

MACIEJOWSKI PRESERVES OSU VICTORY

By MARK REA
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

Ohio State coasted to a 24-0 halftime lead and then had to hang on for dear life, needing a fourth-quarter touch-down drive led by sophomore backup quarterback Ron Maciejowski to preserve a 31-24 victory over Illinois.

The win in the Buckeyes' first road game of the 1968 season upped the team's record to a perfect 5-0 overall and 3-0 in the Big Ten conference.

"This was a close one," said head coach Woody Hayes after the game. "We just didn't play football in the second half. We had a pretty good first half and a lousy second half. We were very, very lucky to win. Very, very lucky."

The Buckeyes came out quickly in the game, scoring three second-quarter touchdowns. But the Illini struck back with three touchdowns of their own and a trio of two-point conversions to tie the score with 4:38 remaining.

But Maciejowski, subbing for injured starting quarterback Rex Kern, guided the team on a three-minute scoring drive that ended with junior fullback Jim Otis' touchdown at the 1:30 mark of the fourth quarter.

"It was a great, great scoring drive at the end of the game and you have to give that youngster credit," said Hayes of Maciejowski. "To come off the bench cold and direct the team to a touchdown was just great."

Before Kern exited the game in the fourth quarter, he was the leading offensive force for the Buckeyes. The sophomore from Lancaster, Ohio, completed 12 of 21 passes for 109 yards and added 57 yards rushing on 14 carries. Maciejowski completed both passes he attempted and added 11 yards rushing.

The leading ball carrier for the Buckeyes was sophomore halfback Leo Hayden. Gaining his first real game experience, Hayden picked up 77 yards on 14 carries. Otis was next with 72 yards and two touchdowns on 11 carries, while another sophomore, halfback



DEFENSIVE SURGE — While the Ohio State offense got most of the publicity in 1968, the Buckeyes' defense was also a tough unit, giving up an average of only 15.0 points per game. The defense was punctuated by excellent play from a number of individuals, including defensive back Mike Polaski (15) and middle guard Jim Stillwagon (68).

Larry Zelina, added 61 yards on eight carries.

The Buckeyes' rushing attack was the primary tool against Illinois. Ohio State piled up 290 yards on 55 at-

tempts, an average of 5.3 yards per carry.

Meanwhile, the Illini offense managed to gain 302 yards in total offense against the Buckeyes, the most yards given up by the Scarlet and Gray defense up to that point in the season against Big Ten competition.

Illini quarterback Bob Naponic completed nine of 23 passes for 102 yards and also tallied 36 yards rushing and one touchdown. Halfbacks Ken Bargo and Rick Johnson combined for 151 yards and two TDs on 33 carries.

However, the OSU defense came through when it needed to most, picking off three Naponic passes, including one at the Ohio 10-yard line with less than a minute to play in the game.

Junior defensive end Mark Radtke led the defensive charge for the Buckeyes with an outstanding effort that in-

cluded a team-high 15 tackles, including 12 solo stops, one batted-down pass and an interception.

The game's outcome spoiled homecoming for the Illinois crowd of 56,174 that packed Memorial Stadium on a cool afternoon. The Illini didn't have much to cheer about in the first half as the Ohio State offense immediately went to work.

With the wind gusting to 15 miles per hour, the Illini won the opening coin toss and elected to take the wind in the fourth quarter. So the Buckeyes got the first possession of the day and nearly cashed it in.

Starting at the 22-yard line, Ohio State showed a blend of rushing and passing to march 71 yards in 17 plays and trim 10 minutes off the clock in the process. However, on fourth and two at the Illini seven-yard line, junior

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halfback David Brungard was stopped for no gain and the Bucks turned the ball over on downs.

Illinois' offense got nowhere on two plays and then tried a play that had worked against Ohio State in the past. Bob Bess crossed the Buckeyes up with a third-down quick kick that traveled 63 yards before safety Mike Sensibaugh could catch up with it. However, when the sophomore got the ball, he returned it 23 yards to the Illinois 49.

With Hayden in the game in place of Brungard, the Buckeyes took advantage of the Dayton, Ohio, product's speed. Hayden picked up 17 yards on his first carry and two plays later tacked on 21 more to take the ball to the eight-yard line.

But the OSU drive stalled at the four-yard line and senior Jim Roman came on to boot a 21-yard field goal, giving the Buckeyes a 3-0 first-quarter lead.

On Ohio State's next possession, Hayden started the drive with a nine-yard run before Otis thundered through the left side of the line and ran for a 30-yard gain. Two plays later, Otis blasted through the right side of the line for a 17-yard run and then bulldozed over from the one for the touchdown. Roman added the PAT for a 10-0 lead with 13:55 left in the second quarter.

While Illinois continued to struggle offensively, the Bucks were just beginning to gather speed. Taking over after an Illini punt at the OSU 41-yard line, Kern directed another scoring drive, using short passes, options and keepers to move 59 yards in nine plays.

The two largest plays in the march were a first-down pass of 17 yards from Kern to Otis and Kern's 11-yard sneak up the middle for a touchdown. Roman added the extra point and OSU went out to a 17-0 lead.

Later in the first half, the Buckeyes struck again. This time Kern took matters into his own hands, passing for five yards to Bruce Jankowski, nine yards to Zelina and 22 yards to tight end Jan White. Then Kern flashed his expertise on the option, tucking the ball under his arm and dashing 16 yards for the touchdown. Roman added his third conversion of the quarter as the Bucks increased their advantage to 24-0 at intermission.

Ohio State completely dominated the first half of the game, churning out 266 total yards to just 56 for Illinois. Time of possession was also heavily in favor of the Buckeyes, who held the ball more than 21 of the 30 first-half minutes.

But the second half was a different story. Perhaps the Bucks became complacent or the Illinois team got fired up by head coach Jim Valek at halftime.

The Illini immediately went on the attack after OSU turned the ball over when Otis fumbled a lateral from Kern. Starting with excellent field position at the Ohio State 30, the Illini kept the ball on the ground. Johnson got the call five times in a six-play drive, the last one a two-yard plunge for a touchdown. Johnson also scored the two-point conversion on a pitch from Naponic to cut OSU's lead to 24-8.

The teams traded miscues after that. The Illini got good field position when Sensibaugh shanked a punt for only 17 yards. But Illinois squandered the opportunity when Naponic's first-down pass was picked off by junior defensive tackle Brad Nielsen.

However, the Illini did take advantage on their next possession, closing out the third quarter with a textbook drive that covered 86 yards

and took 18 plays and well over eight minutes.

Illinois simply ran right at the Buckeyes with good success. They continually hammered away for small chunks of yardage, converting three third downs and a pair of fourth downs along the way. Finally, Naponic scored from two yards out on a keeper and then sneaked into the end zone for the two-pointer, cutting the Ohio State lead to 24-16.

The Buckeyes tried to stem the tide with a drive to open the fourth quarter. Zelina was the workhorse this time, gaining 21 yards on a reverse and then plowing ahead for 15 yards on a pitch from Kern. But the offense stalled and Roman missed a chip-shot field goal attempt from 12 yards out.

Ohio State continued to protect its lead and midway through the final period, backed Illinois up to its own 20. But the Illini had one more scoring drive in them. Naponic gained 11 yards on a first-down keeper and then got the ball to midfield with short passes to halfback Ken Kmiec and tight end Doug Dieken.

Illinois continued to move the ball in short spurts before Bargo exploded up the middle for 20 yards to the OSU 10-yard line. Three plays later, Bargo went up the middle again and scored from two yards out to allow the Illini to pull within two points of the Buckeyes at 24-22. Then, lined up in two-point formation, Bargo tested the middle of the line again with success, tying the score with 4:38 to go and putting the Memorial Stadium crowd into a frenzy.

But like true champions, the Buckeyes rebounded. Starting at his own 26-yard line, Kern gained eight yards on first down and then handed off to Zelina, who got two yards for another first down. Then, with Kern back to pass, Illini defenders Mickey Hogan and Tony Pleviak blew through the line and tackled the OSU quarterback hard. Kern was shaken up and had to leave the game.

Maciejowski came off the bench in relief faced with a second-and-16 situation with just over three minutes left in the game. The cool sophomore responded with a 10-yard strike to Zelina and then a 12-yard scamper into Illinois territory for the first down.

Striking while he was hot, Maciejowski stayed on the attack and hurled a bomb to Zelina, which the sophomore halfback took to the four-yard line. The play went 40 yards and the silence was deafening from the Illini homecoming crowd that had been roaring just two minutes before.

With 2:33 left in the game, Maciejowski tried the right side of line himself on first down and was stopped for no gain. On second down, Otis got half of the four yards he needed over right guard. Then on third down he finished the job, going over right guard again for the touchdown. Roman came on to add the PAT and give Ohio State a 31-24 lead with 1:30 to go in the game. Maciejowski had taken the Buckeyes 70 yards in just six plays over a 90-second span.

Illinois tried one last time to win the game. Senior Bill Huston gave his team good field position by returning the kickoff to the Illini 42. Then, two plays later, Naponic hit Dieken for a 13-yard gainer into OSU territory.

The Illini got to the OSU 39, and then Naponic faded and tried a bomb to the Ohio State 10-yard line, but it was intercepted by Sensibaugh, who returned it 33 yards to preserve the victory for the Buckeyes.

BUCKEYES 31, ILLINI 24

OHIO STATE	3	21	0	7	31
ILLINOIS	0	0	16	8	24

OSU — J.Roman, 21 field goal 2:21
 OSU — Otis, 1 run (J.Roman kick) 10:55
 OSU — Kern, 5 run (J.Roman kick) 9:57
 OSU — Kern, 16 run (J.Roman kick) 2:35
 ILL — R.Johnson, 2 run (Johnson run) 11:11
 ILL — Naponic, 2 run (Naponic run) 0:21
 ILL — Bargo, 2 run (Bargo run) 4:38
 OSU — Otis, 2 run (J.Roman kick) 1:30
 Att. — 56,174

	OSU	ILL
First Downs	25	21
Rushing	17	15
Passing	8	4
Penalty	0	2
Rushes-Yards	55-290	51-200
Passing Yards	163	102
Passes	23-14-2	23-9-3
Plays	78	74
Total Net Yards	453	302
Third Down Efficiency	9-15	6-16
Punts	4-32.2	6-43.2
Fumbles-Lost	3-0	0-0
Penalties	3-29	5-45
Time Of Possession	32:24	27:36

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) — OSU: Hayden 14-77; Otis 11-72; Zelina 8-61; Kern 14-57; Brungard 5-12; Maciejowski 3-11. ILL: Bargo 17-82; R.Johnson 16-69; Naponic 14-36; Kmiec 3-12; Bess 1-1.

PASSING (Att.-Comp.-Int.-Yds.-TD) — OSU: Kern 21-12-2-109-0; Maciejowski 2-2-0-54-0. ILL: Naponic 23-9-3-102-0.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) — OSU: Zelina 5-76; White 5-50; Jankowski 3-20; Otis 1-17. ILL: Dieken 4-65; Kmiec 2-24; Best 2-4; Burns 1-9.

PUNTING (No.-Yds.-Avg.) — OSU: Sensibaugh 4-129-32.2. ILL: Bess 1-63-63.0; Bareither 5-196-39.2.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.-Avg.) OSU: Sensibaugh 2-33-16.5; Zelina 1-6-6.0. ILL: None.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.-Avg.) OSU: Otis 1-8-8.0; Hayden 1-23-23.0; Brungard 2-28-14.0; Kuhn 1-1-1.0. ILL: Huston 4-80-20.0.

DEFENSIVE FUMBLES RECOVERED BY — OSU: None. ILL: None.

INTERCEPTIONS — OSU: Radtke, Nielsen, Sensibaugh. ILL: Bareither, Trigger.

TACKLES FOR LOSS — OSU: Whitfield (2), Radtke. ILL: Hogan (2), Pleviak, Clements, Mauzey.

TACKLES (Solo-Assist-Tot.) — OSU: Radtke 12-3-15; Adams 6-6-12; Tatum 6-2-8; Stier 4-4-8; Whitfield 5-1-6; Nielsen 5-1-6; Stillwagon 4-2-6; Sensibaugh 3-3-6; Schmidlin 2-4-6; Ehrsam 4-0-4; Team 4-0-4; Urbanik 2-2-4; Provost 2-1-3; Stottlemeyer 2-0-2; Holloway 1-0-1; Jack 1-0-1; Anderson 0-1-1. ILL: Erb 11-5-16; Hogan 4-7-11; Pleviak 5-5-10; Trigger 6-3-9; Clements 5-4-9; Brooks 6-2-8; Waldron 4-2-6; Bareither 4-2-6; Whitman 4-1-5; Whiteside 2-3-5; Ryan 4-0-4; McDonough 2-1-3; Kaiser 2-1-3; Mauzey 1-2-3; Bargo 2-0-2; Team 2-0-2; Nowak 1-1-2; McCarthy 1-0-1; Bieszczad 1-0-1; Robinson 1-0-1; Kmiec 1-0-1.

Players In The Game

OHIO STATE — Kern, Brungard, Zelina, Otis, Hayden, Maciejowski, White, Jankowski, Sensibaugh, Kuhn, Radtke, Nielsen, Admas, Stier, Tatum, Whitfield, Schmidlin, Stillwagon, Ehrsam, Urbanik, Provost, Stottlemeyer, Holloway, Jack, Anderson, Foley, Backhus, Muhlbach, Mayes, J.Roman.

ILLINOIS — Naponic, R.Johnson, Bess, Bargo, Kmiec, Burns, Dieken, Huston, Bareither, Erb, Hogan, Pleviak, Trigger, Clements, Brooks, Waldron, Whiteside, Whitman, Ryan, McDonough, Mauzey, Kaiser, Omna, Nowak, McCarthy, Bieszczad, Robinson, Redman.

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