



BSB

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Going Pro

Four Former Buckeyes Get Picked In NFL Draft

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On The Cover:

Former Ohio State offensive tackle Mike Adams was the first Buckeye taken during the 2012 NFL draft. Adams was selected by Pittsburgh in the second round. (File photo)

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The next print edition of **Buckeye Sports Bulletin** (June cover date) will be mailed June 5.

Adams Leads Buckeye NFL Draft Contingent

By Marcus Hartman

Mike Adams went later in the NFL draft than expected, but the ultimate destination made it worthwhile to him.

The 24th pick in the second round (56th overall) by the Pittsburgh Steelers, Adams was the first of four Buckeyes selected in the three-day event that began April 26. It was a status he had to work to secure.

Adams failed a drug test administered at the NFL Scouting Combine in February, a mistake he compounded by lying about it to Steelers officials initially. That nearly ruined his chances to play for the team he rooted for growing up, as he learned via a meeting with the team prior to the draft.

"We told him he's off our draft board," Pittsburgh general manager Kevin Colbert said before explaining the team gave him a list of stipulations he had to meet in order to repair his image with them.

Colbert declined to elaborate on the terms but said he was comfortable with Adams' reaction and picking him up in the second round after he was rated a first-round talent by many evaluators, including their own.

"I think whenever a kid fails at the combine, we look at each individual situation and we try to figure out whether the risk is worth the reward," Colbert said. "Quite honestly, I'm not so much worried about the reward as I am about the young man getting his life in order. In this case, we felt comfortable that he is going to do that. Whether he does or not, nobody knows, including me, him and everybody associated with this."

Adams played high school football in the Columbus suburb of Dublin, but he began his life in the western Pennsylvania town of Farrell as a Steelers fan. That served as an impetus to make things right with the organization, and it left him thrilled with the news he would be joining it.

"When I was a 4-year-old, my entire bedroom was all Pittsburgh Steelers stuff," Adams said. "I've been in love with this organization since I started watching football. It was important for me to reach out to them because this is something I definitely wanted to be a part of.

"I knew that I screwed up," he added. "I struck out to meet with them and just to let them know what happened and show my remorse and let them know that I love that organization and that I'll do anything to be a part of it."

He joins an offensive line group that has struggled with age and injuries in the past few years but said he is not concerned with where the team puts him initially.

"I've played left (tackle) my entire life and my entire career, so that's probably where I'm more comfortable," he said. "I'll do whatever I have to do to contribute to the Steelers."

The selection of Adams ended a three-year drought for Ohio State offensive linemen in the draft. The last Buckeye to hear his name called was tackle Kirk Barton in the seventh round of the 2008 draft.

Posey Tabbed By Houston

Nearly a day and a half passed before any Buckeyes were drafted, but the second one came shortly after the first as the Houston Texans selected wide receiver DeVier Posey with the fifth pick (68th overall) in the third round.

Like Adams, Posey was a five-star recruit coming out of high school in 2008. He also went into the draft process with questions to answer about his character following a pair of five-game NCAA suspensions that limited him to three games as a senior.

That led Texans officials to do their homework on him, due diligence that left them satisfied they could be comfortable adding him to their organization as it comes off its first playoff victory.

"We all checked with whoever we could and felt pretty comfortable that it was a mistake he made," offensive coordinator Rick Dennison said. "He worked hard and still went to practice the entire year even though he only played a few games. We felt that he made a mistake and he learned from that. From there, we went and looked at how he worked at the Indy combine. We looked at his junior year and junior and sophomore film.

"We thought we had a talent that was comparable to some of the guys that

were taken a lot earlier. At that point, we thought it was a good choice for us.”

Throughout the draft process, Posey expressed confidence he would be able to convince teams not to be concerned about his character. With his destination in place, he was ecstatic to take the next step in his football career.

“Being suspended seems like so long ago to me and just like another life,” Posey said. “I’m just really excited just to be where I’m at and just feel very blessed right now.”

Posey is the 17th OSU wide receiver picked in the 20 drafts dating back to 1993, but he is the first since Brian Robiskie (second round, Cleveland Browns) and Brian Hartline (fourth round, Miami Dolphins) in 2009.

Herron Stays In Ohio

When the Cincinnati Bengals picked Dan “Boom” Herron with the 21st pick in the sixth round (191 overall), they hoped they were adding depth to their backfield and special teams. Whether they knew it or not, they might have expanded their fan base.

Herron grew up in northeastern Ohio – where he was a four-star recruit at Warren Harding – as one of a family full of Browns fans, but predicted allegiances would change quickly.

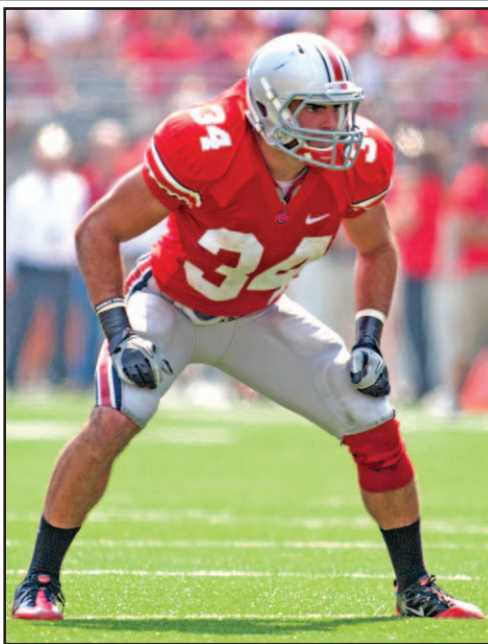
“My family just became Cincinnati fans, I’m sure,” he said. “The first thing my dad (did) was he went upstairs and put an orange shirt on. Everybody’s so happy and very thankful.”

Herron is the 16th Ohio State player selected by the Bengals, who were founded by former Ohio State head coach Paul Brown, but the first in nearly 20 years. The most recent was Jeff Cothran, a full-back who was the first pick of the third round (No. 66 overall) in 1994. Previously that year, the club used the No. 1 overall pick on defensive tackle Dan “Big Daddy” Wilkinson.

Herron’s senior year was shortened to seven games because of two separate NCAA suspensions connected to illicit extra benefits, but he still was voted a team captain by his peers on the squad when the season was complete.

Herron did not blow anyone away with his performance at the NFL combine in February, but Bengals head coach Marvin Lewis and director of football operations Jim Lippincott agreed they admired his overall body of work.

“I think you get into trouble when you



FILE PHOTO

FROM WALK-ON TO DRAFTEE – New England drafted former Ohio State special teams standout Nate Ebner (34) in the sixth round of the 2012 NFL draft.

just buy into a workout,” Lippincott said. “It has to be on tape. That’s what’s really, really, really important – the most important part is the tape work. The workout shows you the athletic skill and the skills that are pertinent to that position.”

Herron finished his career 10th in Ohio State annals with 2,869 yards rushing.

“We get a guy who had a productive career at Ohio State,” Lewis said. “They have a lot of good players up there, and he has done a lot of good things running the football. We are really excited to add him to our stable of guys, and we are ready to get him in here to compete with our guys. He has a chance to make the team by being a runner, playing on special teams, a receiver, and so forth.”

Herron contributed for four years at running back, including an All-Big Ten season in 2010 as a junior, but the Buckeye coaching staff was already talking about his work ethic and team presence even in his first year on campus in Columbus. They nearly burned his redshirt in 2007 for want of help on special teams and in the backfield.

Herron joins a crowded backfield in Cincinnati, where BenJarvis Green-Ellis was signed in the offseason to replace leading rusher Cedric Benson and fourth-year pro Bernard Scott is expected to play an expanded role. Benson is a free agent and not expected to return.

“I’m very capable of playing a lot of special teams and I’m willing to do whatever

the Bengals want me to do,” Herron said. “Whatever I can do to get on the field, that’s what I’ll do.”

Surprise Ending

Not long after Herron came off the board, the New England Patriots stunned many by selecting Nate Ebner with the 27th pick in the sixth round (No. 197 overall).

Ebner played only a handful of defensive snaps during his Ohio State career, but he was a standout special teamer.

“I didn’t want to expect anything and I didn’t want to get overly excited,” said Ebner, who attended Hilliard (Ohio) Davidson High School. “I hoped I would get a chance to get on a team and especially the Patriots. Words can’t describe how happy I am to be a part of this organization. The fact that I got drafted just makes me so happy and my family is happy. I’m just so excited about the opportunity.”

Ebner did not get his start in football until 2009 but did not take long to earn a niche as a special teamer for the Buckeyes. Previously, his primary sport was rugby, a fact that would not come as a surprise to anyone who saw the reckless abandon with which he covered kicks.

Ebner recorded 30 tackles in 36 games with a sack during his OSU career from 2009-11. Those numbers likely didn’t get the attention of pro scouts, but the unofficial 4.47 40-yard dash time and 39-inch vertical jump he posted at Ohio State’s Pro Day on March 9 may have.

“Nate is a guy that is a big, fast safety that has been very productive in the kicking game, a relatively inexperienced player that we think has a lot of good football in front of him,” Patriots head coach Bill Belichick said. “Of course, we have some good connections at Ohio State, people that have worked with him that obviously that played a part in it too, just in terms of his overall development and where we think he can be.”

In another surprise, four-year starting center Michael Brewster – another former five-star prospect in the class of 2008 – was undrafted.

Brewster was projected to be a middle-round pick at worst but had to settle for an opportunity to make the league as a free-agent signee with the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Offensive lineman J.B. Shugarts and linebacker Andrew Sweat both wrote on their personal Twitter pages they had signed as free agents with the Cleveland Browns, but the club had not confirmed the signings as of late April 30.



OHIO STATE

INSIDER

Three Night Games On 2012 Docket

The Big Ten Conference announced the initial slate of prime-time league games for the 2012 football season with three such games to involve Ohio State.

Unquestionably, the highlight for OSU fans will be a home showdown with Nebraska on Oct. 6 that will start at 8 p.m. and be televised on either ABC, ESPN or ESPN2.

The contest will give the Buckeyes an opportunity for revenge for last year's loss in Lincoln in the first Big Ten contest between the traditional powers. Nebraska overcame a 27-6 deficit to take a 34-27 victory in Memorial Stadium.

The 2012 game will be the first between the two schools in Ohio Stadium since the 1950s and the first the two will play in the venerable Horseshoe as conference foes. The Buckeyes prevailed over the visiting Cornhuskers 28-20 to open the 1955 season and beat them in Columbus again the following year by a 34-7 tally.

This time around, it will be the 11th night game in stadium history and the fourth in five seasons. The Buckeyes played at night in Ohio Stadium against Wisconsin in 2011, downing the Badgers by a 33-29 score on a last-minute touchdown pass from Braxton Miller to Devin Smith in one of the most classic affairs in stadium history.

The win snapped a three-game prime-time losing streak in the stadium for the Buckeyes, who lost to Texas in 2005, Penn State in '08 and USC a year later.

Ohio State will also hit the road for two prime-time affairs in October. The first will be an Oct. 13 trip to Bloomington to take



MARCUS HARTMAN

DIFFERENT KIND OF WORKOUT - Senior John Simon and the rest of the Gray team fixed up the Buckeye Grove on April 27 as punishment for losing the spring game.

on Indiana in a game that will be shown on Big Ten Network. The two teams played at night in Memorial Stadium in 2009, with OSU taking an easy 41-10 victory.

Lastly, the Buckeyes will trip to Happy Valley to take on Penn State at 6 p.m. on Oct. 27. That odd game time facilitates a television slot on either ESPN or ESPN2. OSU played at night in State College in both 2005 and '07. They lost the first contest 17-10 but whipped the Nittany Lions 37-17 two years later.

Television assignments for games to be held Sept. 1 (Miami University), Sept. 8 (Central Florida) and Sept. 15 (California) will be announced no later than July 1 with the rest to follow after the beginning of the season.

Spring Game Losers Clean Up Buckeye Grove

Head coach Urban Meyer told the

Buckeyes the loser of the annual spring football game would face some kind of work detail, but they admitted they were not sure what they would be up against until the time came April 27.

That's when it became clear what Christian Bryant's red-zone, fourth-quarter interception of Gray quarterback Kenny Guiton that secured a 20-14 Scarlet victory April 21 really meant.

The reality of the situation set in when the Gray team members found themselves standing in the shadow of Ohio Stadium receiving pitchforks, hoes and spades.

Their task? Fix up the Buckeye Grove, the group of trees south of the stadium that commemorate every former Ohio State football player to earn first-team All-America status.

That meant edging the sidewalk that weaves through the grove, sweeping away debris and spreading new mulch.

A group including Guiton, linebacker Etienne Sabino and safety Orhian Johnson helped transplant shrubs at one end of the grove, something Johnson said he had not done before.

"It's something different," the senior from Florida said. "It's nice because it's not just us. Some of the coaches are out here, too."

Elsewhere, senior tight end Jake Stoneburner worked a rake through some of the old mulch in the middle of the grove. He was in good spirits but admitted to being surprised at the workload.

"At first it wasn't a big deal, but now that we're here it is a big deal," he said with a smile. "We weren't sure what we were going to be doing. I didn't think we'd be mulching and hedging. I thought we'd trim a few trees and get in and out of here. If he (Meyer) keeps this up, the spring game is going to be a lot more intense."

Not many complaints could be heard. In fact, some of the Buckeyes seemed to have fun with the job.

Offensive lineman Andrew Norwell climbed the huge pile of mulch dropped on the sidewalk behind the South Stands of the stadium helping to load wheelbarrows for delivery to those working in the trees. Among those lugging the stuff back and forth was linebacker Ryan Shazier, who said loud enough for strength and conditioning director Mickey Marotti to hear, "Coach, we don't need to go to the weight room anymore. We can just do this and get country strong!"

Buckeyes old and young agreed the project was more satisfying than merely picking up trash or something else not tied to the history of the program.

"It's a little tedious, but we lost," Stoneburner said. "And this place is really nice, so if we can help fix it up that would be really cool."

Bri'onte Dunn, a freshman running back who enrolled in January, admitted not having been through the grove before and said he appreciated the history lesson.

"I did some yard work for my grandma before, so this isn't too bad," Dunn said with a laugh. "This is a good cause to clean up everything for the All-Americans. We lost the game, so we've just got to do what we've got to do."

"This is my first time being out here. I didn't know about the things for the

All-Americans until this year. It's pretty nice. I'm planning on getting me one someday."

Cornerback Surfaces At Illinois State

Former Ohio State cornerback Dominic Clarke – whose scholarship was terminated in January following an arrest for drunk driving – will continue his football career in Division I-AA with Illinois State.

Cardinals coach Brock Spack told the Bloomington (Ill.) Pantagraph he is excited to add an athletic prospect to his secondary.

"We thought we needed a little more depth over there," Spack said. "He's a guy who could play offense, too – receiver or tailback."

Clarke, a Frederick, Md., native, was pulled over Jan. 7 and charged with operating a vehicle under the influence as well as running a stop sign and speeding after officers clocked his vehicle at 35 miles per hour in a 20-mph zone near the intersection of West 12th Avenue and Neil Avenue. Those charges were dropped after he entered a guilty plea to OVI, a first-degree misdemeanor. He received a \$375 fine as well as court costs and two years probation, and his license was suspended.

That was not his first brush with trouble. The 20-year-old pleaded guilty to disorderly conduct in October after he discharged a BB gun on campus outside a restaurant run by the university. No one was injured in that incident, but Clarke was not part of the team for a 17-7 win at Illinois on Oct. 15.

Court records show he paid a \$151 fine in February 2011 after pleading guilty to speeding near the Ohio State football facilities.

"He has to mature a little bit," Spack said. "The guy who recruited him is a very good friend of mine, (former Ohio State assistant coach) Darrell Hazell. Darrell said he's a good kid who made a dumb decision. I'm pretty comfortable he's going to be a good kid for our program."

The one-time four-star recruit played in 12 games last season as a sophomore, recording 12 tackles and three pass break-ups. Clarke started the first two games of the season in place of junior Travis Howard, who was suspended for attending a Cleveland-area charity event and accepting money to cover expenses for the trip.



Dominic Clarke

BSB 2012 Electronic Issue Schedule

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May 8	Nov. 16
May 15	Nov. 23
May 22	Dec. 4

Gee Takes Disputed Reports To Task

Dr. E. Gordon Gee found his name in headlines again after the Ohio State University president accused two prominent national sports publications of practicing their craft poorly.

"Sporting News, Sports Illustrated, a lot of them I don't read," Gee told The Lantern, Ohio State's student newspaper, for a story published April 27. "It's bad journalism. And, so, why buy them?"

The quote came as part of a discussion about a lengthy piece published by Sporting News on April 9 that accused Meyer of leaving the Florida program in shambles after a six-year run that included two national championships.

Meyer was alleged to have created divisions in the team by showing some players preferential treatment, including allowing a star player to go unpunished after an altercation with an assistant coach and covering up suspensions for failed drug tests. He was also accused of being involved in recruiting violations after his arrival at Ohio State, something Meyer vehemently denied in subsequent public comments.

"You know, (OSU) is such a high-profile job, everyone's going to nip at him," Gee said. "Not having fully read the story, but having read portions of it, it is what it

is. I would hope that at our institution we teach a higher quality of journalism.”

The Lantern sought reaction from Sporting News publisher Jeff Price, who said the publication stands by its story written by staffer Matt Hayes.

Price wrote in an email: “The Sporting News has been practicing quality journalism for more than 125 years and during that span, has held itself to the highest standards each and every day. The basic tenets of our craft – sports journalism – are executed thoroughly on a daily basis in our newsroom, especially regarding the importance of source and fact checking.

“We stand firmly behind (Hayes) story we published. In addition, with a highly regarded school of communication under his purview, perhaps President Gee should sit in on a journalism class with members of The Lantern to better understand the definition of ‘bad journalism’ before he flippantly uses the term again.”

Price added that there were no “corrections, clarifications nor retractions” related to the story.

Gee also called into question the quality of an investigative report published by Sports Illustrated last year. In a story published in the June 6 edition, SI senior writer George Dohrmann alleged the illegal benefits scandal involving a Columbus tattoo parlor that put the program in the crosshairs of the NCAA was part of an “eight-year pattern of violations” under the watch of then-head coach Jim Tressel.

Tressel, who admitted before the story was published to withholding information related to potential NCAA violations by at least two players, was forced to resign in the wake of the story.

At the time of the SI story, the NCAA had charged six current players of receiving some kind of extra benefit from Ed Rife, owner of the Fine Line Ink tattoo parlor in Columbus. Dohrmann implicated nine more players, but subsequent NCAA investigations exonerated all but one – linebacker Dorian Bell.

“(Sports Illustrated) came out with this big story about Ohio State, all of which was ultimately proven to be false,” Gee said. “I mean, the guy must have been looking at another school.”

Dohrmann told The Lantern he stood by his reporting.

“(Gee) knows more about bow ties than he does about journalism,” Dohrmann said.

Ohio State Moves Up In Directors' Cup

A strong winter sports season left Ohio



FILE PHOTO

BACK IN AMERICA – Former Ohio State women's basketball guard Brittany Johnson signed a contract with the WNBA's Atlanta Dream on April 26.

State in second place of the Directors' Cup standings released April 26.

With a total of 807.75 points heading into spring competition, Ohio State remained far behind 17-time defending champion Stanford's first-place total of 1,029.75.

The Buckeye fencing team led the way this winter season by earning 100 points with its national championship. The men's basketball team earned 83 points following a third-place finish while wrestling picked up 75 points with a fifth-place finish. That was followed by men's swimming and diving, women's track and field, and women's swimming and diving with 64.5, 55.5 and 54 points, respectively.

Most recently, the Buckeyes posted a pair of seventh-place finishes at the men's and women's NCAA gymnastics championships. Those yielded 32.5 and 68.25 points, respectively.

Ohio State leads a group of five Big Ten conference programs ranked in the top 10 that includes Penn State (3rd), Michigan (5th), Minnesota (6th) and Wisconsin (10th).

Ohio State was in 12th place at the conclusion of the fall sports season.

The first spring Division I standings will be released May 31.

Former Buckeye Joins WNBA Squad

Former Ohio State guard Brittany Johnson signed with the Atlanta Dream of the WNBA on April 26 after a year competing overseas.

Johnson, a 5-11 guard, played in Greece for Panionios and averaged 21.7 points in the 2011-12 season.

The native of Olney, Ill., was a two-year starter and a three-point specialist during her time as a Buckeye. She averaged 10.9 points and shot 45.0 percent (85 for 189) from beyond the arc in 34 games as a senior. Johnson finished her career ranked third on the Buckeyes' all-time list for three-point field goals made with 216 and earned All-Big Ten honorable mention as a junior.

She was the 29th Ohio State women's basketball player to eclipse 1,000 points in her career and finished her career second all-time in three-point shooting percentage (42.8) in school annals behind Cheryl Perozek (45.8 percent, 1988-91).

The Dream has won back-to-back Eastern Conference championships and opens its regular season home schedule May 25 against the New York Liberty.



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B4-30: Red Men's Shorts \$19.95



B11-14: Ladies' Red sports shorts \$21.95



A3-17: Block O Red Visor \$17.50



B1-32: Gray Ohio State Polo \$34.95



B7-172: Gray Athletic O Logo Tee \$12.95



B14-87: Ladies' Go Bucks Tshirt \$19.95



B7-170: Script Ohio State Buckeyes Tee \$12.95



A3-56: Scarlet and Gray Visor \$12.95



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Neal Reopens Recruitment After LSU Offer

Urban Meyer has been quickly filling up his 2013 recruiting class, but one more spot now is available after Wilson (N.C.) James Hunt linebacker Lewis Neal decommitted from Ohio State and reopened his recruitment April 30.

Neal (6-2, 235) had been offered by such programs as Clemson, Maryland, North Carolina, North Carolina State, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vanderbilt and Wake Forest when he committed to OSU on April 23.

RECRUITING OUTLOOK Ari Wasserman

However, when LSU recently offered the three-star linebacker a scholarship, he opted to think twice about his verbal commitment to the Buckeyes.

"I am reopening my recruitment, but I am still considering Ohio State," Neal told Scout.com recruiting analyst Michael Clark. "I will possibly narrow my list of schools down by the end of the school year."

Rated as Scout's No. 28 middle linebacker in the class, Neal now has 11 scholarship offers.

LB Smith Continues To Look Through Offers

Given the variety of talented prospects who still remain on Ohio State's recruiting board, it would be hard to single out any one as the Buckeyes' top remaining target. One player who would have an excellent argument for the honor, however, is Fort Wayne (Ind.) Bishop Luers outside linebacker Jaylon Smith.

The younger brother of Ohio State running back Rod Smith, the five-star prospect is rated by Scout.com as the top outside linebacker in the 2013 class and has an extensive scholarship offer list to show for it.

Despite the fact Smith boasts offers from such schools as Alabama, Florida State, Michigan, Oklahoma and USC, sources close to his recruitment have indicated that Ohio State and Notre Dame are the two programs sticking out for the 6-3, 225-pound prospect.

If that's true, Smith – the No. 16 overall player in the country – isn't ready to confirm that publicly.

"A lot of schools are great schools and I really just have to keep my options open and get out to my visits," Smith told Scout.com national recruiting analyst Bob Lichtenfels. "I can't really say anything about anybody until I visit them."

Smith has most recently visited Indiana, Purdue, Notre Dame and Ohio State, but he's currently in the midst of sorting out future visits. Though the Hoosiers and Boilermakers haven't been as nationally relevant as other programs that have offered him a scholarship, Smith said he's still considering both in-state schools as options.

Staying in Indiana could mean a lot to Smith, but if it does, Notre Dame is the closest prominent program to his home. The Irish, however, have better selling points than just proximity.

"I just like their tradition and how they are trying to get that legacy back up," Smith said. "I know they haven't won a championship since the '80s, so really it's how they are a family and how everything goes there."

Familiarity could play a factor in Smith's recruitment, and Ohio State offers that as well. Though Columbus is not quite as close as Notre Dame, Smith has been to Ohio State enough to see his older brother suit up for the Buckeyes.

Smith has been at Ohio State during the transitional period with the coaching staff – his older brother was originally recruited by and played for Jim Tressel – so he's had a unique view of the recent events with the program.

"I really like what Urban Meyer is doing," Smith said. "He is really bring-



Lewis Neal



JOSH WINSLOW PHOTOS

DIFFERENT PATHS – Ohio State tight end Jeff Heurman (86) won't be joined by younger brother Mike (left, inset), who committed to Notre Dame on April 26.

ing the intensity up. I went to their first spring practice with full pads and it was really intense. I could tell the changes he was trying to make.”

Smith understands Indiana is known as a basketball state and at times has felt pressure to select a program that is within his home state's borders, but he said that's not going to be a factor in his decision.

Hoping to make a decision by the start of his senior football season at the latest, Smith is quite aware of how he'll attack the situation.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to pick and choose which (school) I want to go to,” Smith said, “but really in choosing my school I am going to take football out of the decision and really just figure out which one sets me up best for the future.”

Heuerman Spurns OSU, Elects To Commit To ND

For a while it seemed to be a foregone conclusion that Ohio State would land its second tight end commitment in the 2013 class in the form of Naples (Fla.) Barron Collier prospect Mike Heuerman.

After all, the younger brother of current Buckeyes tight end Jeff Heuerman had been to Columbus multiple times – including the weekend of the spring game – and publicly seemed to be acclimating himself to Ohio State's culture.

The younger Heuerman, however, ended his recruitment on April 26 by committing to Notre Dame, surprising many who were close to the situation who expected he'd be the latest Ohio State pledge. Both Miami (Fla.) and LSU joined Ohio State and Notre Dame in Heuerman's top four before his announcement.

“I really wanted to blaze my own trail,” Heuerman said. “At the end of the day that was very important to me, as well as the way that Notre Dame uses their tight end. I feel like that is the best fit for my skill-set and I can develop into the type of tight end I can envision.”

Heuerman admitted he loved the culture at Ohio State and the players he developed a relationship with, but following in his older brother's footsteps ultimately didn't feel like the right thing for him to do.

“I love Ohio State,” Heuerman said. “I love Columbus, the fans, the players and it is a great school. But I am not

OSU Verbal Commitments

Players in the class of 2013 who have issued verbal commitments to play football at Ohio State.

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Alex Anzalone	OLB	6-3	220	★★★★★	Wyomissing (Pa.) Area
J.T. Barrett	QB	6-2	205	★★★★★	Wichita Falls (Texas) Rider
Marcus Baugh	TE	6-4	230	★★★★★	Riverside (Calif.) John W. North
Joey Bosa	DE	6-5	262	★★★★★	Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas
Cameron Burrows	CB	6-2	195	★★★★★	Trotwood (Ohio) Madison
Ezekiel Elliott	RB	6-0	195	★★★★★	St. Louis (Mo.) John Burroughs
Evan Lisle	OT	6-6	275	★★★★★	Centerville, Ohio
Jalin Marshall	RB	6-1	190	★★★★★	Middletown, Ohio
Billy Price	DT	6-4	265	★★★★★	Austintown (Ohio) Fitch
Tracy Sprinkle	DE	6-4	250	★★★★★	Elyria, Ohio
Jayme Thompson	S	6-2	185	★★★★★	Toledo Central Catholic
Eli Woodard	CB	6-0½	180	★★★★★	Voorhees (N.J.) Eastern

going to a school because that is where my brother goes. We would both be at Michigan if we followed our dad. I had to make my own decision, and Notre Dame was the best place for me.”

A 6-4, 220-pound prospect, Heuerman is rated by Scout as a four-star recruit and is ranked the No. 9 tight end in the 2013 class.

“I felt very comfortable in South Bend and at the university,” Heuerman said. “Now I just want to go in there early, work hard and become the best I can be. All four of my final four teams compete for national titles, and I hope we can win one down the road and get Notre Dame back on top.”

Shaker Heights Lineman Impresses At Cleveland Camp

Ohio State has continued to stock up on defensive linemen since the hiring of Meyer, and there are no signs of him slowing down in trying to accumulate talent along the defensive front.

What makes Shaker Heights lineman Donovan Munger an interesting prospect is that he has been a proficient player on both sides of the line for the Raiders.

Munger (6-3, 290) is considered to project as a defensive tackle at the next level, but his versatility to play both sides of the ball could be the main reason he's been able to accumulate more than 20 scholarship offers.

If the way he performed at the Raw Talent Sports camp in Cleveland on April 28 is any indication of what he's consistently capable of, Munger could be on his way to an array of new offers, too.

“I'm always trying to get better, and there's no point sitting at home while other guys are out working,” Munger told BuckeyeSports.com recruiting ana-

lyst Bill Greene. “I want to cut weight this summer and then build back up for the season. I'm working on my strength and my technique because I've learned that a technician can dominate a game. I'm trying to get our younger players to understand that.”

With Munger having earned scholarship offers from Auburn, Georgia, Illinois, Notre Dame, Ohio State, Penn State, West Virginia and others, it's clear that programs see vast potential for the lineman.

Munger doesn't have a preference for which side of the ball he plays when he reaches the collegiate level.

“I just love playing football and hitting people,” he said. “I just love everything about it. I'm probably better at defensive tackle, and that's where most schools want me, but I don't care, to be honest.”

Munger has taken a handful of visits, including trips to Georgia Tech, Georgia, Louisville, Notre Dame, Ohio State and Cincinnati. Though Munger is still in the process of organizing future trips, he said some places he already has visited have started to stand out.

“I have to say Notre Dame was amazing,” Munger said. “Ohio State was great and I'm familiar with them. Under Coach Meyer, I know he is bringing in the best guys, and that's impressive. I am interested in both Michigan and Michigan State, but neither has offered yet. I might go on the (Raw Talent) bus tour and try to earn those offers, but I'm not sure yet.”

Munger said he's also interested in Arkansas because he's close to Razorbacks assistant Taver Johnson, a former Ohio State coach under Tressel. Though he favors the SEC and Big Ten, Munger said he's still interested in USC and Clemson.

With a lot to sort through before ending his recruitment, Munger at least knows when he'd like to make a final decision.

"I want to do it at midseason after I take my official visits," he said. "It's going to be hard to get my list down to a top five and I don't know how I'm going to do that. I will make my decision based off the visits.

"I have great offers and I know how blessed I am. My decision will be based on the people I meet and how I feel about the environment the school provides. How my family feels will be important, but distance from home won't be a factor at all. It will come down to which school I feel comfortable with."

Sophomore RB Stands Out At Camp, OSU Now Interested

Devine Redding has yet to play a down of varsity football as an upperclassman, but his sophomore season and the performance he put on at Raw Talent Sports camp has him turning into quite the intriguing prospect.

The Mineral Ridge, Ohio, prospect rushed for more than 1,400 yards in eight games in his sophomore season, and the 5-10, 190-pounder flashed his speed in his recent camp performance.

"I had a good season last year, but I know I can do a lot better," Redding stated. "I can break tackles and make quick cuts to gain yards. I need to work on getting my footwork down better and catching the football better, but I love to do the work."

It isn't unusual that Redding hasn't picked up a scholarship offer given how early he is in the process, but his recruitment could be on the verge of starting.

"My coach heard from Ohio State and they want me in their camp," he said. "I'm definitely interested in them and plan on being in camp. Indiana is coming to see me work out (soon). West Virginia and Pittsburgh will also be coming to my school. I'm interested in a lot of schools and will be going to a lot of camps this summer."

Redding understands he has a lot to prove before earning scholarship offers from the programs he hopes to one day play for and that starts by performing well on the field. Though he'll try to impress during camps this summer, his junior season will be pivotal in how much momentum his recruitment picks up.

"Since I'm only a sophomore, these

schools need to see me in person," Redding said. "I like all the Big Ten schools like Ohio State, Michigan, Michigan State and Illinois. I want to go to a college where I can contribute on the field and also get a great education."

Top 2014 QB Earns First Scholarship Offer

When Drew Barker was in Columbus in late April, Meyer told the quarterback that he was one of his top targets in the 2014 class. Barker, however, got his first scholarship offer in late April and it wasn't from Ohio State.

Barker, a 6-4, 205-pound prospect from Hebron (K.Y.) Conner, has heard from plenty of top programs, but in-state Louisville was the first to offer him an opportunity to play Division I college football.

"It's truly a blessing and a dream you have as a kid your whole life (to be offered a scholarship)," Barker said. "Louisville is a great school and I loved it when I visited a couple of weeks ago."

Having garnered interest from top programs such as Ohio State, Penn State, Wisconsin, UCLA and others, Barker could be on the verge of becoming one of the most sought-after prospects in the 2014 class.

As a sophomore, Barker threw for nearly 1,500 yards and had seven touchdowns. He also rushed for more than 1,500 yards and 22 scores. That dual threat is likely why Ohio State is so interested, especially because Meyer compared Barker to former Utah quarterback Alex Smith, who was taken first overall in the 2005 NFL draft.

"I called my dad first and I told him I just got my first offer, (and) he couldn't believe it," Barker said. "It's very surreal for all of my family and everything. Everyone is texting me and my Twitter is blowing up and stuff.

"Ever since I was a little kid, I've been dreaming of playing college football. The day to finally hear you've been extended an offer, it's like, 'Wow, this is for real.'"

Recruiting Notes

- Columbus Walnut Ridge wide receiver Rob Wheelwright committed to Wisconsin on April 29. A four-star prospect, Wheelwright was a target of interest for Ohio State but had yet to earn a Buckeye offer. Wheelwright (6-2, 170) is rated by Scout as the No. 21 wide receiver in the 2013 class. There's no telling if

Ohio State could convince Wheelwright to listen if there are future inquiries.

"As of right now, I won't be taking any more visits, but I am sure I'll be hearing from some other schools," Wheelwright said. "If coaches contact me, I'll still talk to them but as of right now, I am committed to Wisconsin."



Rob Wheelwright
Wisconsin.

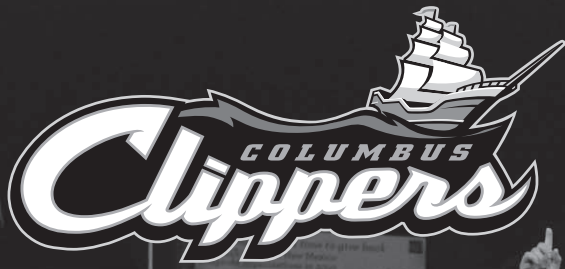
- Westerville (Ohio) Central offensive tackle Nick Richardson has recently picked up offers from Toledo and Illinois despite being only a sophomore. Richardson, who said his favorite player to watch is former Ohio State tackle Mike Adams, has started to hear from programs such as Michigan, Ohio State, Wisconsin, West Virginia and others. The 6-4½, 280-pounder could be one of the top linemen in the 2014 class.

- Louisville (Ky.) Trinity defensive end Jason Hatcher recently released his top five and Ohio State made the cut. Joining the Buckeyes on the 6-3, 230-pound prospect's list are Tennessee, South Carolina, USC and Louisville. Hatcher, a 2013 prospect, will visit all five programs before announcing his decision.

"Football in the Big Ten isn't as competitive as the SEC, but Ohio State is kind of a different story in my opinion," Hatcher said. "I think that coaching staff is so good with Urban Meyer there now and all. He won national championships and he can do it again. It would be great to be a part of that."

- Trotwood (Ohio) Madison could be an emerging pipeline for Ohio State, and 2014 running back Ashton Jackson is an emerging prospect. With offers from Toledo and Illinois already in hand, the 5-10, 182-pound running back plans to attend camps at Tennessee, Illinois, South Carolina and Ohio State. Jackson rushed for 1,000 yards and 17 touchdowns in his sophomore season.

- Despite being committed to North Carolina, Durham (N.C.) Hillside three-star defensive back Korrin Wiggins picked up an offer from Ohio State on April 27. Wiggins (6-1, 190) had 80 tackles, six interceptions, two forced fumbles and a defensive touchdown in his junior season last year.



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(Day of game)	\$15	\$15
RESERVED SEATS	\$10	\$7
GENERAL ADMISSION	\$6	\$3

2012 SCHEDULE

APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
				LOU	LOU	LOU
				7:05	7:05	7:05
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
LOU	IND	IND	IND	IND	@LOU	@LOU
4:05	6:35	6:35	6:35	11:35AM	7:05	6:05
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
@LOU	@LOU	@IND	@IND	@IND	@IND	@TOL
2:05	6:35	7:05	1:05	11:05AM	7:15	6:00
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
@TOL	@TOL	TOL	TOL	PAW	PAW	
2:00	6:30	6:35	11:35AM	7:05	7:05	
29	30	31				
PAW	PAW					
1:05	6:35					

JULY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
TOL	@TOL	@TOL	@TOL	@TOL	IND	IND
6:05	7:00	7:00	7:00	7:00	7:05	7:05
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
			ALL-STAR BREAK BUFFALO, NY	@IND	@IND	@IND
				7:05	7:15	7:05
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
IND	LOU	LOU	LOU	LOU	@LHV	@LHV
1:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	12:05	7:05	6:35
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
@IND	@LHV	@LHV	TOL	TOL	TOL	ROC
1:15	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05
28	29	30	31			
@LHV	ROC	ROC	ROC			
1:15	6:05	7:05	12:05			

MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	4/29	30	1	2	3	4
			GWN	GWN	GWN	@TOL
			6:35	6:35	6:35	7:00
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
@TOL	@SWB	@SWB	@SWB	@SWB	@PAW	@PAW
2:00	7:05	7:05	7:05	1:05	7:05	6:05
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
@PAW	@PAW	SYR	SYR	SYR	SYR	SWB
1:05	12:05	6:35	6:35	6:35	7:05	7:05
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
SWB	SWB	SWB		@SYR	@SYR	@SYR
1:05	6:35	10:35AM		7:00	7:00	7:00
26	27	28	29	30	31	
@SYR	@BUF	@BUF	@BUF	@BUF		
6:30	2:05	7:05	7:05	10:35AM		

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	7/29	30	31	1	2	3
				@NOR	@NOR	@NOR
				7:15	7:15	7:15
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
@NOR	@DUR	@DUR	@DUR	@DUR	IND	IND
6:15	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
IND		DUR	DUR	DUR	DUR	@LOU
6:05		6:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	6:05
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
@LOU	@LOU	@LOU	@LOU	TOL	TOL	@IND
2:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
@IND	@IND	@LOU	@LOU	LOU	LOU	LOU
1:15	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05
2	3	4				
@TOL	@TOL					
6:00	1:00					

JUNE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	5/27	28	29	30	31	1
					@ROC	@ROC
					7:05	7:05
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
@ROC	@ROC	BUF	BUF	BUF	BUF	CHA
1:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
CHA	CHA	CHA		@GWN	@GWN	@GWN
6:05	7:05	12:05		7:05	7:05	7:05
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
@GWN	@CHA	@CHA	@CHA	@CHA	LHV	LHV
2:05	7:15	7:15	12:15	7:15	7:05	7:05
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
LHV	LHV	NOR	NOR	NOR	NOR	TOL
6:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05	7:05

HOME **AWAY**
Game times listed are subject to change

International League Teams & Major League Affiliates

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| WEST DIVISION | SOUTH DIVISION |
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| IND - Indianapolis Indians - Pirates | GWN - Gwinnett Braves - Braves |
| LOU - Louisville Bats - Reds | DUR - Durham Bulls - Rays |
| TOL - Toledo Mud Hens - Tigers | NOR - Norfolk Tides - Orioles |
| NORTH DIVISION | |
| BUF - Buffalo Bisons - Mets | |
| LHV - Lehigh Valley IronPigs - Phillies | |
| PAW - Pawtucket Red Sox - Red Sox | |
| ROC - Rochester Red Wings - Twins | |
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| SYR - Syracuse Chiefs - Nationals | |



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OHIO STATE SPRING FOOTBALL: THE DEFENSIVE LINE

Line Out To Become One Of Nation's Best

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

Even with Darrion Scott on the sidelines this spring, the defensive line is one of the most imposing units on the Ohio State football team.

Scott, a talented defensive end, is missing the spring after undergoing shoulder surgery during the off-season.

He may be out, but the rest of the defensive line has been in — in the offense's backfield, that is — most of this spring.

"I think we're on the right track," said OSU defensive line coach Jim Heacock. "They are coming to work every day. They are practicing hard and coming to work on every down. They like to play football and seem to be enjoying it."

Privately, Heacock has been telling his troops they could be one of the nation's best defensive lines this fall.

"What I'm trying to do is get them to raise their expectation level higher than it's been," he said. "How good can they be if they play up to their potential? It's time to raise the bar a little bit and go to another level."

Junior Will Smith, who returns opposite Scott at end, said the message is getting through.

"I don't think he's trying to put pressure on us," said Smith, who had three of the defense's 12 sacks in the team's April 13 scrimmage. "He's just trying to let us know what he thinks we can do. He thinks we can be the best defensive line in the country. We think that, too, and we have to go out and prove that."

In recent years, OSU has needed to rely on blitzing linebackers and safeties to get adequate pressure on opposing quarterbacks. But if this spring is any indication, the front should be able to handle the pass rush duties.

"That's our plan," said junior Tim Anderson, who returns at defensive tackle. "If we can get good pressure on the quarterback with just our four down linemen, that will free up our linebackers and defensive backs. It should help us as a defense."

Heacock must find a defensive tackle to replace departed starter Mike Collins. But seniors Kenny Peterson, a converted end,

and David Thompson seem equal to that task, meaning the front four could truly be a veteran group.

"This group has a lot of experience, so they should play with some confidence," Heacock said. "We have pretty good depth. That keeps everybody on edge. You can't afford to have a bad day because somebody is always looking over your shoulder."

"We just need to clean up a few things and get better. We need to keep a good attitude and keep working hard."

Last year, the Buckeyes experimented with moving Scott and Peterson inside on passing downs.

Heacock said he plans to utilize the same strategy this year, giving OSU four athletic pass rushers in obvious passing situations.

In theory, on passing situations, the Buckeyes could pull a slower tackle and go with a speedier front that could feature Smith, Scott, Peterson and perhaps sophomore Simon Fraser. But Fraser will miss the final week of spring drills after suffering a knee sprain April 19.

"It will depend if we're in our nickel defense or our base," Heacock said. "We think that will help us create some mismatches if we go with four of our quickest guys on passing downs."

Filling The Tackle Spots

Anderson (6-4, 289) stepped in for early NFL departee Ryan Pickett last fall and went on to earn honorable mention All-Big Ten honors. He ended up second on the team in tackles for loss with nine.

"He's Steady Tim," Heacock said. "I thought at the end of the year he was playing as well as anybody. Tim just brings his lunch pail to work every day. He just brings that toughness and competitiveness. He is a great guy to coach."

Anderson said he leaned on the veteran Collins for advice last year. Now he knows he will have to be a leader.

"It's obviously going to be a little different," Anderson said. "I'm used to having him next to me. I think teams were more concerned about him than me. He was the established starter. I was just a first-year starter, so they double-teamed him more than me."

"But Kenny Peterson and David



STEVE HELWAGEN

HERE'S A TIP — Ohio State defensive line coach Jim Heacock gives a word of advice to lineman Simon Fraser.

Thompson are both pretty good ballplayers. I know they'll do their job. I'm not too worried about it."

Peterson (6-4, 265) is a player who has grown into the tackle spot. He was stymied by a hand injury last season but still enjoyed his best year with 24 tackles, six for losses and three sacks.

"Kenny really could play all four line positions if we need him to," Heacock said. "That is kind of nice. We would like to keep him inside and really put the pressure on the guards and center. With his size and speed, that can create a mismatch."

"For Kenny, this is his senior year and I know he has some things he wants to prove to himself. He is working hard at it."

Peterson enjoys being Mr. Versatility. After Fraser's injury, he repped again at end during the team's April 21 scrimmage.

"Coach Heacock asked me to move around a little bit late last year," Peterson said. "He asked me to play a little inside and I was excited. Wherever they put me, I'll accept that role."

Thompson (6-5, 287) also is in the mix for playing time after working as a reserve last year.

"David has been a big surprise," Heacock said. "He has come on. He is a senior who has overcome a lot of adversity. If he can keep his academics in order, he could be a good player for us."

Another name to watch will be redshirt freshman Marcus Green (6-0, 300), who has turned some heads this spring.

"Marcus is a young pup," the coach said. "He just needs to learn that he has to go all out all the time. He will compete and he shows flashes from time to time."

Manning The Ends

Scott (6-3, 271), a junior, underwent surgery on his right shoulder after the Outback Bowl and, as a precaution, is being held out of spring drills.

But Heacock doesn't think it will hold him back one bit. He tallied 49 tackles and seven sacks a year ago.

"Darrion is a good football player," Heacock said. "We expect him to be back. He underwent that shoulder surgery, so they're holding him out from contact this spring."

Smith (6-4, 250) has seen his star brighten considerably this spring as well. "Will has had a good spring," Heacock

said. "He has taken the challenge to move to that next step and become a better player."

Smith wants to build on a sophomore campaign where he had 47 tackles, seven for losses and four sacks.

"Last year, I knew I had to play," Smith said. "But the main thing is I'll be out there more this year. I'm ready for that and I think Kenny and Darrion are looking forward to that, too."

"The more you play, the better you get. That will help us get in a groove during the game."

Prior to his injury, Fraser (6-6, 250) was getting most of Scott's reps this spring.

"They moved Kenny inside and that left just Will and I to get reps outside," Fraser said. "Plus, with Darrion down with his shoulder injury, there was an opening up there. That gave me a chance to get some reps with the ones."

Fraser, a product of nearby Upper Arlington, Ohio, played in 11 of the 12 games last fall. If Scott recovers completely, Fraser could become a designated pass-rushing specialist this fall.

"Simon is really doing well with his pass rush," Heacock said of Fraser's progress before his injury. "He's still working on his run game to get better there. He has worked hard to improve his strength and that should help him. If he continues to improve, we could use him a lot in pass rush situations."

Fraser said the line is working hard to meet Heacock's expectations.

"The thing Coach Heacock has told us is this is a group with a lot of experience," Fraser said. "Even with the little game experience I got last year, I'll be able to move up from that. We've got a lot of experience. I think the defensive line is going to be pretty good because of that."

Coming This Fall

OSU restocked the defensive line this past February when it signed five high school defensive linemen, all from Ohio. Hopes are high that prep All-American Quinn Pitcock (6-4, 285) will make a sudden impact at tackle.

Likewise, any kind of contribution would be appreciated from ends Mike Kudla (6-3, 235), Joel Penton (6-5, 255), Jay Richardson (6-5, 245) and Tim Schafer (6-5, 250).

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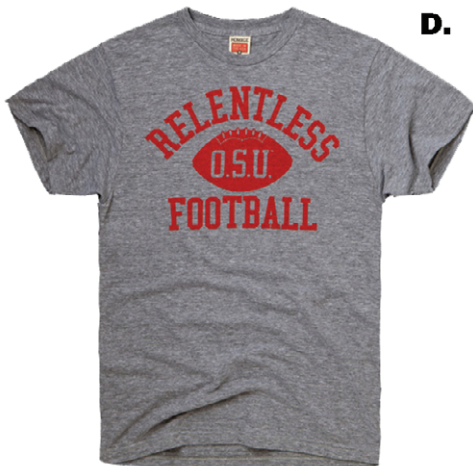
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OHIO STATE SPRING FOOTBALL: THE LINEBACKERS

Linebackers Ahead Of The Mental Curve

By MIKE WACHSMAN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

If you hear a loud voice above the din of popping pads at Ohio State spring football practice, it probably belongs to fiery linebackers coach Mark Snyder.

Working with a group that's almost as green as the Ohio Stadium grass, Snyder has been on his charges from the opening whistle. The experience and know-how that last year's group brought to the table disappeared when Joe Cooper and Courtland Bullard exhausted their eligibility.

It doesn't help matters that stalwart middle man Matt Wilhelm has been on the shelf this spring, dealing with the rehab of an ankle injury.

You'd think that after blowing his top for the 10th time in a day or relentlessly telling his players to wrap up instead of trying to jar teeth loose with a shoulder tackle, Snyder would be frustrated.

You'd be wrong. "They're ahead of where I thought they'd be mentally," Snyder said. "They've been in the system for a year and they're functioning very well. I'm pleased with them. I still have to get on them some, but you expect that with new guys."

Most of OSU's interested linebacker parties have a year in the system to fall back on, and that's helped speed up the tempo.

"It's not learning all over again and that's an advantage," Snyder said. "They went from one level to a new level because they understand things. You have things to refer to now — remember what happened in the Illinois game, remember what Penn State did there. There are reference points and there's video of those kids in the system doing things."

As nothing more than a cheerleader this spring, Wilhelm has had a pretty good glimpse of what the Buckeye linebacker corps brings to the table.

"We have a lot of young guys who don't have a grasp of the system out there, and it's their time right now," Wilhelm said. "That's probably good."

"We've got a competitive group. I'm going to have my work cut out when I get back, and I have to prove I belong out there. The team will be able to gain a lot of depth from what we've done this spring."

Backers Move Forward

Much of Ohio State's spring was spent trying to find the best personnel groupings for certain situations, but



STEVE HELWAGEN

SEE CIE — As he prepares for his senior season, Cie Grant can take comfort in the fact that he will be moving from cornerback to his more familiar position of linebacker.

there also was a good amount of learning and teaching going on.

Snyder was quick to impart words of wisdom after almost every play, and the players seemed to be paying heed.

"These guys listen and pretty much follow what we tell them to do," Snyder said. "You have to have a certain amount of instinct to play linebacker, but you also need to be coachable."

The lead dogs for OSU were Robert Reynolds and Cie Grant outside and Fred Pagac Jr. in the middle.

Reynolds has been in the middle of almost everything, and a shoulder injury suffered during an April 13 scrimmage wasn't enough to keep him down. He was back in business the following Tuesday.

"I'm just trying to make the most of my chance," said Reynolds, who has repped at the wide-side spot vacated by Bullard. "I learned a lot last year and now it's time to get it going."

Grant is moving from cornerback, where he had more downs than ups, back to his more natural linebacker spot. He's been all over the field this spring, chasing down ball carriers from the back side and getting turned loose on blitzes.

"I'm real excited," said Grant, who is working at the boundary position. "I bring sort of a speed into the linebacker

position. I can get into the gaps a lot faster than a lot of guys. I bring a different type of attitude to the linebacker corps. By far I think we're quicker on defense."

Pagac, who started for Wilhelm twice last season, has been picking up the little things that coaches like to see and paying more attention to fundamentals than ever before.

"Freddie's a tough kid," Snyder said. "He's been sticking his nose in there and has a real understanding of what we want to do. He knows the game."

Marco Cooper (boundary) and Pat O'Neill (wide side) also have had their moments as backups outside, each giving cause for optimism heading into the fall.

"Marco and Pat really didn't get much work last year," Snyder said. "They've taken on the challenge of showing us what they have and there have been days when they've both been outstanding. They've also taken some steps backward, but you'll have that with unproven players."

Reggie Arden had a solid scrimmage in the middle April 13 but has done the majority of his work since then at tight end.

With Wilhelm expected back and a host of talented recruits coming in this fall (including prep All-Americans Mike D'Andrea and Bobby Carpenter), Arden may or may not have a place on the Buckeye defense. Walk-on Jason Bond also has been effective when called upon inside.

As for Wilhelm, the senior is confident he can come back strong. Snyder isn't conceding anything, though.

"Matt's handling the injury the right way, but you're always concerned when someone's not playing," Snyder said. "If you aren't playing you aren't getting better and if you aren't getting better you're getting worse. He's going to be rusty when he comes back."

Snyder believes his group is a work in progress, and the first steps are being taken with caution. But he likes what he's seen thus far and feels OSU will have a standout crew when autumn arrives.

"Our goal is to get better every day," Snyder said. "They've been here for a full spring now, and come fall there will be even more to think about and digest. But for right now I'm pretty happy with the way these guys are going at it."

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OHIO STATE SPRING FOOTBALL: THE DEFENSIVE BACKS

Gap Between Safeties And Corners Apparent

By JEFF RAPP

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

There was a time when Mike Doss may have been apprehensive about telling the media anything other than the party line, but times have changed.

Doss is now an All-American safety who put off his NFL dreams to return for his senior season at Ohio State. His goals are sky high — the Thorpe Award, Heisman contention, a Big Ten title and a BCS bid — while his tolerance for mediocrity isn't.

So when Doss was asked to assess the concern at cornerback midway through the spring football season he didn't flinch.

"I don't feel comfortable with that at all right now," he said flatly. "We've got to get going out there. We need some guys to step up and make plays."

Doss' comment appeared to confirm the early scouting report on the Ohio State secondary: nothing to worry about at safety and lots to worry about at corner.

But defensive coordinator Mark Dantonio said the chasm between the two is more like a gap that can be bridged in time.

"I don't share that view with Mike," he said, laughing. "I think we're getting better and developing at that position. Those guys are unproven to this point but when you look at Richard McNutt, even though he's been limited (with a sore ankle) this spring he's getting better."

"Then Dustin (Fox) is helping us, stabilizing things there, and he's learning a lot. Harley (Jacobs) has taken a step forward."

However, not even Dantonio, who gets panicked about as often as Marshall Faulk fumbles, could flower the subject for too long.

"No one else has established themselves there after those guys," he said a breath later. "But I suppose the good news is we're bringing in five defensive backs in the fall."

Man On The Corner

Two of those true freshmen, Tyler Everett and E.J. Underwood, figure to get every chance to work into the two-deep when fall camp breaks in August. Another newcomer, Mike Roberts, enrolled early and is in the ranks, but he has been hindered by injury this spring.

Until those greenhorns emerge, or Bobby Britton or LeAndre Boone shows steady improvement — or Shawn Springs and Antoine Winfield somehow reclaim their eligibility — the Buckeyes will have to look for leadership at corner from an unlikely source: Fox.

He played some nickel back and lots of safety as a true freshman last season, but Fox has the best credentials to play on the corner now that Cie Grant has been moved back to linebacker and Derek Ross is preparing to sign his first NFL contract.

A 6-0, 190-pounder who can run with receivers and smack them when necessary, Fox is a natural DB. He also happens to be one of the fastest guys on the team, the proud owner of sub-4.4 wheels.

"Dustin Fox is a guy we think could play both safety and cornerback," OSU coach Jim Tressel said. "We would like to believe someday we'll have a lot of guys who can play both. That's our goal."

"Dustin has shown he can do both. He needs to do both better but he's a true sophomore who is rising — a lot of talent, a lot of speed, a lot of savvy, a lot of discipline. He's a good player."

Now Fox needs to add a lot of knowledge. He's using the spring to do just that.

"To play corner you really have to get into the role and study it hard," said Fox, who claims Jason Sehorn of the New York Giants as his new hero.

"You try to study other people and you study yourself a lot. I have put in tons of time, tons of extra time in the film room studying and critiquing myself with Coach (Mel) Tucker and just trying to get better."

McNutt continues to be slowed by his ankle and challenged by his stature (5-10, 178) but he has had his moments in practice against OSU's receivers, even the lanky ones.

"He has great technique and he's very competitive," said Tucker, who coaches the secondary. "I think he'll give us some playing time at corner."

Also a junior, Britton (5-11, 194) has been unable to seize an opportunity despite his credentials as a Florida prep standout. Roberts (5-11, 175) also has not been able to move up the depth chart despite his early arrival in Columbus. He rolled an ankle early in camp and hasn't participated in many drills.

Jacobs (6-1, 197) and Boone (6-1, 191) have respectable size and speed but are still learning the ropes. A redshirt sophomore, Jacobs appears willing to put in the work to get better, but he and Britton need to make a mark soon.

Tressel called it a "huge spring" for those two, as did Tucker.

"We don't have a talent like Antoine Winfield or like Ahmed (Plummer), when he was experienced," Tucker said. "But I think through the discipline and the progress that those guys make I think they'll do a good job for us. But we're going to have to make sure we do what they do best."

But are the coaches concerned there is no shutdown corner, which has been a recent staple of the OSU defense?

"I wouldn't say I'm concerned about it," said Tucker, who is in his second year as coach of the defensive backs. "I kind of feel good about where we are right now with the guys that we have. I feel real good about the way they're working. And they are a lot more disciplined right now than they were in the fall as a unit, and I think that's because I'm doing a little bit better job of coaching them."

"I think they understand a little bit more of what's expected of them, too. Now they're really responding to the teaching, and I think there's a little bit more trust there, player-to-coach and coach-to-player."

Safety In Numbers

The easiest defender to trust, of course, is Doss, a 5-11, 204-pound wrecking ball. Doss has logged 224 career tackles and figures to get a bundle more in his quest to be just the seventh three-time All-American in OSU annals.

He's showing his intentions every day in practice while assuming more of a leadership role.

"It's definitely a lot of fun out there just being competitive again and putting the pads on, going against the receivers and being in the huddle with all your Buckeyes out there," he said.

At the same time, the spring is regarded as sort of a necessary evil for an established talent like Doss.

"It's the next step," he said. "It's all preliminary right now. All the players look forward to the season and we know we have



STEVE HELWAGEN

GATHER 'ROUND — Mike Doss (2), Rob Harley (4) and Dustin Fox (37) are a captive audience for OSU defensive backs coach Mel Tucker.

to take this step to get to the season. We're here working hard on our technique and all the little things so we can be the best we can be as players."

Doss returns to strong safety while fellow senior Donnie Nickey (6-3, 203) returns to the free spot. He came in with 34 starts and 191 tackles in his career but said the safeties are boning up like everyone else.

"I wouldn't say we're ahead," he said. "We're having good battles in seven-on-seven. We're getting after the receivers a little."

Joining the fray at safety are backups Will Allen (6-1, 190) and Thomas Matthews (6-0, 206), who certainly look capable of earning playing time themselves.

"We think with Mike Doss and Donnie Nickey we have the best safety combination in the country," Tressel said. "But we have some very capable guys backing them up as well with Will Allen and Thomas Matthews."

Allen came on during parts of last season as a sophomore. He figures to play often, especially if Fox stays at corner.

"His challenge is that he knows we play a lot of nickel and dime, and he's pretty much fighting for that role to be that fifth defensive back to go into the game," Tucker said. "He's also in the position to be the next safety coming into the game if Mike or Donnie needed to come out for any reason. He's trying to solidify that."

"He's quick to the football and he knows what to do on the field. He's not afraid to come up and try to be physical. And he's productive when he's in there. That's what you need."

Tucker also said Matthews, the listed backup to Doss at strong safety, is providing competition.

"When we got those extra practices in the bowl season we gave him more reps and then he started to come around," Tucker said of Matthews, a redshirt sophomore from Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

"I think through watching Mike and Donnie and some of those other guys, he was able to figure out what he was supposed to do. He's carried that over to the spring and I've been impressed with him so far."

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41 Conference Players Picked In NFL Draft

The NFL draft, staged April 26-28 in New York City, provided more evidence of two truths that have become increasingly apparent over the past few seasons.

First, the SEC is the dominant conference in college football. Second, the Big Ten has just as good a claim as anyone that it could be the SEC's closest competitor.

The Big Ten finished the seven rounds of the draft, 254 picks in all, with 41 players having been selected. That was good for second in all of college football behind the SEC, which had 42.

BIG TEN NOTES

Jeff Svoboda

The gap is a little more evident when it comes to first-round picks, though. Nine first-round picks, including eight of the first 18, played in the SEC a year ago, while four Big Ten players went in the first round.

The first league player off the board was Riley Reiff, an Iowa offensive tackle who went 23rd overall to the Detroit Lions. His pick matched that of Minnesota's John Williams, who went 23rd to Baltimore in 1968 and was previously alone as the lowest-ever top Big Ten choice in the NFL draft.

It marked the third straight year Iowa had a player taken in the first round after tackle Bryan Bulaga went to Green Bay in 2010 and defensive end Adrian Clayborn was tabbed by Tampa Bay a year ago.

"He's smart, good athlete, he's big – that goes a long ways," Lions head coach Jim Schwartz said. "He's not a mismatch as a run blocker or pass protector. We liked what we saw. We were fortunate to get him where we did."

Reiff was quickly followed off the board by Illinois defensive end Whitney Mercilus, who was chosen 26th by Houston; Wisconsin offensive lineman Kevin Zeitler, who went 27th to Cincinnati; and Illinois wideout A.J. Jenkins, whom San Francisco took 30th overall.

The selections of Mercilus and Jenkins marked the fourth season out of five that Illinois had a player taken in the first

round. The next two Big Ten players off the board were Illini as well, as offensive lineman Jeff Allen was the first conference player to go in the second round when he was taken by Kansas City.

He was followed in the round by Illinois safety Tavon Wilson, a New England Patriots draftee; Michigan State defensive tackle Jerel Worthy, who was chosen by Green Bay; Penn State defensive tackle Devon Still, who went to Cincinnati; Wisconsin center Peter Konz, who was picked by Atlanta; Ohio State offensive tackle Mike Adams, who went to Pittsburgh; and Nebraska's Lavonte David, a linebacker chosen by Tampa Bay.

Houston took Ohio State wideout DeVier Posey in the third round, while Seattle tabbed Wisconsin quarterback Russell Wilson and Tennessee snagged Michigan defensive tackle Mike Martin.

Two Michigan State players opened the fourth round when quarterback Kirk Cousins was picked by Washington and wideout Keshawn Martin was tabbed by Houston. New Orleans then chose Wisconsin wideout Nick Toon, Houston selected Nebraska defensive tackle Jared Crick and Green Bay drafted Iowa defensive lineman Mike Daniels.

Iowa guard Adam Gettis was chosen in the fifth round by Washington, followed by Penn State offensive lineman Johnnie Troutman to San Diego, Purdue O-lineman Dennis Kelly to Philadelphia, Iowa corner Shaun Prater to Cincinnati, Wisconsin fullback Bradie Ewing to Atlanta and Penn State defensive end Jack Crawford to Oakland.

Sixth-round picks included MSU safety Trenton Robinson (San Francisco), MSU wideout B.J. Cunningham (Miami), OSU running back Boom Herron (Cincinnati), Iowa receiver Marvin McNutt (Philadelphia), Purdue offensive lineman Nick Mondek (Houston), OSU defensive back Nate Ebner (New England) and Wisconsin punter Brad Nortman (Carolina).

Nine players went in the last round: Iowa corner Jordan Bernstine (Washington), Nebraska corner Alfonzo Dennard (New England), Michigan center David Molk (San Diego), PSU linebacker Nathan

Stupar (Oakland), Northwestern tight end Drake Dunsmore (Tampa Bay), Nebraska offensive lineman Marcel Jones (New Orleans), Northwestern receiver Jeremy Ebert (New England), Michigan wideout Junior Hemingway (Kansas City) and MSU running back Edwin Baker (San Diego).

Neither Indiana nor Minnesota had a player drafted.

Heart Issue Felled Tinsley

Former Minnesota linebacker Gary Tinsley had hoped to be one of those Big Ten players taken in the NFL draft, but he passed away suddenly in his sleep April 6.

One day before the draft began, the Hennepin County medical examiner's office released the cause of death, noting its autopsy found Tinsley, 22, died of an enlarged heart. He passed away naturally and not because of foul play.

The university plans to award Tinsley his degree posthumously in May. He was a starter each of the last two seasons, finishing second on the team in tackles in 2011 with 87 tackles.

Playoff Proposals Proffered

With the annual BCS meetings having concluded during the last week in April, a few things are becoming clear about the college football postseason.

First, a four-team playoff starting in 2014 seems all but assured, as BCS spokesman Bill Hancock told reporters at the conclusion that conference commissioners would take a handful of plans featuring a four-team playoff back to their respective schools for discussion.

Another thing assured is that a plan favored by the Big Ten and Pac-12 – one in which the sanctity of the Rose Bowl would be somewhat secured – is off the table. That plan would have kept any Big Ten or Pac-10 team that finishes the season in the top four of the rankings in the Rose Bowl, which would have become a de facto third semifinal, after which the top two teams in the rankings would have made a newly created title game. It was not among the plans commissioners will take back to their universities.

The idea of on-campus sites for the four-team playoff also seems to have been all but discarded, but there still is the potential for some games to be played in



Riley Reiff

the Midwest. Representatives from Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Ford Field in Detroit and Edward Jones Dome in St. Louis confirmed to ESPN.com that they would consider bidding on potential play-off games should the system allow it.

Spring Games Conclude

With the two Big Ten title game combatants from a year ago, Michigan State and Wisconsin, staging their spring games April 28, spring football has come to a conclusion across the league for 2012.

The defending champion Badgers practiced in front of 10,479 fans in Camp Randall Stadium, with the Cardinal squad downing the White by a 21-10 final. Cardinal boasted both the starting offense and defensive units. With top backs Montee Ball (precaution) and James White (bruised knee) out, redshirt freshman Melvin Gordon ran 30 times for 159 yards and a touchdown for the Cardinal while Joel Stave threw a 7-yard touchdown pass to Chase Hammond. The rest of the points in the game came during rapid-fire field goal sessions, in which made tries were worth two for White and one for Cardinal.

Michigan State finished its 15 practices with a game in Spartan Stadium that the White squad won, 14-2, in front of 21,000. Playing for both teams, quarterback Connor Cook completed 20 of 45 passes for 294 yards and a 3-yard touchdown pass to Andre Sims Jr. Nick Hill also had a 32-yard touchdown run for the White squad. Hill was brought down in the end zone by William Gholston for the Green's only points. Marcus Rush of White led that team's defensive attack with 2½ sacks.

U-M Band Gets Go-Ahead

Just days after the Michigan football band was informed that it would not be traveling to the team's opening game this season in Dallas against Alabama, the school reversed course and informed the band April 24 that it would be going after all.

In an email obtained by The Detroit News, athletic director David Brandon told the band that "as a result of the work we have done to reduce costs, the added support of some helpful donors to athletics, and including the investment that athletics was prepared to make when this was initially planned to be a 'bus tour to Dallas,' I am pleased to advise you that we are now able to return to our original plan of taking our spirit groups to Dallas to perform at this game."

The band originally expected to travel to Texas on a bus tour during which it would raise money by playing shows for fans across the state.

However, Brandon informed members that the high cost of the trip, expected to be around \$400,000, would preclude it from happening. When that news leaked, it produced significant complaints from the Michigan fan base.

"This is an unusual set of circumstances, but it's an unusual football game, and that's why I think people have a different view of this game than most away games," Brandon said.

Comments Raise Eyebrows

Nebraska running backs coach Ron Brown hasn't hid his Christian faith since being hired, but recent comments against homosexuality have landed him in hot water.

Brown attended an Omaha City Council meeting in March and testified against an anti-discrimination ordinance that would extend protections to gay and transgender people, saying the Bible does not condone homosexuality and that council members would face "great accountability for the decision you are making."

He went on to say, "The question I have for you all is, like Pontius Pilate, what are you going to do with Jesus? Ultimately, if you don't have a relationship with him, and you don't really have a Bible-believing mentality, really, anything goes. At the end of the day it matters what God thinks most."

That story created some criticism, with Lincoln board of education member Barbara Baier writing to the school requesting Brown's dismissal. To this point, though, Nebraska has not budged, as school chancellor Harvey Perlman wrote a letter to the editor of the Lincoln Journal Star explaining the opinion of Brown does not represent the university but that the school defends his right to participate in public dialogue.

Neither head coach Bo Pelini nor athletic director Tom Osborne has spoken extensively on the subject, with Pelini only backing up Brown's credentials as a football coach. Brown – who heads a Christian ministry and hosts a Christian radio show – is sticking to his guns, as well, telling The Associated Press he has no plans to change his views or stop speaking his mind.

"To be fired for my faith would be a greater honor than to be fired because we didn't

win enough games," Brown said. "I haven't lost any sleep over it. I realize at some point, we live in a politically correct enough culture where that very well could happen."

Minnesota Hires AD

With Joel Maturi retiring at the end of the school year, Minnesota was in the market for a new athletic director.

It found one in late April, as the school has tabbed Virginia Commonwealth AD Norwood Teague as its new mentor.

Teague, who will begin his duties at Minnesota on July 1, oversaw a VCU athletic department in which the crown jewel, the basketball program, has shone in recent years. The Rams made the Final Four in 2011 and won another NCAA Tournament game this March, and the program has a brand-new practice facility and has been able to keep coach Shaka Smart.

Teague will be tasked with improving Minnesota's major programs. The football team has made just one bowl appearance in the last five years, while neither basketball program made NCAA tournament play this past season.

"I have detected a burning desire from Gopher fans for improvement in our athletic department and to operate and to win at a higher level," Teague said.

Teague also has experience at Virginia, Arizona State and North Carolina in his career.

"I know Norwood gets it," football coach Jerry Kill said. "That's the best compliment you can give anyone at this level. He understands college athletics and what it's going to take to be successful."

Big Ten Note-worthy

- The Minnesota legislature voted in late April to approve the sale of beer at University of Minnesota football games, with Gov. Mark Dayton expected to sign the deal. Alcohol has been banned at the stadium because lawmakers objected to the school's idea to allow drinking only in the stadium's suite area, but the beverages will be served in special tents in the stadium until halftime.

- The University of Iowa has received the approval to go ahead on construction of a \$36.6 million football operations facility. The project, approved April 26 by the state board of regents, would be phase two of a project that included a new indoor practice facility. The new build will include strength and conditioning areas, locker rooms, coaches' offices and meeting rooms in a 75,000 square foot area.

Geuy Took Long Trek To Become OSU Pitcher

By Jeff Svoboda

Paul Geuy was on his way to an organic chemistry class when his life changed forever.

Walking across The Oval on Ohio State's campus in the fall of 2009, Geuy answered his ringing phone to find then-OSU baseball coach Bob Todd on the line. One day after telling Geuy he hadn't made the team as a walk-on, Todd was calling back with a different message.

"He was like, 'Coach Todd here,'" Geuy recalled. "I was like, 'Oh yeah?' He said, 'Well, I did some thinking last night and I'd like you to come back and play with us, get a few more looks in and whatnot. Can you be here around 2:30?'"

"I had O-chem, but I was like, 'Yeah!' I went there, practiced every day and ended up dropping O-chem. I was ecstatic. From that day on, it's just been kind of work in progress."

The key word there is "work," which is something Geuy (pronounced "GUY") had done before becoming a Buckeye and has continued ever since. His journey has taken him from Ohio State's Lima campus to the grounds crew at Bill Davis Stadium to, now, a key member of the Ohio State pitching staff.

The former walk-on is sixth on the Buckeyes, who have a 24-20 record through April 29, in innings pitched in his senior season, having worked his way from a mop-up guy with a marginal fastball to a player seeing increasingly important innings in his final campaign.

"It's been a dream," he said. "It's awesome. You can't describe it any other way."

Head coach Greg Beals is pleased to see what has become of the, well, guy who everyone said wouldn't make it but has.

"The thing with Paul is Paul is grateful for the opportunity that he has here to represent Ohio State University," the second-year coach and Ohio native said. "Not that all of our guys aren't, but Paul exudes it at a level beyond where most of our guys do. His leadership is great. Paul Geuy will do anything the team needs."

Geuy dreamed of playing baseball at Ohio State growing up in Bellefontaine, Ohio, where he was a three-year starter and All-Central Buckeye Conference performer at Benjamin Logan High School.

But college scholarships weren't flying in the door, so Geuy continued his baseball



OSU MEDIA RELATIONS

MAKING THE MOST OF HIS OPPORTUNITY – Former walk-on Paul Geuy (34) has become a key member of Ohio State's pitching staff.

career at OSU-Lima. In his lone season there in 2008, he played third base and pitched, hitting .273 and posting a 2.84 ERA on the way to being named an all-conference player.

From there, Geuy transferred to Ohio State and attempted to make the team in 2008 as a third baseman but was turned away. He could have called it quits at that point – both his coach at OSU-Lima and his stepdad told him he probably wouldn't make it – but Geuy soldiered on, hooking up with the OSU club team as a pitcher.

"I got third in the nation in saves that year, and I was like, 'Well, let's try pitching,'" he said. "So I came out here the following year and walked on as a pitcher."

To get ready, he took a job at Bill Davis Stadium as a member of the grounds crew. Each day during the summer he mowed the grass, and he took on other tasks such as fixing the mound and painting the outfield wall. In his downtime, Geuy set up a net in the outfield and worked on strengthening his arm, throwing long toss from one side of the field to the other.

"I was dedicated," he said. "I wasn't letting anything stop me. The best thing about it, though, is everybody told me there was no chance I was going D-I."

Geuy did end up getting that last laugh. He tried out in the fall of 2009 with nearly 40 other players and impressed Todd enough that the coach chose to keep him around after thinking it over for a night.

Geuy didn't pitch that first year under Todd, who chose to retire at the conclusion of the season. When Beals and his staff came in, they decided to continue giving Geuy a roster spot despite the fact he wasn't exactly throwing gas when the staff arrived.

"I have to give credit to Coach Todd for giving me the opportunity to be here and the new coaches for keeping me," Geuy said. "I could have easily been tossed away. (I was throwing) 82 to 83. What's that in D-I? I'm really thankful for them keeping me around and giving me an opportunity. It's been a great ride."

He finally made his debut a season ago, retiring the only batter he faced Feb. 26 against Western Michigan. He finished the year with five appearances, posting a 7.71 ERA in 9½ innings.

This year, with his velocity climbing into the upper 80s, Geuy has seen his role increase. He was just a mop-up player at the start of the season, being brought in when the game was out of hand, but as his effectiveness has improved, he's been trusted in more key situations.

For example, he started the April 17 game against Xavier and was brought into a tight game April 25 against Bowling Green to pitch a scoreless inning in which he struck out two batters. In his last six outings through that Bowling Green game, including two appearances against Big Ten foes, Geuy has posted a 4.26 ERA while

earning his first career win with a scoreless inning March 27 vs. Eastern Michigan.

Overall, he is 1-1 this year with an 8.28 ERA, but he's started to earn the trust of the staff.

"Paul is one of the guys in the bullpen," Beals said. "Paul has learned how to pitch. He's learned how to compete. When we first got here, he didn't have a whole lot of experience. He's had a couple of good summers where he's gotten some experience, and he's proved to his teammates and the coaching staff that he can compete at this level."

The coach said Geuy boasts a fastball with natural cutting action, while the pitcher credits his improved curveball and splitter for his effectiveness. In addition, he was given some scholarship money before the season, which is helping him get through school as he hopes to pursue a career in dentistry.

"When they first told me about it, I just drew a blank," Geuy said. "I was speechless. That was awesome because I'm already paying for college myself. I don't get any help from family or anything, so that was a great day for sure. When I told Mom, she teared up – that kind of thing. It was awesome."

"It doesn't change what I do, how I compete. It's awesome that I get that, but I still give everything I have every day. It doesn't mean any less or any more."

It's that attitude that has made Geuy one of the more inspiring guys on the Buckeye squad.

"He would do anything for this team," senior reliever Andrew Armstrong said. "He's always up and happy. He loves this team and he would pretty much do anything for it."

Walkoff Loss Hurts Chances

When Ohio State took a 7-5 lead in the top of the 10th inning of the last game of a three-game set April 27-29 at Penn State, it looked as though the Buckeyes would escape Happy Valley with a series win and a good outlook on qualifying for the Big Ten tournament.

All that changed when Sean Deegan's three-run homer flew over the wall at Medlar Field at Lubrano Park in the bottom half of the inning, a bomb that gave Penn State a stunning 8-7 victory and damaged OSU's postseason chances.

The Buckeyes dropped to eighth place at 8-10 in the Big Ten with their fifth series loss in six tries, a full 1½ games back of the fourth-place tie between 8-7 Nebraska,

Michigan State, Illinois and Penn State. Only the top six make the league tournament, set for May 23-27 in Columbus' Huntington Park.

Despite that, the weekend got off to a good start for the Buckeyes, as the team rode Jaron Long's outstanding pitching performance on the way to a 4-1 win – the team's third victory in a row – in the series opener.

Long threw eight innings of six-hit, one-run ball, improving to 4-2 on the season. He also struck out five and walked only one while dropping his season ERA to 1.98.

"He's our guy," Beals said. "He's proven that. He's earned the respect and the confidence of this team."

The Buckeyes clinched the win with three runs in the top of the eighth. Third baseman Brad Hallberg broke a 1-1 tie in that frame with an RBI single scoring first baseman Josh Dezse before right fielder David Corna posted his second run-scoring walk of the game. The third run came home when shortstop Kirby Pellant also walked with the bases loaded.

Dezse came in to pitch a perfect ninth while earning his fourth save of the season. Ohio State finished with only four hits on the day, two by Hallberg.

Penn State captured the middle game by a 5-4 final. Designated hitter Mike Carroll and Hallberg each had two hits, but Penn State scored twice in the eighth inning to come away with the victory.

Ohio State thought it might have the lead for good in the top of the eighth when it took a 4-3 lead on an RBI single by Corna and an RBI groundout by catcher Greg Solomon, but the Nittany Lions got the game-winning runs in the bottom of the frame off David Fathalikhani (1-1) and Armstrong.

Fathalikhani was charged with both runs when he hit JJ White with a pitch and walked JC Coban, and pinch runner Taylor Skerpon (on for White) scored on a wild pitch by Armstrong and Coban scored on a balk.

Penn State captured the third game and the series with the 8-7 walkoff victory.

Pellant had his third RBI in as many days in the second and second baseman Ryan Cypret walked home a run, but Penn State (22-22) scored two in the first and three more in the third off OSU starter John Kuchno to take a 5-2 lead.

Kuchno and reliever Brett McKinney kept the Nittany Lions' attack in check the rest of the way until Ohio State tied the game in the eighth. Center fielder

Tim Wetzel walked home pinch runner Joey Ciamacco, who was on for Brad Hutton after the latter led off the inning with a double. Later, Cypret brought home Pellant with a fielder's choice and Dezse had an infield single to score Solomon.

The Buckeyes took a 7-5 lead in the top of the 10th inning thanks to a hit, an error, a wild pitch and three walks. Third baseman Ryan Leffel walked to score Wetzel, and a two-out error by Penn State third baseman Joey DeBernardis on a grounder off the bat of Hallberg allowed Cypret to score.

But it wasn't enough.

Dezse got the first two outs of the 10th with little trouble, but he walked Coban and Elliott Searer before Deegan blasted a 1-0 pitch over the wall in right field to drop the OSU closer to 1-2.

Ohio State fell to 2-3 in extra innings this season with the loss.

Buckeyes Top BG

Ohio State got back in the midweek win column April 25 with an 8-4 victory against Bowling Green (16-24) at Bill Davis Stadium.

Hallberg led the attack with three hits, two RBI and two runs while Dezse, Carroll and left fielder Patrick Porter each had two hits.

"It was good to see the offense get things going," Beals said. "We got multiple hits from Dezse, Carroll, Hallberg and Porter, so you get the meat of the lineup all getting multiple hits, you're going to score some runs."

The game was tied at 3 in the fifth when Carroll singled and later scored on a wild pitch. Ohio State pulled away with three in the sixth with RBI going to freshman catcher Aaron Gretz, Carroll and Hallberg.

Freshman Trace Dempsey got the win to improve to 1-1 despite giving up three BG runs in the fifth.

Game Canceled

Ohio State's scheduled May 1 game at Bill Davis Stadium with Youngstown State was canceled on April 25. The game will not be rescheduled, as Ohio State was on pace to top the maximum games limit and YSU had only four wins at the time of the cancellation. Fans with tickets can exchange them to earn entry to a future game either at the Schottenstein Center ticket office or at the stadium's main gate on game day.

Men's Tennis Upset In Big Ten Tourney Final

The No. 3 Ohio State men's tennis team was upset by a 4-3 score by No. 24 Illinois in the Big Ten tournament championship match April 29 in Evanston, allowing the Fighting Illini to snap the Buckeyes' 92-match winning streak against Big Ten foes and ending OSU's six-year run of league titles.

The match between the tense rivals came down to the end. Ohio State won the doubles point, highlighted by victories by the No. 31 duo of Devin McCarthy and Ille Van Engelen as well as Connor Smith and Peter Kobelt.

Kobelt and No. 11 Chase Buchanan won in singles for Ohio State, with the latter downing No. 8 Dennis Nevolo, 6-2, 6-2, but Illinois notched upsets of No. 115 Van Engelen, No. 85 McCarthy and No. 105 Smith.

The match came down to No. 2 singles, where No. 41 Roy Kalmanovich won the last three games to upset No. 6 Blaz Rola and hand third-seeded Illinois the title.

The rivals met in the final for the eighth time in nine years. Illinois had been the last team to defeat OSU, downing the Buckeyes in the 2005 tournament final.

Ohio State opened the Big Ten tournament with a 4-0 shutout of ninth-seeded Nebraska in the quarterfinals April 27. The No. 1-ranked pairing of Buchanan and Rola were dominating as OSU took the doubles point, then Van Engelen, McCarthy and Hunter Callahan won in singles.

The story was much the same a day later as Ohio State downed fifth-seeded Indiana by a 4-1 score. The Hoosiers won the doubles point before straight-sets singles wins from Buchanan, Rola, Kobelt and Smith.

Before the event began, Buchanan, Rola and Kobelt were named first-team All-Big Ten choices while McCarthy and Van Engelen made the second team and Ty Tucker was named the league's top coach. Buchanan was undefeated during the regular season in league singles play while Kobelt was 10-0 in doubles and Rola was 8-2 in singles.

Women's Golf Takes Third At Big Ten Competition

The No. 19 Ohio State women's golf team was tied for first at the Big Ten championships through the first of three rounds, but charges by No. 23 Michigan State and No. 33 Purdue doomed the Buckeyes to a third-place finish at the April 27-29 event.

The competition was staged at the par-72 Donald Ross Golf Course at French Lick Resort in French Lick, Ind. Michigan State won with a score of 21-over 885, Purdue was 10 shots back to take second and Ohio State shot 34-over 898.

Fresh off her win at the Lady Buckeye Invitational a week-end earlier, Ohio State's Rachel Rohanna shot 2-over 218 to tie for third, two shots behind Big Ten champion Laura Gonzalez of Purdue. Rohanna shot rounds of 74, 1-under 71 and 73.

Three Buckeyes tied for 20th with scores of 13-over 229—Susana Benavides, Jan Chanpalangsri and Claudia Lim. Amy Meier was one shot behind to tie for 25th.



Rachel Rohanna

Big Win Ends Regular Season For Men's Lacrosse

After a midseason blip, the Ohio State men's lacrosse team ended the regular season on a high note April 28 with an 8-3 win at No. 13 Fairfield. The victory was OSU's fourth in a row and allowed the Buckeyes to finish ECAC Lacrosse League play at 5-1 and in second place.

In that four-game span, Ohio State beat opponents by an average score of 11.0-6.3, showcasing the defense that has been strong all season and an offense that has started to put things together.

"We knew going into the season the defense was going to be our backbone," midfielder Brock Sorensen said. "We build off of our defense and we're starting to pick it up on offense, which is exciting. We want to win the ECAC championship and go on to the NCAA championship."

The Buckeyes rattled off eight straight goals after falling into a 2-0 hole. Logan Schuss entered the game fourth in the nation in goals per game but was kept off the board by the Stags, but the junior had two assists and OSU got single tallies from Dominique Alexander, Reegan Comeault, Jesse King, Tyler Frederick, Turner Evans, Adam Trombley, Joe Meurer and Sorensen. Goalie Greg Dutton made 11 saves.

OSU and third-seeded Fairfield will meet again in a league semifinal May 3 in Denver.

Rowers Compete At Home Regatta

The Ohio State rowing squad's First

Varsity Eight lost its first race of the season, but the No. 4 Buckeyes still won 10 of 16 races over two sessions while hosting No. 2 Virginia, No. 3 Michigan, No. 14 Harvard and 19th-ranked Clemson on April 28 at Griggs Reservoir on the Scioto River.

The First Varsity Eight of Ellen Heister, Claudia Herpertz, Ilse Paulis, Claire-Louise Bode, Kate Sweeney, Emily Walsh, Ulrike Denker, Allison Elber and coxswain Amanda Poll finished the morning session in 6:40.63 to best both Harvard and Clemson. In the afternoon session, OSU's time of 6:25.64 was six seconds behind Virginia.

Ohio State's Second Varsity Eight won each of its races on the day. Katie Beletskaya, Samantha Fowle, Ashley Bauer, Meghan Birkbeck, Claudia Schiwiy, Eelkje Miedema, Cori Meinert, Nadine Seehaus and coxswain Victoria Lazur crossed the line in 6:49.20 to beat Harvard and Clemson then finished off the Cavaliers in the afternoon with a time of 6:29.94 to post a nine-second win.

The First Varsity Four beat the Crimson and Tigers in the morning with a time of 7:38.47, but its time of 7:11.41 in the afternoon lost to UVA by 0.21 seconds. The 2V4 beat Clemson in the morning with a time of 7:48.81 and bested Virginia in the afternoon at 7:18.10.

Women's Track And Field Shines At Penn Relays

Competing in one of the top events on the track and field schedule, the No. 22 Ohio State women's team performed well at the Penn Relays from April 26-28.

In the first running event of the 118th annual meet, Nyjah Cousar took third in a deep 400-meter dash field with a time of 58.64.

In throwing events, Norianna Brown and Carly Pendleton posted third-place finishes on the opening day. Brown set a personal record with a distance of 15.84 meters in the shot put, while Pendleton gained third in the discus with a toss of 16.44 meters.

On day two, Kelcey McKinney earned a silver medal in the triple jump with a distance of 12.32 meters.

Ohio State also had a number of relays perform well. The 4x100 team of Christienne Linton, Christina Manning, Aisha Cavin and

Chesna Sykes placed fourth with a time of 44.70 seconds while the 4x400 squad of Cousar, Jackie Dim, Cavin and Shaniqua McGinnis was fourth in 3:36.53.

Men's Spikers Lose In MIVA Final

The No. 10 Ohio State men's volleyball team will not be able to defend its 2011 NCAA championship at the Final Four after falling to No. 7 Lewis on April 28 in the Midwestern Intercollegiate Volleyball Association championship game in St. John Arena.

First-team American Volleyball Coaches Association All-American Shawn Sangrey finished his career with a match-high 31 kills and 34 points, but it was not enough as the Flyers took a 3-2 (20-25, 25-17, 22-25, 27-25, 15-10) final.

Michael Henchy added 16 points for the top-seeded Buckeyes while hitting .325, and Grayson Overman and John Tholen each had 10½ points.

Jay Petty had five kills in the deciding fifth set for second-seeded Lewis.

Ohio State had advanced to the final with a 3-0 (25-14, 25-18, 25-15) drubbing of fifth-seeded Ball State. Sangrey led the offense with 15 kills while Mik Berzins had 11 digs and six assist blocks.

Sangrey, Henchy and Tholen were each named to the all-tournament team. Before the event started, Sangrey was named the MIVA Player of the Year after averaging 5.00 kills per set in conference play, while Berzins was also a first-team all-conference selection.

Women's Tennis Falls In Big Ten Quarters

Competing at home, the No. 63 Ohio State women's tennis team upset Penn State to begin the Big Ten women's tennis tournament April 26 but fell a day later to top-seeded Northwestern in the quarter-finals.

Ninth-seeded Ohio State opened the event with a 4-2 victory against the eighth-seeded Nittany Lions in the OSU Varsity Indoor Tennis Center.

"I'm proud of these guys," head coach Chuck Merzbacher said of the win over PSU. "We've been in a lot of close matches and the kids have stepped up. In the regular season against Penn State, we won the doubles point and they grinded it back, and this time we returned the favor. They just stepped up."

After Penn State took doubles, Ohio State responded with quick victories out

of juniors Fidan Manashirova and Gabby Steele. Penn State tied the score at two, but Kara Cecil won at No. 2 singles in a tight three-set match before Tiffany Dittmer finished off Nina Sertic 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 to clinch the win. Dittmer defeated Sertic in a marathon game to take a 5-3 lead in the last set then broke Sertic to finish off the match.

"It's an awesome feeling," she said. "It was great to know I can do something for the team. It's definitely a team win. The season has been tough so it's nice to get a win."

The good vibes couldn't last, though, as OSU moved outdoors April 27 to take on the No. 11 Wildcats, who posted a 4-0 victory. Dittmer and Cecil both fell in straight sets in singles while Steele also lost despite capturing the first set.

Fifth-seeded Purdue went on to win its first ever title.

Bogle, Leslie Perform Well For Men's Track

Demoye Bogle set a personal record and Cory Leslie nearly broke a school mark as the Ohio State men's track and field team split up the last weekend in April.

Leslie shone on April 29 at the Payton Jordan Invitational hosted by Stanford. His personal-best time of 3:39.00 won Section II of the 1,500-meter run at the event and also served as the second-best time in OSU history and the third-best Division I time of the season. Leslie finished 12th overall of 73 top distance runners at the event.

Ohio State also competed at the annual Drake Relays on April 27-28 in Des Moines, Iowa. Bogle's PR time of 13.81 seconds in the 110-meter hurdles finals allowed him to take third place and post the No. 4 time in school history.

In field events, Korbin Smith and Michael Hartfield finished 2-3 in the long jump competition. Smith jumped 7.64 meters to post a top-15 Division I distance while Hartfield was right behind at 7.51 meters.

Doubleheader Sweep Dulls Softball's Weekend

The Ohio State softball team got off to a good start in a three-game set at Northwestern on April 28 with a 6-2 victory, but the Wildcats came back to take both ends of a doubleheader a day later.

The Buckeyes opened strong behind pitcher Melanie Nichols, who allowed only two runs on nine hits on the way to the

victory. At the plate, third baseman Megan Coletta had a two-run single in the first and OSU posted four runs in the seventh behind RBI singles by designated player Danielle LeBeau and catcher Shelby Pickett and a two-run double by center fielder Taylor Watkins.

Northwestern came back to win the two games on April 29 by scores of 3-1 and 8-5. First baseman Evelyn Carrillo tied the first game at 1 in the fourth inning, but Adrienne Monka's two-run homer in the bottom of the frame was the difference. Shortstop Alicia Herron and Pickett homered in the second game while LeBeau had three hits and two RBI, but NU bashed 12 hits on the way to the win.

Women's Lax Completes Regular Season With Loss

In a matchup of ranked teams, the No. 13 Ohio State women's lacrosse team finished its regular season with a 12-9 loss April 28 at 19th-ranked Johns Hopkins.

Alayna Markwordt and Gabby Capuzzi each had four points for Ohio State, the latter by posting four goals. Markwordt had two tallies along with Katie Chase, while Cara Facchina scored once, but Hopkins goalie Cosette Larash made 11 saves. OSU opened a 4-0 lead 10:06 into the game, but the Blue Jays scored 10 of the next 11 goals.

The Buckeyes completed the season at 10-5, including 1-4 in the American Lacrosse Conference. The No. 4 seed in the ALC tournament, OSU will play May 3 vs. fifth-seeded Vanderbilt in Gainesville, Fla. The Commodores were the only ALC team the Buckeyes beat.

Men's Golf Takes Ninth At Big Tens

The Ohio State men's golf team finished ninth at the Big Ten championships, held in conjunction with the women's tournament April 27-29 at the par-72 Pete Dye Course at French Lick Resort in Indiana.

The Buckeyes finished the four-round tournament with a score of 68-over 1,220, 45 shots behind 38th-ranked Illinois, which won the event.

Grant Weaver had the best finish, carding steady rounds of 75, 75, 75 and 77 to tie for 21st with a 14-over 302. Logan Jones and Boo Timko each shot 310 to tie for 35th, Matthew Turner was a shot back to tie for 40th and senior Alex Redfield shot 24-over 312 to tie for 42nd.

2012 FOOTBALL

Sept. 1 MIAMI (OHIO), TBA; **8** CENTRAL FLORIDA, TBA; **15** CALIFORNIA, TBA; **22** UAB, TBA; **29** at Michigan State, TBA.

Oct. 6 NEBRASKA, 8 p.m.; **13** at Indiana, 8 p.m.; **20** PURDUE, TBA; **27** at Penn State, 6 p.m.

Nov. 3 ILLINOIS, TBA; **17** at Wisconsin, TBA; **24** MICHIGAN, TBA.

2013 FOOTBALL

Aug. 31 VANDERBILT.

Sept. 7 FLORIDA A&M; **14** at California; **21** BUFFALO; **28** WISCONSIN.

Oct. 5 at Northwestern; **19** IOWA; **26** PENN STATE.

Nov. 2 at Purdue; **16** at Illinois; **23** INDIANA; **30** at Michigan.

2014 FOOTBALL

Aug. 30 vs. Navy at Baltimore.

Sept. 13 KENT STATE; **20** VIRGINIA TECH; **27** CINCINNATI.

Oct. 4 PURDUE; **18** at Iowa; **25** NORTHWESTERN.

Nov. 1 at Wisconsin; **8** ILLINOIS; **15** at Penn State; **22** at Indiana; **29** MICHIGAN.

BASEBALL**(24-20, 8-10 Big Ten)**

Feb. 17 Big East/Big Ten Challenge at St. Petersburg, Fla., vs. South Florida, L 5-3; **18** Big East/Big Ten Challenge at Clearwater, Fla., vs. Seton Hall, W 14-7; **19** Big East/Big Ten Challenge at Clearwater, Fla., vs. Connecticut, W 9-5 (6 innings); **24** at (10) Georgia Tech, L 12-4; **25** at (10) Georgia Tech, W 7-3; **26** at (10) Georgia Tech, L 13-4.

March 2 Snowbird Classic at Port Charlotte, Fla., vs. Michigan, W 9-4; **3** Snowbird Classic at Port Charlotte, Fla., vs. Western Michigan (DH), L 15-8, W 5-2; **4** Snowbird Classic at Port Charlotte, Fla., vs. Villanova, W 4-3 (10 innings); **9** Chanticleer Classic at Myrtle Beach, S.C., vs. Marist, W 17-2; **10** Chanticleer Classic at Myrtle Beach, S.C., vs. Coastal Carolina, L 4-1; vs. Toledo, W 13-1; **11** Chanticleer Classic at Myrtle Beach, S.C., vs. Coastal Carolina, L 3-2 (12 innings); **16** AUSTIN PEAY, W 4-3 (13 innings); **17** AUSTIN PEAY, L 7-2 (10 innings); **18** AUSTIN PEAY, W 7-3; **20** at (22) Louisville, L 20-0; **21** at Dayton, W 11-7; **23** (24) PURDUE, postponed; **24** (24) PURDUE (DH), L 8-5, L 8-1; **25** (24) PURDUE, W 5-4; **27** EASTERN MICHIGAN, W 13-4; **31** at Michigan State, W 1-0.

April 1 at Michigan State, L 2-1; **2** at Michigan State, L 10-5; **4** at Miami (Ohio), W 9-2; **6** MINNESOTA, W 2-1; **7** MINNESOTA, W 5-3; **8** MINNESOTA, W 4-1; **10** OHIO, W 6-5; **11** AKRON, W 7-2; **13** NEBRASKA, W 10-2; **14** NEBRASKA, postponed; **15** NEBRASKA (DH), L 5-4, L 17-9; **17** XAVIER, L 3-2; **18** CINCINNATI, L 6-5; **20** at Illinois, L 9-1; **21** at Illinois, L 8-3; **22** at Illinois, W 10-4; **25** BOWLING GREEN, W 8-4; **27** at Penn State, W 4-1; **28** at Penn State, L 5-4; **29** at Penn State, L 8-7 (10 innings).

May 1 YOUNGSTOWN STATE, canceled; **4** NORTHWESTERN, 7 p.m.; **5** NORTHWESTERN,

6 p.m.; **6** NORTHWESTERN, 1:05 p.m.; **8** at Oklahoma State; **9** at Oklahoma State; **11** SEATTLE, 6:35 p.m.; **12** SEATTLE, 3:05 p.m.; **13** SEATTLE, 1:05 p.m.; **15** TOLEDO, 12:05 p.m.; **17** at Indiana; **18** at Indiana; **19** at Indiana; **23-26** BIG TEN TOURNAMENT (AT HUNTINGTON PARK).

MEN'S GOLF**(2-1)**

Feb. 10 Big Ten Match Play at Bradenton, Fla., vs. Wisconsin, W 4-2-0; vs. Indiana, W 3-2-1; **11** Big Ten Match Play at Bradenton, Fla., vs. Northwestern, L 5-1-0; **19-21** Puerto Rico Classic at Rio Grande, Puerto Rico, 11th/15.

March 23-25 FAU Spring Break Championships at Lake Worth, Fla., 2nd/15.

April 2-3 Villanova Wildcat Invitational at Malvern, Pa., 1st/14; **14-15** ROBERT KEPLER INTERCOLLEGIATE, T5th/15; **27-29** Big Ten Championships at French Lick, Ind., 9th/12.

May 17-19 NCAA Regional at TBD; **29-June 3** NCAA Championships at Pacific Palisades, Calif.

WOMEN'S GOLF**(1-0)**

Feb. 13-15 Northrop Grumman Regional Challenge at Palos Verdes Estates, Calif., 6th/15; **20-21** Central District Invitational at Parrish, Fla., 6th/15.

March 5-6 Hurricane Invitational at Miami, Fla., 1st/16; **21** vs. Northwestern at Tucson, Ariz., W 11-7; **23-24** Mountain View Invitational at Tucson, Ariz., 3rd/15.

April 6-8 Bryan National Collegiate at Greensboro, N.C., T4th/17; **21-22** LADY BUCKEYE INVITATIONAL, 1st/11; **27-29** Big Ten Championships at French Lick, Ind., 3rd/12.

May 10-12 NCAA CENTRAL REGIONAL; **22-25** NCAA Championships at Nashville, Tenn.

MEN'S LACROSSE**(8-6, 5-1 ECAC)**

Feb. 9 DETROIT, W 11-6; **11** at Mercer, W 15-8; **19** Moe's Southwest Grill Classic at Jacksonville, Fla., vs. (5) Denver, W 10-9; **25** (8) UMASS, L 9-3.

March 3 (13) PENN STATE, L 5-2; **9** ROBERT MORRIS, L 9-7; **17** (1) VIRGINIA, L 11-9; **21** (6) NOTRE DAME, L 8-7; **24** BELLARMINE, W 13-2; **31** at (4) Loyola (Md.), L 8-7.

April 7 at Hobart, W 10-9 (OT); **14** at Michigan, W 12-9; **21** AIR FORCE, W 14-4; **28** at (13) Fairfield, W 8-3.

May 2 ECAC Tournament Semifinal at Denver vs. (3) Fairfield; **4** ECAC Tournament Championship at Denver.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE**(10-5, 1-4 ALC)**

Feb. 11 vs. San Diego State at Palo Alto, Calif., W 19-4; **12** at (6) Stanford, W 14-10; **17** ROBERT MORRIS, W 16-2; **19** LOUISVILLE, W 21-7; **25** BROWN, W 16-3.

March 4 (14) NOTRE DAME, L 16-7; **18** at Canisius, W 14-11; **19** at St. Bonaventure, W 15-8; **24** (5) FLORIDA, L 10-8; **29** at Hofstra, W 15-9; **31** at Foxborough, Mass., vs. (1) Northwestern, L 13-12 (OT).

April 8 at (15) Vanderbilt, W 13-11; **15** (13) PENN STATE, L 15-12; **21** AMERICAN, W 14-4; **28** at (19) Johns Hopkins, L 12-9.

May 3 ALC Tournament Quarterfinal at Gainesville, Fla., vs. (5) Vanderbilt; **4** ALC Tournament Semifinal at Gainesville, Fla., vs. (1) Florida; **5** ALC Tournament Championship Game at Gainesville, Fla., vs. TBD.

SOFTBALL**(28-20, 7-10 Big Ten)**

Feb. 10 Dot Richardson National Collegiate Softball Invitational at Clermont, Fla., vs. Central Florida, L 2-1; vs. Florida Atlantic, W 9-6; **11** Dot Richardson National Collegiate Softball Invitational at Clermont, Fla., vs. North Carolina, L 3-1; vs. North Florida, L 10-5; **12** Dot Richardson National Collegiate Softball Invitational at Clermont, Fla., vs. Florida A&M, W 7-1; **17** Louisville Slugger Desert Classic at Las Vegas vs. Texas Tech, L 7-4; vs. San Jose State, W 6-3; **18** Louisville Slugger Desert Classic at Las Vegas vs. UNLV, W 4-3; vs. Long Beach State, W 10-5; **19** Louisville Slugger Desert Classic at Las Vegas vs. Idaho State, W 6-2; **24** Cathedral City Classic at Cathedral City, Calif., vs. Fresno State, W 3-0; vs. Oregon State, L 4-3; **25** Cathedral City Classic at Cathedral City, Calif., vs. Cal State Fullerton, W 9-0 (5 innings); **26** Cathedral City Classic at Cathedral City, Calif., vs. Colorado State, W 9-8 (6 innings).

March 2 Citrus Classic at Orlando, Fla., vs. Georgetown, W 5-0; Longwood, W 12-3 (5 innings); **3** Citrus Classic at Orlando, Fla., vs. Notre Dame, L 3-1 (8 innings); vs. Hofstra, L 1-0; **4** Citrus Classic at Orlando, Fla., vs. Pittsburgh, L 4-0; **16** TSU Tiger Tournament at Nashville, Tenn., vs. Tennessee State, W 6-0; **17** TSU Tiger Tournament at Nashville, Tenn., vs. Belmont, W 15-3 (6 innings); vs. Mercer, canceled; **18** TSU Tiger Tournament at Nashville, Tenn., vs. St. Bonaventure, W 8-2; **20** at (13) Louisville (DH), L 7-0, L 7-2; **24** INDIANA (DH), W 4-3 (8 innings), L 4-1; **25** INDIANA, W 7-3; **28** WRIGHT STATE (DH), W 6-0, W 6-2; **31** at Michigan State (DH), W 9-4, W 14-1 (5 innings).

April 1 at Michigan State, W 6-4; **4** BUFFALO (DH), W 5-0, W 8-5; **6** (20) MICHIGAN, L 10-2; **7** (20) MICHIGAN (DH), L 11-4, L 6-5; **11** DAYTON, W 3-2; **14** at Purdue, canceled; **15** at Purdue (DH), L 2-1, L 8-3; **18** OHIO (DH), W 9-5, W 13-3 (5 innings); **21** NEBRASKA (DH), L 11-2, L 3-2 (8 innings); **22** NEBRASKA, W 4-0; **28** at Northwestern, W 6-2; **29** at Northwestern (DH), L 3-1, L 8-5.

May 5 IOWA (DH), 6 p.m.; 8 p.m.; **6** IOWA, 2 p.m.; **11** at Penn State; **12** at Penn State (DH).

MEN'S TENNIS**(31-3, 11-0 Big Ten)**

Jan. 18 BUTLER, W 7-0; XAVIER, W 7-0; **22** (16) MISSISSIPPI STATE, W 6-1; **28** ITA KICKOFF VS. (44) CORNELL, W 5-1; **29** ITA KICKOFF VS. (29) INDIANA, W 4-0; TOLEDO, W 4-0.

Feb. 3 (12) PEPPERDINE, W 4-1; **9** at (36) Louisville, L 6-1; **12** at (55) Michigan State,

W 7-0; **17** ITA National Team Indoors at Charlottesville, Va., vs. (14) Texas, W 4-0; **18** ITA National Team Indoors at Charlottesville, Va., vs. (6) Kentucky, W 4-3; **19** ITA National Team Indoors at Charlottesville, Va., vs. (2) Virginia, W 4-1; **20** ITA National Team Indoors at Charlottesville, Va., vs. (1) USC, L 4-3; **25** (7) KENTUCKY, W 4-0; **26** (17) NORTH CAROLINA, W 6-1.

March 3 at (26) Notre Dame, W 5-2; **9** (17) TEXAS A&M, W 6-1; **11** PENN STATE, W 7-0; NORTHWEST OHIO, W 4-0; **19** at (27) LSU, W 6-1; **21** at (4) Georgia, L 4-3; **25** at (21) Indiana, W 6-1; **30** (70) NEBRASKA, W 6-1.

April 1 IOWA, W 7-0; YOUNGSTOWN STATE, W 6-0; **6** at Wisconsin, W 7-0; **8** at (47) Minnesota, W 6-1; **13** (23) ILLINOIS, W 7-0; **15** (46) NORTHWESTERN, W 5-2; **18** at (74) Purdue, W 7-0; **22** (21) MICHIGAN, W 6-1; **27** Big Ten Tournament Quarterfinal at Evanston, Ill., vs. (9) Nebraska, W 4-0; **28** Big Ten Tournament Semifinal at Evanston, Ill., vs. (5) Indiana, W 4-1; **29** Big Ten Tournament Championship at Evanston, Ill., vs. (3) Illinois, L 4-3.

May 11-13 NCAA First & Second Rounds at TBA; **17-22** NCAA Team Championships at Athens, Ga.; **23-28** NCAA Singles/Doubles Championships at Athens, Ga.

WOMEN'S TENNIS (10-16, 4-7 Big Ten)

Jan. 15 at (42) South Florida, L 6-1; **21** WEST VIRGINIA, W 7-0; DAYTON, W 7-0; **28** ITA Kickoff Weekend at Tallahassee, Fla., vs. (18) Florida State, L 5-2; **29** ITA Kickoff Weekend at Tallahassee, Fla., vs. (29) Texas A&M, L 5-2.

Feb. 4 SYRACUSE, W 5-2; **7** at Penn State, L 4-3; **19** (10) TENNESSEE, L 4-3; **22** at Louisville, W 4-3; **24** (71) DEPAUL, W 5-2; **26** (31) ARKANSAS, L 4-3.

March 4 at Oregon, L 4-3; **18** at (52) Tulane, L 5-2; **20** at (49) LSU, L 4-2; **23** (27) PURDUE, L 4-3; **25** (57) INDIANA, L 4-3; **30** at (18) Nebraska, L 4-0.

April 1 at Iowa, W 4-3; **6** WISCONSIN, W 4-3; **8** (33) MINNESOTA, W 4-3; **13** at (23) Illinois, L 4-3; **15** at (11) Northwestern, L 5-2; **20** MICHIGAN STATE, W 6-1; **22** at (14) Michigan, L 5-2; **26** BIG TEN TOURNAMENT FIRST ROUND VS. (8) PENN STATE, W 4-2; **27-29** BIG TEN TOURNAMENT QUARTERFINAL VS. (1) NORTHWESTERN, L 4-0.

MEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

March 23 Big Ten/SEC Challenge at Starkville, Miss., Big Ten wins 400.5-314.5; **28-31** Clyde Littlefield Texas Relays at Austin, Texas, NTS; **31** Jim Click Shootout at Tucson, Ariz., 2nd/6.

April 13-14 JESSE OWENS TRACK CLASSIC, NTS; **19-21** Mt. SAC Relays at Walnut, Calif., NTS; **20-21** All-Ohio Championships at Oxford, Ohio, 1st/13; **27-28** Drake Relays at Des Moines, Iowa, NTS; **29** Payton Jordan Invitational at Palo Alto, Calif., NTS.

May 5 Campbell/Wright Invitational at Akron, Ohio; **5** Oregon Twilight at Eugene, Ore.; **11-13** Big Ten Championships at

Where To Watch The Buckeyes

Baseball

Date	Opponent, Time	TV/Website
May 4	NORTHWESTERN, 7 p.m.	Big Ten Network
May 5	NORTHWESTERN, 6 p.m.	OhioStateBuckeyes.com
May 6	NORTHWESTERN, 1:05 p.m.	OhioStateBuckeyes.com

Men's Lacrosse

Date	Opponent, Time	TV/Website
May 2	ECAC Tournament Semifinal at Denver vs. Fairfield	DenverPioneers.com
May 4	ECAC Tournament Championship at Denver vs. TBA	ESPNU

Women's Lacrosse

Date	Opponent, Time	TV/Website
May 3	ALC Tournament Quarterfinal at Gainesville, Fla., vs. Vanderbilt	GatorVision.tv
May 4	ALC Tournament Semifinal at Gainesville, Fla., vs. Florida	GatorVision.tv
May 5	ALC Tournament Championship at Gainesville, Fla., vs. TBA	GatorVision.tv

Softball

Date	Opponent, Time	TV/Website
May 5	IOWA (DH), 6 p.m.; 8 p.m.	Big Ten Network
May 6	IOWA, 2 p.m.	BTN.com

Men's Outdoor Track & Field

Date	Opponent, Time	TV/Website
May 5	Oregon Twilight at Eugene, Ore., 8 p.m.	GoDucks.com

Madison, Wis.; **24-26** NCAA East Prelims at Jacksonville, Fla.

June 6-9 NCAA Championships at Des Moines, Iowa; **14-16** USATF Junior Championships at Bloomington, Ind.

WOMEN'S OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD

March 24 UCF Invitational at Orlando, Fla., NTS; **31** Jim Click Shootout at Tucson, Ariz., 4th/6.

April 6-7 Miami Invitational at Oxford, Ohio, NTS; **13-14** JESSE OWENS TRACK CLASSIC, NTS; **20-21** All-Ohio Championships at Oxford, Ohio, 5th/15; **21** Tom Jones Memorial Classic at Gainesville, Fla., NTS; **26-28** Penn Relays at Philadelphia, NTS.

May 11-13 Big Ten Championships at Madison, Wis.; **24-26** NCAA East Prelims at Jacksonville, Fla.

June 6-9 NCAA Championships at Des Moines, Iowa.

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL (21-9, 9-3 MIVA)

Jan. 6 UC Santa Barbara Invitational at Santa Barbara, Calif., vs. (14) UC Santa Barbara, W 3-2 (19-25, 18-25, 25-19, 28-26, 15-9); vs. (3) UCLA, L 3-0 (25-16, 25-19, 25-16); **7** UC Santa Barbara Invitational at Santa Barbara, Calif., vs. (6) Long Beach State, L 3-2 (23-25, 22-25, 26-24, 25-23, 15-10); **13** LEES-MCRAE, W 3-0 (25-19, 25-21, 25-18); **14** (7) PENN STATE, L 3-0 (25-22, 25-23, 25-17); **17** SACRED HEART, W 3-0 (25-18, 25-19, 25-12); **19** GEORGE MASON, W 3-2 (21-25, 25-21, 25-22, 23-25, 15-11); **22**

SAINT FRANCIS (PA.), W 3-1 (25-20, 22-25, 25-18, 29-27); **27** KEN AND DAVE DUNLAP INVITATIONAL VS. (12) PACIFIC, W 3-1 (19-25, 25-20, 25-18, 25-21); **28** KEN AND DAVE DUNLAP INVITATIONAL VS. (4) STANFORD, L 3-2 (25-22, 23-25, 24-26, 25-22, 15-12).

Feb. 3 Penn State Invitational at State College, Pa., vs. Cal-Baptist, W 3-1 (23-25, 27-25, 25-20, 25-21); **4** Penn State Invitational at State College, Pa., vs. Mount Olive, W 3-0 (25-16, 25-17, 26-24); **10** at IPFW, W 3-1 (27-29, 25-11, 25-21, 25-20); **17** BALL STATE, W 3-0 (25-15, 25-22, 25-17); **19** CARTHAGE, W 3-1 (18-25, 25-21, 25-18, 25-16); **23** at (7) Lewis, L 3-1 (15-25, 25-21, 25-18, 25-18); **25** at (14) Loyola (Ill.), W 3-0 (25-18, 25-9, 25-19).

March 2 at St. Francis (Pa.), W 3-2 (23-25, 25-21, 21-25, 25-14, 15-11); **3** at (6) Penn State, L 3-2 (25-17, 25-19, 27-29, 22-25, 15-13); **18** at Ball State, L 3-2 (21-25, 25-23, 23-25, 25-23, 15-12); **23** at Quincy, L 3-1 (25-21, 14-25, 25-23, 25-21); **24** at Quincy, W 3-0 (25-23, 25-21, 25-22); **30** LOYOLA (ILL.), W 3-0 (25-22, 25-20, 25-23); **31** (6) LEWIS, W 3-0 (25-19, 25-18, 25-22).

April 5 GRAND CANYON, W 3-2 (22-25, 25-14, 26-24, 23-25, 15-7); **6** GRAND CANYON, W 3-1 (25-16, 22-25, 25-19, 25-18); **13** IPFW, W 3-1 (25-23, 25-23, 23-25, 25-23); **15** at George Mason, W 3-0 (25-23, 25-23, 25-22); **25** MIVA TOURNAMENT SEMIFINAL VS. (5) BALL STATE, W 3-0 (25-14, 25-18, 25-15); **28** MIVA TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP VS. (2) LEWIS, L 3-2 (20-25, 25-17, 22-25, 27-25, 15-10).

College Sports Could Be Even Better With Tweaks

College sports are a great thing.

They're entertaining. They build character for those involved, from the players to the cheerleaders and band. They provide a great link for alumni. They're a billboard advertising the schools and education. And they put a focus on colleges.

College football is my favorite sport. College basketball ranks high. Nearly all the college sports are fun to follow to some extent.

But college sports could be better if some more things were done right.

THE EXNER POINT Rich Exner

Serving as a reminder were the recent well-publicized shenanigans at Wisconsin. Deservingly so, focus was placed on Wisconsin and basketball coach Bo Ryan when Ryan initially imposed unnecessary roadblocks for a redshirted freshman wishing to explore where he could transfer.

That was an off-field situation, and Ryan operated within the rules of the NCAA. Other rules by the NCAA, or decisions by the colleges and universities, impact things on the field.

Here's a list of some things that should be done, or changed, to make the great spectacle of college sports even better:

- **A football playoff:** It now looks as if a college football playoff, starting in 2014, could be approved by the July 4th holiday. It will be a four-team playoff. How things will be arranged is yet to be determined.

First off, kudos are in order for the powers that be for finally coming around to the correct decision to permit Division I football to join every other NCAA sport at all levels in arranging a championship playoff. It's too bad it will be only four teams. It should be eight or more. But at least this is a start.

Now, the trick is to make the right call in setting up the tournament.

First off, the semifinals should be played on campus, where excitement will be highest, where higher-seeded teams could enjoy a deserved advantage and where the game will stay closest to what

it should all be about – the students, athletes and non-athletes alike.

Staging the semifinals in glitzy, sunny locations perhaps would be a big deal for the high-rollers and the university presidents wishing to dish out paybacks to friendly politicians and big donors. But it's not what college football should be about. College football should be about bringing excitement to the campus and creating a lifetime of memories for the students.

Plus, wouldn't playing the games on campus make for a more exciting setting for both the fans in the stadium and those watching on TV? Traditions – unique from school to school – would be on display like perhaps no other college football games in history.

Another thing the rule makers need to get right on the final playoff format is to limit participation in the tournament to teams that have won their own league championships. If this is about determining a national champion, it should be a tournament of champions.

This means Alabama wouldn't have won last season's title. So be it. Alabama had its chance against LSU during the regular season and lost.

Just as importantly, however, is that limiting each conference to no more than one team opens the field. It will be highly subjective to pick four teams, no matter how it is done. And, despite what all the self-proclaimed talking experts on ESPN might say, no one really knows who the best teams are until the games are played. Otherwise, they would be making a lot more money in Las Vegas than from any ESPN contract.

So widen the scope of the playoff to four teams that proved themselves on the field by winning league championship games.

- **Realignment:** We've addressed this issue before, so we'll keep it brief. Simply put, all the jumping of schools from one conference to the next runs counter to the traditions that make college sports so great.

For a prime example, look to Ohio's neighbor to the east in Morgantown, W.Va.

A longtime staple of East Coast football with the likes of Pitt, Syracuse and for a long time Penn State, West Virginia is now becoming part of the Big 12.

Playing in the Big 12 this season for WVU means four games against Texas schools, two against Kansas schools, two Oklahoma schools and one against Iowa State.

You don't have to be a geography whiz to understand the silliness of that. West Virginia, or its league opponents, will have to leapfrog the Big Ten country to meet on the field.

- **Transfers:** As illustrated by the recent situation in Wisconsin, it's time to lift the transfer restrictions on college athletes. If things are not working out, why not let an athlete go to another school without penalty, even schools within the same league? And why not let them play right away, rather than forcing them to sit out for a season?

The rules have outlived themselves. College coaches make millions and leave from one school to the next without penalty. They can have 30- or 40-year careers. The athletes have only five years to use their four years of eligibility. Then it's gone for a lifetime. Don't stop the athletes from finding the right situation for themselves for this short time period.

- **Student tickets:** Some students get closed out of football and basketball tickets. That should not happen, especially in a football stadium with more than 100,000 seats.

Here's how tickets should be distributed. First, a limited number should go to each player so their families and close friends can see them play. Second, every student who wants a ticket should get a ticket to every game. Third, faculty and staff should get their opportunity, but perhaps not for a full season if things are tight. But prohibit all these groups from reselling the tickets.

This can be done electronically and would leave more options for the next groups: alumni (one game a year if tickets are limited but also with a ban on reselling the tickets), big donors (up to season tickets) and finally everyone else.

The goal here is to put students very close to the front of the line and never close them out.

- **The NCAA Tournament:** Generally, this works fairly well. The NCAA has made some nice changes in recent years, putting more early games within a reasonable drive of the higher-



FILE PHOTO

HELLO & GOODBYE – Several men’s college basketball stars, including Ohio State’s Mike Conley Jr., left after only one season for the NBA.

seeded teams while not allowing schools to play on their home court.

But one quirk in ticket distribution I learned about in recent years involves how the school pep bands are treated. Ohio State has a nice-sized pep band that provides a nice atmosphere and support for the Buckeyes during the entire regular season.

But come tournament time, many of those band members are left at home. The NCAA provides only a select number of seats for the pep bands. OSU does the best it can to sort this out, I’m told, allowing the higher-ranking class mem-

bers the chance to pick whether they would like to play at the Big Ten tournament or the NCAA Tournament.

But that’s a choice that shouldn’t have to happen. The NCAA should make room for the pep bands, no matter the size. What I saw in Cleveland at the NCAA Tournament in 2011 were empty seats in pep band areas because the bands from the other half of each double-header typically showed up only for their own games. Those seats could have been used by OSU band members sitting at home.

Again, this is about the students and

the college experience, and the rules demonstrate a lack for those concerns.

- **Commitment switches:** There have been a lot of complaints – sour grapes – lately about players switching their non-binding verbal commitments, with many of those complaints targeted at Ohio State’s Urban Meyer after he landed some players who had previously “committed” elsewhere.

Such complaining is crazy. Nothing is signed until signing day. That’s why there is a signing day.

A high school kid making a once-in-a-lifetime choice to decide where to begin his or her college career should have all the time permitted and all the information possible in hand.

Meyer was not the coach at Ohio State when some of these kids initially made their commitments. They should have an opportunity for themselves to decide where to sign based on the latest information available.

The administrators – presidents and athletic directors – should make a clear statement on this to shut up the complaining coaches. Nothing is binding until signing day, and the priority should be about the high school athletes making the right decisions for themselves, not for the multimillion-dollar coaches.

- **One-and-done:** This one is out of the hands of the NCAA. The NBA sets its rules on when to allow players to enter the draft. Unfortunately for the college game, it’s after one year in basketball, rather than the three-year rules imposed by Major League Baseball and the NFL.

I don’t have a huge problem with players getting the opportunity to leave after one year because, as noted with some of the issues above, it should be about what is right for the students.

But something just doesn’t seem right to see teams – it was Kentucky this year but it was Ohio State in the past – riding the success of freshmen to the Final Four only to learn days later that those “student-athletes” were leaving school to turn pro.

This is a complicated issue without an obvious solution. One could argue it’s not right for the NFL and MLB to force the college students to wait three years. It’s just too bad that the college basketball game has become so much about those one-and-done players meaning so much to success.

OHIO STATE FOOTBALL TICKETS!



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2012 FOOTBALL SEASON SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION
April 21, 2012	2012 Spring Game	Columbus, Ohio
September 1, 2012	Miami (OH)	Columbus, Ohio
September 8, 2012	Central Florida	Columbus, Ohio
September 15, 2012	California	Columbus, Ohio
September 22, 2012	Univ. Alabama Birmingham	Columbus, Ohio
September 29, 2012	Michigan State	East Lansing, MI
October 6, 2012	Nebraska	Columbus, Ohio
October 13, 2012	Indiana	Bloomington, IN
October 20, 2012	Purdue	Columbus, Ohio
October 27, 2012	Penn State	State College, PA
November 3, 2012	Illinois	Columbus, Ohio
November 17, 2012	Wisconsin	Madison, WI
November 24, 2012	Michigan	Columbus, Ohio

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