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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

October 10, 1998

Singing In The Rain

OSU Opens Big Ten With Wet Win Over No. 7 Penn State

By JEFF RAPP

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

In the wee hours of the first Saturday in October, a cool rain began to fall in Columbus.

A pessimist could have construed it as a bad omen, that Ohio State's top ranking and look of dominance would be washed away with lunch pail Penn State in town.

Sure enough, the drizzle never let up all afternoon, and the soggy Ohio Stadium turf proved to be an equalizer of sorts as OSU never geared up its running game and previously deadly pass plays lost their timing.

But the Buckeyes, as relentless as the moisture from the sky, continued to play the role of champion and mustered up enough to sock Penn State 28-9. The gaudy yardage figures and All-American-like performances were not on display; big plays at key times were.

OSU head coach John Cooper, who improved to 4-2 against walking legend Joe Paterno, has been surprisingly comfortable with his team's position at the apex of the national polls all season, content with the idea that ugly wins will still pave a path to the Fiesta Bowl.

Why not prove his point in a game that opened the Big Ten season fittingly on national television and with enough mud and grime to make John Madden want to join Keith Jackson and Bob Griese in the booth?

The Buckeyes didn't come close to matching Nebraska's statement from a week before, when the Cornhuskers annihilated Washington 55-7, but no one seemed to mind.

Hey, this is Big Ten football, and a 19-point win over a league contender is going to have to be good enough.

"I don't worry about that," Cooper said afterward when asked if it was an ugly win, his red ball cap still soaked. "You can call it whatever kind of victory you want to. I thought it was a good, solid victory over the No. 7-ranked team. If you tell me before the game we're going to beat them like we did, I'll take it in a minute."

Added linebacker Joe Cooper, "This is why you come to Ohio State, to play teams like Penn State. And when it's muddy and all that, you just know it's going to be a smash-mouth game."

That became evident early on, when both teams proceeded to unearth the field in a scoreless first quarter. When the Lions continued to slow down play-makers Michael Wiley and David Boston and took a 3-0 lead in the second period, OSU and its fans knew it was time for the home team to turn the tide.

What ensued was a teamwide effort that produced touchdowns by linebacker Jerry Rudzinski on a fumble recovery, Wiley on a slant pass before the half, and Joe Cooper on a blocked punt recovery that put OSU back in command at 21-3. Penn State's only touchdown was set up when receiver Joe Nastasi made a deep over-the-shoulder catch against OSU All-American Antoine Winfield, not the



JEFF BREHM

LION TAMERS — Senior safety Damon Moore (13) shows his glee after splattering Penn State running back Cordell Mitchell in OSU's impressive win in Ohio Stadium. Na'il Diggs (32) and Andy Katzenmoyer (45) offer defensive support.

Buckeyes Say Ohio Pride Part Of What They're Fighting For

By MIKE WACHSMAN

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Under John Cooper, Ohio State has gained a national reputation. The roster is now littered with players from California, Texas, Florida, Illinois and many other states.

But there are still plenty of Ohioans doing their job to make the Buckeyes better, and it seemed only fitting that on a classic Ohio day — drizzle, cold and wind — the Buckeyes turned to their native sons to turn the game against Penn State.

Linebacker Jerry Rudzinski, a native of Kettering, opened things with a fumble recovery in the end zone, his first touchdown since his final high school game as an option quarterback at Kettering Alter. He was later

joined by central Ohioans Percy King and Joe Cooper, who teamed on a punt block and recovery to give the Buckeyes another score. Their schools — King prepped at Columbus Marion-Franklin, while Cooper is a Columbus Independence grad — have hooked up in some classic City League battles, but now they're working for a common cause.

And though he didn't score, receiver Dee Miller, a Springfield native, had another big day against Penn State, grabbing six passes for 108 yards.

All in all, Ohio spoke loud and clear in its battle with Pennsylvania.

"I think there's a little bit of state pride, especially

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COVER STORY: SINGING IN THE RAIN

Buckeyes Take Care Of Business

Continued From Page 1

kind of thing that happens every day.

"It was one of those days where with the conditions the way they were and facing a good football team, anything can happen," John Cooper said.

"You can't get too worried about the conditions and all that kind of stuff. If it's raining, it's raining on both sides of the field. But I don't think there's any question the weather was a factor in the way the game was played.

"They were set to stop our running game, there's no question about that. We really weren't able to get any big plays."

Tale Of Two Reactions

OSU managed only seven first downs rushing and 17 overall, but that was still nearly twice Penn State's first down total of nine. And while the Buckeyes were held well below the 500-yard barrier of total offense with 326, the Lions amassed only 181, netting just 3.1 yards per play.

Needless to say it was a defensive struggle, but that's to be expected on such a dreary day.

"When I woke up in the hotel this morning, I looked out the window and said, 'It's a good day for some Big Ten football,'" said OSU safety Percy King, who blocked the punt on the Cooper TD. "I knew everybody was going to be muddy and people were going to slip and fall."

Conversely, wide receiver Dee Miller knew he would be competing on a slowed-down track.

"I woke up and looked out the window and was like, 'Aw, man.' I saw the rain trickling in the street and knew we were going to have to adjust," he said.

Miller did, leading all pass catchers with six grabs for 108 yards. It was a nice follow-up for the senior, who had a career day in Happy Valley last year with eight receptions for 149 yards and a long touchdown.

"For some reason I just love playing against Penn State," he said. "Even when I didn't used to play, I just loved the atmosphere."

"Last year I had a real good game and I just wanted to come out and show that that was not a fluke. I made some catches and kept some drives going."

October Dandy

Miller isn't the only one who doesn't mind seeing Penn State's boring blue and white uniforms across the field, especially when it's in the Horseshoe.

Combined with a 24-6 win in the rain and snow in 1993 and the 38-7 spanking in 1996, the Buckeyes have now outscored the Nits 90-22 at home since PSU has joined the conference.

Paterno seemed mesmerized after the rout two years ago, and he was mightily impressed with the Buckeyes again this time, especially after being stymied on offense.

"They're good," he said. "They're quick. They tackle well in the open field. We tried to beat them deep, and then when we tried to run some hitches and things like that because they were blitzing, their corners played great."

"That's a good defensive football team. I thought they were good coming in, and I didn't see anything out there to change that."

In the preconference, OSU beat two ranked teams, but questions lingered as to how much the Buckeyes had been tested. How good Penn State is also remains to be seen, but certainly there was enough talent on field to alter the way Ohio State likes to play.

Joe Germaine threw his first interception of the season, and the OSU run game was basically shut down, but there was no need to panic. After all, the Lions may end up being the best of the lot that the Buckeyes have to face.

"Penn State is a good team, and they're not going to lose many games," said Cooper, who improved his coaching record in Big Ten games to 56-21-4. "Hopefully, by the way we played today, we showed we deserve this No. 1 ranking."

"I think we can play a little bit better offensively than what we played, but we did what we had to do to win the game. It was a real good, solid football game between two outstanding universities and

football teams."

Schedule Appears Kind

By handling Penn State and with the current underwhelming state of the Big Ten, it would be easy for the Buckeyes to relax and expect a smooth ride until Michigan invades Columbus Nov. 21.

For that very reason, they are promising to keep plugging toward greatness.

"If you think you're over the hump right now ... as soon as you feel good about your football team you better check your hole card," Cooper said.

"I just told our squad we're going to have a great week of practice, and I guarantee there won't be any letdown next week. We've got to get better."

That message seems to be well-received, which spells doom for an Illinois team that finally got to feel good about itself with a win over rival Northwestern.

OSU figures to be a multi-touchdown favorite Oct. 10 in Champaign, but the Buckeyes claim they won't come in complacent.

"Well, honestly, I think that Illinois is rated No. 1 right now," said tailback Joe Montgomery, who punctuated the win over Penn State with the final TD. "That's in my mind and the team's mind. We're not No. 1; they're No. 1."

"Anything can happen on any given Saturday. People don't understand. Just because you have the No. 1 ranking, that doesn't mean anything. They don't care if we have the No. 1 ranking. They're going to come in and try to knock us off."

As a team captain, Rudzinski plans on hammering home words of warning. He knows that with no slip-ups, the Buckeyes will be in position for the national championship game.

"We're going to keep worrying about ourselves, and if we keep winning all of



JEFF BREHM

UPLIFTING SCORE — Lineman Rob Murphy (left), fullback Matt Keller (23) and center Kurt Murphy (63) congratulate Michael Wiley after a second-quarter score that gave OSU a 14-3 halftime lead.

our games, we're going to be where we want to be."

Certainly the Buckeyes can't take too much for granted, especially with the Michigan game looming larger every week.

"When I land in Arizona, it will be real," left tackle Tyson Walter said. "Until then, it's not. It's just a figment of the media's imagination."

"It's a goal we're shooting for. We've said all along, since the Sugar Bowl, that the next bowl we want to go to is the Fiesta Bowl. We made a good step today and cleared a hurdle. Was it pretty? Not really. But we got it done."

Added cornerback Ahmed Plummer, "It's a huge win and the biggest game on our schedule to this point. But we've still got a point to prove. There are other teams out there playing just as good of football as we are."

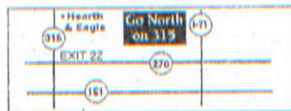
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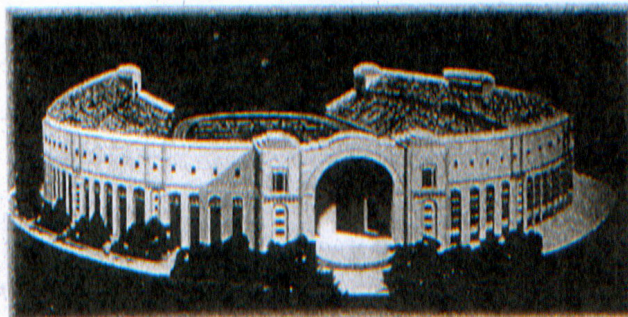
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OHIO STATE VS. PENN STATE

OSU 'Rains' Supreme

Defense, Special Teams Stand Tall As Buckeyes Top Penn State 28-9

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

While conditions were not favorable for offensive football, Ohio State's defense and special teams hardly minded the rain.

In fact, those two units reveled in it. OSU linebacker Jerry Rudzinski recovered a Penn State fumble in the end zone and teammate Percy King blocked a punt for a score as the top-ranked Buckeyes turned back No. 7 Penn State 28-9 before 93,479 rain-soaked fans Oct. 3 in Ohio Stadium.

"I'm really proud of our football team," said OSU coach John Cooper, whose Buckeyes improved to 4-0 overall by winning their Big Ten opener. "I thought our special teams play really improved from two weeks ago, and that may have been the thing that won us the game.

"We blocked a punt, Ken-Yon Rambo did a nice job returning punts, and our kickoff coverage was outstanding."

Where OSU's special teams had sputtered in the team's non-conference wins, nearly everything — save for a blocked field goal — came together against the Nittany Lions.

"One area of their team I wondered about was their special teams, and they were outstanding today," said PSU coach Joe Paterno.

The game was reminiscent of the 1993 game between the schools. That game, the first Big Ten meeting after Penn State joined the conference, was a physical contest played in a sleet/snowstorm. This game was played under steady showers. The conditions were partially to blame for OSU's slow start — the Buckeyes trailed 3-0 late in the first half.

But the defense turned in another command performance, limiting Penn State (3-1, 0-1) to 181 yards total offense and just 79 of those on the ground.

"It was a better day to play defense," said cornerback Antoine Winfield. "We knew they were going to try and run the ball at us. One of our goals was to keep them under 100 yards, and we did that."

Offensively, OSU's string of 500-yard games was snapped at three. But quarterback Joe Germaine braved the elements and completed 16 of 30 passes for 213 yards. He threw a touchdown pass to tailback Michael Wiley, but suffered his first interception of the year.

"We weren't very sharp today," Germaine said. "We had some spurts. We definitely can play a lot better. Our defense did a tremendous job. That blocked punt for a touchdown gave us some momentum and kind of took some pressure off us.

"It was a good team effort today."

Wiley found the turf — not to mention PSU's nine-man front — tough to run on. He finished with 62 yards on 19 carries. Backup Joe Montgomery rushed eight times for 40 yards, including a 1-yard touchdown run.

"They did play a nine-man front today," Wiley said. "They did a good job. The offense didn't get rolling as far as the ground game, but we passed the ball pretty well and got the job done today."

To that end, OSU flanker Dee Miller had a big day. He caught six passes for 108 yards.

As It Happened

Ohio State missed a big scoring opportunity on its second possession, driving 51 yards down to the PSU 21. The key play



JEFF BREHM

DON'T BOTHER — Punter Pat Pidgeon has no chance while trying to launch a punt past a hard-charging Percy King, whose rejection led directly to a touchdown. Tim Cheatwood (49) also was in pursuit.

was Wiley's 22-yard pickup. But he was stopped for a loss of two yards on third-and-1. OSU opted for Dan Stultz to attempt a 40-yard field goal, but the kick sailed wide left.

OSU's next possession ended similarly after the Buckeyes drove 47 yards down to the PSU 33. But Stultz's 50-yard field goal attempt was blocked by David Macklin and returned 10 yards to the PSU 47 by Anthony King. Stultz never had a chance on the play as the snap was high, causing him to pause before attempting the kick.

Penn State capitalized on this break, moving 28 yards in six plays before settling for Travis Forney's 42-yard field goal and a 3-0 lead with 8:08 left in the first half.

Things looked as bleak as the weather for OSU on its next possession when it was forced to punt. PSU took over on its own 13. On second down there, quarterback Kevin Thompson faked a handoff and looked to pass on a naked bootleg near his own goal line.

As he took the ball back to throw it, it came out of his hand. He was hit immediately by blitzing OSU linebacker Jerry Rudzinski, who scrambled to fall on the ball in the back of the end zone for a touchdown.

"That was the big play in the ball game," Cooper said. "We had a blitz called and Jerry came untouched. That play really woke us up."

Rudzinski said Thompson's eyes widened in disbelief when he closed in on him.

"I don't think he was expecting me," he said. "I just came free that time. I was lucky to read that, and we got six points off of that."

"I just saw the ball in the end zone. However it popped out, I felt the pressure paid a big part on that play."

Stultz's PAT kick gave the Buckeyes a 7-3 lead with 3:55 left in the half.

Ohio State regained possession after a Penn State punt with 1:48 left. Rambo gave the Buckeyes good field position at their own 49-yard line with a 24-yard punt return.

OSU went into its two-minute offense, needing eight plays to traverse the remaining 51 yards to take a 14-3 lead just before halftime. Germaine hit Miller for gains of 16, 19 and 11 yards on this drive. The last one converted a fourth-and-8 situation at the PSU 33.

Three plays later, Germaine hit Wiley on a circle route out of the backfield for the 20-yard score. Wiley got behind PSU linebacker Mac Morrison and dove at the goal line to avoid safety James Boyd's shoe-stringing tackle attempt.

"It was a halfback option (pattern)," Wiley said. "I had the choice to either go inside or outside. They were playing Cover-2 deep. I was one-on-one with the linebacker. I faked outside and went

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OHIO STATE VS. PENN STATE

inside.
 "He made a great pass, and I just held on tight and ran into the end zone."

The touchdown, coming with just 23 seconds left in the half, put an exclamation point on the first 30 minutes.

Then the Buckeyes scored off Penn State's first possession of the second half.

Safety Damon Moore, who joined linebacker Na'il Diggs in leading OSU with seven tackles, corralled PSU's Joe Nastasi for a 9-yard loss on a reverse. That pinned the Nittany Lions back at their own 8-yard line for fourth down.

PSU's Pat Pidgeon attempted a punt, but King came unblocked off the left side and smothered it. Teammate Joe Cooper pounced on the ball in the end zone for the touchdown to push the lead to 21-3 with 12:44 left in the third quarter.

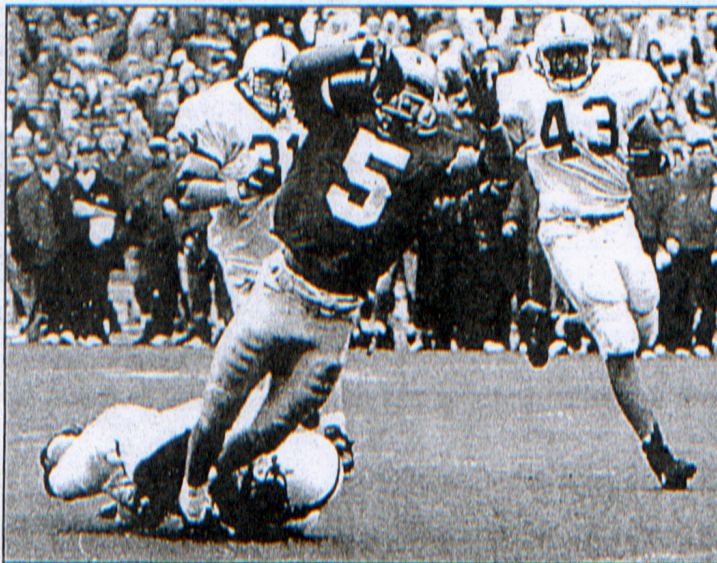
"(Assistant coach Jim) Heacock saw something on the film and Joe Cooper was moving around," King said. "He was trying to get their punt protection to switch up and to scheme them."

"Fortunately they end up blocking the wrong people. It worked and we got the block."

Penn State's lone touchdown was set up later in the third when Germaine suffered his first pick of the year. He was throwing a slant to David Boston, but Macklin made a great play to step in front of the pass and tip it to himself, putting PSU in business at the OSU 38.

On first down, Thompson threw down the right sideline to Nastasi for a 37-yard gain to the OSU 1. Fullback Mike Cerimele then powered in for the touchdown.

PSU then attempted a two-point con-



JEFF BREHM

QUICK SIX — Unable to break off any big plays from the backfield, OSU's Michael Wiley still makes an impact with a stretching touchdown just before halftime. In the area but too late are PSU linebackers Mac Morrison (left) and Brandon Short (43).

version, but Thompson's pass to Nastasi was incomplete. Still, PSU had trimmed the lead to 21-9 with 9:41 left in the third.

OSU's final touchdown was set up by an interception as well. Linebacker Andy

Katzenmoyer hit Thompson as he threw, and cornerback Ahmed Plummer made a sliding grab of a deep pass intended for Chafie Fields at the OSU 39.

The Buckeyes needed four plays to cover the 61 yards. On first down, Germaine went deep down the left sideline to Miller for 34 yards. Montgomery took it the rest of the way with gains of 6, 20 and the touchdown of 1 yard to extend the

margin to 28-9 with 3:08 left in the third.
 "When I saw the end and the linebacker split down, I knew it was going to be one-on-one with me and the DB," said Montgomery, who shrugged off PSU safety Shawn Lee to get the score. "All over again, I felt if I can't get through (him), I can't feed my family."

Penn State went to Rashard Casey at quarterback in the fourth quarter, but the Lions never really threatened to score after that.

Meanwhile, OSU was content to keep the ball on the ground and shorten the game.

Game Notes

- Defensive tackle Ryan Pickett made his first career start in place of Clinton Wayne, who had missed some practice time due to a knee injury. Pickett notched two tackles, including one for a loss.

Wayne did play, however, as part of OSU's defensive front rotation.

"Ryan started because Clinton's knee had been bothering him," defensive coordinator Fred Pagac said. "But I think Ryan and Mike Collins and all of those kids are really playing well right now."

- Linebacker Courtland Bullard saw his first action of the year after recovering from a lingering groin pull.

- King notched his third career blocked kick, while Rudzinski and Cooper both scored their first career touchdowns.

"A lot of things went through my mind in a short amount of time on that play," Rudzinski said. "But I looked up and looked straight at the referee to see if his arms went up or if it was an incomplete pass."

"He was right there and called it a fumble. It was just a lifelong dream to score in Ohio Stadium."

- OSU improved to 4-2 in Big Ten games played between the schools — including a perfect 3-0 at Ohio Stadium — since 1993.

Penn State retains the series lead over OSU at 8-6, although Paterno — a winner of 301 games in his 33 years at Penn State — dropped to 4-6 lifetime against the Buckeyes.

- OSU's record under Cooper against ranked teams improved to 23-22-3. This marks the first time that record has moved above .500 in his tenure.

The Buckeyes also improved to 7-9-1 against top-10-ranked teams under Cooper.

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BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 28, Penn State 9

OSU quarterback Joe Germaine on hooking up with flanker Dee Miller six times for 108 yards: "Dee's the kind of guy who has a knack for getting himself open. He runs great routes. We had a good game plan coming in for the passing game. Put those two things together and it was pretty successful for us."

Miller on what was working for the OSU passing game: "We've been running the digs real successfully against them. They were playing a lot of Cover-2 with the safety back on the hash, so we felt we could get that play. On fourth down we called a dig play to my side, Joe put it right there, and it was an easy catch for me."

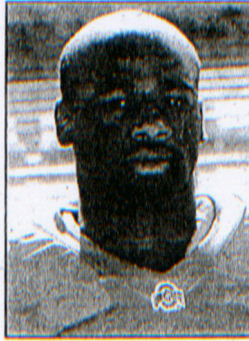
OSU tailback Michael Wiley on how difficult it was to establish the run: "We definitely knew we had to run the ball. They put nine men on the line and on every play somebody came unblocked. They played a great game. No. 11 (LaVar Arrington) had a great game and No. 43 (Brandon Short) had a great game."

Wiley on how his Heisman Trophy hopes were affected by his 62-yard rushing performance: "I really wasn't worried about the Heisman talk. I just went out and played a good game. Their defense played a great game. I don't think I was too much concerned about the Heisman out there."

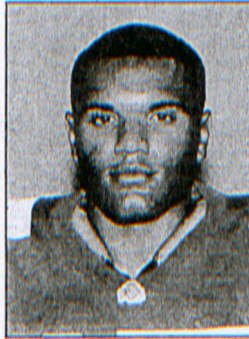
OSU safety Percy King on how important it was to score on his blocked punt early in the second half: "It was great, especially in their first series of the second half. That set the tone for the half. That took the momentum away from them."

OSU linebacker Joe Cooper shared his thoughts on recovering King's blocked punt for a touchdown: "It was a real great feeling. I thought Percy had the touchdown originally, but he lost the ball. I was just trying to secure it as fast as I could."

Penn State running back Cordell Mitchell on what the Nittany Lions felt after King's blocked punt: "We never felt like we were out of it. We gave them two touchdowns, basically."



Joe Cooper



Percy King

PSU coach Joe Paterno summed up his perspective of the game: "I thought both defenses played well. You saw two great defensive football teams out there. If you take 14 points off the board that we gave them, that's a tough football game."

OSU tailback Joe Montgomery on the problems posed by the poor conditions: "We have a lot of weapons on this team, but at the same time we knew it was somewhat limited in what we could do because of the field conditions."

OSU linebacker Na'il Diggs on pacing himself after making nifty tackles on two early Penn State plays: "I knew I couldn't get ahead of myself and make a bunch of plays early and then do nothing the rest of the game. I had to stay focused. I got very excited, but I knew I had to stay calm and relax."

Montgomery on how loud the Ohio Stadium crowd was for the Big Ten opener: "The crowd was extra motivation, it was like having another man on the field. When they have the ball and they can't hear the plays, you know it's going good. A couple of times I couldn't hear the plays and I said, 'Joe, check, I can't hear you.' The crowd is something else here."

Penn State quarterback Kevin Thompson shared what happened on his fumble, which resulted in an OSU touchdown when Jerry Rudzinski recovered it in the end zone: "I was trying to get rid of it real quick out in the flat. It just slipped out of my hands and fell right backwards. I was thinking, 'Please go out of the end zone.' It wasn't a throw. It wasn't part of the throwing action. It's just one of those things that happens, and we have to move on."

Penn State linebacker Brandon Short shared his feelings on the loss: "I am extremely disappointed. We felt like we were capable of coming in here and winning. But they just came up with the big plays when they had to."

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COVER STORY: OHIO PRIDE

OSU's No. 1 Team Has 16 Starters From Ohio

Continued From Page 1

today," said tackle Tyson Walter, a Chagrin Falls native. "We knew some guys from Ohio we played with in the Big 33 game, and they were over with Penn State.

"You can say to them, 'Maybe you should have stayed at home and played for Ohio State.'"

Playing for your school is one thing, but when state pride is involved, too, it becomes even bigger.

"It's a big deal to me because I'm from Ohio," Rudzinski said. "Especially when we're in the Horseshoe, I want to represent the state well. Whether we play Michigan or Indiana or Illinois or Penn State — someone in the Midwest — we want to prove to people that we're the best. I'm sure they're thinking the same thing. That makes for some neat rivalries within the league."

The breakdown of Ohioans for the Buckeyes is pretty impressive.

The entire starting secondary — judged by some as the nation's best — is from within the borders with Antoine Winfield from Akron, Damon Moore from Fostoria, Ahmed Plummer from Cincinnati, and Gary Berry from Columbus. Also, two of the three starters

at linebacker — Rudzinski and Andy Katzenmoyer from Westerville — are Ohio boys.

Sophomore Rodney Bailey is the only Ohioan among the front-line starters on defense, but reserves Matt LaVrar and Mike Collins are also trying to show their state pride.

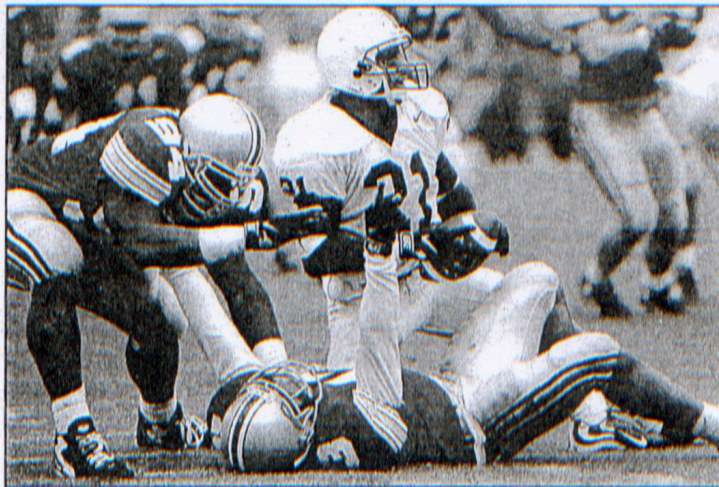
Offensively, the entire line is made up of Ohioans, with Rob Murphy (Cincinnati), Kurt Murphy (Columbus), Ben Gilbert (Lancaster) and Brooks Burris (Logan) joining Walter. Tight end John Lumpkin (Trotwood), fullback Matt Keller (Mason) and kicker Dan Stultz (Orrville) round out the Ohio starters. All told, 16 of OSU's 24 starters are home grown.

The fact so many Ohioans came up big against Penn State made for a few puffed-up chests.

"We have a lot of pride in being from Ohio, especially playing teams like Penn State, where most everybody is from Pennsylvania," King said. "Every freshman class plays them in the Big 33 game. As we get older and to be No. 1 in the country and to be from Ohio kind of unifies us. It gives us a good rallying point sometimes."

Putting Up A Border Patrol

Since Penn State entered the Big Ten



JEFF BREHM

OHIO CONNECTION — Several home-grown players came up big in the win over rival Penn State. Here, Ohioans Damon Moore and Rodney Bailey celebrate after Moore stuffs an end around by Joe Nastasi, a native of Woodbury, Pa.

in 1993, it has been the one school that has gone head to head with Ohio State for more Ohio and national football prospects than any other.

Ohio State has held its own, luring the likes of Katzenmoyer and Canton McKinley standouts Jamar Martin and Kenny Peterson away from Penn State.

But through the years Penn State has scored nicely in Ohio with the likes of tailbacks Ki-Jana Carter (Westerville) and Curtis Enis (Union City) and wide receiver Joe Jurevicius (Cleveland). Two Ohio products, safety Derek Fox of Canton and nose tackle Bob Jones of Wadsworth, started against OSU.

"There are a lot of them we'd like to have," OSU coach John Cooper said. "I'm sure we have a lot of guys Joe (Paterno) would like to have."

"They've got players from Ohio every year. They've got one commitment (Warren Harding's Deryck Toles) already this year."

"Mike Buzin from Cleveland St. Ignatius was a big-time recruit. We tried

hard to get Marc Kielmeyer (a prep teammate of Katzenmoyer). Sam Crenshaw (Youngstown), we tried real hard to get him. They got Lewe Sessions (from Troy).

"Derek Fox, his uncle (Tim) played for us. We did everything we could to try and get him to change his mind. They got Tom Gholston out of Cincinnati last year."

"We didn't try real hard on (Joe) Hartings (St. Henry) because his brother played there."

In recent years, however, Cooper and his staff have done a respectable job of keeping Ohio's very best for themselves.

"I think we've done a better job of keeping our players at home than we used to," Cooper said. "Michigan doesn't have nearly as many players from Ohio that they used to. They got (Charles) Woodson."

"Unfortunately, some of the players we've lost like Woodson, Enis and Carter have turned out to be great players."

"They work hard in this state, particularly in the Youngstown area. That area is actually closer to State College than Columbus."

Cooper said he understands why top prospects look at Penn State.

"If a kid in this state is going to leave the area, he is probably going to go to Michigan or Penn State," he said. "Notre Dame has only gotten one or two players that we've really wanted. Penn State, we've gone head to head with them more than anybody and lost more kids to them than anybody, and vice versa."

"I've always said it helped them in recruiting when they came into the Big Ten. They already had the East Coast. All of a sudden, you're playing Big Ten schools and you're on national TV. That's helped them. They even have a few players from Michigan."

OSU and Penn State have butted heads on a number of national prospects, including linebacker Shamar Finney of North Carolina, who eventually signed with Penn State.

Cooper was asked recently who he would take off Penn State's roster.

"If I could have any of their players? I could go down the list. I'd like to have that big old Kareem McKenzie, 6-7, 313, a sophomore who starts for them," he said.

"Floyd Wedderburn, 6-7, 328, I spent a little bit of time in his home. Ryan Fagan, LaVar Arrington, Brandon Short, Courtney Brown — do you want me to go on?"

"But our guys aren't too bad, either," he said.

BSB editor Steve Helwagen contributed to this story.

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The Numbers Game

Ohio State 28, Penn State 9

Oct. 3, 1998 — Ohio Stadium, Columbus, Ohio

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
PENN STATE	0	3	6	0	- 9
OHIO STATE	0	14	14	0	- 28

Second Quarter

PSU — Forney, 42 field goal 8:08; 7 plays, 38 yards, 2:19
 OSU — Rudzinski, fumble recovery in end zone (Stultz kick) 3:55

OSU — Wiley, 20 pass from Germaine (Stultz kick) 0:23; 8 plays, 51 yards, 1:25

Third Quarter

OSU — Cooper, recovered blocked punt in end zone (Stultz kick) 12:44

PSU — Cerimele, 1 run (pass failed) 9:41; 2 plays, 38 yards, 0:28

OSU — Montgomery, 1 run (Stultz kick) 3:08; 4 plays, 61 yards, 1:17

Att. — 93,479

Weather — Overcast, rain, 51 degrees. Wind 5-10 mph from SSW

Team Statistics

	PSU	OSU
First Downs	9	17
Rushing	5	7
Passing	4	9
Penalty	0	1
Rushes-Yards	30-79	45-113
Passing Yards	102	213
Passes (Att.-Comp.-Int.)	29-13-1	30-16-1
Offensive Plays	59	75
Total Net Yards	181	326
Third Down Efficiency	2-15	8-18
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-1	1-2
Punts	10-37.6	6-38.5
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	5-1
Penalties	6-47	5-48
Time of Possession	26:03	33:57

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) — PSU: C.Mitchell 14-81; Casey 2-13; Easy 2-6; Cerimele 4-5; McCoo 3-2; Harris 2(-5); Nastasi 1(-9); Thompson 2(-14). OSU: Wiley 19-62; Montgomery 8-40; Germaine 7-17; Keller 5-5; Wells 2-2; Combs 2(-1); Garcia 2(-12).

PASSING (Att.-Comp.-Int.-Yds.-TD) — PSU: Thompson 20-11-1-106-0; Casey 9-2-0(-4)-0. OSU: Germaine 30-16-1-213-1.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) — PSU: C.Jones 4-4; Nastasi 2-59; Fields 2-21; McCoo 2-5; C.Mitchell 2(-5); Cu.Brown 1-18. OSU: Miller 6-108; Wiley 5-31; Boston 2-37; Martin 1-17; Lumpkin 1-15; Montgomery 1-5.

PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) — PSU: Pidgeon 9-41.8-52; Team 1-0. OSU: Bartholomew 6-38.5-47.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — PSU: Branch 4-17. OSU: Rambo 8-54.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — PSU: Branch 2-26; Pettigrew 2-20; McCoo 1-17. OSU: Wells 2-40; Rambo 1-21.

FUMBLE RECOVERIES — PSU: Arrington. OSU: Rudzinski.

INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) — PSU: Macklin 1-0. OSU: Plummer 1-0.

SACKS — PSU: Sciolli 2-11; Short 2-7; Arrington 1-2. OSU: Rudzinski 1-12; Moore 1-1.

TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) — PSU: Sciolli 3-14; Short 3-9; Arrington 2-4; Kurpelkis 2-4; Bell 1-3; King 1-2; Morrison 1-2; Adams 1-1; Lee 1-1. OSU: Moore 2-10; Diggs 2-8; Plummer 2-8; Katzenmoyer 2-2; Rudzinski 1-12; Brown 1-6; Pickett 1-6; Johnson 1-5.

TACKLES (Solo-Assist-Tot.) — PSU: Arrington 4-7-11; Short 3-5-8; Adams 3-3-6; Fox 3-3-6; King 3-2-5; Kurpelkis 2-3-5; Lee 0-5-5; Fleischhauer 2-2-4; Boyd 2-2-4; Sciolli 2-2-4; Morrison 1-3-4; Graham 2-1-3; Daniels 1-2-3; Gatten 1-2-3; Wallace 1-2-3; Pettigrew 2-0-2; Jue 1-1-2; Co.Brown 0-2-2; Bell 0-2-2; Macklin 1-0-1; Sandusky 1-0-1; B.Jones 0-1-1; Joyner 0-1-1; Parmer 0-1-1; Kennis 0-1-1; C.Jones 0-1-1; Klemmeyer 0-1-1. OSU: Moore 5-2-7; Diggs 2-5-7; Plummer 5-1-6; Winfield 4-2-6; Katzenmoyer 4-1-5; Rudzinski 3-2-5; Brown 2-2-4; Berry 1-3-4; Johnson 2-1-3; Bellisari 2-0-2; Houser 2-0-2; Ross 1-1-2; Pickett 0-2-2; Cooper 1-0-1; Bartholomew 1-0-1; Keller 1-0-1; Wayne 0-1-1; LaVrar 0-1-1; King 0-1-1; Bullard 0-1-1.

PLAYERS IN THE GAME — PENN STATE: Starters: Defense, Co.Brown, Fleischhauer, Sciolli, Arrington, Short, Morrison, Macklin, King, Lee, Fox, Pettigrew. Offense, Fields, Wedderburn, McKenzie, Cole, Fagan, Grant, Cu.Brown, Thompson, C.Mitchell, Cerimele, Nastasi. Reserves: Branch, Graham, Boyd, C.Jones, McCoo, Jue, Casey, Crenshaw, Forney, Kroell, Adams, Harris, Joyner, Dawkins, McFee, Kennis, Easy, Kurpelkis, Gatten, Pidgeon, Sandusky, Tincher, Daniels, Finney, Ransom, Bell, Sturdiven, Spano, Parmer, Caruso, Blick, Buzin, Watkins, Wallace, Stewart, Luke, Klemmeyer, B.Jones. OHIO STATE: Starters: Offense, Boston, Walter, R.Murphy, K.Murphy, Gilbert, Burris, Lumpkin, Germaine, Keller, Wiley, Miller, Defense, Bailey, Brown, Pickett, Johnson, Diggs, Katzenmoyer, Rudzinski, Winfield, Berry, Moore, Plummer. Reserves: Mitchell, Rambo, Bellisari, Cooper, Garcia, King, Clements, McClellan, Cacchio, Wells, Ott, Montgomery, Ross, Martin, Bartholomew, Griffin, Combs, Stultz, LaVrar, Cheatwood, Cotton, Hopkins, Bullard, Gurr, Bentley, Fleming, Elford, Germany, Wisniewski, Payne, Houser, Wayne, Homa, Eisenhard, Collins, Queen.

Season Statistics

1998 Game-By-Game

Date	Opponent (AP Rank*)	W/L	Score	Crowd
Sept. 5	(1) at West Virginia (11)	W	34-17	68,409
Sept. 12	(1) TOLEDO	W	49-0	93,149
Sept. 19	(1) MISSOURI (21)	W	35-14	93,269
Oct. 3	(1) PENN STATE (7)	W	28-9	93,479
Oct. 10	at Illinois			
Oct. 17	MINNESOTA			
Oct. 24	at Northwestern			
Oct. 31	at Indiana			
Nov. 7	MICHIGAN STATE			
Nov. 14	at Iowa			
Nov. 21	MICHIGAN			

*Number in parentheses before opponent's name is OSU's game day AP ranking; number after opponent's name is opponent's game day AP ranking.

Team Statistics

	OSU	Opp
First Downs	95	49
Rushing	49	27
Passing	44	20
Penalty	2	2
Avg. Per Game/Rush	234.0	113.6
Avg. Per Game/Pass	245.5	110.6
Total Offense	1018	896
Total Plays	304	245
Average Per Game	479.5	224.0
Average Per Play	6.3	3.7
Penalties-Yards	29-251	17-131
Fumbles-Lost	16-4	4-3
3rd Down Efficiency	32-65	10-55
Percentage	.492	.182
4th Down Efficiency	2-3	2-6
Percentage	.667	.333
Sacks	6-36	9-47
Time of Possession Avg.	31:23	28:37

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	38	51	36	21	146	36.5
Opponents	3	24	6	7	40	10.0

Attendance	Games	Total	Avg.
Home	3	279,897	93,299
Away	1	68,409	68,409
Total	3	348,306	87,076

Individual Statistics

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Michael Wiley	73	562	7.7	5	76
Joe Montgomery	36	201	5.6	3	24
Jonathan Wells	17	79	4.6	1	14
Matt Keller	10	42	4.2	0	12
Derek Combs	15	39	2.6	1	12
Dee Miller	2	14	7.0	0	10
Joe Germaine	10	9	0.6	0	22
Jermion Jackson	2	8	4.0	0	4
Jamar Martin	2	4	2.0	0	4
Jerry Westbrook	1	3	3.0	0	3
Brent Bartholomew	1	-4	-4.0	0	0
Mark Garcia	3	-21	-7.0	0	0
OSU Totals	178	936	5.3	10	76
OPP Totals	132	454	3.4	2	34

Receiving	No.	Yards	Avg.	TD	Long
David Boston	23	333	14.5	2	43
Dee Miller	20	321	16.0	2	42
Michael Wiley	8	38	4.8	1	20
Reggie Germany	7	109	15.6	2	47
John Lumpkin	5	91	18.2	0	28
Jimmy Redmond	2	25	12.5	0	15
Jamar Martin	2	23	11.5	0	17
Dan Warnke	2	21	10.5	0	17
Jerry Westbrook	1	7	7.0	0	7
Joe Montgomery	1	5	5.0	0	5
Matt Keller	1	5	5.0	0	5
Steve Wisniewski	1	3	3.0	0	3
Derek Combs	1	1	1.0	0	1
OSU Totals	74	982	13.3	7	47
OPP Totals	57	442	7.8	2	49

Scoring	TD	EPK	EPP	EPR	FG	PTS
Michael Wiley	6	—	—	—	—	36
Dan Stultz	0	18-18	—	—	—	49
Joe Montgomery	3	—	—	—	—	18

	2	—	1	—	—	14
David Boston	2	—	1	—	—	14
Reggie Germany	2	—	—	—	—	12
Dee Miller	2	—	—	—	—	12
Derek Combs	1	—	—	—	—	6
Jonathan Wells	1	—	—	—	—	6
Jerry Rudzinski	1	—	—	—	—	6
Joe Cooper	1	—	—	—	—	6
OSU Totals	19	18-18	1	0	—	146
OPP Totals	5	4-4	0	0	—	40

Passing	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	INT	TD	Rating
Joe Germaine	66	108	.611	875	1	6	145.8
Mark Garcia	5	11	.455	83	0	1	138.8
Steve Bellisari	3	5	.600	24	0	0	100.3
Austin Moherman	0	1	.000	0	0	0	0.0
Jonathan Wells	0	1	.000	0	0	0	0.0
OSU Totals	74	126	.587	982	1	7	140.9
OPP Totals	57	113	.504	442	7	2	76.9

FG Distance	0-39	40-49	50+	Total	
Dan Stultz	1-1	3-4	0-3	0-1	4-9
OSU Totals	1-1	3-4	0-3	0-1	4-9
OPP Totals	0-0	0-1	2-2	0-0	2-3

Punting	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Brent Bartholomew	20	858	43.3	0	56
OSU Totals	20	866	43.3	0	56
OPP Totals	34	1389	40.9	2	62

Interceptions	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Ahmed Plummer	2	0	0.0	0	0
Na'il Diggs	1	18	18.0	0	18
Percy King	1	3	3.0	0	3
Tim Cheatwood	1	0	0.0	0	0
David Mitchell	1	0	0.0	0	0
Damon Moore	1	0	0.0	0	0
OSU Totals	7	21	3.0	0	18
OPP Totals	1	0	0.0	0	0

Punt Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Ken-Yon Rambo	11	62	5.6	0	24
David Boston	8	77	9.6	0	37
Gary Berry	3	14	4.7	0	6
Percy King	1	8	8.0	0	0
Joe Cooper	0	0	0.0	1	0
OSU Totals	23	161	7.0	1	37
OPP Totals	11	67	6.1	0	23

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Ken-Yon Rambo	3	72	24.0	0	26
Jonathan Wells	3	63	21.0	0	23
Michael Wiley	2	48	24.0	0	28
Reggie Germany	1	14	14.0	0	14
OSU Totals	9	197	22.0	0	28
OPP Totals	22	356	16.2	0	25

Defensive Leaders	Solo	Ass.	Tot.	TFL	Yds.	Sacks
Damon Moore	19	6	25	3-11	1-1	—
Andy Katzenmoyer	19	4	23	3-4	—	—
Antoine Winfield	17	6	23	2-10	1-6	—
Na'il Diggs	13	10	23	4-12	—	—
Jerry Rudzinski	12	7	19	3-26	2-22	—
Brent Johnson	9	5	14	2-6	—	—
Joe Cooper	9	5	14	1-3	—	—
Gary Berry	8	6	14	2-14	1-10	—
Central McClellan	6	7	13	—	—	—
Ahmed Plummer	10	1	11	2-8	—	—
Mike Collins	5	3	8	1-3	1-3	—
Joe Brown	3	5	8	1-6	—	—
Ryan Pickett	5	2	7	1-6	—	—
David Mitchell	4	3	7	—	—	—
Steve Bellisari	5	1	6	—	—	—
Tim Cheatwood	3	3	6	1-3	—	—
Derek Ross	3	2	5	—	—	—
Jeff Wilson	4	0	4	—	—	—
Jason Ott	3	1	4	1-1	1-1	—
Percy King	3	1	4	—	—	—