous witnesses and incomplete e-mails "do not erase the shocking and striking documents which Freeh did uncover and which form an unassailable finding made by Mr. Freeh that Joe Paterno tragically had knowledge in 1998 and again in 2001 that Jerry Sandusky was a threat, which was never dealt with properly by the former Penn State coach."

**UM Investigates Allegations Against Former Coach**

After an article in The Athletic detailed sexual assault allegations against a former Minnesota hockey coach, the university launched an investigation. The article alleged multiple accusations of inappropriate behavior with players against Thomas "Chico" Adrahtas, and many of the claims were sexual in nature.

The allegations refer to his work with several hockey programs in the Chicago area over the past 35 years, as well as the lone season (1984-85) he spent as the assistant to Golden Gophers head hockey coach Brad Buetow.

"The University takes this disturbing report seriously and is taking immediate steps – including the retention of the law firm Perkins Coie – to determine what happened," Minnesota president Joan Gabel said. "The University is committed to providing support for our former students consistent with our public responsibilities and dedication to a supportive, inclusive and safe environment for our entire community."

As part of the investigation, anyone with knowledge of Adrahtas' activities at the university has been asked to get in touch with its legal team by emailing minn@perkinscoie.com, which is an email address made specifically to help with the investigation.

**Former U-M Coach Beilein Resigns From Cleveland Cavs**

Former Michigan head coach John Beilein officially resigned as head coach of the Cleveland Cavaliers, redirecting his attention to a different role within the organization on Feb. 19.

"Over these last nine months, I have given my all to this organization, but after much reflection, I have decided that it is best that I step back and resign from my position as head coach of the Cleveland Cavaliers and assist the organization in a different capacity," Beilein said in a statement. "I am very grateful to (owner) Dan Gilbert, (general manager) Koby Altman

and the entire Cavaliers organization for the opportunity they have provided me.

"This was a very difficult decision for me, but I want to be clear – this was my decision to step down and I truly appreciate the understanding and support of the front office during this time. I find losing a very challenging, and this year has taken a much bigger toll on me than I expected. I grew concerned for the consequences this toll could potentially take on my own health and my family's well-being down the road. I was not certain I could be at my best for the remainder of the season and in the future. That would not be fair to the players, coaches and support staff."

Cavaliers associate head coach J.B. Bickerstaff took over for Beilein, who was at the helm of the Wolverines men's basketball team from 2007-19.

"I also would not be doing this now, during the season, if J.B. Bickerstaff was not ready and capable to assume the head coaching role immediately and continue the rebuilding process that we have started," Beilein said. "For 45 years and more than 1,300 games, my journey as a basketball coach has been a dream come true. I have never been afraid of a challenge and have given each one my all – sometimes to the detriment of my own well-being."

Before Cleveland officially announced his resignation, Beilein spoke directly to his players, earning additional respect from Cavaliers forward Kevin Love, who described the coach's actions as "ballsy" and the mood as "powerful."

"For him to come in and do that and look us all in the eye, and acknowledge that integrity and willingness, that's big," Love said. "That's real man s--- right there. So I respect him for coming in and doing that because he didn't have to."

Beilein negotiated a financial settlement with the organization that will pay him a portion of the remaining money on his 2019-20 contract. Beilein left Ann Arbor, Mich., in May 2019 following 41 years among the college ranks, signing a five-year contract, including a team option for the final season and paying him more than \$4 million per season, according to league sources.

"While it's unexpected, we understand and respect his decision to step down as head coach of the Cavaliers," Altman said in a statement. "I was excited about the development of our young players, who have all shown growth and maturity under Coach Beilein. The NBA is a unique business that sometimes requires aggressive risk-taking on important long-term decisions to move a franchise forward and ultimately compete for championships."

The Cavaliers were 14-40 at the time of Beilein's departure.

**Indiana TE Hendershot Suspended Indefinitely**

Indiana third-year sophomore tight end Peyton Hendershot was suspended indefinitely by head coach Tom Allen. Hendershot was arrested after allegedly entering the apartment of a former girlfriend without her permission. According to the police report, he is also accused of grabbing and shoving the woman.

Hendershot faces preliminary charges of felony residential entry and three misdemeanors – domestic battery, criminal mischief and criminal conversion.

Indiana released a statement signifying that the suspension will begin immediately.

"(Allen) will continue to evaluate the situation pending further developments," the statement said.

Last season, Hendershot set Indiana records for a tight end with 52 receptions and 622 yards, while hauling in four touchdowns. The North Salem, Ind., native was a third-team All-Big Ten selection by the media and honorable-mention honoree from the coaches across the conference.

**Hoosier RB James Joins Exodus From Indiana**

Indiana had its fourth player of the off-season enter the NCAA transfer portal in freshman running back Sampson James.

James joins senior quarterback Peyton Ramsey, senior offensive tackle Coy Cronk and fellow running back Ronnie Walker, a sophomore, in the portal after an 8-5 season in Bloomington.

James represents the fourth running

back to pursue a transfer since the start of 2019 fall camp, with Ivory Winters (Southeast Missouri State) and Cole Gest (Akron) having already left the program.

The Hoosiers have not only lost players, but multiple coaches have departed this offseason, including offensive coordinator Kalen DeBoer, who became Fresno State's head coach, defensive line coach Mark Hagen, who took the same job at Texas and, strength and speed coaches David Ballou and Matt Rhea, who are heading to Alabama.

James was originally committed to Ohio State before Allen convinced him to flip in October 2018. He was the highest-rated recruit to choose Indiana in the Internet era, according to the 247Sports composite rankings.

Flashing the ability that made him a sought-after prospect, James rushed for 118 yards and one touchdown on 22 carries in a double-overtime win at Purdue with sophomore starter Stevie Scott out due to injury.

**Michigan Staying Home Amid Coronavirus Crisis**


Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh and his football team will not make their international trip this spring because of recent outbreaks of coronavirus. The Wolverines traveled to Italy, France and South Africa the past three years.

"The football team will not be taking an international trip this spring due to the health concerns around the world, most notably coronavirus," Michigan spokesman David Ablauf said. "The program is looking at doing some community service in the Ann Arbor area."

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a deadly respiratory illness that has spread rapidly since being reported Dec. 31 in Wuhan, China, with more than 88,000 cases worldwide and over 3,000 deaths.

The coronavirus has now been detected in 32 locations internationally, including several cases in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Wolverines had not finalized travel plans, but "quite a few ideas were discussed," according to Ablauf.



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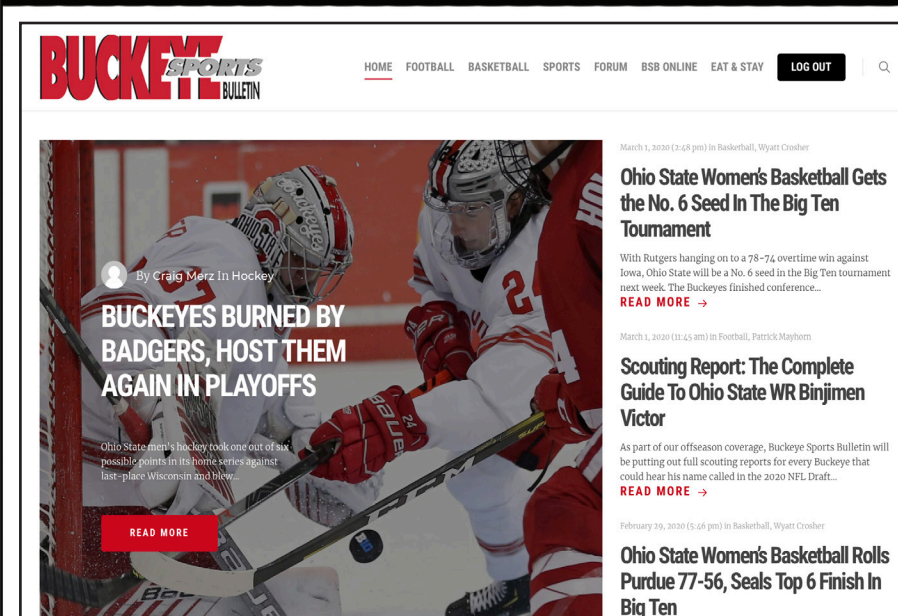
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OHIO STATE

## Burch Leads Alma Mater

By PATRICK MAYHORN  
Special To Buckeye Sports Bulletin

Ohio State might not have intended to, but it is undergoing a full-blown youth movement in the volleyball offices of the Covelli Center. After longtime men's volleyball head coach Pete Hanson stepped down in April of 2019, the Buckeyes knew they would have to undergo some change to move into the future, while keeping ties with the program's rich history.

The answer to that quandary came in the hiring of assistant coach and Ohio State graduate Kevin Burch, who spent three years as a volunteer assistant from 2009-2011 under Hanson after enrolling at Ohio State, following the end of his playing career at Orange Coast College in his home state of California. After moving around the country for a few years at Springfield College, Cal Irvine and Penn State, Burch returned to Ohio State in 2016 as a full-time assistant and recruiting coordinator, helping the Buckeyes to back-to-back national championships in 2016 and 2017.

Those two titles were the cappers on a stunning run of success for the 2017 winner of the American Volleyball Coaches Association "Thirty Under 30" award. From 2010 to 2017, Burch served on seven straight national title-winning staffs. To say that he took the job with a winning pedigree would be an understatement. Despite his résumé, Burch was surprised when he was officially picked by the university to take over the program.

"I was kind of in shock, to be honest with you," Burch said of his reaction to being named Ohio State's head coach. "I think our administrator was kind of looking at me for more of a reaction. I just kind of sat there shocked, because it hadn't actually hit me that I was a head coach at Ohio State, which is my dream job, at 32 years old. It's just how lucky I am to be in this building and this job at this university that's been a dream of mine for so many years. It was pretty fulfilling."

Winning pedigree or not, Burch is a 32-year-old in his first major head coaching job, at a school that he called his dream job. In the transition into the head coach role, Burch cites the day-to-day as the most difficult adjustment.

"Oh, yeah," Burch said when asked if there's a major difference between the daily life of a head coach and an assistant. "I worked for (women's volleyball head coach) Russ Rose at Penn State and he was (truly) the CEO. I remember he was the first head coach that I'd seen that was just a complete CEO. I remember relating to that and thinking that was such a unique perspective and way to manage that position, so I've modeled a lot of that. It's definitely a wildly different job, even more so than I ever anticipated, but it's been fun."

One of those difference is the switch from focusing on minutiae to the bigger picture, including a focus on getting his new players to fully buy in to the new regime.

"I think anytime you have sudden change it can be tough to adapt, but I think our guys have adapted extremely well," Burch said. "I think it helps when you're adapting to a facility like the Covelli Center. It's unbelievable."

Burch's continuity within the program has helped to keep the team, featuring a majority of underclassmen, on the same page.

"We've always held the players to a really high standard, so that part wasn't as much of an adjustment, but with the resources that we now have, it makes it a little bit easier for them."

Despite as smooth a transition as Ohio State could have hoped for, there have still been growing pains under the new head coach early in his first season. After a stellar 6-0 start to the year, the Buckeyes have fallen to 10-7 on the season, struggling with tough conference foes such as Lewis, to whom the Buckeyes lost in straight sets on Feb. 13.

Ohio State's staff, which consists of four hires all made by Burch, is hoping that the early struggles will yield a strong finish as the Buckeyes enter the second half of the season.

"We've learned a lot from every loss," said associate head coach and recruiting coordinator Hudson Bates, who came to Ohio State in June of 2019. "Last weekend (Feb. 21-22), something big we noticed was that our attackers were not linked up well with our hitters on first ball, so we've been talking a lot more about timing steps, being on the right timing step when our setter is touching the ball. It's a really good tangible change for our guys to have in their mind as we're going through practice and into these next few matches."

The early-season struggles have Ohio State in a bit of uncharted territory. After years of consistently finishing atop the Midwestern Intercollegiate Volleyball Association and making deep tournament runs, the Buckeyes faltered in Hanson's final season, going 10-19 on the year and 5-9 in conference play. It was a young team, just as this one is, but returning to winning ways was paramount for this year's squad.

Though it likely won't be an easy road for the Buckeyes with a strong schedule still ahead of them, Bates is confident that Ohio State has as good a chance as anybody to make the NCAA tournament, which opens on May 1.

"It's going to take a little bit of grinding it out towards the end of the season, make a nice little run in the MIVA tournament, but the conference is so wide open right now," Bates said of Ohio State's NCAA tournament hopes. "It's anybody's game."

As Burch moves into the second half of his first season, with a team whose fate will depend on how well the final 11 matches go, he may look to tap into one of Ohio State's richest resources: coaching experience.

"(Men's lacrosse coach) Nick Myers has been a huge help," Burch said. "He's been a great mentor. (Wrestling coach) Tom Ryan, too, incredible mentor. (Men's soccer coach Brian) Maisonneuve is awesome. I got to know him a little bit through some other head coaching interviews, and I've talked with him quite a bit. (Women's volleyball associate head coach) Susan Halverson-Maloney has been unbelievable. She works super hard and is very good at what she does. She's very creative and very intelligent."

"There are a lot of great, not only young coaches, there are great head coaches here. It has helped immensely. These are people that I talk with on a regular basis because of how knowledgeable they are, how much experience they have, and like I mentioned earlier, there's a lot of tough decisions you have to make as a head coach. And to have the support that we have here with those head coaches and other staff members who are on campus, it makes it a lot easier."

*In order to better introduce BSB readers to Ohio State's Olympic sports teams and athletes, we have shifted to more featured-oriented coverage of the various squads. Buckeye Sports Bulletin will provide a roundup of all games, matches and meets involving OSU's teams each Monday on our BuckeyeSports.com website, free to all print subscribers.*



# March Has Arrived: Are Bucks Ready To Thrive?

Most rides are designed to be enjoyable and some even manage to thrill, but sometimes they leave you disoriented and with a bad feeling in the pit of your stomach.

A good portion of the 2019-20 Ohio State men's basketball season, unfortunately, has managed to do the latter for many. But on the first day of March, that all changed. With an eye-popping 77-63 victory over rival Michigan in Columbus on March 1, Chris Holtmann's squad bagged its 20th win and prevailed for the eighth time in its last 10 games.

## RAPP AROUND Jeff Rapp

Doing that in the deepest conference in America is no small feat and especially noteworthy for an OSU team that has stalled out seemingly every time it appeared to be gathering momentum. Dare it be declared that the teeter-totter finally has stopped and that the Buckeyes have found – gasp – some sense of consistency in terms of execution on both ends and finishing games.

Against the Wolverines, OSU was locked in a 54-all squabble with about six minutes to play, and doubt was threatening to creep back into the psyche of a team that was without the services of power forward Kyle Young (ankle), wing Alonzo Gaffney (illness) and point guard D.J. Carton (personal reasons).

However, behind the urgings of a sellout crowd of 18,809, the Buckeyes answered the bell with an impressive 23-6 surge that included clutch play on both ends of the floor. The run began with a well-defended jumper by junior point guard C.J. Walker and continued with a trio of treys – one of which senior forward Andre Wesson banked in for a 59-54 edge and another junior center Kaleb Wesson also knocked in off the window for a 73-60 lead that ignited the party.

"Our older guys stepped up and made major, major plays today," Holtmann said. "Both Andre and Kaleb played really solid games. You get some of those (breaks)."

Granted, OSU stole a win at Michigan on Feb. 4 and benefited from more good fortune in pulling away from U-M in the rematch, but the statement still was made: The Buckeyes not only have steadied the ship, they now can be considered downright dangerous with the Madness about to ensue. In between the sweep of the rival Wolverines were fairly dominating home wins over NCAA hopefuls Rutgers and Purdue, an upset of league-leading Maryland and a blowout victory at Nebraska.

"I don't want to sound cocky or anything, but I would say our team is kind of built for the moment, we're built for this," Walker said confidently after the home defeat of Michigan. "We feel like we can play at any level with any team."

Duane Washington Jr., who tied his career high of 20 points against U-M, nodded when asked if he agreed with his teammate.

"There's a lot of stuff that you guys haven't seen with a lot of the work that we've put in, a lot of time that we've spent off the floor with each other," said the sophomore

shooting guard. "It's stuff like that that shows at times like this. It's something that we say all the time, that we're built for this, this is what we're made for, this is why we came to Ohio State, moments like this."

"I think preaching that and believing in that is 100 percent why we're playing well now, and we're just trying to keep it going."

Holtmann's predecessor, Thad Matta, is Ohio State's winningest coach in roundball thanks largely to his annual production of 20-plus-win seasons, trips to the NCAA Tournament and several memorable runs in the postseason. In his third year at OSU, Holtmann is now starting to follow on that path as his teams have posted at least 20 wins in each of his last seven seasons as a college head coach.

In that time he's seen his share of ebbs and flows, "but I don't think I've been part of one this significant," he said. "I don't think we've had one like this, not in a league this great."

The Buckeyes were 1-5 in their first six games in January and were being thrown on the scrap heap by fans and sportswriters alike.

"We realize plenty of people wrote us off when we were 2-6 (in the conference)," Holtmann said. "We had people kind of making fun of us, putting all of their sarcastic tweets out there. I've got them all saved. All of them."

"We get it. We had to close ranks and find a way to come together."

### Challenges Overcome

After an 11-1 start that included a win over Kentucky just before Christmas, fortunes turned for the Buckeyes. Young wasn't right physically, and Carton struggled monumentally in a loss to West Virginia up in Cleveland on Dec. 29. Young underwent an appendectomy at the turn of the calendar year, and more defeats followed – at home vs. Wisconsin, at Maryland and at Indiana. The nadir came with a home loss to Minnesota on Jan. 23, leading to the aforementioned tweetstorm. When Carton announced he was taking a leave of absence from the team at the end of January to address mental health issues, the team outlook was grim.

So what changed?

Well, OSU appears to have learned how to play without Young, who is now nursing a high-ankle sprain. In the latest win against Michigan, it was rejuvenated freshman E.J. Liddell who was diving on the floor and saving possessions with hustle plays. Sophomore Justin Ahrens also has excelled as a more regular part of the rotation.

In addition, the Buckeyes have rediscovered their outside shooting stroke. They've canned at least nine three-balls in seven of their last 10 games and now lead the conference in both three-pointers made (253) and three-point percentage (37.8). A surprising contributor to the onslaught has been Luther Muhammad, who has scored nine or more points in six of his last seven games (after not doing that in eight consecutive league games) and contributed multiple threes in several of them.

Yet another eureka has been the new-found balance of late. Against Michigan, for example, Kaleb Wesson clearly was bothered by U-M's length and was 0 of 7 in the paint in the first half. He kept plugging, though, and managed to finish with 14 points and nine boards. Andre matched him with 14 points in support of Washington's

20-point outing, Muhammad added 10, and Walker was the definition of solid with 15 points, six rebounds, seven assists and just one turnover.

A transfer from Florida State, Walker now looks every bit the role of reliable veteran in the backcourt. In league play, he ranks second in the Big Ten in assist-to-turnover ratio during conference play at plus-2.8.

Maybe most important, though, has been that Ohio State has found a consistency with its effort. Cuts are sharper, passes have more purpose, and there's more grit on defense.

"We have to play extremely hard, harder than the other team – 50/50 balls have to be ours," Washington said.

Added Walker, "It's March. It's the best time for basketball, and we want to come out with a lot of energy."

### Let The Madness Begin?

When you start breaking matters down, the Buckeyes still are a bit head-scratching, though.

For example, it appears this team can hang its hat on defense. That's a Holtmann staple, and the Buckeyes have plenty of guys who can dig in and create difficulty on the defensive end. Muhammad certainly is a hard-nosed defender; Walker has quickness and desire; Andre Wesson is savvy and also willing to provide help; his brother, Kaleb, is a brick wall inside; and Young is pure hustle, a floor burn waiting to happen.

That's why Washington often doesn't start – because the five guys mentioned above are OSU's best group at setting the defensive tone. Statistically, OSU entered the U-M game tied for second in the league and 19th nationally in points allowed per game (62.3), which is terrific.

However, the Buckeyes were 10th in the Big Ten and tied for 120th nationally in fewest fouls (488). That could be a factor to watch as we enter both Big Ten tournament and NCAA Tournament play.

Kaleb Wesson is Ohio State's headline player, which makes sense considering he leads the team in points and rebounds. However, he occasionally bogs down the offense by taking too much time to read double-teams in the post, and he still hasn't totally overcome his penchant for committing unnecessary fouls. He's having a commendable junior season, no doubt, but NCAA Tournament teams will be well aware of him and provide him plenty of attention, especially since the Buckeyes have only one other double-figure scorer (Washington at 11.4 ppg) currently at their avail.

Again, Wesson has to be part of the flow, but balance is key.

"So much of what we do is predicated off of Kaleb's ability to stretch you through the middle of the floor," Holtmann said.

"In the last five or six weeks, we've settled more into our roles, and that's probably a significant factor as to why we're playing better. I trust our guys, but I'm hesitant because of the league we're in."

The Buckeyes are going to do well down the stretch of close games shooting over the top and foiling traditional defensive strategies just as they did when Muhammad went off in the big win over Maryland and in various moments when Young burned teams with aggressive plays along the baseline.

Standing around, watching Kaleb pound the ball in the ground and hoping foes will leave your best shooter alone isn't a

formula for success. Holtmann, of course, has known this all along, which is why he's only guardedly optimistic after wins. He's well aware the ball movement needs to not disappear and that this team is going to have to do a lot of things just right to survive and advance.

### Bracketology Comes Into Focus

Resident ESPN bracketologist Joe Lunardi has liked Ohio State throughout the season and has an interesting scenario in mind. His most recent stab at predicting the NCAA Tournament field showed Ohio State very firmly in the picture as a six-seed and designated to face USC in St. Louis. Similarly, CBS Sports' Jerry Palm tabs OSU as a five-seed and matching up with 12-seed Stephen F. Austin.

There is now sentiment that the Buckeyes could lift into five-seed status, which, of course, sets up for the dreaded 5-12 upset. Recent history is on OSU's side, however. Holtmann's first OSU team was sent out to Boise, Idaho, in 2018, and many national experts picked the No. 5 Buckeyes to lose to No. 12 South Dakota State. OSU won that game 81-73, and Holtmann opened his postgame comments by reminding all the naysayers of their predictions.

Last year, OSU had a losing record in Big Ten play but squeaked into the Big Dance as an 11-seed. The Scarlet and Gray again had early success with a 62-59 upset of six-seed Iowa State in Tulsa, Okla.

### Also Flying High

If you hadn't noticed, men's college basketball in the state of Ohio is very healthy at the moment, that is, in addition to the recent play of the Buckeyes.

Cincinnati and Xavier are somewhat on the bubble but appear to be in good shape to make the Big Dance with at-large bids, if necessary. Bowling Green and Akron also are in position to be in the equation, but either team likely would need to win the Mid-American Conference title to punch its ticket. A dark horse to win the MAC tourney is Kent State, an Ohio State opponent this season. Meanwhile, Wright State is the class of the Horizon League and could add yet another Ohio team to the Dance.

And then there is the phenomenon that is Dayton.

The Flyers improved to an astonishing 27-2 on Feb. 28 with a home win over Davidson. That moved them to 16-0 in the Atlantic 10 and allowed them to celebrate a league title before March – sort of. They opted not to cut down the nets since their sights are set on an undefeated league season and a very high seed in the NCAA Tournament.

After their team dispatched the Wildcats 82-67, UD students began to chant "not done yet." This team has a superstar forward in dunk machine Obi Toppin, size, depth, athleticism, experienced guards and connectivity on both ends of the court.

Dayton leads the nation in field-goal percentage (52.6), a stat that was only enhanced when it made 72.3 percent of its attempts including – get this – 27 of 28 from inside the arc.

Just as Gonzaga is a surety to play in Spokane, Kansas will open matters in Omaha and Duke will fill up the gym in Greensboro, the Flyers are a virtual lock to be sent to Cleveland, possibly as a two-seed. Will the Buckeyes and their fans join them there?



# Skipping Combine Drills Makes Sense For Young

Leave it to ESPN to create a controversy when there is none.

The self-professed Worldwide Leader in Sports made some comments recently about Ohio State's Chase Young deciding to pass on doing drills at the NFL Scouting Combine. Plenty of players over the years have declined, preferring to work at their own Pro Day, but most agree to medical exams and interviews with NFL teams, which Young did.

## THE FACTS MAN Mike Wachsman

The controversy came when the network's three draft stooges – Mel Kiper, Todd McShay and Louis Riddick – all slammed Young for doing something that hasn't exactly been out of the ordinary the last few years. The fact is this – putting up big numbers at the combine doesn't mean you suddenly become a good football player. Tape and your body of work are the best indicators of pro success, and Young's is as good as anyone else's in this year's draft.

The cautionary tales of Mike Mamula and Vernon Gholston can be referenced here, as both were good college players who blew up at the combine and managed to be chosen in the top 10 – even though their production didn't truly merit that. Teams fell in love with their athleticism and strength but overlooked the holes in their game that watching the tape would have

shown. Young has very few holes in his game, so why does he need to run a 40-yard dash? What if his time is slower than expected? Does he all of a sudden become a question mark?

The ESPN crew created a narrative that Young actually had a shot at being the top overall pick and threw it away with his decision to not do drills at the combine. They are wrong. Once the Cincinnati Bengals locked up the first overall pick it was obvious they were going after a quarterback at the top. Young could have worked out until the cows came home. He wasn't going No. 1. They added that his "lack-luster" final three games didn't help Young's cause, which they were also wrong about.

For people who look only at sacks as a measure of effectiveness, Young did not have much of an impact in the final three contests. But people who understand the game know that he had 12 pressures and eight hurries in those same contests, which means he was having an effect on opposing quarterbacks. Teams schemed their protections for him, which means he was having an impact. Yet there was carnival barker Kiper lamenting all things Chase Young.

"He would have been in the discussion to be the No. 1 overall pick in the draft," Kiper said. "It certainly would have made Cincinnati think more seriously about him, had he finished a little stronger. But his final three games, he was not a game-wrecker like he had been. Now, you think about the injury, you think what could have caused that. But throughout the year, he was that kind of player. He's got that strip-sack down to a science.

"... Great football player. No. 1 player on my board, despite being quiet in those final three games. And that's why, even at No. 2, is it a

guarantee the Redskins will take him? Had he dominated those games, he would've gone, at worst, No. 2. He still probably will go there, but it makes it a little bit more of a hesitation with the way he finished in those final three games."

No, Mel, it doesn't.

McShay got into the act and used an apples to oranges comparison when decrying Young's decision.

"It's highly likely he's going to be the No. 2 overall pick in this draft, right, but when you kind of look at the makeup – why isn't he working out?" McShay said. "Defensive players always work out. If you're healthy, you come here and you work out. Nick Bosa did. Joey Bosa did. They knew they weren't going to run good 40 times. They knew. Nick knew he was going to run the high 4-7s, Joey knew he was going to run the low 4-8s and they still came out and worked out – and they did everything. And evaluators got to see them compete. They saw the short shuttle, which was elite. They saw some of the other drills, which really translate to pass-rushing, and they were elite in terms of what they did. The 40-yard dash wasn't great. Fine. Why isn't Chase Young working out? That's a question that teams are going to ask."

Nick Bosa worked out because he was coming off of an injury and hadn't played in a game since September of the football season. So it was in his interest to show that he was back to his normal self. Joey Bosa worked out because some questioned his athleticism and he wanted to prove them wrong. And he did that. Few are actually questioning Young's athletic ability or his pass-rushing skill, which is why there is almost no advantage to doing drills at the combine. It would be an opportunity for teams to pick your game apart because you were a little slower than advertised on the short shuttle or didn't jump as high as expected in the vertical.

Pop in the tape and get back to me.

Young made it a point to talk about his mindset for the next level, and it makes a lot of sense.

"Me and my team, we decided that because that first day of camp when I step on the field, I want to be the best player I can be," Young said. "I don't want to waste time trying to be a combine athlete. When I step on the field, I need to know that I put my best foot forward as being the best player I can be."

The time spent in the film room breaking down protections as well as his work on perfecting his technique are much more important than working to shave a tenth of a second off his 40 time. Young said he owes a lot of his success to Buckeye defensive line coach Larry Johnson, who many feel is the best in the business.

"As we say at Ohio State with Coach J, it's really drinking the Kool-Aid," Young said. "My sophomore year, I was sipping it, but I think my junior year, I was drinking gallons all the time. So I think it goes out to Coach J. Extra work with him, film study. My play recognition went through the roof my junior year, and I think that's one of the main things that helped me through this season."

The fact that the ESPN talking heads were upset with Young isn't necessarily a story by itself. Where it becomes evident that they have an agenda is the fact that Joe Burrow, the odds-on choice for the top pick, also chose to not do anything at the combine, yet we didn't hear word one about that. ESPN has a sweet deal with the SEC and seldom does much criticizing of the league or its players. I am not saying Burrow should be criticized, as I think more players would be smart to skip the drills portion of the combine, especially if they are locked in as a top-10 pick. My problem is with ESPN dissing Young and not Burrow.

It should probably be expected, though,

especially in this day and age of cord cutting. The Mothership has to find a way to stay relevant and generate viewership.

### New Definition Of Sloppy

Young wasn't the only Buckeye making headlines at the combine.

Cornerback Jeff Okudah, tabbed as the tops at his position and a likely top-five pick, got an odd question from a reporter during his meeting with the press. His answer spoke volumes about what kind of guy he is.

The unidentified scribe apparently didn't do any homework on Okudah before asking, "Sometimes you have a tendency to get kind of sloppy," the reporter said. "How are you looking to improve that?"

"Sloppy in what way?" Okudah replied.

"Sloppy like kind of penalties and stuff like that," the reporter said.

"I had zero pass interferences, zero hold-ings. So put the tape on again. I think you might see something else," Okudah said.

OSU opponents managed just a 46.6 percent catch rate targeting Okudah in 2019, and he didn't allow a completion of over 30 yards all season.

### Team Effort Rights The Ship

Remember the hot start put up by the Ohio State men's basketball team? It opened the year 11-1 and ascended to No. 2 in the national rankings. Along the way it knocked off Cincinnati, Villanova and Kentucky and was being touted as a serious contender for the national title.

Then, as young basketball teams are prone to do over the course of a 30-plus game season, the Buckeyes hit a few potholes. OSU dropped to 12-7, and fans were suddenly of the mind-set that it couldn't beat Podunk Junior High and that Chris Holtmann should be shipped off to Siberia because he knew very little about the game.

But something clicked after that late January loss at Minnesota – the Buckeyes once again found themselves and reeled off wins in eight of their next 10 contests, including a raucous home upsets of No. 7 Maryland and No. 19 Michigan, and moved to 20-9 on the season, putting themselves safely into the NCAA Tournament field.

Ohio State has been up and down this year but appears to be trending in the right direction with scant time left in the regular season. Holtmann likes how his team has battled out of its malaise, but he isn't dwelling too much on what has already been.

"I try not to reflect back on the season until the story is finally written and stay in the moment as much as possible, because it can be overwhelming if you don't," Holtmann said recently.

During the losing streak Ohio State dipped as low as 10th in the league in defensive efficiency, so shoring up that end of things has gone a long way in the resurgence.

For of the last six foes had scored 66 points or fewer, and Nebraska (54) and Purdue (52) barely eclipsed 50. So getting down and dirty on the defensive end has paid off, and if the Buckeyes can continue with that mentality, they could be hitting their stride at the perfect time.

Interestingly, a recent Bracketology reveal by the RealTimeRPI.com website placed the Buckeyes as a seven seed in the East Region – and placed Cincinnati, Kentucky and Villanova in that same region. While the tournament is still off in the distance, it would be interesting to see a rematch with any of those teams. One thing is certain – the Buckeyes would not have any fear factor.

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# Picking OSU's Greatest Teams No Easy Feat

## THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH

Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

In this issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin, staff writer Wyatt Crosher attempts to determine which are the greatest Ohio State football teams to not win the national championship. The topic comes up, of course, because many, me included, believe the 2019 team that won the Big Ten championship and battled Clemson (and maybe some other forces) tooth and nail before falling in the College Football Playoff semifinal belongs in the discussion.

The usual suspects came up as Wyatt talked with our panel of experts, which included noted Ohio State football historian Jack Park, our own Mark Rea, and longtime OSU golf coach Jim Brown, who doubles as a longtime observer of Ohio State football.

Those usual suspects included the junior and senior seasons of the Super Sophs, the Archie Griffin years and some of John Cooper's teams that fell just short of the mark, among others. But I am going to go against the experts' grain and suggest a Buckeye team that maybe doesn't get the credit it deserves – the undefeated 1944 Ohio State team that finished runner-up nationally to Army.

I got to thinking about this squad, which featured 1944 Heisman Trophy winner Les Horvath, when Kendall Herron, a member of that team, reminded our Andrew Lind that the '44 squad was referred to as the "Civilian National Champions" when we spoke to him for a Michigan Memory back in November.

Obviously, few of us had the opportunity to see the 1944 team play, so it is hard to compare it to the more modern Ohio State teams that were considered as possibly the best one not to win a national championship.

But I would contend that each of the teams that are mentioned had some flaw – usually a key tie or loss – that kept it from winning all the marbles. The 1944 team won all of its games. It's only "flaw" was achieving its success at an unfortunate time in our nation's history.

There was no way that amid World War II, Army was not going to get the nod over the Buckeyes when both teams went undefeated.

Not that the Cadets didn't have an incredible team. They outscored their opponents 504-35 that season with four shutouts in their 9-0 campaign. Major feathers in their caps were a 59-0 demolition of No. 5 Notre Dame and a season-ending 23-7 win over archrival and No. 2-ranked Navy.

But Ohio State was no slouch, matching Army's 9-0 record, outscoring opponents 287-79, with wins over No. 19 Wisconsin, No. 6 Great Lakes Navy (coached by Buckeye and Ohio legend Paul Brown), No. 15 Indiana and a season-topping 18-14 victory over rival and No. 6-ranked Michigan.

I think it is strength of schedule where Ohio State could have made its case in a peacetime season. The Buckeyes' unranked opponents included Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota and Illinois. Army's unranked opponents featured North Carolina, Brown, Coast Guard, Duke, Villanova and Penn.

The two teams had a common opponent that season in Pitt, which Army crushed 69-7. But the Buckeyes also had little problem with the Panthers, downing them 54-19.

There is no question that the 1944 Army team was one of the greatest teams of all time, featuring two future Heisman Trophy winners in Doc Blanchard and Glenn Davis. And that 59-0 win over Notre Dame, arguably the premier team in the first half of the 20th century, is hard to ignore.

I'm just suggesting that if it had been, say, 1949 instead of 1944, the Buckeyes, with their four top-20 wins, would have gotten more consideration as national champions than they did

in the heart of a world war.

Thus, my vote for the 1944 squad as the greatest Ohio State team not to win a national championship.

### The Top 150 College Teams

It was purely coincidence that while we were working on trying to determine the greatest Ohio State teams not to have won a national championship, loyal reader David Thompson sent me a list tabulated by USA Today back in December of the 150 greatest college football teams of all time in honor of college football's 150th season. Some of you may have seen it. I had not.

Six Ohio State teams made the list. Without skipping ahead, if you can guess the top three Buckeye teams on the list in any kind of order, I would be very impressed.

The list was compiled by USA Today's respected computer rankings expert Jeff Sagarin, and it was understandably not an easy task.

"The ranking method used in this retroactive look was to combine a won-loss-tie method with a pure score method," Sagarin explained. "Combining those two methods prevents an extreme in one method from dominating the process.

"To achieve a high rating, a team must have a great won-loss record, have won its games by decisive scores and also have played a decent schedule. If a team's schedule was weak, then it essentially needed to be undefeated and have won by huge scores."

Let me say right off the bat that I question the methodology of any survey that doesn't include the 1968 Buckeyes among the top 150 teams of all time, especially when that methodology determines that six Ohio State teams were among the 150 greatest. At best, that makes the Super Sophs-led team the seventh-greatest team in Ohio State history. I don't think there is a Buckeye fan in the world who believes that to be the case, and you can see why I cautioned that it would be difficult to get the top three OSU teams on the list correct (I told you not to look ahead).

In fact, without the Super Sophs, I'm not sure any Buckeye fans would have gotten the top six right. I asked you to try to choose the top three because I felt most of you would be thrown by the fact that the 1996 squad came in at No. 32, third highest among the Buckeye teams listed. I don't think many of you would have seen that coming. I certainly didn't.

The top two Ohio State teams ranked were the previously discussed 1944 team at No. 9 and the 1973 team at No. 18. I don't have problems with those teams landing lofty rankings.

The snub of the Super Sophs is even more perplexing when you consider that the '68 Houston team, which was 6-2-2, was ranked the 80th-greatest college football team of all time, while the great USC team of 1968 led by O.J. Simpson, which the Buckeyes defeated at the Rose Bowl in a hard-fought game to win the crown, was not listed either.

Texas, which finished 9-1-1 in 1968, also made the list checking in at No. 116. But no Buckeyes.

One of those ties for the Longhorns was in the season opener against the Cougars, which would boost Houston's case for its all-time ranking. They also beat No. 17 Mississippi, 29-7, and tied No. 7 Georgia, 10-10. But the

Cougars lost to unranked teams Oklahoma State and Florida State, 21-17 and 40-20, respectively. Using the Sagarin method, the Cougars were surely also helped by a 100-6 win over Tulsa and a 77-3 victory over Idaho, national powers both.

I know Rex Kern reads Buckeye Sports Bulletin, and if he is reading this he is probably thinking, "Bring them on," as to the Cougars. And if O.J. Simpson tore himself away from the links long enough to read the article in USA Today when it came out, I'm sure he said the same thing.

By the way, Texas would lose to Texas Tech, 31-22, in week two and then reel off nine straight victories to finish No. 3 in the final 1968 AP poll, behind the Buckeyes and Penn State, which also failed to make the top 150 with Joe Paterno's first great (and first undefeated) team. USC was fourth. UPI had it Ohio State, USC, Penn State, Georgia (which aids Houston's cause) and the Longhorns.

Speaking of Penn State, the 1994 Lions team that thrashed Ohio State, 63-14, in one of the low points of the Cooper era, was No. 16 all-time, so at least the Buckeyes were defeated by a good team that season.

The 1945 Army team was determined to be the greatest college squad of all time.

"The Cadets won all their games by impressive margins and played the toughest schedule in the country for that season," Sagarin said.

Army was followed in the top 10 by Notre Dame (1943), California (1920), Army (1944), Nebraska (1995), Texas (2005), Nebraska (1971), Michigan (1943), the '44 Buckeyes, and Oklahoma (1971).

So at least Sagarin's method agreed with me that the 1944 Army and Ohio State teams were worthy competitors for the national crown.

In top 10 notes, No. 3 Cal crushed Ohio State, 28-0, following the 1920 season in the Buckeyes' first trip to the Rose Bowl. The Buckeyes also hosted No. 6 Texas in 2005, falling to the Vince Young led Longhorns, just 25-22, with Troy Smith playing only part of the game while coming off suspension.

In another Rose Bowl note, the 1996 Arizona State team, which Ohio State defeated in Pasadena, was considered the 149th greatest team of all time. That Buckeye victory, no doubt, contributed to the 1996 Ohio State team's lofty No. 32 ranking.

Other Buckeye teams deemed to be among the 150 greatest teams of all time were the 1954 national champions (66th), the 1998 team (89th) and the 2014 national champions (126th).

The 2008 Florida team is ranked No. 52 on the list, giving Urban Meyer two of the greatest teams of all time, helping cement his place as one of college football's all-time great coaches.

Michigan made the list the six times, the same as the Buckeyes. In addition to the 1943 Wolverines, The School Up North was recognized for powers in 1947 (19th), 1948 (34th), 1944 (67th), 1973 (108th) and 1940 (138th).

That means Ohio State has had five teams among the greatest of all time since 1950 and four since 1973, while Michigan has had just the '73 team, which battled to a famous 10-10 tie with the Buckeyes, in the last 71 seasons.

One current Big Ten team that has fielded many of the greatest teams is Nebraska, with eight on the list. In addition to the two teams

in the top 10, they were ranked in 1997 (23rd), 1970 (58th), 1994 (68th), 1993 (94th), 1996 (103rd) and 1982 (115th).

You can almost guess the leaders with Notre Dame landing 16 teams on the list, followed by Alabama and Oklahoma with 12 each.

I will add a link to USA Today's complete list of the 150 greatest college football teams of all time on our Forum at BuckeyeSports.com, free to all BSB subscribers. You can go ahead and leave your comments on what you think of the rankings, the 1968 team not being listed and anything else that strikes you about the list or the methodology.

### For The Young, Old And A Gift

While our ongoing Reverse Green Bananas Special is meant to attract younger readers, I wanted to point out that this promotion offers savings for virtually every BSB reader. Those who take advantage of this special pay an annual price based on their age.

So while a 33 year-old-reader pays just \$33, a savings of almost \$67 over the regular \$99.95 rate, even someone like my dad, the incomparable Jack Moskowitz who turned 93 on March 2, could save \$6.95 annually. (Yes, in reality I am comping my parents. I was just trying to make a point!) In fact, only a reader 100 or older does not save something on this special.

I thought about that and have decided to give a free year of Buckeye Sports Bulletin to any readers 100 or older.

Not only that, but if you have achieved that milestone, send me your birthday and your all-time favorite Buckeye. I will list your name, birthday and favorite Ohio State player in BSB. You deserve a gift and recognition! I know some of you sons and daughters look after your older parents. If they fall into this category give us a call at (614) 486-2202 and we will give you the details.

For you parents and grandparents, don't forget that a subscription for anyone under 21 is just \$14.95 with the Reverse Green Bananas Special, a loss-leader for sure, but a great way to introduce young people to the joy of reading a newspaper, something many children have never done!

See page 4 of this issue for Reverse Green Bananas details or call us at the above number for information.

### Faster Than A Speeding Bullet

There are many reasons to enjoy our electronic BuckeyeSports.com. As mentioned, you can comment on the 150 greatest college football teams on our Forum. And with spring football practice under way, we will be covering preparations for another run at the national championship extensively between print issues.

Reprint Thursdays, when we reprint articles from the BSB archives, are always popular. On recent Thursdays we have reprinted stories on Ted Ginn Jr.'s breakout game as a freshman, stories from new Michigan State coach Mel Tucker's time at Ohio State and, before that, stories from former MSU coach Mark Dantonio's time on the Buckeye staff.

One of my favorite recent items was on the Forum. It was a clip of a race between 58-year-old hyper coach Kerry Coombs and large, athletic freshman offensive lineman Paris Johnson. The race ends in a photo finish. Go to the BuckeyeSports.com Forum and you be the judge. You may have to scroll down a bit to find it, but it's worth the search.

If you are not enjoying BuckeyeSports.com, free to all BSB subscribers, see the instructions on page 5.



**FOR ATHLETES**

**HEADS UP  
CONCUSSION  
IN YOUTH SPORTS**

**HOW CAN I TELL IF I HAVE  
A CONCUSSION?**

You may have a concussion if you have any of these symptoms after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body:

- Get a headache
- Feel dizzy, sluggish or foggy
- Be bothered by light or noise
- Vomit or feel sick to your stomach
- Have trouble focusing or problems remembering
- Feel more emotional or problems remembering
- Feel more emotional or "down"
- Feel confused
- Have problems with sleep



**HOW CAN I  
HELP MY TEAM?**

**PROTECT YOUR BRAIN**

Avoid hits to the head and follow the rules for safe and fair play to lower your chances of getting a concussion. Ask your coaches for more tips.

**BE A TEAM PLAYER**

You play an important role as part of a team. Encourage your teammates to report their symptoms and help them feel comfortable taking the time they need to get better.

Concussion symptoms usually show up right away, but you might not notice that something "isn't right" for hours or days. A concussion feels different to each person, so it is important to tell your parents and doctor how you are feeling.

The information provided in this document or through linkages to other sites is not a substitute for medical or professional care. Questions about diagnosis and treatment for concussion should be directed to a physician or other health care provider.

**GOOD TEAMMATES KNOW: IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON**

<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/concussion>

