

# BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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Vol. 32, No. 6

"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

Oct. 13, 2012

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# Popped Corn

*Ohio State Earns  
Marquee Victory  
Against Nebraska*



JOSH WINSLOW PHOTOS

**LOWERING THE BOOM** – Ohio State senior defensive end John Simon (54, above) was one of several Buckeyes to make an impact – literally – on Nebraska quarterback Taylor Martinez (3, above), much to the delight of OSU defenders Ryan Shazier (10), Etienne Sabino (6) and Johnathan Hankins (52), all of whom congratulated Simon on his sack (left).

By **MARCUS HARTMAN**  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

If the last game of September was one small step for the Ohio State football team, the first game of October just might turn out to be a giant leap for Urban Meyer's program.

Ohio State's 17-16 win at Michigan State on Sept. 29 had Meyer, the national championship-winning coach in his first season leading the Buckeyes, beaming as he embraced everyone he could find after the final seconds ticked off at Spartan Stadium. He told reporters afterward how thrilled he was to get his first Big Ten win under his belt, but the words were unnecessary for anyone who merely saw the look on his face.

Two days later, though, his mood was different as preparations for No. 21 Nebraska began. After doing his usual postgame film review, Meyer was still grateful for the victory but sounding like a man still not satisfied.

He spoke almost regretfully about not being able to put more points on the board in the first five games, about the inconsistency of his ballyhooed spread offense, the one born in Ohio at Bowling Green but known for lighting up scoreboards in the West at Utah and the South at Florida.

"I have a great message for the fans," Meyer said Oct. 1. "We appreciate what they've gone through the first four weeks (at home). We are getting better, and I think they're going to enjoy watching their home

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



## Blame Falls On Smith

Per Mark Rea's Final Thoughts in the Oct. 6 issue ("Editor's Notebook"), I'll tell you who the "genius" (and I use that word loosely) is that decided last year's team should play in a bowl. His name is Gene Smith.

Anyone who doesn't think Smith was running the entire football program last season is delusional. He wanted to make sure that his buddies Dan Herron and DeVier Posey got "rewarded" for having to serve suspensions and miss chunks of their senior year.

Remember how he whined that Posey's extended ban was too harsh? Baloney, Gene. Neither of those two should have been allowed back on the team, but do you seriously think Luke Fickell would have been able to pull the trigger on that kind of decision?

All the selfish individuals, minus Terrelle Pryor, who helped get the team into the NCAA pit that they are in now got to play in a worthless bowl game. Teams that finish 6-6 don't deserve bowl games, no matter who you are. I agree with Mark – a one-year post-season ban was coming. Take it last year for an undeserving 6-6 team with troublemakers on the roster.

Keep in mind that not only does this year's team deserve a bowl game (although none is forthcoming), they'll miss out on almost a month of extra sanctioned practice to lay the groundwork for next season. And somehow after all this, after OSU getting hit with the second harshest penalty the NCAA can levy, Smith is somehow still employed as the athletic director.

**Joe Hylton**  
Hilliard, Ohio

## Meyer Ran It Up

Sportsmanship is obviously one thing Urban Meyer did not discover in his one-year sabbatical from coaching college football.

I do not understand his philosophy of attempting to score meaningless touchdowns with less than a minute to play, especially in a year where we are not bowl-eligible and there is no incentive to impress voters of various polls.

There will be a game sometime in the future where the score will be piled on the Buckeyes and we'll have no one to blame but ourselves – or more specifically Coach Meyer.

**Marc Tobias**  
Lima, Ohio

## Needs Some Aggression

I am told that crowd is very chewy and greasy. Personally, I hope I get put into a position to eat some.

However, the Luke Fickell and Mike Vrabel defensive alignments place the cornerbacks 5 to 8 yards off the line of scrimmage. Too many drives are kept alive by the quick out for 5 or more yards.

The tackling is improving and the rebuild of the entire team is looking very good. I just don't see any improvement in stopping the quick out.

Vrabel and Fickell are the men orchestrating the defensive deployment. Come on, have a little faith in your cornerbacks.

**Don Goss**  
Cortland, Ohio

## Tressel Still Overrated

I must agree with Larry C. Hansgen (BSB Letters, Oct. 6). Jim Tressel had Michigan's

number. But the three years under Rich Rodriguez, they were really bad and the remaining six years Michigan was good maybe two of those years.

There's no denying Tressel milked that national title (with John Cooper's players) for the rest of his tenure with the Buckeyes. Mr. Hansgren, after winning the national title, name me one top-10 team Tressel beat, not to mention how he got wasted against Florida and LSU. I don't think Oregon was in the top-10 in the loss to OSU in the Rose Bowl.

For a coach to say the punt is the most important play in the game (and the field goal), to lose to really bad Illinois, Southern California at home against true freshman Matt Barkley, Texas at home when they had the game won – I could go on how he lost to every good team he played and many times barely beat nonconference nobodies.

Tressel could recruit, but with outstanding talent on board he still could not beat the big boys.

**Rich Foust**  
Troy, Ohio

*(Oregon was ranked No. 7 prior to its 2010 Rose Bowl loss to Ohio State. Ed.)*

*If you would like to express an opinion concerning Ohio State University sports, please send your letter to BSB Letters, P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, OH 43212, or email it to [bsb@buckeyesports.com](mailto:bsb@buckeyesports.com) for use in BSB. Letters must be signed and include the writer's hometown and a daytime telephone number for verification. Publication priority will be given to those letters that are brief, and we reserve the right to edit letters for publication.*

## BUCKEYE SPORTS .COM FAN POLL

Go to [www.BuckeyeSports.com](http://www.BuckeyeSports.com) and visit the Ask The Insiders forum to check out the next poll. Or, starting this season, check out Buckeye Sports Bulletin on Facebook to find the poll as well. Results will be printed in the next edition of BSB.

**Will OSU be 10-0 after the next four games?**

**Yes:**

**92.0 percent**

**No:**

**9.0 percent**

*Poll ran on Oct. 7*

"I'm glad we have Purdue at home because they always play us tough. I think Meyer keeps the guys focused and we do go into the Wisconsin game 10-0."

– HBBuck

"I will say, we have a little problem with spread teams that dink and dunk. Indiana does that very well. Must tackle."

– MagicBuc

"I vote no. I think it's more likely that we lose one of the next four games than we lose one of the last two. Purdue and Penn State could surprise us. Forty-nine percent chance of being 10-0 come Nov. 4."

– Kurt23

## From The Pages Of BSB

### 30 Years Ago – 1982

Wisconsin stunned Ohio State, 6-0, in Ohio Stadium, the Badgers' first win ever in the storied venue.

That was not the only negative note associated with the Buckeyes' loss. Earle Bruce's crew fell to 2-3 for the first time since 1967, lost its third straight game for the first time since 1971, lost a third straight game in Ohio Stadium for the first time ever and failed to draw a sellout crowd for the first time since 1968.

UW running back John Williams scored the only touchdown of the game on a 1-yard run in the first quarter, and Ohio State defender Jerome Foster blocked Mark Doran's ensuing extra point.

The OSU Ice Rink underwent some cosmetic changes over the summer, including a new interior color scheme featuring a dark brown and white paint job for the ticket lobby.

### 25 Years Ago – 1987

Indiana ended 36 years of frustration and a 0-30-1 stretch against Ohio State by scoring 21 unanswered points in the second half for a 31-10 shocker over the Buckeyes in rain-drenched Columbus.

"I've been associated (with Ohio State) since I came in as a freshman in 1949, and it's got to be the darkest day I've seen in Ohio State football," a solemn Bruce told reporters afterward.

IU quarterback Dave Schnell completed 15 of 20 passes for 200 yards and two touchdowns while Anthony Thompson ran 34 times for 126 yards and a score of his own as the Hoosiers dominated all aspects of the game.

The Buckeyes managed just 264 yards compared to Indiana's 405.

### 20 Years Ago – 1992

"It must be a jinx," OSU fifth-year senior cornerback Bryan Cook said after taking part in a fifth consecutive loss to Illinois, this one by an 18-16 count at Ohio Stadium.

That the Fighting Illini's efforts seemed particularly charmed this time was a result of two Buckeye drives ending at the 1-yard line, including one on an Eddie George fumble that was returned 96 yards for a touchdown by Illinois defensive back Jeff Arneson for the game's first score.

Later in the game, OSU fullback Jeff Cothran appeared to break the plane of the goal line but was not awarded a score, and on the next play George fumbled the ball away again.

Ohio State also surrendered a safety in the contest.

Despite all that, the Buckeyes could have won the game had dependable kicker Tim Williams' 44-yard field goal not sailed wide left in the final minute.

It all added up to drop Ohio State to 0-2 and to the bottom of the conference standings by themselves for the first time since 1947.

### 15 Years Ago – 1997

No. 2 Penn State rallied from a 10-point deficit in the fourth quarter to snatch a 31-27 victory away from seventh-ranked Ohio State in Happy Valley.

After trailing 17-10, the Buckeyes scored 17 points in a row, a run capped by Pepe Pearson's 8-yard touchdown run in the third quarter.

However, at that point the Penn State running game imposed its will on the young OSU defense as Aaron Harris and Curtis Enis took turns gashing Andy Katzenmoyer and company. First Harris burst free for a 51-yard touchdown run, and then Enis scored from 26 yards out to earn the game-winning points.

The duo finished with a combined 307 yards rushing on 35 carries. Ohio State as a team managed just 106 yards on the ground.

Joe Germaine led the Buckeyes in defeat, coming off the bench to complete 29 of 43 passes for 378 yards, two touchdowns and two interceptions.

### 10 Years Ago – 2002

Despite butterfingers and poor special teams, Ohio State beat heavy underdog Northwestern, 27-16, under the lights at Ryan Field in Evanston.

"I don't think anyone is happy with the way things ended up," tight end Ben Hartsock said. "Of course, we got the 'W,' but we're not going to be able to play like this in weeks to come and be a contender for the Big Ten championship. We've come out flat the past three weeks. We need to get back to where we were with the first three games, when we came out on fire."

Maurice Clarett, Ohio State's freshman tailback, ran for 140 yards against the Wildcats but also lost three fumbles and got into a verbal altercation with running backs coach Tim Spencer on the sideline.

Earlier in the week, Clarett did not refute a previous report he might try to enter the NFL draft after just two seasons of college football. Asked if he completed high school in December 2001 in order to gain earlier entry into the league, Clarett replied, "I'm smiling. That's all I can say about that."

After months of speculation about whether prep All-America offensive lineman Derek Morris would be eligible, he enrolled in classes only to be released from his scholarship five days later.

When pressed by reporters one day later, Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel refused to clarify just why that happened.

### Five Years Ago – 2007

The fourth-ranked Buckeyes jumped out in front with two early touchdowns and scarcely looked back en route to a 23-7 win over No. 23 Purdue.

Ohio State's domination – along with Purdue's fall break in classes – helped ruin plans for a "blackout" that called for all Boilermakers fans to wear black to help support the home team.

Instead, as much as one-third of the crowd appeared to be clad in scarlet and/or gray.

"Instead of doing a blackout, they should just hand out free tickets so our fans could scoop them up and bring the red stuff out," OSU right tackle Kirk Barton quipped.

The Buckeyes moved up one spot from No. 4 to No. 3 after second-ranked USC lost a stunner to 40-point underdog Stanford.

The men's hockey team began the season ranked No. 19 in the country and hoping an infusion of youth – 15 freshmen among 29 team members – could help stop the streak of losing seasons at two.

"It's a lot of fun with all these new guys coming in and bringing all this energy," senior Tom Fritsche said.

### One Year Ago – 2011

On the heels of more bad news from the NCAA – further suspensions for running back Dan "Boom" Herron and wide receiver DeVier Posey – the Buckeyes suffered an epic second-half collapse during the first trip to Nebraska in school history.

The Buckeyes coughed up a 27-6 lead in the second half, falling 34-27 in Lincoln to the biggest comeback in Cornhusker annals.

"I don't know that I've ever been involved in one like that," Ohio State head coach Luke Fickell said.

Ohio State competed without Herron and Posey, who along with offensive lineman Marcus Hall were suspended indefinitely after OSU and the NCAA determined they were paid by a Cleveland-area businessman for summer work they did not perform.

# Miller Might Be Most Exciting Buckeye In Some Time



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No. 12	Nov. 30	No. 24	August

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Charter Member

During a night awash in myriad offensive milestones, much of the buzz in the Ohio Stadium press box focused upon Braxton Miller when the question was raised: "Who is the most exciting Ohio State player in the past 10 years?"

Surprisingly for a team that has done more than its share of winning over the last decade, there weren't that many names on the list.

Troy Smith got a mention, mostly for the career body of work turned in by the 2006 Heisman Trophy winner.

Someone brought up Terrelle Pryor for his gazelle-like moves and raw athletic ability, while another offered Maurice Clarett, who played such a vital role in the 2002 national championship season. But just as quickly as their names were mentioned, Pryor and Clarett were summarily dismissed – Pryor because of the perception he should have been even better than he was, and Clarett because his star flashed so quickly across the horizon before disappearing. There was also the haze of off-the-field issues that hung over both players.

The player receiving the most nods of agreement was Ted Ginn Jr., the electrifying speedster who rewrote the Ohio State and Big Ten record books for kick returns. Ginn's graceful running style was such a blur of speed and elegance that those in pursuit of him seemed to be moving in slow motion.

Ginn eventually recorded eight returns – six punts and two kickoffs – for touchdowns, all but erasing the fact that he was also an underrated receiver. His 135 career receptions for 1,943 yards and 15 TDs all rank among the top 10 in program history.

Of course, the conversation only got started following Miller's 72-yard run in the second quarter, a play that set the tone for the rest of the game against a Nebraska defense that had surrendered a scant 17 yards to Ohio State on its preceding 13 plays.

Every play in every offensive coordinator's playbook is designed to go the distance if everything goes according to plan. The trouble is, not every play goes according to plan – and even when it does, it often needs a little something extra. Miller is that something extra for the Buckeyes, and he so often displays it with an exquisite dash of flair.

Nebraska had just taken a 17-7 lead at the 11:59 mark of the second quarter, and the press box chatter sounded more like a postmortem on the Ohio State team than a discussion about exciting players of the recent past. Then Miller took all of about 15 seconds to change that.

The sophomore quarterback took a relatively routine shotgun snap and began moving to his right with tailback Carlos Hyde swinging out for a possible option pitch. As the OSU offensive line began to pick off Nebraska defenders one by one, Miller recognized a huge lane, tucked the football under his arm and quickly cut upfield, reaching the second level in what seemed like less than the blink of an eye.

Two effortless fakes – moves designed to make talented Big Ten defenders look like pony leaguers – left a pair of Cornhuskers clutching at air, and then two more downfield blocks allowed Miller to glide all the way to the Nebraska 3 before he was finally pushed out of bounds.

Humorist James Thurber once wrote that Chic Harley's running style was "kind of a cross between music and cannon fire," and I couldn't help but remember those words while watching Miller on that 72-yard display that was as melodic for the Buckeyes as it was lethal to the Cornhuskers.

"We couldn't get anything going at the time," OSU junior receiver Corey "Philly" Brown said of Miller's big play. "We had a couple of punts leading up to that, and we needed somebody like Braxton to make a big play to excite the crowd because the crowd got out of it. To have someone like Braxton make a play like that and get them into the game and being able to score, it was good."

Good? That might qualify Brown for understatement of the season so far.

"We have a quarterback that's kind of ridiculous running the ball," OSU head coach Urban Meyer said. "I think Braxton obviously changed the game."

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Mark Rea

That wasn't the only time.

Later in the second quarter, Miller did it again, this time on a fourth-and-2 play from the Nebraska 31. The Cornhuskers called timeout before the play, and head coach Bo Pelini had to figure Meyer was going to put the ball in the hands of his best player.

Not that the knowledge did Pelini any good. Miller took the shotgun snap, and as Hyde picked off blitzing NU safety P.J. Smith, the quarterback broke over the right side of the line and sprinted his way past every other would-be tackler for a 31-yard touchdown run. It was Miller's crowning achievement during a second-quarter performance that included six rushes for 146 yards, and it gave the Buckeyes a 35-24 halftime lead.

By now you know that second-quarter explosion was part of a career-high 186 rushing yards for Miller, a performance that allowed him midway through his sophomore year to tie Pryor for most career 100-yard games by an Ohio State quarterback.

It is also worth noting Miller's virtuoso performance occurred in full witness of a nationwide television audience. It was, in simple terms, the kind of performance on which future Heisman Trophies are won.

### Coaching Matters ... A Lot

There is little wonder much of the rest of the college football world sneers at the success enjoyed by Ohio State. The Buckeyes play in one of the most iconic stadiums the sport has to offer, they enjoy a rich tradition steeped in a multitude of conference and national championships, and they have a fan base whose cockiness is commensurate to a program that manufactures winning season after winning season decade after decade.

Of course, all of that winning isn't achieved by accident. Ohio State has been blessed throughout the years to have some of the finest head coaches to ever walk a sideline. From the scholarly and professorial (John W. Wilce, Paul Brown and Jim Tressel) to the fanatic overachievers (Francis Schmidt and Woody Hayes), the university has more often than not pushed the correct buttons during a coaching search.

Perhaps that was never proved more true than last November when the Buckeyes found the ultrasuccessful Meyer semiretired and waiting for a new challenge. Faced with a 6-7 season and the lingering dark clouds of a lengthy NCAA investigation, Ohio State could not afford to make a mistake when hiring a new head coach. Fortunately, Meyer provided a slam-dunk no-brainer.

And in case you think hiring the right coach at the right time is overrated for a big-name program, consider what happened at Notre Dame in 1981 with the transition from Dan Devine to Gerry Faust. Consider what happened at Alabama in 1997 with the transition from Gene Stallings to Mike DuBose. Consider what happened at Michigan in 2008 with the transition from Lloyd Carr to Rich Rodriguez. Consider what has happened this year at Arkansas with the transition from Bobby Petrino to John L. Smith.

Even programs with long traditions of winning can't afford to make an error in judgment when it comes to hiring a head coach. And that's why many Ohio State haters can't stand the fact Meyer was out there waiting to step into the breach left by NCAA sanctions.

Rather than a broken program sifting through the ashes, the Buckeyes are proving each week that 2011 was a one-year aberration and that their current head coach is intent upon adding to his collection of national championship rings.

### Some Final Observations

- When the Buckeyes scored 63 points against Nebraska, it marked only the 27th time in program history the team had topped the 60-point mark. Rarer still is accomplishing the feat against a Big Ten opponent. OSU had tallied 60 or more points against a conference rival only seven times before doing it against the Cornhuskers. Northwestern played the hapless victim in four of those games – 60-0 in 1973, 63-0 in 1980, 63-20 in 1978 and 70-6 in 1981. The other three were 69-18 vs. Minnesota in 1983, 62-7 over Wisconsin in 1969 and 83-21 against Iowa in 1950, the game in which Vic Janowicz threw for four touchdowns, ran for another, returned a punt for a sixth TD and kicked 10 extra points.

- Sooner rather than later, Meyer is going to have to address the fact that his team is leading the Big Ten in personal foul penalties. The Buckeyes committed five more vs. Nebraska – actually six, but one was declined – to increase the team's total to 16 personal fouls in six games. OSU is currently the most penalized team in the conference with 46 flags totaling 401 yards. On the flip side of that coin, unbeaten Kansas State has committed only nine penalties for 71 yards in five games all season.

- Don't be surprised if Michigan State's offense begins to get better. Head coach Mark Dantonio showed the confidence he has in his offense when he decided to go for a fourth-and-1 at the Indiana 2 despite trailing by 10 points. The Spartans picked up the first down and went on to score a 31-27 victory over the Hoosiers.

- Conversely, don't be surprised if Northwestern's defense continues to show cracks. Head coach Pat Fitzgerald decided to go for a fourth-and-7 at his own 28 late in a 39-28 loss to Penn State. The fact that the Wildcats trailed only by four, had all three of their timeouts remaining and still had more than two minutes to play underscored the lack of faith Fitzgerald has in his defense.

- Ohio State moved up to No. 8 in The Associated Press writers' poll released Oct. 7, leading some to believe the Buckeyes can make a run at the AP's version of the national championship. It seems doubtful OSU can garner enough support to finish No. 1 from the writers, some of whom will not vote for a team on probation purely on principle. But a top-five finish and undefeated season certainly would be a nice springboard to a national championship run in 2013.





# INSIDER

## Starters Still Sidelined As Second Half Begins

Ohio State faced Nebraska without two expected starters and lost another before the 63-38 decision went final Oct. 6.

As expected, running back Jordan Hall missed the contest with a knee injury and safety C.J. Barnett sat out a third consecutive game with an ankle injury.

Senior linebacker Etienne Sabino went down in the first half with a lower leg injury. He missed all of the second half, and Ohio State announced the day after the Nebraska contest that he will miss the Oct. 13 game at Indiana. True freshman Joshua Perry replaced Sabino as the team's Sam linebacker in the base defense against Nebraska while senior Storm Klein took his spot as the Mike position in the nickel defense. Klein was already playing middle linebacker in the base defense.

Sabino had one tackle before being injured. Klein finished with seven stops, including a sack, while Perry did not record a stat. Sabino entered the game second on the team with 36 tackles and had arguably played his best college game against Michigan State.

Sophomore linebacker Ryan Shazier briefly left the game after hitting his knee on the Ohio Stadium turf, but he was able to return and finished as the game's top tackler with 11 stops, including two for loss and a sack. He also had a quarterback

hurry. Shazier is the team's leader in stops this season with 59.

True freshman Camren Williams took his spot at Will linebacker while trainers attended to Shazier.

Hall was injured Sept. 29 when he ran six times for 26 yards and caught a 10-yard pass in the 17-16 win at Michigan State. That was the senior's third game of the season after missing the first two recovering from off-season foot surgery.

"I hate to see it because he is a kid that works his tail off," OSU head coach Urban Meyer said of Hall while revealing the injury to be a slight PCL tear.

In Hall's place, junior Carlos Hyde made his third start of the season and ran 28 times for 140 yards and four touchdowns. All of those numbers represented career single-game highs.

Sophomore Rod Smith backed up Hyde and made a good showing by rushing twice for 38 yards, including a 33-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter.

Hall's replacement as punt returner, junior receiver Corey "Philly" Brown, also found the end zone with a 76-yard jaunt in the third quarter that helped blow the game open.

Barnett suited up for the Nebraska game but did not play. Meyer said of him earlier in the week, "He's feeling a lot better, but he's still limping around."

Senior Orhian Johnson has started the past three games at safety with Barnett out while junior Corey Brown has filled in at nickel back, logging 11 stops in the three contests.

On top of Barnett's absence, the Buckeyes have a cornerback continuing to battle injury. Bradley Roby missed the week-four win over UAB with a sore shoulder but returned last week to make nine tackles against Michigan State. He admitted it is still sore but promised not to miss a game against a ranked opponent under the lights at Ohio Stadium.

Roby made good on that pledge, notching four tackles and intercepting two passes, one of which he returned 41 yards for a touchdown.

On top of the news involving starters, the school announced junior safety Jamie Wood's season is over because of a shoulder injury that will require surgery.

Wood, a four-star recruit in 2009 from



SONNY BROCKWAY

**TOUGH BREAK** – Fifth-year senior linebacker Etienne Sabino (6) left the Nebraska game with a lower leg injury and was to miss at least the following game against Indiana according to Ohio State.



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## BSB Prognosticators Underestimate Score

While all of Buckeye Sports Bulletin's fearless forecasters saw the Ohio State-Nebraska game as a much more high-scoring affair than the Buckeyes' 17-16 victory over Michigan State the week before, none of the staffers came anywhere close to predicting the scoring outburst to come in OSU's 63-38 win Oct. 6 over Nebraska.

Interestingly, Jeff Svoboda, who was the only prognosticator to predict a Cornhuskers victory, also saw the lowest final score, predicting a 28-25 win for Nebraska. Matt Hager (31-28 score), Marcus Hartman (35-31), Mark Rea (38-34) and Ari Wasserman (38-31) all predicted an Ohio State victory, but each had the Buckeyes scoring a minimum of 25 points fewer than they ultimately did.

To see how the fearless BSB crew foresee the rest of the games this season, check out our Football Friday electronic newsletters, which will also include injury updates, any breaking recruiting commitments, rosters and lineups and more from our celebration of the 10th anniversary of the 2002 national football championship.

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Pickerington (Ohio) Central, is a two-year letter winner who had played 26 games as a special-teamer entering this season. He made 13 tackles in 2010 and four last season.

### Receiving Corps Shrinks By Two Inside A Week

Ohio State is down to eight scholarship wide receivers for the second half of the season after the exit of two from the program during the first week of October.

## BSB 2012 Electronic Issue Schedule

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April 17	Oct. 19
April 20	Oct. 26
May 1	Nov. 2
May 8	Nov. 16
May 15	Nov. 23
May 22	Dec. 4

First to go was Tyrone Williams, a sophomore who was kicked off the team for a violation of team rules.

"I'm disappointed with Tyrone's dismissal," said Meyer on Oct. 1, adding there is no chance Williams will be allowed back on the team.

Williams was a four-star recruit from East Cleveland (Ohio) Shaw in the class of 2010 but never established himself as a pass-catching threat in his two-plus years in Columbus.

He redshirted in 2010 while drawing rave reviews from then-receivers coach Darrell Hazell, who compared him to San Francisco 49ers wide receiver Randy Moss for his raw speed and 6-6, 229-pound body.

Williams played eight games last season, including one start at Purdue, but was more likely to see the field in running situations. He often displayed problems catching the ball in games and in practices that were open to the media. He finished his Ohio State career with five catches for 74 yards.

On Oct. 5, Ohio State announced the departure of Ricquan Southward, a true freshman who had not yet played this season. Southward was a three-star recruit from Lakeland, Fla., who committed to the Buckeyes last fall. The 6-0, 185-pounder was the No. 119-rated receiver in the country and caught 54 passes for 994 yards and nine touchdowns in his senior season for the Dreadnaughts. He is the first member of Meyer's first Ohio State signing class to leave the program.

A team spokesman said Southward's exit was voluntary.

## 2012 OSU Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time/Result	TV	Record, Oct. 4-6 Results
Sept. 1	MIAMI (OHIO)	W, 56-10	BTN	3-3, 52-14 loss to Cincinnati
Sept. 8	CENTRAL FLORIDA	W, 31-16	ESPN2	3-2, 40-20 win over East Carolina
Sept. 15	CALIFORNIA* %	W, 35-28	ABC	2-4, 43-17 win over UCLA
Sept. 22	UAB^	W, 29-15	BTN	1-4, 52-3 win over SE Louisiana
Sept. 29	at Michigan State*	W, 17-16	ABC	4-2, 31-27 win over Indiana
Oct. 6	NEBRASKA* #	W, 63-38	ABC	4-2, 63-38 loss to <b>Ohio State</b>
Oct. 13	at Indiana	8 p.m.	BTN	2-3, 31-27 loss to Michigan State
Oct. 20	PURDUE*	TBA	TBA	3-2, 44-13 loss to Michigan
Oct. 27	at Penn State*	6 p.m.	ABC, ESPN or ESPN2	4-2, 39-28 win over Northwestern
Nov. 3	ILLINOIS*	TBA	TBA	2-4, 31-14 loss to Wisconsin
Nov. 17	at Wisconsin*	TBA	TBA	4-2, 31-14 win over Illinois
Nov. 24	MICHIGAN*	Noon	ABC	3-2, 44-13 win over Purdue

^ - Alumni Band Day % - Hall of Fame Day # - Homecoming \* - Bowl team

### Buckeyes Will Two-Step With Texas Christian

Director of athletics Gene Smith announced recently that Ohio State will play a home-and-home football series with TCU beginning in 2018. The Buckeyes will travel to take on the Horned Frogs in Fort Worth that season before playing host to them the following season at Ohio Stadium.

"Competing against programs from the state of Texas has always offered exciting experiences for our players and fans," Smith said. "TCU continues to be one of the top football programs in the country."

The 2018 game marks the Buckeyes' first trip to TCU and a renewal of a brief yet interesting series last played in 1973 when the Buckeyes trounced the Horned Frogs by a 37-3 score in Ohio State's second game of the season. Tailback Archie Griffin ran for 119 yards and two touchdowns for the Buckeyes in that game while quarterback Cornelius Greene added 113 yards and another score on the ground.

Rick Middleton led the OSU defense that day with 13 tackles while fellow linebacker Randy Gradishar added 11 stops, including two for loss.

Ohio State and TCU first played Sept. 25, 1937, when head coach Francis Schmidt led the Buckeyes to a 14-0 home win in the season opener. The game pitted Schmidt against his protégé Dutch Meyer, who replaced Schmidt as TCU head coach when Schmidt took over in Columbus in 1934. Future Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback Davey O'Brien was a member of that TCU squad.

Two of Ohio State's seven national championship seasons began with contests against TCU. The Buckeyes lost 18-14 to the Horned Frogs to open the 1957 campaign before reeling off nine consecutive wins, including a 10-7 triumph over Oregon in the Rose Bowl.

In 1961, Ohio State and TCU tied 7-7 after the Buckeyes failed to score on

Continued On Page 6

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# INSIDER

Continued From Page 5

a late trip inside the Horned Frog red zone. They won their last eight games and were named national champs by the Football Writers Association of America despite being denied a bid to the Rose Bowl by a vote of the school's Faculty Council.

OSU also defeated TCU in 1966 (14-7) and '69 (62-0). The Buckeyes were ranked No. 1 in the latter contest.

The first game of the future series will be Sept. 15, 2018, with the Buckeyes' home game set for Sept. 21, 2019.

TCU, a member of the Big 12, joins Cincinnati of the Big East on Ohio State's 2018 nonconference schedule, and Smith told Yahoo! Sports he hopes to add two more teams from BCS conferences to fill out the slate.

He went on to say that would be the rule rather than the exception.

"That year (2018) is a snapshot of future years," Smith said. "As we move forward from 2018 and out, our goal is BCS (schools) only. We are looking at top-ranked teams, No. 1 through 50 teams."

The move away from historically weaker teams is a response to the coming of a four-team playoff that will decide college football's national champion beginning in 2014.

"As ADs in the Big Ten, we had a discussion about the playoff and how the selection committee might consider criteria for the participating teams," Smith said. "We felt nonconference strength of schedule should be considered and probably would."

### Former Buckeye Stillwagon Charged In Shooting Incident

Legendary Ohio State defensive lineman Jim Stillwagon is in legal hot water after his arrest for an alleged road rage incident Oct. 1 in a Columbus suburb.

The 63-year-old Stillwagon is accused of firing shots at a truck driver on a highway ramp in Delaware, Ohio. Police say he also struck the driver of the truck after the men pulled over into a parking lot. When that happened, the gun discharged again and the man was grazed by a bullet. After being treated at a hospital, the alleged victim was eventually able to return to his home.

"Considering the circumstances, (the victim is) extremely lucky," Delaware interim police chief Bruce Pijanowski told The Associated Press. "He had probably just superficial injuries, and it could have been a lot worse."

Police say Stillwagon, who was riding a motorcycle, was licensed to carry the weapon



FILE PHOTO

**IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA** – Former Ohio State head football coach Jim Tressel debuted his new weekly television segment, "A Moment With Jim Tressel," Oct. 3 on WKYC in Cleveland.

used in the incident. He was arraigned Oct. 1 on a charge of felonious assault with bond set at \$350,000. His next hearing is scheduled for Oct. 10 in Common Pleas Court.

Woody Hayes recruited Stillwagon to be a member of his 1967 recruiting class that would later become known as the Super Sophomores after winning the 1968 national championship. The Buckeyes also won the Big Ten that season and again in '69 and '70 with Stillwagon starting at middle guard all three years.

He was a two-time All-American and won the Outland and Lombardi awards in 1970 before going on to a six-year career in the Canadian Football League.

Stillwagon has been in business for himself in central Ohio since the mid-1980s, when he founded Stillwagon Promotions and Awards in Hilliard. The headquarters later moved to Dublin.

### Tressel TV Becomes Weekly Cleveland Feature

Former Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel's weekly television segment – "A Moment With Jim Tressel" – debuted Oct. 3 on WKYC in Cleveland.

The current vice president of strategic engagement at the University of Akron is scheduled to appear during the 7 p.m. broadcast each Wednesday and focus on his motivational speeches and books, according to station general manager Brooke Spector.

University president Luis Proenza added that he expects the new feature to strengthen his school's relationship with the community.

"In his new role as our VP for strategic engagement, Jim is responsible for student success, from application and recruitment to graduation and beyond – what we are calling 'The Akron Experience,'" Proenza said. "We think his weekly television segments will only add to his community outreach."

Tressel, whose best-selling books include "The Winner's Manual: For the Game of Life" and "Life Promises for Success: Promises from God on Achieving Your Best," was head coach of the Buckeyes from 2001-10 before an NCAA scandal led to his forced resignation in May 2011.

Under his watch, Ohio State won seven Big Ten titles and the 2002 national champi-

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onship. He put together a record of 106-22 during his time in Columbus, a tenure that included a 9-1 record against Michigan.

"I'm part of a new team now at the University of Akron, and it's a really big one," Tressel said during the first televised segment. "I'm figuring out how to harness the energy of nearly 30,000 students to move the whole team forward. The lessons I've learned, and the ones I'm learning now, I'll keep sharing with you."

### Meyer Addresses Pair Of MSU-Related Issues

Two days after his team downed Michigan State, Meyer addressed two incidents that came out of the contest – one on the field and one off.

Regarding a video circulating around the Internet that appeared to show Spartans offensive lineman Jack Allen poking fingers into the face mask of Ohio State defensive tackle Johnathan Hankins, Meyer said he believed someone had submitted the tape to the Big Ten offices for review.

"I think it gets turned in, and then I believe it's in the conference offices or the team's way of handling it," Meyer said.

The issue was closed Oct. 4 when the Big Ten announced there would be no punishment for Allen, a redshirt freshman from Hinsdale (Ill.) Central.

"Michigan State values and respects the Big Ten's Sportsmanlike Conduct Policy, and both parties take any alleged violations of the agreement very seriously," MSU director of athletics Mark Hollis said in a statement. "There are procedures in place to review any alleged violations of the policy. After a thorough review, the Big Ten has determined that MSU offensive lineman Jack Allen didn't violate the conference's Sportsmanlike Conduct Policy."

Hankins was not made available for interviews during the week or after the Nebraska game, but defensive line coach Mike Vrabel said Oct. 1 the junior from Detroit had not said anything to him about it during the game.

"I told him if they were picking on him to come tell his coach and I would try to help out," said Vrabel, a former Ohio State defensive lineman who played 14 years in the NFL.

He disputed the idea "anything goes" in a pile during a football game.

"Somebody trying to take a cheap shot at you, whether that's a chop block, poking you in the eye or doing something, I don't think that has any place in the game, especially at the college level," Vrabel said.

Meyer also attempted to clarify what happened prior to the game when the teams exchanged game film for scouting purposes, a practice regulated by the Big Ten.

MSU defensive coordinator Pat Narduzzi told the Detroit Free Press after the game that the Spartans coaching staff received game film that had pre-snap motions edited out, something considered a no-no. He also told the newspaper the Big Ten had been notified, but another MSU official later disputed that and the initial story on the Free Press' website was edited to reflect the change.

Meyer said he was unaware of the issue until after the victory over the Spartans.

"The first I heard about that was after the (postgame) press conference," Meyer said Oct. 1. "A guy grabbed me and said, 'What about the videotape?' I said, 'I have no idea.' I asked my guy and he said he had no idea either. So I went back on Sunday and asked again. I asked our video staff. They said there was an issue on Tuesday, it was corrected immediately, and that's all I was told. There was no intent or deception or hiding anything, nothing like that."

Michigan State head coach Mark Dantonio declined to discuss the issue when asked on the Big Ten coaches' teleconference Oct. 2.

"I'm not going to go through that right now," he said. "I'll set my sights on our next football game."

### Offensive Linemen Lead Weekly Awards

The first offensive player of the week award for the Big Ten season went to the offensive line for its performance against a stout Michigan State defensive front.

All five starters – tackles Jack Mewhort and Reid Fragel, guards Marcus Hall and Andrew Norwell and center Corey Linsley – received "champion" grades, Meyer told reporters after he and his staff finished reviewing the game film.

"We were very proud of their effort and what they did," said Meyer, who was a vocal critic of the state of the offensive line for much of the offseason. "It's great to have an offensive line grade out as your player of the game. You usually win that ballgame."

They were not the only blockers to stand out, though. Joining them in the champions club were fullback Zach Boren and tight end Jeff Heurman, both of whom helped the Buckeyes rush for 204 yards against the Big Ten's top rushing defense. That included 38 yards (prior to three kneel-downs) on the team's last possession as Ohio State ran the last 4:10 off the clock in East Lansing.

On the defensive side of the ball, Sabino was named player of the game after making eight tackles, including a sack, and breaking up a pass. He was credited with a pair of quarterback hurries, including one on Michigan State's final offensive play when Sabino forced an errant pass.

Joining Sabino in the champions club on defense were fellow linebacker Shazier, linemen John Simon and Hankins, and cornerbacks Roby and Travis Howard.

Roby was named special teams player of the week for blocking a Spartan punt.

"We finally blocked a frickin' punt around

here," Meyer said with a smile. "We worked really hard around here. I hope there are some sharks in the water after this week looking for another one."

### Miscellaneous Notes

- Ohio State moved up to No. 8 in The Associated Press writers' poll released Oct. 7 after they improved to 6-0. Michigan was the only other Big Ten team to appear in the AP top 25. The Wolverines were 25th while Michigan State, Nebraska, Northwestern and Penn State were also receiving votes.

- In a show of sportsmanship, Ohio State recognized retiring Nebraska director of athletics Tom Osborne on the Ohio Stadium video board prior to the game between the Buckeyes and the Cornhuskers.

Osborne, who led the Cornhuskers to three national championships as head coach of the program from 1973-97, announced his retirement Sept. 26.



Bradley Roby

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# Night Time Was Right Time For OSU

Continued From Page 1

team come back home and play hard for them.”

Meyer never lost sight of the value of being 5-0 after beating the Spartans, but he never stopped sounding like someone who wanted more – more yards, more first downs, more big plays and more points.

While noting the workhorse characteristics of the team, he lamented that it did not have more thoroughbred in it yet.

Then came Oct. 6, a crisp and picture-perfect autumn evening in Columbus that saw the 12th-ranked Buckeyes race past Nebraska and improve to 6-0.

The 63-38 triumph was a sight that had to be seen to be believed, and it seemed to put the whole season in a different perspective as every unit contributed to the rout of the Cornhuskers.

## Points Aplenty

First there was the defense, a unit maligned at times this season as new assistants meld with holdovers to devise a strategy that fits the players available to participate.

Injuries up front, youth at linebacker and inconsistency and health issues in the backfield have provided for some harrowing moments for a stop unit that has been better sometimes than others at pressuring opposing offenses.

This time they helped the Buckeyes draw first blood even as they allowed more big plays to put the team in a hole.

Sophomore cornerback Bradley Roby, a would-be star admittedly disappointed in his own production during the first five games of the season, started the scoring by returning an interception 41 yards for a touchdown that made it 7-0.

The Huskers struck right back, though, gashing the Buckeyes for a 73-yard run and a 43-yard punt return to set up touchdowns that turned the seven-point deficit into a seven-point lead.

Nebraska tacked on three more points before the first quarter was over, taking advantage of some overeagerness on the part of Meyer to shake his team out of its doldrums by faking a punt.

Senior Ben Buchanan looked to have a shot at picking up the 7 yards he needed for a first down but was cut down short of the marker by Charles Jackson, who recognized the ruse fast enough to react and close the distance just in time to reach Buchanan.

Then it would come as no surprise who jump-started the Ohio State offense as it faced a 10-point deficit. What followed qualified as headline news, however.

Of course, Braxton Miller would be the catalyst of the comeback, sparking the team with a 72-yard scamper that saw the sophomore quarterback take advantage of a well-conceived blocking scheme to get through the line before going to his vast array of moves to free himself for more. Miller juiced a pair of defenders and then broke to his right up the sideline after picking up a big block from wide receiver Corey “Philly” Brown.

He was finally caught inside the Nebraska 5-yard line and hit the turf hard on one side, a shot that jarred him enough to temporarily knock him out of the game.

But whereas last year the Buckeyes fell apart after losing Miller to injury against the Cornhuskers, they finished the drive with backup QB Kenny Guiton handing off to Carlos Hyde, who ran twice to net 3 yards and a touchdown.

The defense did not morph into a top-flight unit after the offense showed its first sign of life, but it secured another takeaway on the following possession as Roby snagged an errant throw from Martinez for his second interception.

Miller returned and made Nebraska pay with an 18-yard touchdown pass to tight end Jeff Heurman to put the Buckeyes back on top.

That would be short-lived as Martinez and the Huskers answered with a 75-yard drive the quarterback capped with a 9-yard touchdown run.

By then the Ohio State offense was rolling, however. Beginning with Hyde’s 1-yard touchdown run that had followed Miller’s 72-yard run, the Buckeyes scored on five consecutive possessions.

It would not get a chance to make it six thanks to Brown, who returned a punt 76 yards for a touchdown a little more than nine minutes into the third quarter.

That staked the Buckeyes to a commanding 49-31 lead and had Ohio Stadium rocking, just as Meyer had envisioned when he took the job late last year.

“I want to give a lot of thanks to our crowd,” he said, noting also a great response outside the stadium as the Buckeyes walked from their team hotel and stopped at St. John Arena for the OSU marching band’s traditional Skull Session pregame performance. “That was one of the great evenings in Columbus, for Ohio State. I really appreciate that. I never want to let that go without telling the fans that. That was tremendous.”

## Buying Into ‘The Plan’

By the time all was said and done, there might have been only two Buckeyes with regrets about how things went down under the lights at Ohio Stadium – team mascot Brutus Buckeye and Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini.

Pelini, a former Ohio State safety and team co-captain in 1990, was left to sift through the ashes as the Huskers got set to head back home to Lincoln with a 4-2 record.

Brutus undoubtedly had sore arms after doing pushups in the south end zone, one for every point the Buckeyes put up on the board.

The rest of the scarlet and gray faithful in the stadium-record crowd of 106,102 were loud and jubilant throughout, leaving the current Buckeyes in awe afterward.

“It’s electrifying, seeing those fans out there, everybody in scarlet,” said Brown, a junior from the Philadelphia area. “This was the loudest game I’ve ever played in today. Being able as an offense to go out there and score that many points against a defense that’s as good as them, it’s a confidence booster.”

Brown didn’t hide the fact he was proud to provide the first punt return touchdown of the Meyer era at Ohio State. The head coach treats special teams as a pet project, and winning the kicking game is one of the four base tenets of the “plan to win” he has instituted at all of his head coaching stops.

“We’ve not had as many punt return opportunities as we would like, but he’s been talking for weeks now about how we’ve not had a good punt return or kick return,” Brown said. “I kind of take that personally since I’m back there. When I got a chance, I just wanted to make it happen.”

Heurman, another out-of-state Buckeye,



JOSH WINSLOW

**GOODBYE** – Ohio State got the scoring started in the first quarter when sophomore cornerback Bradley Roby (1) returned a Taylor Martinez (3) interception 41 yards for a touchdown.

called the atmosphere crazy and the most fun he has experienced.

“I don’t even have words for it,” said the sophomore, a Naples (Fla.) Barron Collier product. “I was just happy to play in the game, be a part of the team with 106,000 people out there. It’s the craziest game I’ve ever been a part of. I think this one will definitely go down in the record books.”

Despite the fits and starts the offense had endured in the first five weeks of the season, when big runs or throws by Miller were just about the only thing as common as three-and-outs and untimely penalties or missed assignments, Heurman did not sense a feeling of frustration from within the team.

While fans wondered when they would see a high-flying unit such as the ones Meyer constructed at Utah and Florida, the players tried to focus simply on ironing out mistakes and continuing to learn the offense. That was even as Meyer publicly questioned the effectiveness of just about every unit, from the offensive line to the backfield to the wide receiver corps in particular.

Miller, the unquestioned top threat on the squad during the first month of his second season in scarlet and gray, even became the subject of some public criticism from the head coach after committing three turnovers against Michigan State. He did not turn the ball over against Nebraska, but he received plenty of help in moving the ball and putting points on the board.

“We all bought into the system when Coach Meyer got here,” Heurman said. “‘The plan’s invaluable’ is what he always says. We just had to keep working hard, and we knew it would work out sooner or later. It worked out tonight with 63 points.”

Brown agreed the team had maintained confidence it would continue to improve thanks to the time it was putting in during

the week and the repetitions coming from a new opponent in each week’s game, but he acknowledged the gaudy point total yielded by the Cornhuskers might have been at least toward the high end of expectations.

“I don’t know if we expected it,” he said, “but we know we can put up points like that with the style of offense we run, the players we have on offense and our offensive line.”

Meyer, too, expressed such sentiments about the Ohio State blockers, something that would have surprised preseason attendants to one of his press conferences.

Now after back-to-back weeks of stellar performances, the five offensive line starters – tackles Reid Fragel and Jack Mewhort, guards Andrew Norwell and Marcus Hall and center Corey Linsley – can count themselves among those Meyer has referred to simply yet powerfully as “my guys.”

“I’ve got a bunch of guys in there right now,” the OSU head coach said. “My guys right now are that offensive line. I just love them to death.”

That put the fivesome in a group of highly praised and trusted players already including Miller as well as such elder statesmen as fullback Zach Boren, defensive end John Simon, tight end Jake Stoneburner, linebacker Etienne Sabino and safety C.J. Barnett.

Meyer acknowledged the performance against the Cornhuskers had the Buckeyes looking as close as ever to meeting his expectations for the team, and he was his typical direct self in responding to a question about what unit he thought might have precluded such an evolution from taking place by the midway point in the season.

“I didn’t think our offensive line would come to this point when you’re playing a tight end at right tackle, playing a bunch of guys who haven’t played a lot of football at their positions,” Meyer said. “Being as honest as I



## COVER STORY

can, they weren't very good. They didn't look the way we wanted them to look in January. Good kids, though. Good, tough guys."

With the offensive line coming together and Ohio State's highest point total against a Big Ten opponent in nearly three decades in the books, questions about how good the 2012 Buckeyes can ultimately be naturally arose.

"I don't know. Score 100 points hopefully?" Heurman said with a laugh before taking a more practical position. "The future, we've just got to keep grinding every day. We're only halfway through the season. We've still got a long way to go."

Miller, the ever-soft-spoken quarterback, took a similar approach when posed with a similar question.

"I don't believe this is what it can be capable of," he said of the offense. "I think it can be better. We made a couple of minor mistakes out there. We'll watch film tomorrow, so I'll say we've got a lot more to do."

Brown, who also caught three passes for 35 yards, stated his belief the Buckeyes could have surpassed 63 points against the Cornhuskers if not for a myriad of miscues in the first quarter, when the Buckeyes gained only 17 yards and punted three times.

"We made some mistakes that killed us," he said. "Sixty-three points is obviously amazing, especially for us. We knew we had it in us, we just had to do it. I wouldn't say we're satisfied - we're going to stay hungry - but for tonight we're satisfied."

Asked about the potential ceiling of the team, Brown was stumped.

"I couldn't even tell you. Outer space?" he said. "We can do so many crazy things. This could be a magical season for us if we keep playing the way we are and keep progressing."

### Chasing Lofty Goals

The Buckeyes entered the season in the unenviable position of being banned from postseason play as a result of NCAA sanctions committed by a handful of players and former head coach Jim Tressel.

That means they cannot play in a bowl game or the Big Ten Championship Game, although they can be considered champions of the Leaders Division of the conference if they finish atop the standings.

Meyer admitted in August to being unsure how that status might affect the motivation of his team in the second half of the year. The coach is unfamiliar with leading a team into November without a conference or national championship on the line but said that might not be the way the team is looking at it.

"We're trying to go 12-0 and win every single game, trying to get that (Associated Press) No. 1 (ranking)," Roby said. "We want to win the national championship. That's our goal. They can't take that away."

The Buckeyes rose to No. 8 in the AP poll after beating the Cornhuskers, who fell out of the top 25 of both major polls. Ohio State is disqualified from the USA Today coaches' poll because it is used in the BCS standings formula, but the AP has been awarding championships recognized in what is now referred to as the Football Bowl Subdivision since 1936.

Ohio State last topped it in 2002 to win its fourth AP national title.

"That's definitely a goal for our team," Roby said. "We want to win every single game. We're taking it one play at a time, one game at a time. We definitely want to go undefeated, and hopefully that's something in the future."

Meyer was not asked about that specific goal, but he took a longer view when asked about where his team's most recent victory left the team as far as the future is concerned.

"Well, we had a bunch of recruits in that locker room afterwards," he said. "So you would start talking about the future, you know, that's the name of the game - go out and recruit new players and continue and build and keep going."

"I'm very pleased with where we are, but I've also been doing this long enough to realize if you have a bad week, you have a bad night tonight, you have a bad something, (you lose)."

"I don't want to be the downer, but we're not there. We have a long way to go, and the good thing is these guys know it and they're anxious to get into work tomorrow. To a man, they said that tonight. They can't wait to get to work tomorrow."

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# Buckeyes Race Past Nebraska In Rout

By MARK REA

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Managing Editor

Ohio State shook off a sluggish start and then ran roughshod over visiting Big Ten rival Nebraska, pounding out a 63-38 victory Oct. 6 in front of an Ohio Stadium crowd of 106,102 and a prime-time nationwide television audience.

The game marked the highest point total for the 12th-ranked Buckeyes since a 73-20 victory over Eastern Michigan in 2010 and the best output against a Big Ten opponent since a 69-18 win over Minnesota in 1983. Additionally, it represented the most combined points in an OSU game since 1950. That year, Ohio State and Iowa combined for 104 points in an 83-21 win for the Buckeyes.

Conversely, it was the most points surrendered by No. 21 Nebraska since a 65-51 loss at Colorado in the 2007 season finale. Head coach Bill Callahan was dismissed following that game, and the Cornhuskers hired current head coach Bo Pelini before the 2008 season.

Ohio State failed to gain a single first down and accounted for only 17 yards in the first quarter but wound up with 19 first downs and 498 yards for the game, including 371 on the ground. It was the highest rushing total for OSU since a 383-yard effort during a 35-6 win at Minnesota in 1991.

"Give credit where credit is due," Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer said. "I thought the first quarter was a train wreck for our offense, but it was because (Nebraska was) playing good defense. They came out and hit us in the mouth ... but our offensive line eventually took over that game."

Meyer got no argument from Pelini.

"What changed after the first quarter was not getting off blocks, not making tackles and just not playing well enough," the Nebraska head coach and former OSU co-captain said. "We overall just did not play good enough. Ohio State deserved that game."

As the offensive line began to wear down the Cornhuskers up front, sophomore quarterback Braxton Miller and junior tailback Carlos Hyde each went over the 100-yard rushing mark to lead the Buckeyes.

Miller had a career-high 186 yards and one touchdown on 16 carries while Hyde carried 28 times for 140 yards and four TDs. The carries, yardage and touchdowns all represented new career highs for Hyde, who became the first Ohio State running back to rush for four touchdowns since Heisman Trophy winner Eddie George during a 56-35 win over Iowa in 1995.

"We have a quarterback that obviously is kind of ridiculous running the ball," Meyer said, "and then Carlos Hyde is a guy that is starting to earn a lot of respect. So, you can see what we are. We're kind of a pound-you offense right now. I don't mind that. I've not



KEVIN DYE

**INCOMING – Ohio State junior tailback Carlos Hyde (34) goes up and over fullback Zach Boren (44) en route to one of his four rushing touchdowns during the Buckeyes' 63-38 win against Nebraska.**

had a lot of those. But that's a pound-you offense."

In addition to his rushing, Miller also completed 7 of 14 passes for 127 yards and a touchdown.

Meanwhile, his counterpart from Nebraska had a night to forget. Junior quarterback Taylor Martinez pitched three interceptions, lost a fumble and was sacked four times despite throwing for a touchdown and running for two others. He finished the game 15 for 25 in the passing department for 214 yards, one score and the three picks, and he added 40 yards and two scores on a team-high 18 carries.

"Taylor did a lot of good things offensively," Pelini said, "but turning the ball over kills you. Special teams-wise, we played lousy and not nearly well enough to play championship football. We also had problems in the penalty area."

Nebraska was flagged nine times for 75 yards, including four false starts and one delay of game. Meanwhile, Ohio State was marked off 76 yards on nine penalties, which included three personal fouls for grabbing the face mask.

The Cornhuskers totaled 437 yards, includ-

ing 223 on the ground. They were led by senior I-back Rex Burkhead, who rushed for 119 yards on 14 carries.

The game's leading receiver was NU sophomore Kenny Bell, who caught five balls for a career-best 133 yards.

Despite surrendering more than 400 yards for the third time in six games, the Ohio State defense got a superlative effort from senior lineman John Simon, who had five tackles for loss among his seven total stops. That tied a single-game OSU record first established by Judah Herman in a 16-9 loss to Iowa in 1991 and equaled by Jayson Gwinn during a 23-17 win against Indiana in 1993 and Andy Katzenmoyer in the 1997 Rose Bowl vs. Arizona State, a 20-17 victory for the Buckeyes.

Sophomore linebacker Ryan Shazier had a game-high 11 tackles, including one of Ohio State's four sacks, while sophomore cornerback Bradley Roby contributed four tackles and picked off two of Martinez's passes. Senior safety Orhian Johnson had the other interception, sophomore end Michael Bennett had a fumble recovery and senior linebacker Storm Klein had a sack to go along with seven tackles.

Junior receiver Corey "Philly" Brown had a quiet night on offense with only three catches for 35 yards and one rush that netted only 1 yard. But Brown electrified the Horseshoe crowd late in the third quarter with a 76-yard punt return for a touchdown. It was the longest punt return by an Ohio State player since Brian Hartline set the school record with a 90-yarder in 2007 during a 48-3 win over Kent State.

## Shake, Rattle And Roll

The Buckeyes got off to a shaky start, going three-and-out on each of their initial three offensive possessions, netting minus-2

yards on their first nine plays from scrimmage.

Nebraska wasn't doing any better, though. In fact, the Cornhuskers were doing worse. Their first possession was a three-and-out that netted minus-9 yards, and their second resulted in an Ohio State touchdown.

On third-and-10, Martinez tried to get the ball to junior receiver Quincy Enunwa when Roby jumped the sideline route and grabbed the interception. The OSU sophomore then weaved his way along the sideline, picking up a block from defensive lineman Johnathan Hankins, who wiped out Martinez at about the 10-yard line, before sprinting into the end zone with a 41-yard touchdown return.

Junior kicker Drew Basil came on to add the extra point, and the Buckeyes had a 7-0 lead at the 8:29 mark of the first quarter.

The Cornhuskers seemed unfazed, however, and quickly answered by moving 92 yards in seven plays for their first touchdown of the night. The drive was highlighted by a 73-yard cutback run from Burkhead and capped by a 1-yard run from speedy sophomore I-back Ameer Abdullah, who finished the game with 28 yards and a pair of TDs on seven carries.

NU senior kicker Brett Maher added the extra point to tie the game at 7 with 5:26 to go in the first period.

The Huskers threatened to take control of the contest when they scored the next time they got the ball. After the third three-and-out series by the Buckeyes, Abdullah broke off a 43-yard punt return to give his team the ball at the OSU 28-yard line. Four plays later, Abdullah took a pitch from Burkhead, who was under center for the play, and scampered 3 yards for a touchdown.

Maher added the PAT and Nebraska had its first lead at 14-7 with 1:50 remaining in the first quarter.

By the end of the first quarter, it appeared the Cornhuskers were on their way to a victory. They had six first downs to none for Ohio State, and they had outgained the Buckeyes by a 137-17 margin.

And things nearly got worse for the Buckeyes when Miller was intercepted late in the opening period by NU senior safety Daimion Stafford. The turnover was nullified by replay when it was determined the ball hit the ground before Stafford could make the catch, but the Buckeyes turned the ball over anyway when senior punter Ben Buchanan was tackled a yard short of a first down on a fake punt.

That gave the Cornhuskers possession at the Ohio State 31, but they couldn't fully cash in on the good field position before getting a 26-yard field goal from Maher. It was a mini-success for the OSU defense, but Nebraska still held a 17-7 advantage with 11:59 to go in the second quarter.

Then, totally without warning, the Buckeyes shifted gears. The offense that had been stuck in neutral for the first 15 minutes suddenly exploded for 242 yards and four touchdowns in the second quarter alone.

The first score was set up on a 72-yard run by Miller, who got a point-of-attack block from senior right tackle Reid Fragel to break free. That moved the ball to the Nebraska 3, and two plays later Hyde took it in from the 1. Basil added the PAT and Ohio State was back in the game, trailing 17-14 at the 10:49 mark of the second period.

Roby came up with his second interception of Martinez on Nebraska's next possession, a poorly thrown ball by the Huskers QB that gave the Buckeyes possession at the NU 20.

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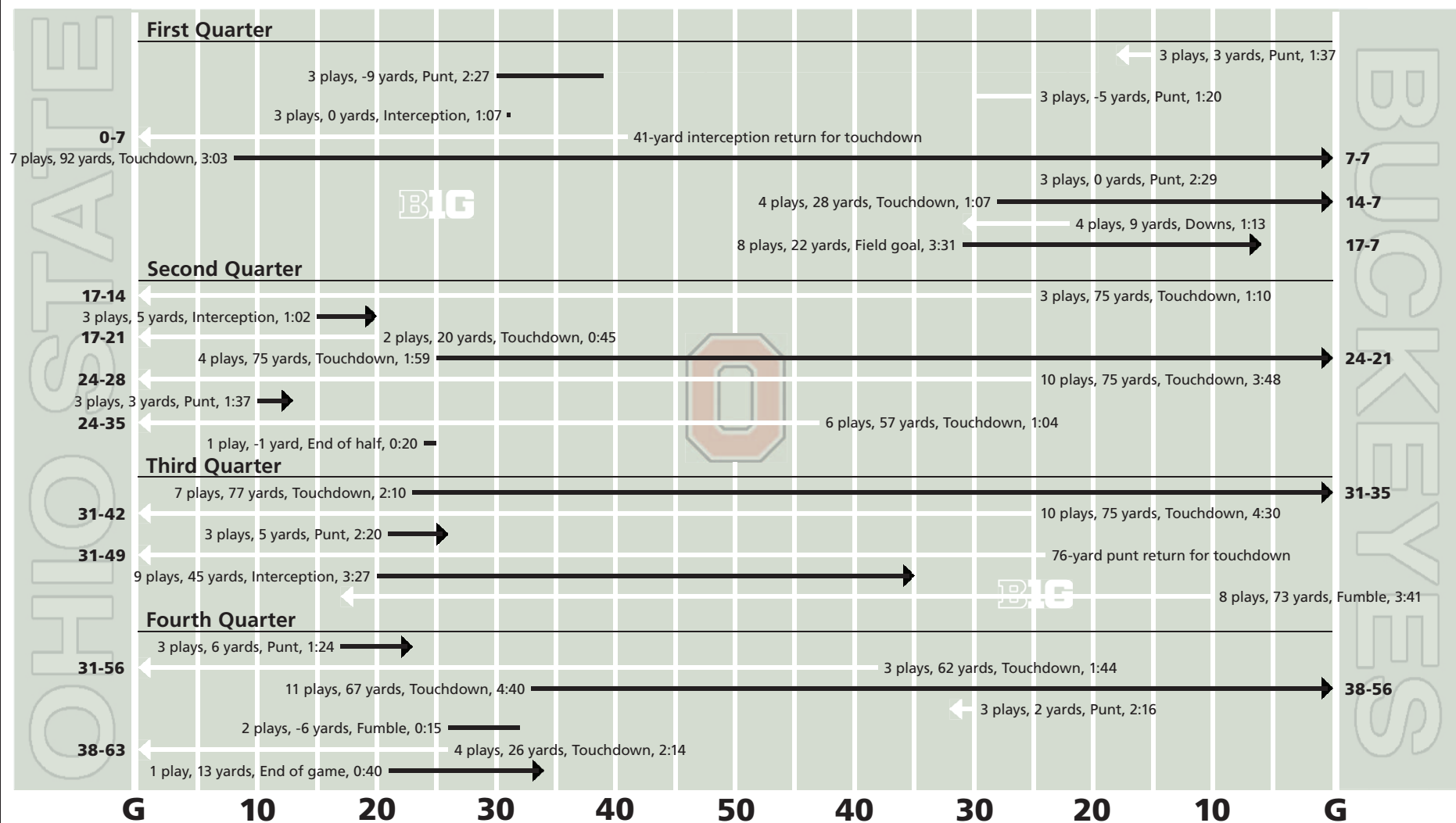
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## Drive Chart

Nebraska

Ohio State



Two plays later, Miller tossed a quick flip to wide-open Jeff Heuerman at about the 12, and the Ohio State tight end did the rest, reaching the end zone for the 18-yard touchdown. After Basil added another extra point, the Buckeyes were back in the lead at 21-17 with 8:58 remaining until the break.

Nebraska had no intention of going away, however. The Cornhuskers answered on their next possession, using a 74-yard pass play from Martinez to Bell on a second-and-17 play to set up a 9-yard touchdown run by Martinez, who broke three tackles on his way to the goal line.

That score and Maher's subsequent PAT pushed Nebraska back on top at 24-21 with 6:59 left in the half.

And back came the Buckeyes with a 10-play, 75-yard drive. The big play in that march was a 32-yard reception by tight end Nick Vannett, who split a pair of Nebraska defenders on a stretch play down the middle of the field.

That moved the ball to the NU 19, and four plays later, Hyde rolled around right end for a 7-yard touchdown and the third lead change of the second quarter. Basil's extra point gave the Buckeyes a 28-24 edge with 3:11 remaining until halftime.

Ohio State got an add-on touchdown in the waning seconds after moving 57 yards in only 1:07. Miller did most of the damage himself, covering 18 yards on a counter play early in the possession and then playing off an excellent block from Hyde at the line of scrimmage to zip 31 yards on a fourth-and-2 play for a touchdown with only 23 seconds remaining.

Basil tacked on his fifth PAT of the first half, and the Buckeyes had a 35-24 lead heading into the locker room.

By the break, Miller had already piled up

137 yards and a touchdown on the ground while adding 78 yards and another score through the air.

But Nebraska showed no intention of giving in. The Huskers took the opening kickoff of the second half and moved 77 yards in seven plays to narrow the gap. On successive plays, Martinez connected with Bell for 28 yards and sophomore running back Braylon Heard for 20 yards before Burkhead broke off a 24-yard run to give NU a first-and-goal at the Ohio State 5, although Burkhead, who would not return in the game, was injured on the play.

Three plays later, Martinez found senior tight end Ben Cotton free in the end zone for a 3-yard touchdown pass. Maher added the extra point, and the Huskers were within four again at 35-31 with only 2:10 gone in the third quarter.

But that was as close as Nebraska would get as most of the rest of the game belonged to the Buckeyes.

OSU marched 75 yards in 10 plays on its next possession, a drive marked by two big pass completions by Miller – the first for 14 yards to Brown, the second a 35-yarder to Heuerman. That gave the Buckeyes a first-and-goal at the 1, and after Hyde was stopped for no gain, the junior tailback powered his way into the end zone on second down.

Basil added another extra point to give the Buckeyes a 42-31 lead at the 8:15 mark of the third quarter.

Brown followed with his 76-yard punt return for a touchdown at the 5:50 mark to make it 49-31, and then Ohio State delivered the dagger. Martinez had his team with a first down at the OSU 35, but his pass over the middle was intercepted by Johnson at the 10-yard line.

## The Bottom Line

**The game was over when ...** Corey "Philly" Brown returned a punt 76 yards for a touchdown with 5:50 remaining in the third quarter. Nebraska had been counterpunching with Ohio State to that point, but Brown's return gave the Buckeyes an 18-point lead at 49-31 and the Cornhuskers never threatened again.

**Game balls go to ...** Braxton Miller and Carlos Hyde. Miller continues to dazzle opposing defenses with a running style head coach Urban Meyer described as "kind of ridiculous," while Hyde established new career highs in carries (28) and yardage (140) while becoming the first OSU running back to score four touchdowns in a game since Eddie George in 1995.

**Stat of the game ...** 101. The teams combined for 101 points, the most Ohio Stadium has seen since the Buckeyes rolled to an 83-21 victory over Iowa in 1950.

– Mark Rea

The Buckeyes failed to capitalize on the turnover when Hyde fumbled on the eighth play of the drive following a 15-yard run up the middle. But Ohio State had flipped field position on the Cornhuskers, and when the defense forced another three-and-out, the offense got the ball back at its own 38 and wasted little time from there.

Hyde banged up the middle for 6 yards and then came back over right guard for a 23-yard gain before giving way to sophomore Rod Smith, who took his first carry of the game 33 yards to the house. Basil's ensuing PAT pushed the Buckeyes' lead to 56-31 with 10:27 to go in the game.

Nebraska put its final score on the board with 5:38 remaining when Martinez finished

off an 11-play, 67-yard drive with a 2-yard touchdown run to make it 56-38.

But the NU signal caller fumbled while being sacked by Simon on the Cornhuskers' next drive, and Bennett fell on the loose football at the Nebraska 26. Four plays later, Hyde motored around right end for a 16-yard score with 48 ticks left on the clock.

### Game Notes

- The contest marked only the fourth ever meeting between Ohio State and Nebraska. The Cornhuskers erased a 21-point deficit last year for a 34-27 victory in Memorial Stadium, while the Buckeyes won both of the previous

Continued On Page 12



# Miller Continues Assault On OSU Record Book

Continued From Page 11

games – 28-20 in the 1955 season opener for both teams and 34-7 a year later in that season's opener. Both of those games were played at Ohio Stadium.

• The game also marked the first time in four meetings that both teams were ranked. The Buckeyes were No. 6 in 1955 and No. 8 in '56 while the Cornhuskers were ranked 14th last season.

• The game pitted a pair of head coaches with a lot of Ohio and Ohio State ties. Meyer is a native of Ashtabula who spent the 1985 and '86 seasons as an assistant on Earle Bruce's coaching staff at Ohio State. Meanwhile, Pelini, who grew up in Youngstown, was recruited by Bruce out of Cardinal Mooney High School to play for the Buckeyes. He was a four-year letterman at OSU from 1987-90 and a two-year starter at safety in 1989 and '90. Pelini was also a team co-captain during the 1990 season.

• Pelini had coached three times before against his alma mater and he was 3-0. In addition to last year's victory, Pelini was a graduate assistant on Hayden Fry's staff at Iowa in 1991 when the Hawkeyes took a 16-9 victory over Ohio State in Columbus. Then, in January 2008 just before taking over at Nebraska, Pelini was defensive coordinator at LSU when the Tigers scored a 38-24 win over the Buckeyes in the BCS National Championship Game.

• Meyer had never before faced Nebraska, but he had butted heads with Pelini. From 2005-07 when Pelini was defensive coordinator at LSU, Meyer went 1-2 vs. the Tigers while at Florida.

• Meyer has his team off to a 6-0 start for

the fifth time in 11 seasons as a head coach. The others were Bowling Green (2002), Utah (2004) and Florida (2006 and '09).

• Pelini has won at least nine games in each of his first four seasons at Nebraska, putting him into some elite company. The only others to accomplish that feat with the Cornhuskers were Bob Devaney, Tom Osborne and Frank Solich. Pelini has a way to go to equal the record for most nine-win seasons with the Huskers, however. Osborne won nine or more games in each of his 25 years at Nebraska.

• The game featured two of the top five winningest programs in college football history. Michigan tops the list with 898 victories through Oct. 6 followed by Texas with 862 and Notre Dame with 859. Nebraska is fourth with 850 and Ohio State is fifth with 843.

• The Cornhuskers and Buckeyes are the two winningest teams in college football since 1970. Nebraska has 416 victories during that time frame while Ohio State now has 390.

• The contest marked only the 12th night game in Ohio Stadium history. The Buckeyes are now 9-3 under the Horseshoe lights.

• Overall, Ohio State is now 37-19 in night games since 1959. Nebraska fell to 81-34-3 all-time under the lights.

• The Buckeyes are 5-0 at home this season and 71-7 at Ohio Stadium since 2002. Nebraska dropped to 0-2 on the road this season and 13-8 in regular-season away contests under Pelini.

• Ohio State has now notched victories in seven of its last eight Big Ten home openers while the Cornhuskers have won only two of their last six conference road openers. That

includes an 0-2 record as Big Ten members. Nebraska suffered a 48-17 loss at Wisconsin last season.

• It was the 91st annual homecoming game for Ohio State. The Buckeyes are now 67-19-5 on homecoming.

• The Buckeyes upped their all-time record to 377-131-28 in October. That is a .729 winning percentage. The Cornhuskers are now 350-133-19 (.716) during the month.

• The high-scoring affair wasn't exactly expected, but both teams pride themselves on scoring points. Nebraska has now scored in 210 consecutive games while Ohio State has scored in 235 straight contests. The Cornhuskers were last shut out during a 19-0 loss at Arizona State on Sept. 21, 1996, while the Buckeyes haven't been shut out since a 28-0 loss at Michigan on Nov. 20, 1993. OSU hasn't been shut out at home since the 1978 season opener, a 19-0 loss to Penn State.

• Ohio State, which entered the game second in the Big Ten and tied for 26th nationally in red zone offense, scored touchdowns on all five of its trips inside the Nebraska 20-yard line. The Buckeyes have scored 22 times – 19 touchdowns and three field goals – in 24 trips inside their opponents' red zone. OSU currently has a streak of scoring on 20 consecutive trips inside the red zone.

• Miller's career-high 186 rushing yards vs. Nebraska pushed his career total to 1,478 and jumped him into fourth place all-time among Ohio State quarterbacks. Terrelle Pryor (2008-10) is first with 2,164 yards, followed by Cornelius Greene (2,080, 1972-75) and Rex Kern (1,714, 1968-70).

• Miller also matched Pryor's school

record for quarterbacks with seven games of 100 or more yards rushing.

• Martinez increased his career ground total to 2,177 yards and that ranks third on his school's all-time list of rushing quarterbacks, trailing only Eric Crouch (3,434, 1998-2001) and Jammal Lord (2,573, 2000-03). Martinez is also fourth on the NU career passing list with 4,993 yards. Zac Taylor (2005-06) is Nebraska's all-time leader in that category with 5,850 yards followed by Joe Ganz (5,125, 2006-08) and Dave Humm (5,035, 1972-74).

• Burkhead's 119 yards vs. the Buckeyes moved his career rushing total to 3,046, making him only the seventh player in Nebraska history with at least 3,000 yards in a career. Mike Rozier (1981-83), who won the 1983 Heisman Trophy, is NU's all-time leading rusher with 4,780 yards.

• Members of the 1972 Ohio State team were recognized during the game to mark the 40th anniversary of a season that celebrated the first of a conference-record six consecutive Big Ten championships or co-titles. LB Randy Gradishar and OT John Hicks were named All-Americans that season, team captains were HB Rick Galbos and DT George Hasenohrl, and the Buckeyes were led by freshman tailback Archie Griffin, who rushed for 867 yards.

• The crowd of 106,102 broke the old Ohio Stadium attendance record of 106,033 set vs. USC in 2009.

• Ohio State is now 272-0-1 all-time when scoring 35 or more points. The lone blemish on that record is a 35-35 tie with SMU in 1978.

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# Buckeyes Grant Meyer's Wish For More Points

Fresh off his first Big Ten win as Ohio State's head coach, Urban Meyer was visibly elated Sept. 29 when he addressed the media after the Buckeyes knocked off Michigan State, 17-16, in East Lansing.

Ohio State's offensive display wasn't what most had come to expect from a Meyer-led team, but the Buckeyes' head coach was proud nevertheless to have guided the program to his first road victory against a talented Big Ten foe.

## INSIDE THE OFFENSE

Ari Wasserman

But as is always true with the goals-oriented coach, he wanted more, especially from his offense.

"We've got to score more points," Meyer said after the narrow win over the Spartans. "I'd like 70 every once in a while."

A week later, his wish almost came true.

With Ohio State facing what most considered one of the best teams in the conference for the second consecutive week – this time Nebraska – the Buckeyes exploded for seven offensive touchdowns, one defensive score and a special teams tally on the way to dispatching the Cornhuskers, 63-38, in Ohio Stadium.

The Buckeyes' start, however, indicated the team was in line for a repeat performance from the Michigan State game given OSU didn't achieve a first down in its first four possessions. By that time, the Buckeyes were already in a 17-7 hole.

But as he typically does, quarterback Braxton Miller got Ohio State moving by making the team's first big play, a 72-yard scamper that moved the ball to the Nebraska 3-yard line. Two plays later, running back Carlos Hyde was in the end zone to cut the Cornhuskers' lead to three.

Ohio State wouldn't be stopped from that point forward.

"I think Braxton obviously changed the game," said Meyer, who saw his Buckeyes put together five consecutive touchdown drives to take complete control of the game.

Miller's big run proved to be the spark that led to the team's most impressive offensive performance of the season so far. The Buckeyes put up 498 yards of total offense and had a pair of 100-yard rushers in Miller (186) and Hyde (140) for the first time since they had three in their 34-20 win against Indiana last November.

As Hyde rumbled into the end zone from 16 yards out with less than a minute remaining in the game to set the final score – he had four touchdowns in the game – the Buckeyes' first quarter that Meyer referred to as "a train wreck" was a distant memory for the head coach.

"He didn't know what we put up," Miller said of Meyer, smiling after the offensive onslaught. "He was like, 'How many points did we put up again?'"

Meyer wouldn't mind regularly having to think twice about his team's point total after games, but the head coach admitted he never thought he'd encounter that problem this season.

When initially evaluating the team in January, Meyer saw a lot of things that didn't add up to an offensive juggernaut – namely a converted tight end playing right tackle, a youthful quarterback and wide receivers



JOSH WINSLOW

**OPENING THE HOLE – Ohio State junior tailback Carlos Hyde (34) had plenty of room to run thanks to blocking from his offensive line, including senior tackle Reid Fragel (77).**

who had little-to-no experience making big plays.

Above all, though, Meyer didn't see an offensive line capable of performing at a level that would yield the offensive proficiency the Buckeyes showed against the Cornhuskers.

"They're the ones that have really developed – I mean, like *really* developed," Meyer said of the offensive line. "Even early in the season, I didn't feel it. I didn't feel us change the line of scrimmage against those early teams."

"I'm starting to feel us change the line of scrimmage. They're changing the line of scrimmage against some very good defensive lines. The last two we played, those are very good defensive lines."

Both Miller and Hyde were quick to give credit to the offensive line for what turned out to be a 371-yard rushing day.

"Without the offensive line, I wouldn't have scored any of my touchdowns," Hyde said. "Those holes were there and I had room to make a play. Those guys up front, they know if it wasn't for them that we wouldn't have been able to do the things that we did. They deserve all the credit in the world."

Ohio State's offense looks a lot different than it did for 10 years under former head coach Jim Tressel and last season under interim head coach Luke Fickell. That's because Meyer installed a spread offense, complete with pre-snap motions, zone reads and option plays.

The Buckeyes, however, delivered their most recent offensive eruption using the offensive principles ingrained from previous coaching regimes. The win over Nebraska

was aesthetically different, but the Buckeyes did it the old-fashioned way.

They repeatedly ran right at Nebraska's defense and dared it to stop them. It turned out the Cornhuskers weren't up to the task.

Although Meyer has consistently described his offensive attack as a power spread, the prevailing opinion was that his philosophy promised huge offensive production in the passing game with quicker, more elusive players gaining yardage in bunches when given space.

But old school was what worked against the Cornhuskers, and Meyer wasn't going to turn his back on traditional Big Ten power football. Miller had only one touchdown pass – an 18-yard strike to tight end Jeff Heurman – but most of the damage was done on the ground as the head coach witnessed the offensive line assert itself as the superior force.

"Coach Meyer gets classified as a spread guy, but he really likes the smash-mouth football," junior left tackle Jack Mewhort said. "He loves running power and running it down guys' throats, and we have the ability to do that here when we execute and do it right. I think he loves it. Running it down their throats is his favorite thing to do."

That just wasn't always a possibility, specifically earlier in the season when Meyer didn't see the necessary results from the offensive line. As that unit has continued to grow, however, so has the Buckeyes' mentality.

"As we've grown as an offensive line, we've matured and jelled each week," Mewhort said. "We've gotten better and better, and we're starting to execute schemes and stuff."

"But we have to start doing that sooner.

We can't wait an entire quarter to get things going, and we have a ton to work on. We're blue-collar guys and we're going to come back next week even better."

### Hyde Earning Respect

Maybe Hyde just likes playing against Nebraska at night. A year ago, he rushed for 104 yards during the Buckeyes' loss to the Cornhuskers in Lincoln, including a 63-yard touchdown burst down the sideline.

But after Hyde's 140-yard, four-touchdown performance against the Cornhuskers this season, the running back has made progress in helping the Buckeyes become more versatile offensively.

For a while, Ohio State's offense was just Miller and little else. The junior tailback, however, has come a long way in changing that distinction.

"We have two good runners right now," Meyer said. "Carlos Hyde is starting to earn a lot of respect."

Perhaps Hyde's 6-0, 232-pound frame wouldn't make for the ideal fit in Meyer's offense had the head coach recruited him out of high school, but the junior is making it very hard for the head coach to move in a different direction offensively.

As the Buckeyes continue to rely on their rushing attack, and senior Jordan Hall continues to nurse injuries, the hard-nosed Naples, Fla., native has earned the distinction of being the team's top running option – aside from Miller, of course.

"I like the way I am playing right now, and I think I am starting to gain some respect," Hyde said. "I just want to do whatever I can to help the team win, and hopefully that means me carrying the ball a little more."



# Buckeye Game Analysis

## Play Of The Game

Ohio State ran away with a thrilling 63-38 win against No. 21 Nebraska on Oct. 6 in Ohio Stadium, so it's easy to forget that at one point the Buckeyes seemed to be in danger of letting the game slip away.

The visitors scored 17 consecutive points to take a 17-7 lead early in the second quarter, but it took Ohio State wunderkind quarterback Braxton Miller just one play to tilt the game back the other way when the Buckeyes regained possession.

Ohio State took over with a first-and-10 at its own 25 after a Nebraska field goal, and Miller took that first play 72 yards on the ground to put the Buckeyes inside the Huskers 5-yard line.

With the ball on the left hash, the Buckeyes came out in a shotgun formation with Carlos Hyde to Miller's left, a single wideout to the left side of the formation and three receivers split out to the field side.

Miller took the snap and immediately started shuffling to his right with Hyde on an option play. That action forced Nebraska's linebackers – middle man Will Compton and outside 'backer Alonzo Whaley – to start funneling to that side of the field.

Ohio State's offensive line was active on the play, with left guard Andrew Norwell pulling around to the right to block defensive end Thaddeus Randle. Right guard Marcus Hall blocked down to seal the edge, while right tackle Reid Fragel fired to the second level to seal off Compton as the linebacker moved to his right.

Seeing the middle of the field blocked accordingly, Miller eschewed the give to Hyde and cut upfield with plenty of open space. Safety P.J. Smith was moving toward Hyde at the start of the play and seemed to be in position to tackle Miller, but the quarterback is one of the hardest-to-tackle players in college football and simply juiced to his right as he approached Smith, leaving the senior waving at air.

Miller added another quick fake around Whaley, who was pursuing back toward the middle of the field, to reach the open field. Around the 40, the QB picked up a second block from Norwell, who proceeded from mauling Randle to pick up a seal block on safety Daimion Stafford.

The last piece of the puzzle was a crushing block from Corey "Philly" Brown. The wideout came from the right side of the field to smash cornerback Josh Mitchell, who appeared to have an angle on Miller, into pursuing backside corner Stanley Jean-Baptiste at the 43, setting Miller off to the races.

He was finally caught near the 20 by nickel back Ciente Evans, but Miller broke through that tackle before being pushed out of bounds by Stafford, who did not give up on the play.

Miller tweaked an injury on the play, but Kenny Guiton came in and handed off to Hyde a pair of times before the big back plunged in to pull the Buckeyes within one score. That set off a run of five consecutive offensive possessions with touchdowns that allowed OSU to bury the Huskers.

"We couldn't get anything going at the time," Brown said of the play. "We had a couple of punts leading up to that, and we needed somebody like Braxton to make a big play to excite the crowd because the crowd got out of it. To have someone like Braxton make a play like that and get them into the game and being able to score, it was good."

## Hidden Play Of The Game

Nebraska was still in the game even after Ohio State scored to take a 42-31 lead with 8:15 to go in the third quarter, but things quickly spiraled out of control over the next few minutes as the Buckeyes took the lead for good – and the key play was a sack by middle linebacker Storm Klein.

After OSU kicked off following a Hyde touchdown run, Ameer Abdullah returned the ball to the Nebraska 21 to set up first-and-10. On the opening play of the drive, Martinez faked a pitch and rolled out to his right, where he was met by a wall of Ohio State defenders.

The slippery quarterback tried to make the most of the situation, doubling back to his left, but Klein kept enough contain to take the feet out from under Martinez, who fell for a 12-yard loss at the 9. It was the first sack and first tackle for loss of the year for Klein, and it put Nebraska in a bind as momentum was slipping away.

Soon enough, it was totally gone. The Huskers had to



JOSH WINSLOW

**AWAY HE GOES** – Ohio State sophomore quarterback Braxton Miller sparked his team's offense in the second quarter with a 72-yard run that set up a touchdown.

punt on the drive, and Brown returned the kick 76 yards for a touchdown that gave the Buckeyes a 49-31 lead that essentially put the game out of reach for the visitors.

## What Worked Well

- **The team effort:** Ohio State certainly doesn't have a dominating team at the moment, but it does have one that picks itself up when it needs to. When the offense was struggling early in the game, the defense got a touchdown on a Bradley Roby interception return to get things going. Later, the offense made some plays to pick up the defense when Nebraska was moving the ball, and finally things started clicking to the point that OSU outscored the Huskers by a 35-7 mark from the late second quarter to the early fourth.

- **Getting Miller some help:** A few times this year, Ohio State has totally put the game in Miller's hands. Against Nebraska, the sophomore quarterback got some major help. He combined for 30 offensive plays – 16 rushes and 14 passes – after 46 the week prior at Michigan State, while the rest of the team chipped in to take the load off a little bit. Hyde ran 28 times for 140 yards and four touchdowns, while Rod Smith added a long TD run and Brown had the punt return score.

## What Didn't Work

- **Avoiding big plays:** At this point, the Ohio State defense is what it is. On the plus side, it's a physical unit that stiffens in crucial situations, but on the negative side, it is still prone to missing tackles in open space and giving up long gains a couple of times per game. Nebraska finished with five plays of 20 yards or more, including a 73-yard run by Rex Burkhead and a 74-yard pass from Martinez to Kenny Bell.

- **The team's start:** Ohio State was outscored 14-7 in the first quarter, and opposing teams now hold a 36-34 edge for the season in the opening frame. It seems like it takes the Ohio State offense a quarter to figure out what opposing teams are doing before things really click into gear. When it does, though, teams need to watch out. The Buckeyes are now outscoring teams by an 87-23 margin in the second quarter.

## Reviewing The Matchups

**Ohio State rush offense vs. Nebraska rush defense:** Picking up 371 yards and six touchdowns on the ground is any offensive coach's idea of a good day, and that's what Ohio State did against the Huskers. Nebraska simply

couldn't stop Miller from getting into the open field, and then Hyde ground out the game with some tough inside running. On top of that, the offensive line earned major praise after an excellent showing. **EDGE: Ohio State**

**Nebraska rush offense vs. Ohio State rush defense:** Ohio State's rushing numbers were eye-popping, but Nebraska wasn't bad, either. The Cornhuskers racked up 223 yards and four touchdowns with Burkhead making big plays on the edge a couple of times. Abdullah and Braylon Heard also made some nice plays, but the Buckeyes have to be happy about keeping Martinez to 40 net yards. **EDGE: Nebraska**

**Ohio State pass offense vs. Nebraska pass defense:** The scary part is that Ohio State piled up 63 points and didn't even have to do much in the passing game. Miller threw only 14 times, completing seven of his passes, and had just a single touchdown. He missed a few big-play tries to Devin Smith, who finished without a catch, but his passes to tight ends Jeff Heuerman and Nick Vannett were huge plays as the two combined for three catches for 85 yards and a score. **EDGE: Even**

**Nebraska pass offense vs. Ohio State pass defense:** Once Nebraska got behind, it tried to catch up through the air, a strategy that did not work for the most part. Martinez pitched the three critical interceptions and was sacked four times, seven hugely negative plays that sapped much of the momentum the Huskers tried to build on offense. **EDGE: Ohio State**

**Special teams:** Brown's punt return touchdown gave OSU the edge here, but in truth it was a mixed bag. The Buckeyes gave up a long return to Abdullah – major credit goes to punter Ben Buchanan for a touchdown-saving, open-field tackle – and also came up short on a missed fake punt. On the positive side, Buchanan boomed his kicks and the Buckeyes' kickoff coverage unit was nothing short of outstanding, keeping the explosive Abdullah to a 16.0-yard average on eight returns. **EDGE: Ohio State**

**Intangibles:** Ohio State dominated this category in a nearly perfect night in Ohio Stadium. Urban Meyer's offense made a huge statement, players stepped up across the board and a stadium-record crowd made the Old Gray Lady of the Olentangy into the inferno Meyer wanted. Once the Ohio State train started rolling down the track, a Nebraska team that struggles on the road was steamrolled, while OSU left the game thinking that big things could be in the offing for the rest of the year. **EDGE: Ohio State**

– Jeff Svoboda



# Despite Numbers, Defense Gets Job Done

Though it might sound flip to say, in many ways, Ohio State had the best defensive performance in program history Oct. 6 in which it gave up 38 points and 437 yards to the opposing team.

There were surely breakdowns in the defense, especially early as Nebraska scored 24 points in the first 23:01 of play, but the OSU stop troops buckled down to give up only a single touchdown in the next 30-plus minutes as the Buckeyes ran away with a 63-38 win against a high-octane Nebraska outfit in Ohio Stadium.

## INSIDE THE DEFENSE

Jeff Svoboda

"We did feel like we did our part," cornerback Bradley Roby said. "They were averaging a lot of points, but I feel like we contained them. They made some plays. It's a football game so that's going to happen, but I felt like our defense did a good job. I think we stepped up and made plays when we needed to."

That was true as the Buckeyes slowed down the Nebraska charge from late in the second quarter until the early fourth. The Cornhuskers were kept off the board on four of five drives during that span as the OSU offense sprang into gear, posting a run of touchdowns that turned into an avalanche that buried the visitors.

From the time Nebraska took a 24-21 lead midway through the second quarter, the next five Huskers possessions – excluding a kneel-down at the end of the first half – ended in a trio of three-and-outs, an interception and a touchdown.

By the time the Cornhuskers were able to stem the tide, their lead had turned into a 56-31 disadvantage that by all rights ended the game.

Ohio State was able to do that with one of its senior leaders on the bench. Strongside linebacker Etienne Sabino left the game in the first quarter with what appeared to be a leg injury and did not return.

With Sabino out, the team turned to middle linebacker Storm Klein in the nickel defense, and the senior had one of the best games of his career with seven tackles and a 12-yard sack. True freshman Joshua Perry stepped in as the Sam linebacker in the base defense, while OSU also got small cameos in the linebacker group from sophomore Curtis Grant and true freshman Camren Williams.

"One thing that pushed us a lot is when Etienne got hurt, we tried to put it on our back," said sophomore weakside linebacker Ryan Shazier, who finished with a team-high 11 tackles. "We try to do it for our brother because we're here for each other no matter what, and we'll always be there for each other."

That was something echoed by senior defensive lineman Garrett Goebel, who entered with Sabino in the ballyhooed and eventually star-crossed 2008 recruiting class.

"Just looking in his eyes, you knew how much it means to him and how much he wanted to be out there," Goebel said. "You never know when it can happen to you. You have to take advantage of your opportunities. Josh stepped in and did a great job, and hopefully Bino's back soon because he's a good leader on our team. We need to have him."



JOSH WINSLOW

**BEWARE** – Ohio State fifth-year senior defensive lineman Nathan Williams (43) had four tackles, forced a fumble and was one of several Buckeyes to make things difficult for Nebraska quarterback Taylor Martinez (left).

One issue the defense continued to have was stopping big plays, which were the key to Nebraska's offensive success. Rex Burkhead got the Huskers' attack going early with a 73-yard cutback run setting up a score that victimized what appeared to be overaggressive safety play from Orhian Johnson and Corey Brown.

Nebraska's next two scoring drives – a touchdown jaunt and a field-goal possession – were set up by short fields thanks to misadventures in the OSU punting game, while the Huskers' third touchdown was the result of a 74-yard catch-and-run from Nebraska quarterback Taylor Martinez to receiver Kenny Bell.

Martinez just got the pass off before being belted by Roby on a corner blitz, and Bell was inside of Johnson on a post pattern for the big gain. He broke Johnson's tackle near the sideline and then tiptoed down the sideline before being caught by Shazier in pursuit at the OSU 8. A face-mask call on Shazier – which could have gone either way as Bell was stiff-arming the Buckeye linebacker's cage – put the ball at the 4, and Nebraska took advantage with a Martinez touchdown run to make it 24-21 in favor of the visitors.

But from there, Ohio State largely clamped down. The Buckeyes forced four turnovers out of Martinez – a trio of interceptions and a fumble – and sacked the elusive Nebraska quarterback four times on the day.

Martinez had entered with 11 passing touchdowns against just one interception and averaging nearly 60 yards rushing per game, but Ohio State was able to thoroughly frustrate him, especially as the Cornhuskers turned to the pass in an effort to get back in the game.

"He's obviously a fast quarterback," Roby said. "We just wanted to contain him as much as possible, and I felt like we did a decent job of that."

Head coach Urban Meyer saw both the pluses and minuses of the defensive effort as he assessed the contest afterward.

"The defense can get better," Meyer said. "They created some turnovers but can get better. I'm pleased with their effort, but we all know we can't give up those kinds of yards and those kinds of points and win the game. They fed off each other."

### Roby's Big Day

No one stepped up and made more plays than Roby, who is starting to look more and more like a surefire All-Big Ten choice after a pair of interceptions and another pass breakup against the Cornhuskers.

His first big play not only opened the scoring, it helped him live out a couple of premonitions. Roby and his father both had dreams that he would have an interception return for a touchdown, and then the sophomore corner made it a reality when he picked off Martinez's out pass to Quincy Enunwa and ran it 41 yards up the home sideline to give the Buckeyes a 7-0 lead just 6:31 into the game.

"I hadn't had (an interception) all year," Roby said. "I just knew it was a big deal for my team if I got a pick-six. I dreamed about that. I saw it, and my dad called me this morning and was like, 'I had a dream you had a pick-six today.' I was like, 'I'm going to get it. I had the same dream.' Sometimes stuff like that happens and it's just crazy."

The play wasn't just dumb luck, though. Roby sniffed out the pattern from the very beginning, putting him in perfect position to step in front of Enunwa.

"I saw it on film," he said. "When they line up in certain formations, they run certain routes in certain downs and distances. I saw it and thought about it pre-snap, so when I saw him running the route, I just jumped it."

Roby, who finished with four tackles as well, added a second interception early in the second quarter, setting up an OSU touchdown that allowed the Buckeyes to take the lead. With Nebraska facing third-and-5, Martinez tried to force a pass into Bell, but Roby played the route physically and stayed inside the receiver as Martinez threw the ball right to him.

Roby later knocked down a pass in the end zone in the fourth quarter to complete his excellent effort.

"I just tried to make as many plays as possible," he said. "I could have had three picks today. At the very end, when I knocked the slant down, I feel like I could have picked it off, but I was playing it safe. I don't really worry about all that stuff, I just try to make

as many plays as possible for my team. If I get three picks or four picks, that's just what happens."

### Line Steps Up Again

Throughout much of the preseason, there was talk that the Ohio State defensive line could be one of the most dominating units in the country.

But as John Simon battled a shoulder injury, Adam Bellamy gave up the sport, Michael Bennett missed the first four games with a groin malady and Nathan Williams worked his way back from microfracture knee surgery, the depth and production on the line suffered a bit during the nonconference season.

Things appear to be humming nicely, though, as the Buckeyes hit the meat of the conference slate. Simon, Bennett and Williams appear to be improving, giving the Buckeyes a fearsome fivesome when potential All-Big Ten tackles Goebel and Johnathan Hankins are factored in.

Those players were again excellent against Nebraska, with Goebel turning in an impressive eight tackles along with a stop for loss. Simon added a dominant outing, turning Nebraska left tackle Brent Qvale inside and out all day while racking up seven tackles, including five for loss, two sacks and a forced fumble.

Meanwhile, Williams had four tackles and another forced fumble, Hankins continued to get off blocks to swallow up run plays and finished with three stops, and Bennett had two tackles and a fumble recovery while continuing to build up playing time.

Lastly, sophomore Steve Miller didn't show up on the stat sheet but got in for a few plays while Williams went out with a ding for a short time.

"We have amazing guys in front of us," Shazier said. "That's another reason I feel like I could play well sometimes. And the secondary gets a lot of opportunity to make a lot of big plays because our defensive line brings a lot of pressure. We might not get a sack all the time, but they're bringing pressure in, making the quarterback be rattled."

"So I feel it's amazing having guys like that in front of us and beating up blocks and making great plays."



# BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 63, Nebraska 38

**Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini's assessment of the game:** "Congratulations to Ohio State. Obviously I'm disappointed about how the game ended. Obviously we didn't play our best football."

**Junior wide receiver Corey "Philly" Brown on whether it was a statement win:** "A big statement game, obviously. They beat us last year with the biggest comeback in Nebraska history. A couple of people picked us to lose, but in the locker room we know nobody can beat us if we play our game, so we just stayed focused. We went through a little adversity in the beginning of the game, bounced back strong like I knew we would and handled our business."

**Pelini on his defense's approach against OSU quarterback Braxton Miller:** "We got the safeties up there. We put some other guys in position, and like I said, we didn't play well enough. We didn't get off blocks, we missed tackles, we missed opportunities, we overpursued on a couple of things. I think on his first (72-yard run early in the second quarter), we had about four guys there to make the tackle and to his credit he made some guys miss. We have to make those plays."

**Junior tailback Carlos Hyde on whether he had any idea the Buckeyes could put more than 300 rushing yards against Nebraska:** "I watched the UCLA game, and their running back had 200-some yards on them. I was thinking, 'If we can get going, we probably can do that and do more.' We started off slow, but we got clicking in the second quarter. I just kept going."

**Junior offensive tackle Jack Mewhort on the offensive effort:** "It was just a matter of time before we had a performance like this. If we had come out in the first quarter and played like we're capable of, it could have been more. We're really pleased. It's obviously great that we put up 63 points, but we need to get a lot better."

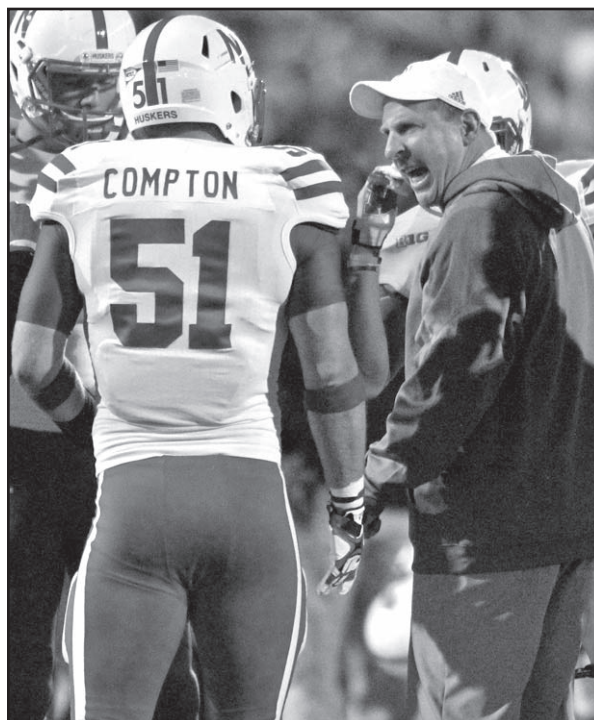
**Miller on what clicked for the OSU offense:** "I think the O-line. They stepped it up real big. They worked hard throughout the week, every day. The O-line just gave it out."

**Pelini on what happened to his team's defense:** "Not getting off blocks, unblocked guys not making tackles. We didn't play good enough, you know? We didn't play well, obviously. I give Ohio State credit. We didn't play good enough. They deserved to win the football game."

**Sophomore tight end Jeff Heurman on if he's surprised the offense has progressed as well as it has in the Meyer system:** "We're not surprised. I wouldn't put it that way. Did I think we were going to score 63 points tonight? No, I don't think so. But I wouldn't say we're surprised. But we know how hard we've worked. We know that when we put it all together it's going to be a big game. That's what happened tonight."

**Brown on whether OSU's 63 points is the maximum potential for the offense:** "It could have been more, to be honest with you. We made some mistakes that killed us. Sixty-three points is obviously amazing, especially for us. We knew we had it in us, we just had to do it. I wouldn't say we're satisfied – we're going to stay hungry – but for tonight we're satisfied."

**Hyde on OSU's progress in Meyer's offense:** "It was pretty crazy how we've changed, how we can just go down the field so easily and just score and just keep scoring on top of that. Keep going and just put up crazy numbers and yards. It's pretty crazy."



JOSH WINSLOW

**UNHAPPY HOMECOMING – Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini (right), a former Ohio State football player, seemed displeased with his team's performance.**

**Sophomore cornerback Bradley Roby on the feeling among the team:** "It's just like Coach Meyer described it. It was like pushing a ball up a hill. You're pushing the ball and at first you can't really see much. It's cloudy, you can't really see, but you break through it and you see the sun. You're like we're almost there, almost there, keep pushing, keep pushing. I feel like that was a component of tonight. We saw the sun and we just kept pushing. Now we're going downhill and there's nothing stopping us."

**Sophomore linebacker Ryan Shazier on if he's surprised by OSU's 6-0 start to the season:** "We're not surprised. We knew that this whole year we're going to do as many things and win as many games as possible. But we're going to keep fighting and be behind each other, keep rolling, and we won't give up and can't be stopped. And we'll keep going and win as many games as possible this year."

**Roby on the game's atmosphere:** "It was indescribable. The 107,000, it was packed. It was sold out, a night game. I feel like when we play at night, we're unstoppable. Last year vs. Wisconsin, this year – it's just indescribable. Just so much joy happens with a win like this. It's something I'll never forget."

**Hyde on the same subject:** "That was great. That game reminded me of the Wisconsin game (last year), but we scored a lot of points this game. We didn't have to worry about a Hail Mary at the end of the game. That game was great. It was just a fun experience to be able to play under the lights in the 'Shoe. That was awesome."

**Nebraska offensive guard Spencer Long on how the crowd noise affected the Cornhuskers:** "The crowd noise was a definite factor, but it's tough to win when you beat yourself (with penalties and turnovers). We have to get better."

**Brown on whether the Buckeyes are having fun through the first half of the season:** "Definitely. We are all in. Everybody here has bought into the system, and this is a brotherhood right here. A lot of programs preach it, but this is

truly a brotherhood around here. Everybody feels like everybody is each other's brother. Everybody picks up for each other. We play for each other, and everybody here puts the team in front of them. So as long as we don't have any of the I's on our team, we'll be good."

**Brown on his 76-yard punt return for a third-quarter touchdown:** "Going out there, I knew I had to make a play. Coach (Stan) Drayton was in my ear, in my face telling me I had to change the game. I knew with the scheme we had I would definitely get a chance to make a play. When I caught the ball, I saw no one even close to me, so the blocking was excellent. Coach Drayton did a good job motivating me and those guys did it for me."

**Heurman on his second-quarter touchdown:** "It was my first touchdown as a Buckeye so I was ecstatic. It was almost like a dream when I first got in there. It took me a second to realize it."

**Hyde on beating Nebraska after losing a disheartening game in Lincoln last season:** "Our emotions are high right now. What happened to us last year and how we were up and they came back in the second half, we knew exactly what happened last year. We came into this game at halftime just saying, 'We've got to keep pressing the pedal. Don't let up at all because they can score any minute.' We have to keep going every time we get a possession. We've got to score and that's exactly what we did."

**Heurman on the three combined catches between him and fellow tight end Nick Vannett:** "That was awesome. We're always just working hard. When the ball comes our way, we'll do something with it. It was nice to see the ball."

**Shazier on playing with his family in town from Florida:** "Today, it was already a big game, but it was a little bit bigger to me because my family was in town. They rarely get to come to games. When they do, it's really big to me. So I tried to take all advantage of the game I could today. And it was just amazing just knowing that my family was here and I can spend time with them, because I don't really get to see them that much."

**Pelini on his team's road struggles:** "You watched it. We have to execute. We can talk about it all we want. What just happened, happened. What I'm worried about is we have six weeks and we need to win the next six football games to get to Indianapolis."

**Nebraska quarterback Taylor Martinez on his team's mentality following the loss:** "We have to win out. Our goal is to make the Rose Bowl, and the only way to do that is to win the rest of the games on our schedule."

**Pelini on if he was angry about Ohio State's final touchdown, which came in the final minute:** "Hey, when you have an unblocked player and you don't make the play ... I don't fault him for running the ball. If he wanted to take a knee, he could have taken a knee, but I don't know. You keep playing. Our guys needed to keep playing."

**Roby on whether The Associated Press national championship is a realistic goal:** "Oh yeah, that's definitely a goal for our team. We want to win every single game. We're taking it one play at a time, one game at a time. We definitely want to go undefeated, and hopefully that's something in the future."



# The Numbers Game

## Ohio State 63, Nebraska 38

Oct. 6, 2012 — Ohio Stadium; Columbus, Ohio

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
NEBRASKA	14	10	7	7	38
OHIO STATE	7	28	14	14	63

### First Quarter

**OSU** — Roby, 41 yard interception return (Basil kick), 8:29.  
**NEB** — Abdullah, 1 yard run (Maher kick), 5:26; 7 plays, 92 yards, 3:03 TOP.

**NEB** — Abdullah, 3 yard run (Maher kick), 1:50; 4 plays, 28 yards, 1:07 TOP.

### Second Quarter

**NEB** — Maher, 26 yard field goal, 11:59; 8 plays, 22 yards, 3:31 TOP.

**OSU** — Hyde, 1 yard run (Basil kick), 10:49; 3 plays, 75 yards, 1:10 TOP.

**OSU** — Heuerman, 18 yard pass from B.Miller (Basil kick), 8:58; 2 plays, 20 yards, 0:45 TOP.

**NEB** — Martinez, 9 yard run (Maher kick), 6:59; 4 plays, 75 yards, 1:59 TOP.

**OSU** — Hyde, 7 yard run (Basil kick), 3:11; 10 plays, 75 yards, 3:48 TOP.

**OSU** — B.Miller, 31 yard run (Basil kick), 0:23; 6 plays, 57 yards, 1:04 TOP.

### Third Quarter

**NEB** — B.Cotton, 3 yard pass from Martinez (Maher kick), 12:50; 7 plays, 77 yards, 2:10 TOP.

**OSU** — Hyde, 1 yard run (Basil kick), 8:15; 10 plays, 75 yards, 4:30 TOP.

**OSU** — P.Brown, 76 yard punt return (Basil kick), 5:50.

### Fourth Quarter

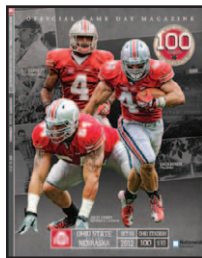
**OSU** — R.Smith, 33 yard run (Basil kick), 10:27; 3 plays, 62 yards, 1:44 TOP.

**NEB** — Martinez, 2 yard run (Maher kick), 5:38; 11 plays, 67 yards, 4:40 TOP.

**OSU** — Hyde, 16 yard run (Basil kick), 0:48; 4 plays, 26 yards, 2:14 TOP.

**Att.** — 106,102.

**Weather** — 52 degrees, partly cloudy; wind, NW 9 mph.



### Team Statistics

	NEB	OSU
First Downs	21	19
Rushing	10	13
Passing	7	5
Penalty	4	1
Rushes-Yards	46-223	48-371
Passing Yards	214	127
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	15-25-3	7-14-0
Offensive Plays	71	62
Total Net Yards	437	498
Third Down Efficiency	5-14	5-11
Fourth Down Efficiency	2-2	1-2
Punts-Avg.	4-43.5	4-43.8
Fumbles-Lost	2-1	3-1
Penalties	9-75	9-76
Time of Possession	31:52	28:08

### Individual Statistics

**RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.)** — **NEB:** Burkhead 14-119; Martinez 18-40; Abdullah 7-28; Heard 5-24; Cross 1-13; TEAM 1-(-1). **OSU:** B.Miller 16-186; Hyde 28-140; R.Smith 2-38; Buchanan 1-6; P.Brown 1-1.

**PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD)** — **NEB:** Martinez 15-25-3-214-1. **OSU:** Miller 7-14-0-127-1.

**RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.)** — **NEB:** K.Bell 5-133; Turner 3-24; B.Cotton 2-19; Heard 1-20; Abdullah 1-8; Janovich 1-5; Enunwa 1-3; Burkhead 1-2. **OSU:** P.Brown 3-35; Heuerman 2-53; Vannett 1-32; Z.Boren 1-7.

**PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long)** — **NEB:** Maher 4-43.5-50. **OSU:** Buchanan 4-43.8-49.

**PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.)** — **NEB:** Abdullah 2-49. **OSU:** D.Smith 2-1; P.Brown 1-76.

**KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.)** — **NEB:** Abdullah 8-128. **OSU:** D.Smith 3-46; R.Smith 1-25.

**FUMBLE RECOVERIES (No.-Yds.)** — **NEB:** Randle 1-0. **OSU:** Bennett.

**INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.)** — **NEB:** None. **OSU:** Roby 2-49; Johnson 1-3.

**SACKS (No.-Yds.)** — **NEB:** Martin 2.0-8. **OSU:** Simon 2.0-13; Klein 1.0-12; Shazier 1.0-5.

**TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.)** — **NEB:** Martin 2.0-8; Ankrah 1.0-2. **OSU:** Simon 5.0-24; Shazier 2.0-8; Klein 1.0-12; Goebel 1.0-1.

**TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.)** — **NEB:** Martin 5-4-9; Compton 3-6-9; P.J.Smith 3-6-9; Whaley 2-6-8; Stafford 5-2-7; Mitchell 2-2-4; Evans 2-1-3; Stoddard 2-1-3; Steinkuhler 1-2-3; Meredith 1-2-3; Rome 0-3-3; C.Jackson 2-0-2; Ankrah 2-0-2; Randle 0-2-2; K.Bell 1-0-1; Seisay 0-1-1; A.Williams 0-1-1; Fisher 0-1-1. **OSU:** Shazier 6-5-11; Bryant 4-5-9; Goebel 2-6-8; Simon 6-1-7; Klein 3-4-7; Howard 2-4-6; Johnson 2-3-5; Roby 2-2-4; N.Williams 2-2-4; C.Brown 1-2-3; Domicone 0-3-3; Hankins 0-3-3; Bogard 2-0-2; Bennett 1-1-2; C.Williams 1-1-2; Griffin 0-2-2; Buchanan 1-0-1; Marcus 1-0-1; Z.Boren 1-0-1; Murray 1-0-1; Sabino 1-0-1; Basil 1-0-1; Hale 0-1-1; C.Grant 0-1-1.

**PLAYERS IN THE GAME** — **NEBRASKA:** Offense, K.Bell, Qvale, Choi, J.Jackson, Long, Sirls, B.Cotton, Martinez, Enunwa, Janovich, Burkhead, Maher. Defense, Martin, Randle, Steinkuhler, Meredith, Compton, Whaley, Jean-Baptiste, P.J.Smith, Stafford, Mitchell, Evans. Reserves, Nebraska: H.Jackson, A.Bell, Seisay, Heard, Cooper, Allen, J.Carter, Abdullah, Ankrah, Turner, Marsh, Marrow, Richards, C.Jackson, S.Osborne, Davie, A.Williams, K.Reed, Dean, Zimmerer, Cross, Stoddard, Long, Santos, Fisher, Roach, Pensick, Rodriguez, McDermott, Mangieri, Rome. **OHIO STATE:** Offense, Mewhort, Norwell, Linsley, M.Hall, Fragel, Heuerman, Vannett, B.Miller, Hyde, M.Thomas, Spencer, Basil. Defense, Simon, Hankins, Goebel, N.Williams, Shazier, Klein, Sabino, Roby, Bryant, Johnson, Howard, Buchanan. Reserves, R.Smith, C.Brown, C.Williams, Spence, Griffin, V.Reed, P.Brown, Stoneburner, D.Grant, Guiton, C.Grant, D.Smith, Domicone, Murray, Perkins, A.Reeves, Dunn, Tanner, Rice, Bogard, Marcus, Crowell, Perry, Haynes, Z.Boren, Homan, J.T.Moore, Hale, Makridis, Bennett, Decker, Kramer, C.Carter, Baldwin, Fields, S.Miller, Schutt, Washington.

## Season Statistics

### 2012 Game-By-Game

Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd
Sept. 1	(18) MIAMI (OHIO)	W, 56-10	105,036
Sept. 8	(14) C. FLORIDA	W, 31-16	104,745
Sept. 15	(12) CALIFORNIA	W, 35-28	105,232
Sept. 22	(16) UAB	W, 29-15	105,019
Sept. 29	(14) at Mich. State (20)	W, 17-16	76,705
Oct. 6	(12) NEBRASKA (21)	W, 63-38	106,102
Oct. 13	at Indiana	8 p.m.	
Oct. 20	PURDUE	TBA	
Oct. 27	at Penn State	6 p.m.	
Nov. 3	ILLINOIS	TBA	
Nov. 17	at Wisconsin	TBA	
Nov. 24	MICHIGAN	Noon	

Drew Basil	—	29-30	—	—	2-2	35
Devin Smith	4	—	—	—	—	24
Jake Stoneburner	3	—	—	—	—	18
Zach Boren	2	—	—	—	—	12
Philly Brown	2	—	—	—	—	12
Bradley Roby	2	—	—	—	—	12
Rod Smith	2	—	—	—	—	12
Bri'onte Dunn	1	—	—	—	—	6
Jordan Hall	1	—	—	—	—	6
Jeff Heuerman	1	—	—	—	—	6
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>29-30</b>	<b>2-2</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>2-2</b>	<b>231</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12-14</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>9-15</b>	<b>123</b>

### FG Distance

	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Drew Basil	2-2	0-0	0-0	0-0	2-2
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>2-2</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>2-2</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>3-4</b>	<b>2-2</b>	<b>1-5</b>	<b>3-4</b>	<b>9-15</b>

\* OSU's gameday AP ranking is in parentheses before the opponent, while the opponent's ranking is after the name.

### Team Statistics

	OSU	Opp
First Downs	126	110
Rushing	77	32
Passing	45	63
Penalty	4	15
Average Per Game/Rush	248.7	121.2
Average Per Game/Pass	182.8	265.3
Total Offense	2,589	2,319
Total Plays	410	432
Average Per Game	431.5	386.5
Average Per Play	6.3	5.4
Penalties-Yards	46-401	38-327
Fumbles-Lost	11-5	6-3
3rd Down Efficiency	34-78	34-95
Percentage	44%	36%
4th Down Efficiency	3-5	3-10
Percentage	60%	30%
Sacks-Yards	16-136	10-60
Times Of Possession Avg.	29:02	30:58

### Score

By Quarters	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	34	87	52	58	—	231	38.5
Opponents	36	23	37	27	—	123	20.5

### Individual Statistics

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Braxton Miller	106	763	7.2	8	72
Carlos Hyde	63	298	4.7	6	23
Jordan Hall	40	218	5.4	1	15
Rod Smith	14	88	6.3	2	33
Bri'onte Dunn	12	60	5.0	1	13
Philly Brown	6	49	8.2	0	19
Zach Boren	11	33	3.0	2	8
Kenny Guiton	5	14	2.8	0	11
Ben Buchanan	1	6	6.0	0	6
Devin Smith	1	2	2.0	0	2
TEAM	7	-39	-5.6	0	0
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>1,492</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>81</b>

### Passing

	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT	Effic.
Braxton Miller	83	135	61.5	1,060	9-3	144.99
Kenny Guiton	5	9	55.6	37	0-0	90.09
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>61.1</b>	<b>1,097</b>	<b>9-3</b>	<b>141.56</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>60.6</b>	<b>1,592</b>	<b>6-10</b>	<b>114.85</b>

### Receiving

	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Philly Brown	35	352	10.1	1	38
Devin Smith	19	351	18.5	4	72
Jake Stoneburner	7	92	13.1	3	40
Jeff Heuerman	5	81	16.2	1	35
Evan Spencer	5	70	14.0	0	44
Nick Vannett	5	51	10.2	0	32
Zach Boren	4	35	8.8	0	14
Jordan Hall	3	31	10.3	0	14
Carlos Hyde	2	8	4.0	0	6
Verlon Reed	1	13	13.0	0	13
Michael Thomas	1	6	6.0	0	6
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>1,097</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>1,592</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>74</b>

### Scoring

	TD	EPK	EPR	EPP	FG	PTS
Braxton Miller	8	—	2-2	—	—	52
Carlos Hyde	6	—	—	—	—	36

### Punting

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Ben Buchanan	31	1,301	42.0	1	55
TEAM	1	0	0.0	0	0
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1,301</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1,172</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>70</b>

### Interceptions

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Travis Howard	3	26	8.7	0	17
Bradley Roby	2	49	24.5	1	41
Orhian Johnson	2	6	3.0	0	3
Christian Bryant	1	38	38.0	0	38
Etienne Sabino	1	2	2.0	0	2
Doran Grant	1	0	0.0	0	0
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

### Punt Returns

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Philly Brown	4	88	22.0	0	76
Devin Smith	4	15	3.8	0	16
Bradley Roby	1	11	11.0	0	0
Jordan Hall	1	6	6.0	0	0
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>43</b>

### Kickoff Returns

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Devin Smith	8	147	18.4	0	26
Armani Reeves	2	45	22.5	0	26
Rod Smith	1	25	25.0	0	25
Bri'onte Dunn	1	22	22.0	0	22
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>35</b>

### Def. Leaders

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# Grandfather's Advice, Meyer Ties Help Smith

By JEFF SVOBODA  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

When Zach Smith needs inspiration, the first-year Ohio State wide receivers coach doesn't have to go very far to find it.

Urban Meyer's office sits just a few feet away in the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, and Smith has made use of the expertise of Meyer, who spent more than a decade as a receivers coach at Colorado State and Notre Dame.

"He's the best receivers coach in the country," Smith said. "He really is. Any question or anything you want to know, the greatest resource I have is in that office right there. I'm fortunate to have that. Maybe I have a question, he may see something that I missed, or vice versa. To have that influence is phenomenal for me and for my guys."

Then there are times when Smith's inspiration comes and finds him. That would be the case with his grandfather, Earle Bruce, a mentor to Meyer who still makes his presence known around the Ohio State facility.

"He comes in about every Monday," Smith said. "He comes into my office and gives me a little advice, a little reflection from the game and a prediction for the game to come. It's always great advice. He's very insightful and gives me perspective on kind of another angle of whatever it is. There's a lot of wisdom behind it."

Being linked with such coaches – Bruce, who is already in the College Football Hall of Fame, and Meyer, who seems ticketed for that honor – is perhaps one reason Smith has quickly risen to the ranks of a full-time Division I coach at the age of 27.

His youth hasn't been an impediment, though. He's mentored the Ohio State receiving corps into becoming a much more productive unit in 2012.

"He's doing well," Meyer said. "It's an evaluation-friendly business."

So far, that evaluation includes Corey "Philly" Brown, who has 35 catches for 352 yards in six games, and Devin Smith, who has become a dependable deep threat with 19 grabs for 351 yards and four touchdowns.

"Zach's been with me a long time, (and he's) doing an excellent job," Meyer said. "I trust him. He's coaching them hard. We have one kid with 30 catches, another guy that's developed to be a big-play threat. You have some other young guys starting to develop a little bit. That is a sign of good coaching. Like I said, it's evaluation friendly. It's either thumbs up or thumbs down, and so far it's going well."

Meyer would know Smith's strengths and weaknesses well given how long the two have been together. Smith walked on to Meyer's squad at Bowling Green in 2002 and then followed him to Florida, where he spent five seasons on the head coach's national championship-winning staff. From 2005-07, Smith served as a special teams quality control coach before being promoted to an offensive graduate assistant for 2008-09.

From there, Smith was hired as a wide receivers coach at Marshall by Doc Holliday, a Florida assistant from 2005-07. After one year there, Smith moved on to the same role at Temple, where he was hired by Steve Addazio, another former Florida assistant.

Smith said having that experience prepared him to take the job at Ohio State when Meyer got back into coaching.

"Absolutely," he said. "Just having the opportunity to work with Coach Meyer at



SUSAN ZEIER

**FAMILY AFFAIR – Ohio State first-year wide receivers head coach Zach Smith is the grandson of former OSU head coach Earle Bruce.**

Florida for five years – talk about accelerated learning. I went in knowing nothing and came out feeling like I had a great understanding of the game and the position and this offense. I'm very lucky to have had that opportunity."

The return to Ohio State has been a homecoming as well. Smith grew up in Dublin, a northwest suburb of Columbus, and played football at Coffman High School. Given his close relationship with Bruce, his ties to Ohio State are obvious, and Smith called getting the chance to work at the university a dream job upon his hiring in January.

"It's hard to really verbalize how awesome it really is," he said at the time. "A place that you grow up loving, and when I got into this profession, it's a place that is your dream place. It's a place that you say, 'Man, how awesome would it be to go there?' To actually do it is indescribable, really. It's a great opportunity and I'm fortunate that Coach Meyer gave me the opportunity."

Now that he's had a chance to actually stand on the sideline in scarlet and gray, not much has changed in Smith's viewpoint.

"It's exceeding expectations," he told BSB recently. "You really don't know the greatness of this university, the community and the athletic program until you're inside of it. It's exceeded every expectation. It's been awesome."

Some of the things that have stood out for Smith have been small moments.

"There are some things that you sit there and can't believe – like I was just texting Joey Galloway back and forth," he said. "You sit there like, 'I'm texting Joey? Like, what?' There are some things that you sit there and go, 'Wow, that's sweet.'"

"Then there are things that you really don't think about until after the fact. You kind of just reflect on it, but there have been a number of moments where it kind of catches you off-guard, like, 'Wow, how cool is this place?' It's unbelievable."

The draw of Ohio State was more than enough to pull Smith in even with the struggles the Buckeyes' receivers had a year ago. Brown, Smith and Jake Stoneburner famously tied atop the team charts with only 14 catches all season, and it had been more than three decades since such thin production led the squad.

That meant a lot of work had to be done, but Smith wasn't about to shy away from the challenge.

"I didn't really evaluate why or how,"

he said before turning to the kind of blunt talk that has come to characterize his boss. "It was definitely a selling point because as a wideout, that's not the year you want. Fourteen catches? That's your fourth-string Z receiver that catches 14 balls in a year. We went into it and it was like Coach Meyer said to them all the time, 'I'm used to guys that catch 14 balls in a game, not a year.'"

"That builds excitement with the group because they knew that was obviously our goal and what we were going to try to do, and it was also a selling point, like, 'Hey, you haven't really done much yet. You caught 14 passes last year. It's time to go.'"

While some younger receivers such as Evan Spencer and Michael Thomas still have growth to make, the success of Brown and Smith has started to show the progress the receivers group has made.

"They've come a long way since the spring," Zach Smith said. "The biggest change that needed to happen was they needed to realize that this offense has a lot to do with how they perform. It's not an offense where once or twice a game you're going to take a shot."

"It's an offense that if we go out and don't play well, we're not going to win the game. There's more pressure, and obviously since we got here, there's been a lot more pressure put on them for good reasons. I think that's helped with the results so far. We're far from there, but we're further along than we were."

Part of the growth has resulted from the players synching up with Smith's style. Despite good size, he wasn't the most talented player, and his work ethic was what drove him to walk on at Bowling Green.

As a result, he's asked for a lot from his players.

"They say if you can't do it, teach it, right?" he said. "The experience I have and how I was as a player, it helps me teach guys because I wasn't a first-round draft pick talent. To be successful at anything, I had to be an expert fundamentally and as far as accountability. Being able to convey that to my position of guys who are talented, it's like, 'Hey, listen, I can do that. You have to be able to do that because I could do it.'"

Smith, who also oversees Ohio State's punt return team, has brought a staple of Meyer's early-career days with him to Columbus. Meyer was known for running intense blocking drills with his receivers known by some as "Vietnam," and Smith puts his charges through similar paces.

"Just sheer chaos – that's the blocking drill," he said. "I really enjoy it because too many receiver groups nationally, they work on things that are important, but there's not toughness in that position. I'm not the type of guy that likes to coach a soft group. That's my favorite part to coach because it develops toughness within the guys I sign my name to, so I really, really enjoy it."

As the receivers continue to improve, so too will the Ohio State offense. That's exactly the type of challenge Smith was looking for when he accepted the job.

"There was pressure, but I would rather have pressure than sit here and say our position group doesn't have a whole lot of effect on the team," he said. "I like that challenge and I know that our guys responded to that challenge."

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# Hoosiers Have Shown Signs Of Life This Season

By JEFF SVOBODA  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Perennially the doormat of the Big Ten, Indiana at least has some hope through the early part of the 2012 season.

Though the Hoosiers are only 2-3 and have lost three in a row, they have been in every game down to the wire and boast an offense that can put points on the board with anyone in the Big Ten.

That was proven Oct. 6 as the Hoosiers jumped out to an early 17-0 lead on Michigan State. Though the Spartans came back to post a 31-27 win in Bloomington, IU served notice that it can hang with the upper echelon of the league, especially on its home turf.

The next step is turning those close games into wins.

"We just need to keep chipping away, keep getting better every single day at practice, keep getting better and it's going to happen," starting quarterback Cameron Coffman said. "You saw how good we can be when we're playing well, but we're not into moral victories. We fully expected to beat that team and we didn't. That's my fault on the offensive side."

To get to that point, second-year head coach Kevin Wilson is preaching to his team that it must play a complete game. The Hoosiers have put a scare into numerous Big Ten teams since Wilson took over, including Ohio State last year before the Buckeyes pulled away to a 34-20 victory, but they need to finish better to get over the hump.

"You're not going to beat a good team, you're not going to win the Big Ten like that and you're not going to beat good teams if you don't play 60 minutes," Wilson said after the loss to MSU.

Perhaps the team's inability to play a full game has something to do with its youth. Twenty-two of the 29 players who have started this season are underclassmen, and the squad has only eight seniors – just five of whom came to Bloomington on scholarship – on the roster.

Thus, Indiana will have a tall order when Ohio State visits Oct. 13 for a prime-time affair. The Buckeyes, who usually bring tens of thousands of fans to help fill Memorial Stadium, haven't lost to Indiana since falling, 41-7, in Bloomington in 1988. In all, the Buckeyes are 18-0-1 in their last 19 games against the Hoosiers.

Still reeling from failing to close the deal against Michigan State, Indiana will have to bounce back quickly in order to snap that streak against the undefeated Buckeyes.

"It's tough, but it's behind us now," said wide receiver Shane Wynn, an Ohio native. "We've got to focus on Ohio State next weekend."

## High-Powered Offense

Wilson came to Indiana with a reputation for offensive success after working with up-tempo, high-scoring spread squads at Northwestern and Oklahoma, and he hasn't disappointed in that regard.

Indiana was held below 20 points only three times last year, and this season, the Hoosiers and their hurry-up offense have topped the 24-point barrier in each contest. Overall, the squad leads the Big Ten in passing with 304.8 yards per game and is second with 472.4 total yards. The Hoosiers are fifth in the league with 32.8 points per game, and the squad has 17 scoring drives of 70 or more yards this season.

They've accomplished those marks largely without starting quarterback Tre Roberson, who seemed poised for a stand-out sophomore campaign before suffering a serious leg injury during a blowout win vs. Massachusetts on Sept. 8.

The Hoosiers haven't missed much of a beat, though, thanks to Coffman and Nate Sudfeld, who have split time in Roberson's stead. Coffman played the entire Michigan State game, and the 6-2, 191-pound pocket passer has gone 86 for 126 (67.2 percent) for 801 yards, six touchdowns and one interception.

A sophomore, Coffman led Arizona Western Community College to last year's JUCO national championship game. He has been effective in each game he has played so far, earning the trust of Wilson.

"The only reason we went with Cam (vs. MSU) was that he was slightly better on Wednesday and Thursday," the Indiana head coach said. "It was really just better in communication as a young guy and a couple of plays. When we were practicing, Nate would be a little off on a couple of plays, just butchered a couple – didn't mean to, it's just him being a young guy. We truly don't chart our statistics, but the two are close."

Sudfeld is a 6-5, 218-pound true freshman from Modesto, Calif., who was named by some observers as one of the top quarterbacks in the country coming out of high school. Just the third true freshman signal caller to play at Indiana, he hasn't looked too out of place so far, going 25 for 40 (62.5 percent) for 357 yards, three touchdowns and no picks.

Indiana uses a one-back offense, with junior Stephen Houston, sophomore D'Angelo Roberts and true freshman Tevin Coleman splitting time. Each is sure-handed – Indiana running backs have lost just one fumble in their last 418 attempts.

After posting 711 rushing yards in eight starts last season, Houston is the team's leading rusher through five games. The junior has some power in his 6-0, 218-pound frame, and he has 52 rushes for 277 yards



IU ATHLETICS

**MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION – Second-year Indiana head coach Kevin Wilson already has double the wins he had last year in his first season with the Hoosiers.**

and four touchdowns. He also has 14 catches for 117 yards and a score.

Roberts and Coleman have both rushed for 177 yards this season. A 5-10, 195-pound native of Bloomington, Roberts has a touchdown among 45 carries, while Coleman (6-1, 200) is averaging 5.5 yards on his 32 rushes.

IU also has Morehead State transfer Isaiah Roundtree, a 5-11, 190-pounder who has started once and compiled 16 rushes for 84 yards and a touchdown.

The Hoosiers generally use a three-wide-out set, and they have a deep corps of players who have been effective at the college level thus far in their careers.

So far, Wynn is atop the team's receptions chart with 26 on the year. A 5-7, 157-pound speedster from Cleveland Glenville, Wynn ran a 4.37 40-yard dash in the offseason. He's a constant target on screen passes and other ball-control plays, as the sophomore has turned his grabs into 213 yards and a team-best four touchdowns.

Sophomore Cody Latimer from Dayton Jefferson is more of a big-play target, as the 6-3, 208-pounder has 20 catches for 363 yards (an 18.1-yard average) and two touchdowns. Junior Kofi Hughes (6-2, 210) has come back from an early-season injury to total 16 grabs for 248 yards and two touchdowns.

Juniors Duwyce Wilson (6-3, 195), a freshman star two seasons ago, and Jamonne

Chester (6-2, 210) each have 12 catches on the year, with Wilson totaling 113 yards and Chester 102.

Indiana's starting tight end is junior Ted Bolser, a Cincinnati Indian Hill product. Bolser (6-6, 250) had five touchdowns as a freshman two years ago, and he's proved again to be a big part of the passing offense this year with 15 catches for 161 yards and a touchdown.

The Hoosiers' starting five up front has not changed in the first five games, with senior center Will Matte leading a group that includes four underclassmen. Matte has worked himself into one of the top centers in the Big Ten. The 6-2, 292-pounder from Wheaton, Ill., is in line to start his 40th career game against the Buckeyes.

Matte is flanked by youth on both sides, including a true freshman at left tackle in Jason Spriggs. The 6-7, 268-pounder is the first true freshman to start at the position since Rodger Saffold in 2006 and leads the team in knockdowns.

Left guard Bernard Taylor (6-2, 292) was a standout freshman a year ago after moving over from the defensive line, while right tackle Peyton Eckert (6-6, 293) is a fellow true sophomore starter. Right guard Dan Feeney (6-4, 293) is also a true freshman from Orland Park, Ill.

## Struggling Defense

While Wilson has succeeded in build-

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ing the IU offense into a formidable unit, the Hoosiers still have a long way to go on defense. Indiana is 11th or 12th in every major statistical category in the Big Ten and is allowing 444.0 yards and 27.8 points per game.

The rushing defense has been particularly bad during conference play. Indiana has ceded 267.9 yards per game on the ground in Big Ten games the last two years.

The Hoosiers' ability to keep Michigan State to 120 yards on the ground was encouraging for Wilson, but the team will have to work on some things with Ohio State's spread offense coming to town.

"I think our defense got better in the last week," he said. "It was a tough animal the way Michigan State can spread you out and make you work with their stuff. I think their coaches addressed some things and we were just putting some guys in different positions for movements and blitzes. We did get worked in the pass game a little bit on the perimeter. We have to tighten that up."

There isn't much experience on the Indiana defense, but the one place there is some is at defensive tackle. Seniors Adam Replogle, Larry Black Jr. and Nicholas Sliger have played 38 of Indiana's last 40 games together and are old hands in the middle of the defense.

Replogle (6-3, 294) and Black (6-2, 294) have started each of the last 33 games next to each other, with Replogle leading all current Hoosiers with 149 tackles and 12½ sacks and tying Black for a team-best 20 tackles for loss. This year, Replogle, a Centerville, Ohio, native, has a team-high 36 stops, a forced fumble and 2½ sacks, while Black has 13 stops, a fumble recovery and 4½ TFL.

The 6-3, 290-pound Sliger has added seven tackles.

As experienced as the Hoosiers are on the interior line, they're that young on the outside. Sophomore Ryan Phillis starts on the left side, and the 6-3, 261-pounder has 16 tackles and notched his first career sack vs. Massachusetts. Redshirt freshman Zack Shaw (6-3, 245) is the right end, and the Coshocton, Ohio, native has nine stops.

Sophomore end John Laihinin (6-4, 250) started the first two games and has two TFL, while sophomore Bobby Richardson stands 6-3, 279, played a lot last year and has nine tackles.

Indiana has dipped into the JUCO ranks to fill out its linebacker corps, and first-year Hoosiers Jacarri Alexander and David Cooper have become starters. Cooper, a 6-1, 225-pounder who had 102 tackles last year at Coffeyville (Kan.) Community College, has 36 tackles and four TFL, while Alexander (6-1, 232) has 21 tackles as the strongside starter. He splits time with sophomore Forisse "Flo" Hardin (6-1, 208), who has 17 stops.

On the weak side, 6-3, 226-pound junior Griffen Dalhstrom has 14 tackles and a sack since taking over for sophomore Chase

Hoobler (6-2, 242), an Orrville, Ohio, native who has 10 tackles but has missed the last three games with a back injury.

All four starters in the secondary are sophomores, including returning starter Mark Murphy. The 6-2, 206-pound safety hails from Akron and is the son of the former Green Bay Packers safety of the same name who played in the NFL from 1980-91. After making 76 tackles last year as a true freshman, Murphy has 31 stops this year.

Drew Hardin (6-0, 208) fills the other safety role, and he has 17 tackles and a fumble recovery this season. He is the brother of linebacker Flo Hardin.

Indiana has two new starters at cornerback in Kenny Mullen and Brian Williams. Mullen is one of the most improved players on the team after bulking up in the offseason, and the 5-10, 180-pounder has 29 stops, four pass breakups and three tackles for loss. On the other side, Williams (6-0, 185) has made 28 tackles, broken up seven passes and picked off one throw.

Junior Greg Heban started at corner last year but is the team's nickel back now. A former IU baseball pitcher who walked onto the football team before getting a scholarship, the 6-1, 191-pounder has 26 tackles, 3½ TFL and an interception.

### Dangerous Returners

Indiana leads the Big Ten in kickoff returns, and both Wynn and Coleman have shown they can take it to the house. Wynn had a return touchdown last year and Coleman posted one vs. Northwestern this season, and this year the two have combined for a 31.7-yard average on nine returns.

The Hoosiers also boast one of the better kickers in the league in junior Mitch Ewald. For his career, the 5-10, 173-pounder is 34 of 43 (79.1 percent) on field goals and has made all 82 extra points he's tried. This year, Ewald has made 5 of 8 field goals with a long of 46. In addition, 14 of his 29 kickoffs have been touchbacks.

Indiana has used a pair of punters. Junior Mitchell Voss (5-11, 177) has been better at pinning teams deep, and the Ferris State transfer averages 37.2 yards on 22 punts with eight landing inside the 20 and zero touchbacks. But Voss was hurt against Michigan State, and redshirt freshman Erich Toth (6-3, 190) relieved him. Toth has seven punts for a 41.3-yard average.

Sophomore Nick Stoner, a track All-American, is the punt returner. The 6-1, 173-pounder has seven returns for 43 yards.

### Indiana, Our Indiana

• After years of flagging attendance, the Hoosiers are doing better this year. The team is averaging 45,349 fans for the first three games this year in Memorial Stadium, an increase on last year's mark of 41,380. Memorial Stadium has a listed capacity of 52,929.

• Indiana assistant head coach and co-defensive coordinator Doug Mallory is the

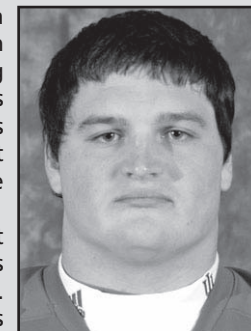
## Players To Watch

• **Quarterback Cameron Coffman:** A JUCO star a year ago, Coffman was supposed to back up Tre Roberson this year. However, Roberson suffered a season-ending injury in game two, pushing Coffman into the lineup. He's excelled thus far, completing 67.2 percent of his passes with six touchdowns and an interception. Coffman isn't that mobile, but he's good at getting the ball into the hands of Indiana's playmakers.

• **Wide receiver Kofi Hughes:** Hughes starred against Ohio State last year, making a career-high eight receptions for 147 yards as the Hoosiers put a scare into the Buckeyes. The junior was dinged up at the start of the year but has come back strong, topping 100 yards vs. Northwestern on Sept. 29. He has 15 catches in Indiana's last three games, and at 6-2, 210 pounds, he combines size and speed very well.

• **Defensive tackle Adam Replogle:** The second of three Replogle boys to play at Indiana – older brother Tyler was a starter at linebacker and younger brother Mike is a reserve defensive end – Adam is one of the senior leaders of the Indiana defense. The Centerville, Ohio, native has 149 career tackles, 12½ sacks and 20 tackles for loss, all of which allow him to either tie for or hold the Hoosiers' active lead in those categories.

• **Kickoff returners Shane Wynn and Tevin Coleman:** Wynn returned a kick for a touchdown last year as a freshman, and Coleman has done the same already this year. Indiana's kickoff return unit is first in the Big Ten and 10th in the nation with a 28.3-yard average, and the two speedy Hoosiers can put points on the board in a hurry if the coverage units aren't sound.



Adam Replogle

son of IU's all-time winningest coach, Bill Mallory, a one-time Woody Hayes assistant at Ohio State. The elder Mallory was on Hayes' staff from 1966-68.

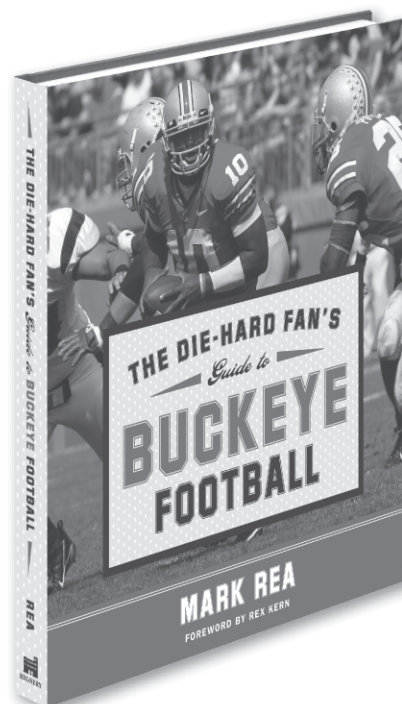
• Thanks to a revamped strength and conditioning staff, as well as the addition of a team nutritionist, every position group has dropped body fat since the end of the 2010 season. The offensive and defensive lines lead the way, as members of each of those groups have dropped an average of 4.5 percent.

• Indiana has scored 107 points in the first half this year but only 57 in the final two quarters.

• Indiana University boasts an impressive list of famous alumni, including sports statistician Jeff Sagarin, Subway restaurant spokesman Jared Fogle, former U.S. Sen. and Indiana Gov. Evan Bayh, Dallas Mavericks owner and billionaire Mark Cuban, TV personality Jane Pauley and New York Times crossword puzzle maker Will Shortz.

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# Ohio State at Indiana

Sat., Oct. 13, 2012 • 8 p.m. • BTN  
Memorial Stadium; Bloomington, Ind.



## About Indiana

- **2012 record:** 2-3 (0-2 Big Ten).
- **2011 Record:** 1-11 (0-8 Big Ten, sixth place Leaders Division).
- **Team Information:** Offensive Formation – Multiple; Defensive Formation – 4-3; Starters Returning – Offense 7, Defense 8, Specialists 1.
- **Top Players (2012 stats):** QB Cameron Coffman (86-128 passing for 801 yards with six touchdowns and one interception); RB Stephen Houston (52 rushes for 277 yards and four touchdowns; 14 receptions for 117 yards and a touchdown); WR Shane Wynn (28 receptions for 213 yards and four touchdowns); DT Adam Replogle (36 tackles, 4.5 tackles for loss, 2.5 sacks, one quarterback hurry, one forced fumble); LB David Cooper (36 tackles, four tackles for loss, one pass breakup); S Mark Murphy (31 tackles, one tackle for loss, one pass breakup).
- **Head Coach:** Kevin Wilson, 3-14, second year (both at Indiana).
- **Series History:** 86th meeting; Ohio State leads 68-12-5.
- **School Facts:** Location – Bloomington, Ind.; Enrollment – 42,731; Nickname – Hoosiers; Colors – Cream and Crimson; Conference – Big Ten (Leaders Division); Stadium – Memorial Stadium (Surface, FieldTurf; Capacity, 52,929).

## 2012 Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time/Result (ET)
Sept. 1	INDIANA STATE	W, 24-17
Sept. 8	vs. UMass (Foxborough, Mass.)	W, 45-6
Sept. 15	BALL STATE	L, 41-39
Sept. 29	at Northwestern	L, 44-29
Oct. 6	MICHIGAN STATE	L, 31-27
Oct. 13	<b>OHIO STATE</b>	8 p.m.
Oct. 20	at Navy	3:30 p.m.
Oct. 27	at Illinois	Noon
Nov. 3	IOWA	TBA
Nov. 10	WISCONSIN	TBA
Nov. 17	at Penn State	TBA
Nov. 24	at Purdue	TBA

## How We See It

### OHIO STATE RUSH OFFENSE vs. INDIANA RUSH DEFENSE

This has the potential to get quite ugly. Ohio State piled up 346 yards on the ground vs. Indiana a year ago, and Braxton Miller hadn't quite reached the peak of his powers running an OSU offense that wasn't 100 percent suited to his skills. Indiana sits last in the Big Ten and 99th in the country in rushing defense this year, allowing 196.8 yards per game including 404 vs. Northwestern. There's a good chance the Buckeyes will run wild against the Hoosiers after an incredibly impressive performance against a Nebraska unit that had shut down Wisconsin the week before. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### INDIANA RUSH OFFENSE vs. OHIO STATE RUSH DEFENSE

Much like Ohio State, Indiana tries to spread you out and then hit you in the seams of the defense. Stephen Houston is an effective between-the-tackles runner for the Hoosiers while D'Angelo Roberts and Tevin Coleman can hit the edge. Indiana does average 167.6 yards per game thanks to those three players, so the squad has proved it has the ability to move the ball on the ground somewhat effectively. Ohio State has struggled stopping spread teams this year, but with Tre Roberson out, Indiana doesn't have much of a quarterback run game with Cameron Coffman calling the signals. **EDGE: EVEN**

### OHIO STATE PASS OFFENSE vs. INDIANA PASS DEFENSE

Indiana's pass defense has not been horrible, but it hasn't been great, either. The Hoosiers are 62nd in the nation in passing efficiency defense and 83rd in passing yards allowed, and the team has been able to snag only three interceptions in five games. Indiana just doesn't have much in the way of veteran leadership in the secondary, so teams are able to hit plays against IU if they stick with the passing game. Given Ohio State's advantage in the running game, the Buckeyes might not need to chuck it very often, but Miller could hit a few deep ones if the Hoosiers don't respect someone such as Devin Smith. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### INDIANA PASS OFFENSE vs. OHIO STATE PASS DEFENSE

Coffman has been efficient, completing a high percentage of his passes and throwing six touchdowns and only one interception. This isn't really a deep-throwing offense with him in charge, though, as Indiana runs a number of bubble screens and other short passes designed to get such players as speedster Shane Wynn and others in space. Tackling will be important for the Buckeyes, as the screen game has been effective against the Scarlet and Gray at the start of the season. Expect Indiana to go to that well a few times, especially with a young offensive line. **EDGE: EVEN**

### SPECIAL TEAMS

One place the Hoosiers might be able to pick up cheap points is in the kicking game since Tevin Coleman and Wynn combine to form one of the most dangerous kickoff return tandems in the nation. Mitch Ewald is also one of the more competent kickers of the Big Ten, but Indiana is mediocre in the rest of the special teams categories. Assuming head coach Urban Meyer doesn't go for any more fake punts, the Buckeyes could have an advantage here, especially given how well OSU has covered kicks. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

### INTANGIBLES

Ohio State has to go into this game with confidence. Not only have the Buckeyes dominated this series, they're coming off a huge win in Ohio Stadium and are clearly the cream of the Big Ten crop so far as the only undefeated team left standing. The question then becomes if the Buckeyes will become overconfident. OSU struggled with Indiana last year after a big night win vs. Wisconsin, and the Hoosiers will be playing at home at night where sometimes crazy things can happen across college football. **EDGE: INDIANA**

### STAFF PREDICTION

Kevin Wilson has been handed a tough task resuscitating the IU program, but he's starting to make incremental steps. The Hoosiers offense has continued to improve, and the Cream and Crimson has been competitive against some upper-echelon Big Ten teams since Wilson took over. However, there just isn't enough manpower around to go score for score with Ohio State, especially considering the Hoosiers' flagging defense. Indiana is one of the youngest teams in the country for the second year in a row, and while the Hoosiers can make some plays, they won't be able to make enough of them to hang for 60 minutes. **OHIO STATE 51-24**

## Depth Charts

### WHEN OHIO STATE HAS THE BALL...

49 GRIFFEN DAHLSTROM, 6-3, 226, JR. 34 JACARRI ALEXANDER, 6-1, 232, JR.  
31 Jordan Wallace, 6-0, 229, Fr. 4 Forisse "Flo" Hardin, 6-1, 208, So.

8 DREW HARDIN, 6-0, 208, SO.  
27 Alexander Webb, 6-0, 200, 5th Sr.

42 DAVID COOPER, 6-1, 225, SO.  
55 Jake Michalek, 6-2, 242, So.

37 MARK MURPHY, 6-2, 206, SO.  
19 Ryan Thompson, 5-10, 195, Jr.

7 BRIAN WILLIAMS, 6-0, 185, SO.  
23 Lawrence Barnett, 5-10, 187, Jr.

98 ADAM REPLOGLE, 6-3, 294, SR.  
75 Nicholas Sliker, 6-3, 290, 5th Sr.

25 RYAN PHILLIS, 6-3, 261, SO.  
95 Bobby Richardson, 6-3, 279, So.

33 ZACK SHAW, 6-3, 245, R-FR.  
96 John Laihinien, 6-4, 250, So.

97 LARRY BLACK JR., 6-2, 294, 5TH SR.  
99 Adarius Rayner, 6-2, 292, R-Fr.

22 KENNY MULLEN, 5-10, 180, SO.  
9 Greg Heban, 6-1, 191, Jr.

74 JACK MEWHORT, 6-6, 312, JR.  
76 Darryl Baldwin, 6-5, 300, So.

71 COREY LINSLEY, 6-3, 295, JR.  
50 Jacoby Boren, 6-2, 287, Fr.

77 REID FRAGEL, 6-8, 310, SR.  
68 Taylor Decker, 6-7, 313, Fr.

10 PHILLY BROWN, 6-0, 186, JR.  
16 Evan Spencer, 6-2, 205, So.

78 ANDREW NORWELL, 6-6, 310, JR.  
73 Antonio Underwood, 6-2, 306, So.

79 MARCUS HALL, 6-5, 315, JR.  
57 Chase Farris, 6-4, 290, R-Fr.

86 JEFF HEUERMAN, 6-5, 250, SO.  
81 NICK VANNETT, 6-6, 255, R-FR.

17 BEN BUCHANAN, 5-11, 192, 5TH SR.  
24 Drew Basil, 6-1, 210, Jr.

5 BRAXTON MILLER, 6-2, 220, SO.  
13 Kenny Guiton, 6-3, 210, Jr.

11 JAKE STONEBURNER, 6-5, 245, SR.  
80 Chris Fields, 6-0, 197, Jr.

34 CARLOS HYDE, 6-0, 232, JR.  
2 Rod Smith, 6-3, 228, So.

44 ZACH BOREN, 6-1, 245, SR.  
49 Adam Homan, 6-3, 245, Sr.

24 DREW BASIL, 6-1, 210, JR.  
39 Kyle Clinton, 6-1, 215, So.

15 DEVIN SMITH, 6-1, 200, SO.  
83 Michael Thomas, 6-2, 198, Fr.

### WHEN INDIANA HAS THE BALL...

10 RYAN SHAZIER, 6-2, 230, SO.  
5 Camren Williams, 6-1, 225, Fr.

37 JOSHUA PERRY, 6-4, 238, FR.  
59 Stewart Smith, 6-3, 230, Sr.

4 C.J. BARNETT, 6-1, 202, JR.  
3 Corey Brown, 6-1, 197, Jr.

32 STORM KLEIN, 6-2, 242, SR.  
14 Curtis Grant, 6-3, 235, So.

19 ORHIAN JOHNSON, 6-3, 210, 5TH SR.  
3 Corey Brown, 6-1, 197, Jr.

2 CHRISTIAN BRYANT, 5-10, 192, JR.  
19 Orhian Johnson, 6-3, 210, 5th Sr.

1 BRADLEY ROBY, 5-11, 190, SO.  
12 Doran Grant, 5-11, 188, So.

53 GARRETT GOEBEL, 6-4, 290, 5TH SR.  
51 Joel Hale, 6-4, 295, So.

54 JOHN SIMON, 6-2, 263, SR.  
63 Michael Bennett, 6-3, 285, So.

43 NATHAN WILLIAMS, 6-3, 249, 5TH SR.  
88 Steve Miller, 6-3, 255, So.

52 JOHNATHAN HANKINS, 6-3, 322, JR.  
92 Adolphus Washington, 6-3, 289, Fr.

7 TRAVIS HOWARD, 6-1, 200, 5TH SR.  
8 Adam Griffin, 5-8, 180, So.

78 JASON SPRIGGS, 6-7, 268, FR.  
57 Pete Bachman, 6-5, 285, So.

60 WILL MATTE, 6-2, 292, 5TH SR.  
64 Collin Rahrig, 6-2, 278, So.

59 PEYTON ECKERT, 6-6, 293, SO.  
62 Ralston Evans, 6-4, 284, R-Fr.

1 SHANE WYNN, 5-7, 157, SO.  
84 Jamonne Chester, 6-2, 210, Jr.

73 BERNARD TAYLOR, 6-2, 292, SO.  
64 Collin Rahrig, 6-2, 278, So.

67 DAN FEENEY, 6-4, 293, FR.  
76 Cody Evers, 6-4, 304, So.

83 TED BOLSER, 6-6, 250, JR.  
85 Charles Love III, 6-3, 240, 5th Sr.

35 MITCHELL VOSS, 5-11, 177, JR.  
36 Erich Toth, 6-3, 190, R-Fr.

2 CAMERON COFFMAN, 6-2, 191, SO.  
7 Nate Sudfeld, 6-5, 218, Fr.

3 CODY LATIMER, 6-3, 208, SO.  
81 Duwycce Wilson, 6-3, 195, Jr.

12 STEPHEN HOUSTON, 6-0, 218, JR.  
20 D'Angelo Roberts, 5-10, 195, So.

13 KOFI HUGHES, 6-2, 210, JR.  
14 Nick Stoner, 6-1, 173, So.

16 MITCH EWALD, 5-10, 173, JR.  
99 Nick Freeland, 6-0, 201, 5th Sr.

- Depth charts compiled/created by Matthew Hager



# Dublin Product Found His Role With Buckeyes

By **MATTHEW HAGER**  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Roughly a dozen years ago, there was a youth football team in Dublin, Ohio, that had some impressive talent. Several of its players would go on to play collegiately at NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision schools.

The quarterback of that team was Jake Stoneburner, currently a wide receiver/tight end at Ohio State. But Stoneburner wasn't the player who piled on the points for that youth team.

It was Taylor Rice, a slot receiver/wing-back who has become a special teams mainstay during his career as an OSU walk-on.

"We had a reverse play – I'll never forget it," Stoneburner recalled. "I was the quarterback and I stood back and just handed him the ball. Touchdown. Every time. He was dangerous."

Rice and Stoneburner are each in their fifth and final years as Buckeyes, but they took much different routes to the finish line.

For Stoneburner, his path to Ohio State was heralded. He was a four-star tight end prospect, the No. 4 ranked player at his position by FoxSportsNext.com, from Dublin Coffman. Meanwhile Rice, who was not ranked at all by Scout, went to cross-town Dublin Scioto and earned offers from Cincinnati and Air Force.

But Rice knew where his heart lay – at Ohio State.

"I wanted to play big-time football," he said. "I had a couple of small offers, but I knew I always wanted to be a Buckeye. I talked to (then OSU head coach Jim) Tressel and he's the one that introduced me to the program. It took off from there."

Rice joined the Buckeyes as a preferred walk-on and worked to earn the respect of his coaches and teammates. While Stoneburner became a fan favorite, Rice toiled behind the scenes in hopes of finding playing time. Being a walk-on at any major-college football program is not easy. Playing time is difficult to earn, as is respect often times.

Even so, Rice did not shy away from the challenge. The youngest of five brothers, he attacked it head-on as usual.

"I've always had complete confidence

in myself," Rice said. "It's something deep down, whether it was confidence or pride or the belief in me."

"I just knew I could play with them."

Like Stoneburner, Rice redshirted in 2008. He did not play in 2009, however, before finally seeing the field a year later as a sophomore. He made his debut Oct. 9, 2010, vs. Indiana on the kickoff unit, and it was a moment he will never forget.

"It was awesome," Rice said. "Running down on kickoff for the first time was probably equal to the first time running out (of the tunnel) at the 'Shoe. It's an unexplainable feeling. It's awesome."

Since then, Rice has become a steady member of OSU's special units. He earned varsity letters in 2010 and '11, and last season he made five tackles, including four solo stops. Through the first six games of this season, Rice had recorded one stop.

Those numbers might not be flashy, but Rice's work on and off the field has not gone unnoticed.

"I have the highest respect for (walk-ons), especially someone like Taylor," Stoneburner said. "He probably could have played at other places, but he wanted to stay here and fulfill his dream of playing at Ohio State. He's been able to play and make big-time contributions on special teams."

"I'm really proud of him. I'm glad he's been able to stick through it."

Rice said he feels that respect.

"Coming in as a walk-on, I feel like I definitely had to earn my respect," he said. "A lot of guys come in and the respect is already given to them. But I worked my way up every year. I feel like I've earned my spot, and a lot of guys respect that."

Earning respect is nothing new for Rice. Growing up with three older brothers who played collegiate sports – Shaun (football and baseball at Bowling Green before transferring to Ohio Wesleyan), Nick (football at OWU) and Jason (football at Bowling Green) – gave him an impressive work ethic.

Rice said it had a positive effect on his play.

"Growing up, I was always the littlest," he said. "I was always the youngest. I had to fight for everything I had. Coming here,



FILE PHOTO

**EARNED HIS RESPECT – Fifth-year senior Taylor Rice has become a special teams mainstay as a walk-on from Dublin, Ohio.**

that's the mind-set I had – knowing I would have to fight for every single play, every snap that I earned."

Despite the departure of Tressel after the 2010 season, Rice remained optimistic that he would make a good impression on new head coach Urban Meyer. Rice dealt with a nagging hamstring injury when Meyer, a former walk-on himself as a college football player at Cincinnati, first came to Columbus.

But Rice soon got on Meyer's good side with positive play in the spring.

"I started to gain more and more respect and trust," Rice said. "Now I think these coaches know my work ethic and I think they know my capabilities."

Rice is currently on three special teams units – kickoff coverage, kickoff return and

punt return. Like the rest of the OSU senior class, he has only six games remaining in his collegiate career and intends to make the most of the time he has left.

"I've loved every minute of it," Rice said. "Carrying on the tradition and being a Buckeye, everything about it is great – the program, the people, the tradition."

Rice might not be able to follow in the footsteps of another one of his good friends and former walk-on compatriots, Nate Ebner, who was drafted last spring and is on the New England Patriots' roster. Just don't expect Rice to leave football behind after this season. The human development and family studies major could go into coaching.

"Football's what I've done my whole life," Rice said. "I'd love to give back."

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# Tight End Took Unusual Route To Ohio State

By CRAIG MERZ  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Jeff Heurman is different but in a good sort of way.

Ask him about growing up in Florida and following the coaching career there of Urban Meyer, and he says he didn't really notice college football.

While most kids who earn a scholarship have been playing since they were old enough to walk, Heurman (pronounced HIRE-mun) had another love – ice hockey.

"It was the first sport I picked up," he said.

And he did so living in Naples, Fla., of all places.

Heurman started around age 4, and his development enabled him to accept an offer to play for the prestigious Detroit Compuware youth team in Plymouth, Mich., as an eighth-grader in hopes of attracting attention from potential junior hockey teams or colleges.

To make his story even more bizarre, he would attend football games at nearby Michigan when his schedule permitted, but he eventually chose to play football for the Buckeyes over the Wolverines even though his father, Paul, lettered for the U-M basketball team from 1978-81.

"He supported my decision 100 percent," the younger Heurman said. "That was never an issue."

Heurman didn't take an interest in football until returning home to the Sunshine State after one season with Compuware, but he quickly picked up the nuances of the game although his first attempt to pick a position as a ninth-grader at Barron Collier High School was met with an incredulous look by head coach Mark Ivey.

"They had a tryout sheet for football," said Heurman, who was big even back then and now carries 250 pounds on his 6-5 frame. "I knew nothing about football – literally nothing – and I signed up for corner. The first day, the coach went, 'Huh?' and they stuck me out at receiver. I went from there."

Heurman quickly adapted and by his senior season was all-conference, all-area and all-district, and the Cougars won three district titles in four years.

Scholarship offers started coming Heurman's way after his junior season, and among those expressing interest was Meyer, then the head coach for the Gators. Of course, the two would meet again when Meyer was named to take over the Ohio State program in November.

"I didn't know a lot (about him)," Heurman said. "Obviously, I grew up playing hockey. I never followed college football at all. When I was younger, I never really paid attention, but by my senior year I knew he had a great reputation."

So much for being awed by the presence of a coach who won two national championships with the Gators.

Heurman enrolled early at Ohio State in January 2011 and, unlike many Floridians, didn't shy away from a northern winter. After all, he had played ice hockey in Michigan.

"The weather wasn't that big a deal to me, to be honest," he said.

He came to OSU knowing that former head coach Jim Tressel viewed the tight ends as blockers first and receivers second, or maybe even third if he could find something else for them to do. Still, Heurman was impressed with the way Tressel had tried to incorporate Reid Fragel and Jake



JOSH WINSLOW

**BIG GAME – Sophomore tight end Jeff Heurman (86) caught a pair of passes Oct. 6 vs. Nebraska and scored his first collegiate touchdown with an 18-yard scoring grab in the second quarter.**

Stoneburner into more downfield plays and was looking forward to his freshman season.

Tressel, of course, was ousted because of NCAA violations, and his replacement, Luke Fickell, had his hands full last season breaking in freshman quarterback Braxton Miller.

Not surprisingly, Heurman didn't see the ball thrown his way much in the limited time he played, and his first and only catch was for 25 yards against Florida in the Gator Bowl.

Meyer's hiring and the spread offense he brought with him potentially opened more opportunities for Heurman, and his chances to contribute grew when Stoneburner started spending more time as a wide receiver and Fragel moved to right tackle.

Suddenly, Heurman and redshirt freshman Nick Vannett from Westerville (Ohio) Central were the two-deep at the position.

"We're both young, so we're still learning," Heurman said. "But it's good."

Through six games, he has five catches for 81 yards with a long of 35 yards, including an 18-yard touchdown reception against

Nebraska. Meanwhile, Vannett had two catches each in the season opener against Miami (Ohio) and game three vs. California and one more against Nebraska. His five receptions have been worth 51 yards.

Heurman did not have a reception against the RedHawks but had one catch for 9 yards against both Central Florida and Cal and then one grab totaling 10 yards vs. UAB while earning praise from Meyer. Against the Cornhuskers, he caught a touchdown pass and set up another with a 35-yard gain.

"Heurman is a guy that's starting to earn more playing time," the OSU head coach said. "He's been injured in spring and in the fall, so now you expect him to play some more."

The injury to which Meyer referred was a hamstring strain, but Heurman said he is fine now.

"I was kind of limited on the things I was doing," he said, "but I'm healthy now."

Fragel is proud of his former position mates.

"It's good to see guys like Jeff and Jake and Nick Vannett out there making some plays," he said.

For his part, Heurman noted that Fragel is no longer welcome in the tight end fraternity.

"Not at 300 pounds," he joked.

Actually, Heurman appreciates any advice from his senior teammate.

"(Fragel) knows the tight end position a lot so he knows where I am when I'm blocking and what I'm about to do," Heurman said.

Without Fragel and Stoneburner, another senior, there appears to be a lack of veterans when the tight ends get together, but Heurman said that's not a problem with the additions of senior fullbacks Zach Boren and Adam Homan.

"When the new coaches came in, they combined the fullbacks and tight ends in the same room so we've had Zach and Adam in there," he said. "That's good from the experience side of things."

## Hockey's Lessons Learned

In reality, Heurman has maturity beyond his years because of his decision to leave home at an early age. He billeted in Michigan with the grandparents of teammate Austin Watson and dreamed of following idols such as Steve Yzerman and Mike Modano to the NHL.

"It was a tough decision moving away in my eighth-grade year," he said. "They wanted me to go up there. I went and visited and saw the house I'd be living in with Austin."

Heurman had played for the Florida Junior Everblades, a youth team under the auspices of the minor league Florida Everblades of the ECHL. It was during a trip to Chicago with his travel team that he drew the attention of Compuware, whose alumni include future NHL players Pat LaFontaine, Kevin Hatcher and Eric Lindros, among others.

Hockey at that level is serious business as Heurman found out when Watson, a year ahead in ninth grade, was being wooed to play collegiately.

"Notre Dame wanted him real bad so they had him in for a recruiting weekend. I went and tagged along," Heurman said. "We were at the football game, Notre Dame-Michigan, that weekend. They wanted him and Jared Knight, so I went there with them."

Watson and Knight both eschewed college for junior hockey and were chosen in the 2010 NHL draft – Watson by Nashville (18th overall) and Knight by Boston (32nd).

As for Heurman, he decided to return to Florida to start high school and has not played hockey since.

"I have two younger brothers," he said. "They were crushed when I moved away. They were so young. It all worked out."

One of them, Mike, verbally committed in April to play football for Notre Dame.

Still, Heurman has no regrets.

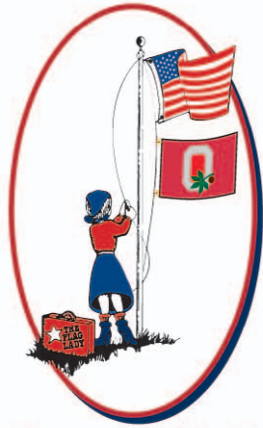
"Growing up playing hockey, I wouldn't do it any other way," he said. "I know a lot of guys grew up playing football their whole lives. Hockey taught me a lot of things I carry over to football, a lot of discipline."

While he hasn't laced the skates in years, the Buckeyes' trip to Michigan Stadium last season brought back memories of his days with Compuware and his teammate Watson.

"We were 15 minutes from Ann Arbor. We were always in Ann Arbor," Heurman said. "Weekends we didn't have games, we'd go to the Michigan games. It was surreal going back, to be honest. I never thought that would happen."

"I remember sitting in the stands with Austin, just two hockey players, thinking, 'These dudes are incredibly big. You've got to be kidding me.'"





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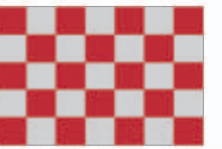





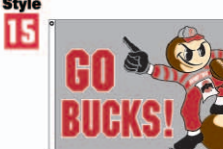








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# Eichorst Named Nebraska's Next Athletic Director

Nebraska didn't wait very long when it came to finding a new athletic director.

Only eight days after announcing the impending retirement of Tom Osborne, the school proclaimed Oct. 4 that it had lured Miami (Fla.) athletic director Shawn Eichorst to the job.

"After consideration of a large number of candidates, I was impressed with Shawn's credentials and experience but more importantly his respect for and appreciation of the tradition of the Nebraska athletics program," Nebraska chancellor Harvey Perlman said. "He expressed from the onset his hope to draw on the experience and knowledge of Tom Osborne and the rest of the current staff in working to continue the department's success both on and off the field."

former football coach was making less than \$300,000 in base salary.

Osborne will stay with the university through Aug. 1 to work with Eichorst to ensure a smooth transition, but the Nebraska legend did not attend the news conference Perlman held to announce the decision.

Perlman admitted that Osborne might have been disappointed by the fact that he did not have more control over choosing his successor, but Osborne released a statement Oct. 5 in which he urged Cornhuskers fans to support the new boss.

"My primary remaining job as athletic director is to facilitate a smooth transition in the athletic department, and I will do everything I can to see to it that this occurs," he said. "I was never under the impression that the hiring of a new athletic director would be my decision. It is important that Nebraskans give Shawn Eichorst every opportunity to have a successful tenure as the next athletic director at the University of Nebraska."

However, Lincoln Journal Star columnist Steven Sipple wrote a column in which he opined NU football coach Bo Pelini was also dismayed at his lack of input into the hiring of Eichorst.

"Pelini is like most of us in that trust is a crucial word in his world," Sipple wrote Oct. 4. "Trust and loyalty. The damage in this case may be irreparable.

"If I were Perlman, my concern would be that his actions (or lack thereof) pertaining to Osborne and Pelini arguably discredit the university even if Eichorst turns out to be a sound hire – and even if Perlman has a sound argument for limiting Osborne and Pelini's involvement.

"My read is that Perlman led them to believe they both would have significant input in the process. They didn't, especially Pelini. And now it's clear that two very powerful men are disgruntled. I'm sure Osborne's legions of fans are just thrilled about that little development."



FILE PHOTO

## BIG TEN NOTES Jeff Svoboda

Eichorst will begin at the first of the year upon the retirement of Osborne. He has no direct ties to the university but is a Midwesterner. Eichorst has degrees from Wisconsin Whitewater as well as Marquette,



Shawn Eichorst

and he worked at Wisconsin for six years before taking over the Hurricanes' athletic department in April 2011.

"I am humbled by both the responsibility and opportunities that lie ahead, and I hope to carry on the rich tradition of

Husker excellence set by Coach Osborne and so many others," Eichorst said.

He will make \$973,000 per year, placing him third among Big Ten athletic directors behind Ohio State's Gene Smith and Wisconsin's Barry Alvarez. That represents a significant raise over Osborne's pay. The

### McQueary Sues PSU

Sentencing for Jerry Sandusky was set for Oct. 9 after he was found guilty of child sexual abuse, but another key player in the scandal that rocked Penn State was in the news in early October.

**TOO FOCUSED ON ILLINOIS** – Wisconsin head coach Bret Bielema had no idea President Obama was visiting the UW campus when reporters asked Bielema about it Oct. 4.

Former Penn State quarterback and assistant coach Mike McQueary, who testified that he once stumbled upon Sandusky performing a sexual act on a minor in a shower in the PSU football facility, has sued the university for millions of dollars in damages. McQueary contends he has suffered defamation and misrepresentation in the whistle-blower lawsuit.

McQueary – who was put on leave when the scandal hit the news and was not retained as part of Penn State's new coaching staff – also contends the university's treatment of him has caused distress, anxiety and humiliation.

The former coach claims public statements by university president Graham Spanier have suggested McQueary's testimony was untrue in some ways.

"Spanier's statements have irreparably harmed (McQueary's) reputation for honesty and integrity, and have irreparably harmed (his) ability to earn a living, especially in his chosen profession of coaching football," the lawsuit said.

Spanier, who expressed public support of other Penn State administrators charged with perjury related to the case, has been let go by the university.

### Bielema In The Dark

Most people who follow college football know that most coaches, who regularly put in 15-hour days, live in a bubble during the

## BIG Current Standings

### Leaders Division

	Conf.			All		
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
Ohio State*	2	0	1.000	6	0	1.000
Penn State*	2	0	1.000	4	2	.667
Wisconsin	1	1	.500	4	2	.667
Purdue	0	1	.000	3	2	.600
Indiana	0	2	.000	2	3	.400
Illinois	0	2	.000	2	4	.333

### Legends Division

	Conf.			All		
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.
Iowa	1	0	1.000	3	2	.600
Michigan	1	0	1.000	3	2	.600
Northwestern	1	1	.500	5	1	.833
Michigan State	1	1	.500	4	2	.667
Nebraska	1	1	.500	4	2	.667
Minnesota	0	1	.000	4	1	.800

\* – Ineligible for Big Ten championship

### Oct. 6 Games

Ohio State 63, Nebraska 38  
Michigan State 31, Indiana 27  
Penn State 39, Northwestern 28  
Wisconsin 31, Illinois 14  
Michigan 44, Purdue 13

### Oct. 13 Games

Iowa at Michigan State, Noon  
Northwestern at Minnesota, Noon  
Wisconsin at Purdue, Noon  
Illinois at Michigan, 3:30 p.m.  
Ohio State at Indiana, 8 p.m.

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## Around The Big Ten

### Penn State 39, Northwestern 28

Northwestern's stay in the Associated Press writers' poll's top 25 lasted only one week as the No. 24 Wildcats gave up 22 unanswered points in a loss in Happy Valley.

The Wildcats led 28-17 after three quarters, but the Nittany Lions scored three touchdowns in the last 10 minutes to take the win. Matt McGloin threw and ran for touchdowns in that span while Michael Zordich put an exclamation point on the win with a 3-yard score with 1:30 to play.

"You can't say enough about these kids," head coach Bill O'Brien said afterward. "With what they've been through, they're smart, they're tough, they're committed to Penn State. They come to practice every single week. The practices aren't always pretty, but there's a lot of effort. There's great chemistry in that locker room. We're 4-2 (and) who knows where it's going to end up."

The Nittany Lions ran 99 plays on the day. McGloin threw for 282 yards and a pair of TDs to Allen Robinson while Zach Zwinak led the rushing charge with 28 carries for 121 yards and a score.

The Wildcats had only 247 yards of offense a week after topping the 700-yard mark. Venric Mark ran for a touchdown and had a 75-yard punt return score.

Northwestern hasn't won a game as a ranked team since 2001 and fell to 10-16 in October since head coach Pat Fitzgerald took over.

### Michigan 44, Purdue 13

Denard Robinson became the Big Ten's all-time leading rusher for a quarterback, racking up 235 yards on the ground as the Wolverines dominated the Boilermakers in West Lafayette.

Robinson moved to 3,905 rushing yards in his career, breaking the old mark of 3,895 set by Indiana's Antwaan Randle El from 1998-2001. It was the fifth 200-yard game of the senior's career.

"That means something," Robinson said of the record. "But to be honest with you, our goal is to win the Big Ten, and so whatever it takes to win the Big Ten, that's what we have to do."

Michigan opened a 21-0 lead 18 minutes into the game and didn't look back. The Wolverines defense held Purdue to 213 yards of offense and forced four turnovers.

Robert Marve returned to play quarterback for the Boilers after suffering a torn ACL on Sept. 8, but he and starter Caleb TerBush combined to throw for only 148 yards and a pair of interceptions.

"It's kind of embarrassing losing like that in Ross-Ade (Stadium) with a lot of people visiting and just getting blown out," TerBush said. "It's a pride thing, and we can't let it happen again."

### Michigan State 31, Indiana 27

Michigan State withstood an early onslaught from the Hoosiers in Bloomington before rallying for the victory and the Old Brass Spitoon trophy.

Indiana led 17-0 before the first quarter ended, but the Spartans put together a furious comeback capped when Andrew Maxwell hit Bennie Fowler for a 36-yard touchdown with 6:35 remaining.

"I thought at halftime the players refocused and did a great job setting the tone in the locker room for themselves and started rallying back," MSU head coach Mark Dantonio said.

football season and are often unaware of a lot of the things happening around them in the world.

Wisconsin head coach Bret Bielema proved that Oct. 4 when he admitted he had no idea that President Barack Obama was visiting the UW campus as part of a campaign stop.

Presidential visits are often hard to ignore given the logistical issues and massive hype that accompany them, but Bielema's dedication to helping the Badgers move past a Big Ten-opening loss to Nebraska apparently kept him in the dark.

When asked about the president being on campus, Bielema replied, "President of our ...?" before adding, "I have no idea what's going on. The shell I live in, I have no idea."

Bielema even managed to avoid noticing any commotion on his usual Thursday walk around campus. He usually makes the walk with Alvarez, outlets reported, but the AD was out of town for the day and thus did not have a chance to mention Obama's visit.

"I walked by myself," Bielema said. "It was very peaceful. Controlled the whole conversation."

### Coach's Habit Snuffed

Illinois is only 2-4 after an Oct. 6 loss to Wisconsin, and the seat of first-year Fighting Illini head coach and former Ohio State assistant Tim Beckman is already getting hot.

Beckman didn't do himself any favors during that game, either, when he got into



FILE PHOTO

**DUAL THREAT – Michigan quarterback Denard Robinson (16) became the Big Ten's all-time leading rusher at his position thanks to his 235-yard performance at Purdue.**

Maxwell threw for a career-high 290 yards and two touchdowns, while RB Le'Veon Bell ran for a pair of scores. Aaron Burbridge caught eight passes for 134 yards.

Indiana quarterback Cameron Coffman was 33 of 48 for 282 yards and three touchdowns, but the Hoosiers had only 37 yards and two first downs after halftime.

### Wisconsin 31, Illinois 14

The Badgers defended their home turf, riding Montee Ball and Joel Stave to a victory against Illinois to even the all-time series between the two schools at 36-36-7.

Stave threw for 254 yards and two touchdowns, hooking up seven times with Jared Abbrederis for 117 yards and a score. Ball added 116 yards and two touchdowns on 19 carries as Wisconsin won its 20th consecutive home game.

"I'm very excited about our guys today," UW head coach Bret Bielema said. "I thought they put in a lot of good preparation. There was a huge emphasis during the week about playing a four-quarter game."

Wisconsin pulled away with three fourth-quarter scores to blow open what had been a 10-7 advantage.

Illinois' offensive struggles continued as quarterback Nathan Scheelhaase ran for a touchdown and threw for a score, but the team mustered only 284 yards of offense and lost two turnovers.

trouble for something he did on the sideline. High-definition television cameras caught Beckman dipping into a can of smokeless tobacco during the game. The NCAA bans all tobacco use during games or practices, and it is a secondary violation.

"That's a bad habit of mine," Beckman told reporters after the game. "I apologize for that. I guess it's the stress, but there's no excuse for that and that'll be stopped. It shouldn't have been done."

OSU assistant Mike Vrabel got into hot water for doing the same last year. Ohio State self-reported the violation to the NCAA, and the ruling body has previously reprimanded other coaches who have been spotted using the product on the sideline.

Illini cornerback Terry Hawthorne left the field via ambulance but gave the crowd a thumbs-up gesture on the way off after suffering an apparent neck or head injury.

### Iowa (3-2, 1-0)

The Hawkeyes had an open week after starting Big Ten play Sept. 29 with a big win in a rivalry game vs. Minnesota, but the good vibes were spoiled when three Hawkeyes had trouble with the law. Cornerback Micah Hyde was arrested Oct. 6 on a pair of misdemeanor charges, tight end Ray Hamilton was arrested that same morning for presence on a premise (licensed liquor establishment) after hours and offensive lineman Drew Clark was arrested for public intoxication the day before. Head coach Kirk Ferentz said the program will follow the school's student-athlete Code of Conduct when determining suspensions.

### Minnesota (4-1, 0-1)

Jerry Kill remained unsure of the status of senior quarterback MarQueis Gray as not even the team's open week gave the second-year head coach confidence Gray could return from a sprained ankle Oct. 13 vs. Northwestern.

"Not much encouraging," Kill said. "He can't run full speed. ... He's not as far along as we expected him to be."

### Odenigbo Out

Ohio State hotly pursued Centerville, Ohio, prospect Ifeadi Odenigbo during the last recruiting cycle, but the highly rated defensive lineman/linebacker chose Northwestern over the Buckeyes and a number of other schools.

Odenigbo made his college debut during a Northwestern win Sept. 8 vs. Vanderbilt, but his season has come to an end. He played in just that game before aggravating a shoulder injury, and NU head coach Pat Fitzgerald said he will not return in 2012.

"We'll get a medical redshirt for him and have him back for four years," Fitzgerald said.



# OSU Holds On To Top Wildcats

*Editor's Note: Buckeye Sports Bulletin is celebrating the 10th anniversary of Ohio State's 2002 national championship team by reprinting stories that appeared in BSB throughout that special season. This story was originally published in the Oct. 12, 2002, issue of BSB.*

By **STEVE HELWAGEN**  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

On paper, Northwestern's porous run defense was not supposed to stand up to powerful fifth-ranked Ohio State.

But the problem is Big Ten football games aren't played on paper — or even in computer games, for that matter.

The Wildcats continued their steady improvement, giving the Buckeyes quite a tussle for more than three quarters before OSU pulled away to a 27-16 victory before 43,489 Oct. 5 at Ryan Field.

"We were making some plays and we were taking Ohio State to a place that they didn't want to be, and that was in a ball game," said Northwestern coach Randy Walker. "But, as in every game, there were a handful of critical plays. The credit goes to Ohio State — they made them and we didn't."

Ohio State (6-0, 2-0 Big Ten) was its own worst enemy at times. Freshman tailback Maurice Clarett ended up carrying 29 times

for 140 yards and two touchdowns. But his three lost fumbles helped keep Northwestern (2-4, 0-2) in the game well into the fourth quarter.

"I thought Northwestern did some good things," OSU coach Jim Tressel said. "Whenever you play a team that's improving and you're playing them at their place, it's a scary thing. I think they're a good football team."

Northwestern came into the game 11th in the Big Ten in rushing defense (308.8 yards per game) and scoring defense (40.0 points per game).

The Buckeyes were able to outgain NU 455-396, grinding out 285 yards on the ground. But OSU's longest run was a 23-yard scramble by quarterback Craig Krenzel, meaning the Buckeyes had to earn every yard.

"I think everybody was in shock," Clarett said. "We looked at it statistical-wise and felt we were going to rip this team. I think we came out and took it kind of lightly. That's what I think I did."

"I didn't have my running style. I didn't have my feet under me or my explosive style. But we came out with the win. That's all that matters to me."

Krenzel enjoyed a fine all-around game. He completed 11 of 22 passes for 170 yards. He also carried nine times for 62 yards.



FILE PHOTO

**THERE HE GOES** – Ohio State's Chris Gamble (7), after receiving a block from Bobby Carpenter (42), breaks free from Northwestern's Tim McGarigle on the way to a 56-yard kickoff return in the third quarter.

Lydell Ross spelled Clarett and carried 18 times for 83 yards.

Northwestern utilized its spread offense and enjoyed some success against the Buckeyes. Quarterback Brett Basanez, a red-shirt freshman, was 24 of 45 passing for 283 yards with an interception.

Tailback Jason Wright added 95 yards and a touchdown on 24 carries for the Wildcats.

There were three different occasions when NU had the ball at or inside the OSU 10-yard line but managed just two field goals out of those opportunities.

"There were some big momentum shifts where Northwestern could have really capitalized, but our defense was able to stop them," said OSU tight end Ben Hartsock. "It's a nice luxury to have a defense that can do that."

"The turnovers we had were crucial. The formula that Coach Tressel has put together for road games is we have to be mistake-free and opportunistic on offense. We definitely were not that tonight. We're thankful for our defense coming through when they did. They kept us in the game."

## As It Happened

Two of OSU's first three possessions ended with Clarett fumbles. On the second one, NU's John Pickens reached in and knocked the ball out and teammate Mark Roush made the recovery at the OSU 9-yard line with 8:50 left in the first quarter.

The Wildcats netted just 1 yard in three plays, with Wright dragged down by OSU linebacker Matt Wilhelm for a 1-yard loss on a third-down option play. David Wasielewski came on and hit a 26-yard field goal to open the scoring and put NU up 3-0 with 7:25 left in the first quarter.

The Buckeyes then drove 46 yards down to the NU 26. But Clarett was stoned for no gain by NU's Herschel Henderson on fourth-and-1 and the Wildcats regained possession.

NU moved 64 yards in 10 plays before Wasielewski connected on a 27-yard field goal to up the lead to 6-0 with 58 seconds left in the first. The key plays were Basanez slant passes of 14 yards to Roger Jordan and 18 yards to Jeff Backes.

Ohio State answered with a six-play, 66-yard scoring drive. Krenzel came out firing, hitting passes of 13 yards to Chris Vance and

23 and 15 yards to Michael Jenkins. After a 5-yard ineligible receiver penalty — coming on a pass from Vance back to Krenzel — pushed OSU back to the NU 20, Krenzel scrambled for a 13-yard gain.

Ross went left for 4 yards and a first down at the NU 3. He went back over right tackle on the next play for the touchdown, giving OSU a 7-6 lead with 13:15 left in the first half.

"It felt good to get that in there," Ross said. "They were up 6-0. We had to get that six to get started."

The teams traded punts and NU's Kunle Patrick appeared to break an 84-yard punt return back to the OSU 9. But a pair of Wildcats were flagged for excessively blocking an OSU player well behind the play. The penalty pushed the Wildcats back to their own 44.

But Basanez hit a quick pass to Patrick for 16 yards and found Mark Philmore for 8 more down to the OSU 21.

On second-and-2, Basanez threw a fade to Philmore in the right corner of the end zone. He absorbed hits from OSU's Mike Doss and Dustin Fox and appeared to get a foot down in the end zone. But the officials ruled he was bobbling the ball as he fell and called the pass incomplete.

The drive stalled after Wright got 1 yard on third down and Wasielewski drilled a 37-yard field goal to put the Wildcats back up 9-7 with 5:20 left in the half.

Ohio State moved 63 yards in five plays to regain the lead. On the first play, Krenzel threw deep to Chris Gamble, who went up and hauled in the 48-yard spiral over NU's Marvin Ward at the Wildcats' 15-yard line.

Clarett did the rest, carrying for 7, 3 and 3 yards before capping the drive with a 2-yard touchdown run. On the touchdown, he went around right end and beat NU's Raheem Covington to the pylon to put the Buckeyes back up 14-9 with 2:43 left in the half.

The Wildcats threatened in a big way just before halftime. Basanez hit Wright for a 31-yard gain on a screen. Those two then hooked up for a 26-yard gain on another screen down to the OSU 4.

Wright got 3 yards on first down. But OSU's Cie Grant went up over the top to stop him for no gain on second down. Basanez tried to find Patrick, but OSU's Will Smith tipped the pass away in the right flat.



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To compound matters for NU, Wasielewski's 18-yard field goal was wide right with 32 seconds left in the half.

"Our defense did a great job on that stand," Tressel said.

Wilhelm added, "It's a totally different ball game coming out of the half if they get a score then."

OSU got the ball to open the second half after Gamble returned the kickoff 56 yards to the NU 44.

"I just saw a hole and tried to attack it," Gamble said. "I tried to score, but they had me bottled in on the sideline."

But OSU could get only as close as the NU 24 and Mike Nugent came on and hit a 41-yard field goal to put the Buckeyes up 17-9 with 12:17 left in the third quarter.

Northwestern had Wright return the ensuing kickoff 67 yards to the OSU 28. OSU's Chris Conwell saved the touchdown. But NU denied itself points again as Wasielewski was wide left on a 39-yard field goal with 11:16 left in the third.

The Buckeyes then moved 79 yards in 11 plays to extend the lead. Krenzel kept the ball for 15 yards before hitting Hartsock for 13 more. Claret carried five times for 35 yards on the drive, including the 20-yard touchdown in which he burst through a hole on the right side and dived in from the 2 to avoid a tackle attempt by NU's Dominique Price. The touchdown put the Buckeyes up 24-9 with 6:33 left in the third.

"After I saw (right tackle Shane Olivea's) positioning on his block and I saw the pylon, I knew we had to get some points on the board," Claret said.

But Northwestern hung tough and drove 80 yards in nine plays to tighten the game once again. The Wildcats converted a pair of critical third downs as Basanez found Jon Schweighardt for a 36-yard gain on a post route before OSU's Fox was guilty of pass interference, giving NU a first down at the OSU 30.

Basanez hit Jordan for a 12-yard gain and Patrick for 9 more. On second-and-1 at the 9,

Wright took an inside handoff out of the shotgun, went up the middle and fended off Doss at the goal line for the touchdown, trimming the OSU advantage to 24-16 with 1:57 left in the third.

The Buckeyes succeeded in melting over five minutes of clock time and extended their lead with a 12-play, 52-yard scoring march. The drive stalled at the NU 12, but Nugent's 30-yard field goal pushed the OSU lead to 27-16 with 11:28 left in the game.

The OSU defense did its job, holding the Wildcats to just one first down and forcing punts on their next two possessions.

Northwestern got a glimmer of hope as Claret was hit from behind by NU's Price and fumbled for the third time. NU's Luis Castillo recovered the ball at the NU 46 with 4:22 left.

But three plays later, Basanez was intercepted by Grant with 3:33 left. The defense stood tall one last time as Wilhelm forced a fumble by NU's Eric Worley and OSU's Donnie Nickey recovered it with 53 seconds left.

**Game Notes**

- Ohio State defeated Northwestern for the 23rd consecutive time. The Wildcats have not defeated OSU since 1971 and have not downed the Buckeyes in Evanston since 1958, when Ara Parseghian was the Wildcats coach.

OSU has won 14 straight in Ryan Field, formerly Dyche Stadium.

- OSU is 6-0 for the first time since the 1998 season. The Buckeyes won their first eight games that season.

*Additional coverage of Ohio State's win over Northwestern will appear in Buckeye Sports Bulletin's Oct. 12 electronic issue. If you are an active print subscriber and have not signed up to enjoy BSB's electronic issues, simply email your name, address and telephone number to subscriptions@BuckeyeSports.com and we will forward you instructions on how to access our 36 additional electronic issues.*

**Box Score**

**Ohio State 27, Northwestern 16**

Oct. 5, 2002 — Ryan Field; Evanston, Ill.

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
<b>OHIO STATE</b>	0	14	10	3	27
<b>NORTHWESTERN</b>	6	3	7	0	16

**First Quarter**

**NW** — Wasielewski, 26 yard field goal, 7:25; 4 plays, 1 yard, 1:25 TOP.

**NW** — Wasielewski, 27 yard field goal, 0:58; 10 plays, 64 yards, 2:53 TOP.

**Second Quarter**

**OSU** — Ross, 3 yard run (Nugent kick), 13:15; 6 plays, 66 yards, 2:43 TOP.

**NW** — Wasielewski, 37 yard field goal, 5:20; 8 plays, 36 yards, 3:06 TOP.

**OSU** — Claret, 2 yard run (Nugent kick), 2:43; 5 plays, 63 yards, 2:37 TOP.

**Third Quarter**

**OSU** — Nugent, 41 yard field goal, 12:17; 6 plays, 20 yards, 2:43 TOP.

**OSU** — Claret, 20 yard run (Nugent kick), 6:33; 11 plays, 79 yards, 4:43 TOP.

**NW** — Wright, 9 yard run (Wasielewski kick), 1:57; 9 plays, 80 yards, 4:36 TOP.

**Fourth Quarter**

**OSU** — Nugent, 30 yard field goal, 11:28; 12 plays, 52 yards, 5:29 TOP.

**Att.** — 43,489.

**Weather** — 62 degrees, clear; wind 5 MPH from W.



**Team Statistics**

	OSU	NW
<b>First Downs</b>	23	18
<b>Rushing</b>	16	5
<b>Passing</b>	7	12
<b>Penalty</b>	0	1
<b>Rushes-Yards</b>	56-285	27-113
<b>Passing Yards</b>	170	283
<b>Passes (Att.-Comp.-Int.)</b>	22-11-0	45-24-1
<b>Offensive Plays</b>	78	72
<b>Total Net Yards</b>	455	396
<b>Third Down Efficiency</b>	5-12	4-15
<b>Fourth Down Efficiency</b>	0-1	0-0
<b>Punts</b>	4-36.2	6-39.7
<b>Fumbles-Lost</b>	3-3	1-1
<b>Penalties</b>	5-45	5-42
<b>Time of Possession</b>	35:05	24:55

**Individual Statistics**

**RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.)** — **OSU:** Claret 29-140; Ross 18-83; Krenzel 9-62. **NW:** Wright 24-95; Aikens 1-15; Basanez 1-2; Herron 1-1.

**PASSING (Att.-Comp.-Int.-Yds.-TD)** — **OSU:** Krenzel 22-11-0-170-0. **NW:** Basanez 45-24-1-283-0.

**RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.)** — **OSU:** Jenkins 4-64; Gamble 2-51; Hartsock 2-26; Vance 1-13; Claret 1-9; Carter 1-7. **NW:** Patrick 6-63; Wright 4-37; Backes 4-32; Jordan 3-38; Philmore 3-20; Schweighardt 2-55; Worley 2-38.

**PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long)** — **OSU:** Groom 4-36.2-40. **NW:** Huffman 6-39.7-45.

**PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.)** — **OSU:** Gamble 4-14. **NW:** Patrick 3-58.

**KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.)** — **OSU:** M.Hall 2-53; Gamble 1-56; Vance 1-2. **NW:** Wright 1-67.

**FUMBLE RECOVERIES** — **OSU:** Nickey 1-7. **NW:** Price 1-0; Roush 1-0; Castillo 1-0.

**INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.)** — **OSU:** Grant 1-23. **NW:** None.

**SACKS** — **OSU:** None. **NW:** None.

**TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.)** — **OSU:** Grant 2-4; Wilhelm 1-1; Pagac 1-1. **NW:** Howard 1-1; Thompson 1-1.

**TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.)** — **OSU:** Wilhelm 9-6-15; Doss 5-8-13; Grant 3-3-6; Fox 2-3-5; Nickey 2-2-4; Scott 1-3-4; Thompson 2-1-3; Peterson 1-2-3; Smith 1-2-3; Allen 2-0-2; McNutt 2-0-2; Groom 1-0-1; Pagac 1-0-1; Reynolds 1-0-1; Conwell 1-0-1; Kudla 0-1-1; Hawk 0-1-1; Britton 0-1-1; Childress 0-1-1. **NW:** Price 6-9-15; Pickens 5-10-15; Jones 2-6-8; Szymul 2-5-7; Ward 4-2-6; Roush 2-4-6; Henderson 4-1-5; Howard 1-4-5; Castillo 2-2-4; Covington 2-2-4; Adams 1-3-4; Thompson 0-4-4; McGarigle 2-1-3; Bogenrief 1-2-3; Cofield 1-1-2; Aikens 1-1-2; Wright 1-0-1; Vanderhorst 1-0-1; Jordan 1-0-1; Lawrence 1-0-1; Cartaya 0-1-1.

**PLAYERS IN THE GAME** — **OHIO STATE:** Starters: Defense, Smith, Thompson, Peterson, Scott, Grant, Wilhelm, Reynolds, Fox, Nickey, Doss, McNutt, Groom. Offense, Jenkins, Douglas, Clarke, Stepanovich, Bishop, Olivea, Hartsock, Gamble, Krenzel, Ross, Claret, Nugent. Reserves: Britton, Childress, Vance, D'Andrea, Carter, Conwell, Salley, Allen, M.Hall, Everett, Joe, Matthews, Carpenter, Schnittker, Pagac, Hawk, Tucker, Underwood, Kne, Mangold, Kudla, Andrews, Fraser, Sims, Hamby, Arden, Caldwell, Bond. **NORTHWESTERN:** Starters: Offense, Philmore, Essex, Ulrich, King, Matejka, Roehl, Wohlscheid, Schweighardt, Basanez, Wright, Patrick, Wasielewski. Defense, Thompson, Castillo, Clark, Howard, Szymul, Pickens, Jones, Covington, Roush, Price, Henderson, Huffman. Reserves: Fields, Aikens, Jordan, Cartaya, Bogenrief, Brewer, Horn, Lawrence, Adams, Jordan, Backes, Stuckey, Ward, Dawson, Herron, Ayeni, Lezi, McGarigle, Vanderhorst, Jones, Anderson, Grimes, Strief, Newton, Cofield, Kennedy, Mansfield, Worley, Foster, Lutzen.



FILE PHOTO

**FIRM HANDSHAKE** — Before the 2002 kickoff between Ohio State and Northwestern, OSU head coach Jim Tressel (left) shook hands with Wildcats mentor Randy Walker.



# Brotherly Love Led To Fox's On-Field Toughness

*Editor's Note: Buckeye Sports Bulletin is celebrating the 10th anniversary of Ohio State's 2002 national championship team with features throughout the year on that special season.*

By ERIC LOUGHRY  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

As Derek Fox was making a name for himself as a standout quarterback and safety at Canton (Ohio) GlenOak high school in the mid-1990s, his kid brother, Dustin, was a pudgy lineman in the Plain Local Midget League who was less than enthusiastic about football and shied away from contact.

While Derek fielded plenty of calls from college coaches vying for his talents before he eventually chose to attend Penn State, he also took a call from a coach who was definitely not making a recruiting pitch. Dustin's coach rang the Fox residence to let Derek know that Dustin was, in no uncertain terms, soft – a wimp.

No sooner had Derek hung up the phone than he stormed downstairs where Dustin was playing a video game and demanded that his younger brother put his football pads on and head outside. It was time to toughen Dustin up.

"My brother took it personally and kicked my (butt)," Dustin said. "It was like domestic violence, basically."

As Derek whaled on Dustin and threw him around the front yard, some neighbors witnessed the brutal brotherly love.

"My neighbors are out, and staring, and it's like, 'What the hell is going on at the Fox house?'" Dustin said, laughing while remembering the scene.

Derek broke down his little brother that afternoon, leaving him in tears, but Dustin came to embrace contact. Soon thereafter, seemingly overnight, he shed his baby fat and morphed into a blur who liked to hit. Almost out of nowhere, he displayed outstanding speed, quickness and jumping ability – just like Derek, who would go on to be a three-year starter at safety for the Nittany Lions.

In 1999, while Derek was in his senior

season at Penn State, Dustin garnered first-team All-Ohio accolades as a defensive back at GlenOak. He was a first-team All-Ohio DB again as a senior, when he also ran for almost 1,400 yards and 14 touchdowns as a tailback to lead the Golden Eagles to their second-ever playoff appearance.

During a basketball tournament game, he went up for an alley-oop and dunked over 6-7 Terence Dials of Youngstown (Ohio) Boardman, who would go on to be the 2006 Big Ten Player of the Year at Ohio State. The younger Fox also ran a leg on a GlenOak 400-meter relay team that set a Stark County record of 41.50 seconds.

Along the way, Fox gained a reputation as a big hitter, a player who had a nose for the ball and could use his explosiveness to unload on ball carriers and receivers. He credits the impromptu drill his brother put him through in the front yard that afternoon for the hard-hitting mentality that, coupled with his athleticism, would propel him to Ohio State, where he started three years at cornerback and helped the Buckeyes win a national title in 2002 as a sophomore.

"That was one of those moments that you look back and you're thankful that somebody cared that much about you," Dustin said. "It was tough love."

Not only did his older brother help foster the attitude that served Dustin so well at Ohio State, he also had a hand in Dustin choosing to attend OSU over Penn State. Dustin verbally committed to the Buckeyes during his senior season at GlenOak, but he had second thoughts when John Cooper was fired as head coach following a loss to South Carolina in the 2001 Outback Bowl.

"As a high school kid, you're uncertain," he said. "You want to know who your coach is going to be. I didn't know who they were going to bring in, and so I just kind of wavered."

Fox was on the verge of committing to Penn State when Jim Tressel was named Cooper's successor at OSU in January 2001. One of Tressel's first orders of business was a visit to the Fox household. Along with Dustin and his parents, Randy and Jean, Derek was on hand to welcome the new coach.



FILE PHOTO

**FIFTH FAMILY BUCKEYE — To say OSU safety Dustin Fox came from a football family would be an understatement, as four of his uncles preceded him as Buckeyes.**

By the time Tressel left that night, he had sold Dustin – and the rest of the family – on Ohio State. Prior to the visit, Derek was doing his best to convince Dustin to become a Nittany Lion, but after hearing what Tressel had to say, Derek was convinced his little brother should stay in-state.

"I was very close to going to Penn State, but when Tressel came, it was like a no-brainer," Dustin said. "My brother, who was recruiting me to go to Penn State, actually told me that I had to go to Ohio State."

Fox saw action in every game as an OSU freshman, playing nickel back, safety and corner. He made his first collegiate start in the fourth game of the 2001 season, lin-

ing up at nickel back in a 38-20 win over Northwestern under the transportable lights brought in to illuminate Ohio Stadium.

"I was dead nervous," he said of his debut in the starting lineup. "It was a night game. I've been to a lot of games at Ohio State, but I don't remember many that were rocking like that place that night."

Despite the butterflies, Fox acquitted himself well as he registered six tackles. He saw his first action at cornerback a month later, filling in at the position when starter Cie Grant sustained a head injury early during a 31-28 win over Minnesota at the Metrodome in Minneapolis. Fox had never even practiced at the position before that night when the coaching staff called on him in an emergency role.

"They didn't really have anybody to go in, and they just threw me out there," he said. "I'll never forget – I didn't know what the hell I was doing. I'm looking at (Mike) Doss every play, like, 'What am I doing?! What am I doing?!'"

Fox knew just what to do on the last play of the Buckeyes' 26-20 win at Michigan in the regular-season finale, OSU's first victory in Ann Arbor since 1987. Michigan quarterback John Navarre heaved a Hail Mary as time expired, and Fox playing deep, positioned himself under it and fielded it almost like a punt to secure both his first career interception and the upset win over the No. 11 Wolverines.

"It was a big game for us," he said of the win over the Wolverines. "That was a turning point for the program."

A couple of weeks after OSU's win in Ann Arbor, starting cornerback Derek Ross announced he would forgo his senior season at Ohio State to make himself eligible for the 2002 NFL draft. He also opted to have shoulder and toe surgery and would not be around for Ohio State's matchup with South Carolina State in the Outback Bowl.

That meant defensive coordinator Mark Dantonio and defensive backs coach Mel Tucker were in the market for a starting boundary cornerback, not only for the New Year's Day bowl game, but for the 2002 season. The coaches turned to Fox.

"They thought I had the skills needed to play the position," he said. "It was just a matter of learning and having the confidence to play."

While Fox allowed a touchdown reception to South Carolina's leading receiver, Brian Scott, during the Buckeyes' 28-21 loss to the Gamecocks in the Outback Bowl, he was in on six tackles and broke up a pass that afternoon in Tampa, Fla.

Fox wound up leading all OSU freshmen in playing time in 2001, and the OSU coaching staff selected him as the Buckeyes' most outstanding first-year defensive player.

## 'Like A Family' In '02

After practicing at cornerback in preparation for the Outback Bowl, then in spring practice and the summer, Fox felt more comfortable at his new position going into his sophomore campaign.

As he made the adjustment, Fox was also bolstered in the secondary by defensive co-captains Doss, the strong safety, and Donnie Nickey, the free safety. Richard McNutt started the first six games of that season at the field corner, but when a nagging ankle injury ended his career prematurely, leading receiver Chris Gamble was brought over to join the secondary as a two-way starter.

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"We were like a family, and I was lucky because Doss and Nicky were the quarterbacks and captains of that defense," Fox said. "And they always made sure I was lined up properly. If I screwed up, they'd have my back. You always felt good when you saw Doss and Nicky behind you."

In what would prove to be an anomaly, OSU opened the 2002 campaign with a relatively easy win over Texas Tech. Red Raiders quarterback Kliff Kingsbury threw for 341 yards and three touchdowns in a 45-21 loss to the Buckeyes, but Fox intercepted one of his 44 passes in the end zone early in the third quarter to keep OSU's lead at a comfortable margin.

Close wins were the hallmark of the 2002 Buckeyes, and Fox made a habit of coming up big in those tight contests. While many Ohio State fans remember Gamble returning an interception 40 yards for the winning touchdown in a 13-7 win over Penn State in his first game as a two-way starter as one of the highlights of the 2002 season, Fox had seven solo tackles – including one for a loss – and broke up a pass against the Nittany Lions, leading the OSU coaching staff to recognize Fox as the defensive player of that week.

Fox's next interception came two weeks later at Purdue, where OSU would pull out a 10-6 win on a 37-yard touchdown pass from Craig Krenzel to Michael Jenkins on fourth-and-1 with less than two minutes remaining. Hours before the play that came to be known as "Holy Buckeye" in OSU football lore, however, Fox picked off Purdue quarterback Kyle Orton in the end zone on the Boilermakers' opening drive of the game.

The following week at Illinois, Fox would have his toughest outing as a Buckeye. He pulled a hip flexor in practice that week and couldn't even run until the morning of the game, but he convinced the trainers and coaching staff he could play.

"Frankly, I didn't want to lose my spot," he said. "I didn't want somebody to beat me out. I wanted to be out there."

Fox reinjured the hip in coverage during the game and was targeted by the Fighting Illini throughout the afternoon as 6-5 receiver Walter Young had 10 catches for 144 yards over him.

"I kept trying to play through it, and that Walter Young dude was just eating me alive because I literally couldn't burst," Fox said. "I wasn't myself, but there are no excuses. I mean, I put myself out there. I should have made the plays or I shouldn't have gone out there."

Fox was even replaced at corner by freshman E.J. Underwood at one point in the third quarter, but he came back and wound up making a crucial play in overtime to keep the Buckeyes' undefeated record intact going into the final game of the regular season.

After the Buckeyes had taken the lead in overtime, the Illini went after Fox again as they attempted to pull even again. From the OSU 9, Illinois quarterback Jon Beutjer tossed a fade to Aaron Moorehead in the end zone. Moorehead plucked the ball out of the air, but Fox forced him out of bounds before he could get a foot down for a touchdown. The Illini eventually turned the ball – and the game – over on downs.

"I wish I could forget (that game)," Fox said, "but the good thing is, at the end of the game, I made the play in overtime on Moorehead in the end zone."

The biggest play Fox made in 2002 came on the biggest stage – the Fiesta Bowl. With OSU down 7-0 late in the first half, he intercepted Miami (Fla.) quarterback Ken Dorsey and returned the ball 12 yards to the Miami 37.

Fox said it was likely miscommunication between Dorsey and Miami receiver Roscoe Parrish that led to the turnover. Playing Cover 3, he noticed Parrish running a different route than the one Dorsey must have expected based on the throw. As a result, Fox almost looked like the intended receiver on the play.

"Right place, right time," he said. "Say what you want, but I was there and I just made sure I was going to not drop it."

The Buckeyes failed to capitalize on the turnover as their subsequent drive stalled on a fake field goal, but Fox's INT helped turn the tide. Dorsey turned the ball over on the next two possessions (another interception and a fumble), helping the Buckeyes stake a 14-7 halftime lead en route to their 31-24 overtime win.

Fox considers that play one of his career highlights at OSU, of course, but he still laments that his return was only 12 yards, and that he was tackled by an offensive lineman.

"It was awful," he said. "I look back (and) if I would've gone to the left instead of the right, I probably score a touchdown."

Fox was third on the team with 84 tackles during the national championship season of 2002. He led the Buckeyes with 14 pass breakups, and his three interceptions were second on the team behind Gamble. For his efforts, Fox was selected honorable-mention All-Big Ten by the coaches and media.

Looking back on the title season, he singled out Doss, who had surprised many by returning for his senior year rather than declaring for the 2002 NFL draft, and Krenzel for leading the Buckeyes to a national title for the first time in 34 years.

"We had such great leadership on that team – guys that really cared about the team," he said.

### Carrying On Family Tradition

Fox took his game to new heights in more ways than one as a junior in 2003. In the season opener, a night game against Washington at Ohio Stadium, he charged the line of scrimmage and skied above the defensive line to block a Huskies field-goal attempt during the Buckeyes' 28-9 win.

In some ways, Fox never came down from that lofty standard. He led OSU with 55 solo tackles and tied Gamble with a team-high three interceptions as the Buckeyes finished 11-2 and ultimately fell short of their goal to repeat as national champions. He also broke up nine passes that season (second to Gamble's 12) and forced a fumble against Northwestern.

Fox's finest performance that year may have come at Penn State. With his brother looking on from the home sideline, Fox intercepted a pass, broke up another one and led the Buckeyes with nine tackles (seven solo) in a 21-20 OSU win.

Asked if playing against his brother's alma mater provided extra motivation, Fox originally balked. As he recalled the game, however, he did allow "maybe there's something a little special behind that."

Though Fox didn't follow in his brother's footsteps to Penn State, he was actually following a family tradition by going to OSU. With four uncles playing at Ohio State before him, he was another branch on a Buckeye family tree.

Mark Stier was a three-year starter at linebacker for Ohio State from 1966-68, helping the Buckeyes to a national championship as a senior and winning team MVP honors that year. Another uncle, Dick Kuhn, was a sophomore on that '68 team and started a left guard as a senior in 1970.

Tim Fox started at safety for the Buckeyes from 1973-75, earning All-America status in '75 before playing for 11 years in the NFL. He and yet another uncle, Ken Kuhn, who started at linebacker in '74 and '75, were senior captains in '75 along with tailback Archie Griffin and wingback Brian Baschnagel.

Like his uncles on the 1975 team, Fox was selected as a captain his senior year.

"It was something that I always wanted to have happen – something I worked hard for, something I prided myself in by doing all the right things to put myself in that position," he said.

Fox also had another title as a senior – husband. He and his longtime girlfriend, Nicole, whom he had met in high school, were married in the summer of 2004. Unfortunately for Fox, his senior season was no honeymoon.

He missed three games that year as the result of a broken left arm suffered in the first quarter of a last-second win over Marshall in week two. As a captain, Fox still had an active role as his injury healed, but it was certainly not the senior campaign he envisioned.

"I tried to be the best leader I could while I was out, but that's a hard thing when you start for four years and then you can't play," he said. "It's very frustrating."

With Fox out of the lineup, OSU won at North Carolina State before losing to Northwestern for the first time since 1971 (and the first time in Evanston since 1958) and then falling to Wisconsin.

"Everything happens for a reason, but that was a tough break for me," Fox said. "I only missed three games, but three of the games I missed there were some big things that happened. I feel like Northwestern was a game that, if I played, I really think we wouldn't have lost because there were some situations where guys were forced into duty and really didn't know what they had to do."

Upon Fox's return, Iowa drilled the Buckeyes, 33-7, to drop OSU to 3-3 overall and 0-3 in the Big Ten for the first time since 1988. Fox and his fellow captains – defensive end Simon Frazer, kicker Mike Nugent and tailback Lydell Ross – didn't let their teammates give up on the season, though, as OSU lost only one more game and capped off an 8-4 season with a win in the Alamo Bowl.

In his final season in scarlet and gray, Fox made 28 tackles (22 solos), broke up three passes and forced one fumble.

The Minnesota Vikings selected Fox in the third round of the of the 2005 NFL draft (80th overall), but his rookie season was over before it ever started. On the first day of training camp, his left arm was broken again when he went to make a tackle during a drill. He was placed on injured reserve for the season, and to make matters worse, the Vikings had a dreadful season and head coach Mike Tice and his staff were let go.

Minnesota's next regime, headed by coach Brad Childress, had no film on Fox and released him before the 2006 season. He was signed by the Philadelphia Eagles a few days later and made his NFL debut on Monday Night Football. In the Eagles' 31-9 win over the Green Bay Packers, Fox registered his first tackle – on a kickoff – and saw action at safety late in the game.

With Green Bay starter Brett Favre forced out of the game with an injury, Fox went out against then-backup QB Aaron Rodgers and was flagged for interference on Greg Jennings, then an up-and-coming receiver.

"It's funny," Fox said. "At the time I was going against Aaron Rodgers and Greg Jennings, and now those guys are kind of the superstars."

That was the only game Fox played that season, and after he was released by the Eagles during training camp in '07, the Buffalo Bills signed him to their practice squad. He played in six games for Buffalo that year, registering three tackles on special teams.

After he was released by the Bills before the 2008 season, Fox was re-signed to their practice squad and eventually played in five games for Buffalo that year.

"It was like every year I was going somewhere else or getting cut, then getting picked back up," Fox said. "It's a tough lifestyle when you're not sure where you're going to be or if you're going to make a team."

"It was worth it, no doubt about it, but it was just tough – tough on the family for sure."

When he was unable to latch on with a team in 2009, Fox went into medical sales in the Canton area, where he and Nicole now reside. They have a daughter, Hadley, who will turn 3 in November, and they are expecting a second child in February.

In addition to his regular job, Fox, a communications major at OSU who graduated before reporting to his first training camp, proved to be a chip off the old block by going into radio. His father, Randy, has hosted a talk show on WJER Radio in Dover, Ohio, for more than 30 years. Eager to get into that business full time, Fox would go on the air whenever and wherever he could.

"I kept grinding," he said. "Every time anybody had an opportunity, I would show up – I'd show up for free."

After handling OSU football analysis for WEWS Newschannel in Cleveland, Fox now co-hosts a weekday afternoon sports talk radio show, Bull and Fox, on 92.3 FM The Fan, a new CBS-affiliated radio station in Cleveland.

"It's an adrenalin rush for five hours," he said. "It's work, but it's a lot of fun. Sometimes it can be a grind, when you're talking about the (Cleveland) Browns and they're 0-8 and the (Cleveland) Indians are about to lose 100 games, but there are some fun times."

Fox is looking forward to having a good time during the weekend of the Ohio State-Michigan game Nov. 24 when he and his teammates from the 2002 national championship team will get together for a 10-year reunion.

"It's going to be fun, man," he said. "We're looking forward to that. Mike Doss is putting it together. We're all coming down. It should be a ball."

A few days later, Fox will host the Ohio State University Alumni Club of Greater Cleveland's annual football banquet. Doss, Krenzel and Tressel are expected to join him at the event.

Fox said it doesn't feel as though 10 years have passed since he was playing cornerback for a national championship team, but he also appreciates more what he and his teammates accomplished back then as time goes by.

"You don't realize how big something is until you take some time away from it," he said. "I mean, there's not a day that goes by where I don't talk to somebody about a play during that season or a game during that season or being introduced as a national champion."

"That's something no one can ever take away from you."



# Wide Receiver Prospects Enjoy Ohio State Visit

When Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer walked into Ohio Stadium the evening of Oct. 6, he had one goal in mind – to lead his Buckeyes to a win over visiting Nebraska. The team got the job done, but that wasn't the lone victory the head coach celebrated after the game.

Louisville (Ky.) Trinity wide receiver James Quick was in attendance, and leaving an impression on one of the biggest playmakers in the 2013 class made for the cherry on top to a perfect fall Saturday evening for Meyer.

## RECRUITING OUTLOOK Ari Wasserman

"Yes, this definitely helps (Ohio State) out a lot," Quick told FoxSportsNext.com. "I really liked it there, the atmosphere and everything. I would say that puts them up there with Louisville. They're now sitting right there at the top with Louisville."

Meyer has long spoken about the importance of finding a top wide receiver for his 2013 class, and Quick fits all the characteristics for the type of playmaker the head coach seeks.

Quick is a five-star prospect and has scholarship offers from such programs as Alabama, Auburn, Kentucky, Louisville, Missouri, Michigan, Ohio State, Oregon, Tennessee and many others.

The 6-2, 185-pounder has been a regular at Louisville games given the proximity of the university to his home, but Quick said the atmosphere at Ohio Stadium really left a lasting impression.

"It was so loud in there I could hardly hear myself think," he said. "I couldn't even talk to (teammate Reggie Bonnafon), it was so loud. There were a lot of people in the stadium. It was very exciting."

Quick is one of the main reasons Trinity has won back-to-back Class 6-A state titles in Kentucky and boasts a 32-game winning streak. As a senior, he already has 61 catches for 1,020 yards and 10 touchdowns through seven games.

Rated the No. 3 wide receiver in the nation by FoxSportsNext, Quick is now second all-time in career receptions in state history and 11 behind Montrell Jones, who played high school football at Louisville Male. Jones went to Tennessee before transferring back to Louisville to finish his collegiate career.

Quick said that although Ohio State and Louisville are at the top of his list, he hasn't officially isolated leaders. The wide receiver plans to visit Oregon, and he's also considering Kentucky, Cincinnati and Tennessee.

In the meantime, Ohio State can rest easy knowing that they left an impression on the playmaker.

"I was really impressed," Quick said.

### Cleveland Heights WR Enjoys First OSU Game

One of the top remaining targets on Ohio State's board in the 2013 class is wide receiver Shelton Gibson of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, a four-star prospect many thought would be committed to the Buckeyes by now.

Although that isn't the case, the 6-0, 185-

pound wideout hasn't hidden his admiration for the Buckeyes, something that may have been reinforced during an unofficial visit to Columbus to watch Ohio State knock off Nebraska.

"Oh, man, it was great down there, to be honest," Gibson told BuckeyeSports.com recruiting analyst Bill Greene. "I was impressed by the fact that they were losing early in the game, but they just kept fighting back and eventually won the game by a huge score."

"We got in there late because of traffic, and I walked in right when (cornerback) Bradley Roby made the interception and took it to the house. The place went crazy and I threw my hands up in the air. I was screaming like all the fans."

The No. 23-rated receiver in the 2013 class, Gibson has garnered more than 10 offers, including ones from Auburn, Illinois, Mississippi State, Nevada, North Carolina State, Pittsburgh, Vanderbilt and Ohio State.

The Buckeyes, however, may have gained even better positioning on the speedster after Gibson caught his first game in Ohio Stadium. The win over Nebraska – a rare night contest – also set an attendance record for the Horseshoe.



James Quick

"That was my first-ever game at Ohio State, even though I've been there before for camps and stuff," Gibson said. "I got all caught up in the hype and stuff and just had a blast. I was able to see (ex-teammate) Kyle Dodson and hang out with him, which was great. I have to say the trip was a 10 and everything was great."

Following the game, Meyer got a chance to speak with the array of visitors who made the trip to Columbus for the Buckeyes' first conference home game. Given the dramatic way in which OSU performed, Meyer was pleased to speak with all the prospects who made the visit.

Gibson was a priority for the head coach. "Coach Meyer was all pumped up after the game, and he told me he can't believe any recruit with an offer wouldn't commit after that game," Gibson said. "I was just laughing with him, and it was a good time. It was real good seeing Coach (Zach) Smith and Coach (Stan) Drayton, and everybody was real happy about how the game went for them."

Gibson was impressed with the Buckeyes, but he returned to northern Ohio the following day without issuing a commitment.

Once a prospect experts picked to commit to the Buckeyes this summer – he had an announcement date set June 20 – Gibson now prefers to take things slow. The wide receiver will likely wait to take official visits before issuing a commitment.

"I have to wait until after my season because we play on so many Saturdays," he said. "I want to take all five officials, but none of them are set up yet."

"I'm definitely coming back to Ohio State, for sure, for an official. I also want to get to Auburn, who has been one of my favorites for a long time, and I want to speak to them again. West Virginia has really caught my eye with their offense, and I love what they do on offense. I'm not sure about my other two officials, and I have to see where things are in the next month or so."

## OSU Football 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
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	270	★★★★★	Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas
Cameron Burrows	CB	6-2	195	★★★★	Trotwood (Ohio) Madison
Ezekiel Elliott	RB	6-0	195	★★★★	St. Louis (Mo.) Burroughs
Tim Gardner	OT	6-5	320	★★	Indianapolis Lawrence Central
Michael Hill	DT	6-2	305	★★★★	Pendleton, S.C.
Taivon Jacobs	WR	5-10	160	★★★	Forestville (Md.) Suitland
Darron Lee	ATH	6-2	205	★★★	New Albany, Ohio
Tyquan Lewis	DE	6-4	230	★★★	Tarboro, N.C.
Evan Lisle	OT	6-6	275	★★★★	Centerville, Ohio
Jalin Marshall	WR	6-1	190	★★★★★	Middletown, Ohio
Billy Price	DT	6-3	285	★★★★	Austintown (Ohio) Fitch
Tracy Sprinkle	DE	6-4	250	★★★	Elyria, Ohio
Jayme Thompson	S	6-2	185	★★★★	Toledo Central Catholic
Johnny Townsend	P	6-2	200	★★★	Orlando (Fla.) Boone
Eli Woodard	CB	6-0½	180	★★★★	Voorhees (N.J.) Eastern

### Buckeyes Keep Texas Linebacker Interested

If Plano (Texas) Prestonwood Christian linebacker Mike Mitchell's offer list is an indication of how good he is, the more than 30 scholarship offers he's racked up would imply that he's one of the best prospects in the country.

The four-star linebacker amassed 93 tackles (22 for loss), six sacks and nine forced fumbles through his team's first five games this season, giving plenty of reason for all the attention he's garnering from top programs.

Mitchell's favorites are currently Oklahoma, Oregon, Ohio State, Florida State, TCU and Texas A&M, and he most recently took a trip with his father to Norman to check out the Sooners.

The 6-4, 225-pound prospect said that trip went well, but he also is starting to gain interest from defending national champion Alabama, a program that he admitted he'd like to further investigate.

Ohio State has also kept Mitchell interested.

"I want to take two official visits – one to Ohio State and one to Oregon," Mitchell said. "I would like to take my official visits and possibly have a decision in December or before December – sometime around then."

While Oklahoma, Ohio State and Oregon are all in solid positioning for the linebacker's services, two in-state programs have continued to stay on the list for Mitchell, who ranks as the No. 53 overall prospect in the 2013 class.

"The other two would probably be TCU and Texas A&M," he said.

Mitchell doesn't have any official visits planned.

"We do not have anything worked out at this time," he said. "We are just about to (try to schedule visits), but we actually do not have a bye week this year, so I've got to find the days when I can make the trips."

### Seven Schools Remain Alive For Four-Star WR's Services

Four-star wide receiver Marquez North of Charlotte (N.C.) Mallard Creek is one of the best wide receivers in the 2013 class, and the 6-3, 210-pound prospect could be getting closer to ending his recruitment.

Despite earning more than 20 scholarship offers, North has narrowed his list to seven schools, and Ohio State is one of them. Joining the Buckeyes in the wide receiver's final seven are Clemson, Florida, North Carolina, Georgia, LSU and Tennessee.

"I just like their conference play and the history of those schools," North said. "They all individually have good things to offer me. I just now have to think and see what's best for me, really."

North has decided that Ohio State, Florida, Georgia, LSU and Tennessee will all earn an official visit, but that isn't necessarily a bad sign for Clemson or North Carolina. He explained that decision was more about proximity than formulating a pecking order.

"These five schools are where I want to take official visits to because I can't really travel there," North said. "People have been asking me if North Carolina and Clemson are still in the hunt. They're still in the hunt. It's just I could go up there anytime I want to."

Ohio State has worked diligently to establish a recruiting presence in the state of North Carolina, but the program certainly has plenty of work to do if it plans on earning a pledge from another prospect from that area. Rated the No. 9 wide receiver in the nation by FoxSportsNext, North's final seven consists of all Southern schools except for OSU.

North hasn't yet scheduled an official visit, but he has most consistently seen North Carolina. He went to three Tar Heels games last year and saw North Carolina's 62-0 win over Elon in this season's opener Sept. 1. He has become impressed with UNC's new gameday atmosphere.

"It's just really fiery in a way," North said. "They're just trying to get their crowd hyped and get the crowd involved."

With no clear-cut favorite, and the likelihood he will be waiting until National Signing Day to make a decision, North said there's still plenty of time to organize his thoughts. The wide receiver, however, doesn't anticipate separating any programs until after he's completed his official visits.

"I'm not looking for anything specific," he said. "I'm just going to go up there, see what they have to offer and evaluate afterwards."

### Stevens Decommits From FSU; Considering Five Others

Orlando (Fla.) Evans wide receiver Tony Stevens had been committed to Florida State since February, but he decommitted from the Seminoles and Ohio State is one of five schools he is now considering. Along with OSU, the 6-3, 185-pound prospect is considering Georgia, Louisville, South Florida and USC.

Stevens said his decommitment from the Seminoles had nothing to do with his relationship with the program's coaching staff



and more to do with his desire to explore other programs that have expressed interest in him in the recent months.

A four-star prospect ranked the No. 24 receiver in the 2013 class, Stevens was interested in the Buckeyes long before he issued his commitment to Florida State. It looks like OSU will continue to be at the center of Stevens' recruitment, especially given Meyer's desire to bring in playmakers at wide receiver in this year's class.

Stevens is expected to officially visit Ohio State.

## Glenville OT, Teammates Enjoy Visit To Night Game

Meyer has made continuing Ohio State's relationship with Cleveland Glenville a priority, and the Buckeyes head coach had a few Tarblooders visit Ohio State's win over Nebraska.

Among them were linebacker Chris Worley, a 6-3, 195-pound three-star prospect with an OSU offer and a No. 73 ranking among outside linebackers, and 2014 offensive tackle Marcelys Jones, a 6-4, 325-pound prospect who is on the verge of becoming one of the most sought-after junior prospects in the country. Jones also has an Ohio State offer.

"It was a good visit and I really enjoyed myself," Jones told BSB of the night game at the Horseshoe. "It was a crazy atmosphere so it was a pretty cool experience. It was really good to see the coaches and see the team and to be down there."

Along with offers from OSU and Indiana, Jones is hearing from programs such as Arizona State, Cincinnati, Florida, Tennessee, Michigan, Michigan State, Wisconsin, USC, UCLA, West Virginia and many others.

Given Glenville's history of sending prospects to Ohio State and the fact the Buckeyes were his first offer, Jones admitted it was special to roam the sidelines of Ohio Stadium before kickoff.

"It was a really good offer, and it is pretty special to me," he said. "I really like how the team looks out for each other and how everyone is a family. That's what stood out to me the most."

Jones got a chance to catch up with former Glenville stars in Devan Bogard, Marcus Hall and Christian Bryant, all of whom have found roles on this year's team.

"I also got to speak with Coach Meyer and some of the other coaches," Jones said. "They just wanted me to enjoy my time down there and catch in the atmosphere. It was a really good visit."

Jones said thinking about making a commitment or isolating favorites hasn't yet been something that he's focusing on. Instead, he'll continue to try to get better every day while hoping to accumulate as many scholarship offers as possible.

"I am not in a rush," Jones said. "I just am going to take it one day at a time."

## Nebraska Contest Serves As Huge Visiting Weekend

There were plenty of reasons for Meyer to smile after his team blew out Nebraska 63-38 in the head coach's first conference game in Ohio Stadium.

What was really reassuring about the most impressive victory the Buckeyes have posted under the head coach was that it was witnessed by the team's best turnout of visiting recruits.

Roaming the OSU sidelines before the game started were a handful of 2013 commitments, including Ezekiel Elliott, Joey Bosa, Cameron Burrows, Tracy Sprinkle and Eli Woodard. Players from the 2013 class who remain uncommitted who were in attendance were Gibson, Belle Vernon (Pa.) Area

offensive tackle Dorian Johnson, Frankfort (Ky.) Franklin County wide receiver Ryan Timmons and Quick.

Prospects from the 2014 class at the game included quarterback Drew Barker of Hebron (Ky.) Conner; outside linebacker Jacob Betschel from Jackson, Ohio; dual-threat quarterback Reggie Bonnafon of Louisville Trinity; offensive guard J.B. Butler of Joliet (Ill.) Catholic; cornerback Romello Crisp of Trotwood (Ohio) Madison; wide receiver Nacarius Fant from Bowling Green, Ky.; wide receivers Izaiah Fuller and Derek Kief of Cincinnati La Salle; safety Todd Kelly of Knoxville (Tenn.) Webb School; wide receiver Allen Lazard of Urbandale, Iowa; offensive tackle Nick Richardson of Westerville (Ohio) Central; safety M.J. Stewart of Arlington (Va.) Yorktown; offen-

sive tackle Kyle Trout from Lancaster, Ohio; and tight end Ethan Wolf of Minster, Ohio.

## Lee Scores Two Clutch TDs; Barrett Scores Before Injury

Several members of Ohio State's 2013 recruiting class had standout performances during the Oct. 5 weekend. The following is a complete list of results.

- **J.T. Barrett, QB, Wichita Falls (Texas) Rider** – The Raiders earned a 44-17 win at Fort Worth Brewer, but Barrett left the game early because of an injury. He told The (Wichita Falls) Times Record News that he twisted his knee on a running play, which caused him to exit the game early.

Rider (4-1, 2-0 District 5-4A) did not need Barrett in the win. The Raiders punted only once and got a combined 386 yards from run-

ning backs Domanic Thrasher and Carlos Fleeks.

Before leaving the game, Barrett rushed for 49 yards and completed 2 of 4 passes for 41 yards. He also rushed for a 12-yard touchdown that started the scoring. Brewer lost for the first time this season, falling to 5-1 (1-1).

- **Marcus Baugh, TE, Riverside (Calif.) North** – The Huskies took advantage of some good fortune in posting a 21-12 Inland Valley victory at Moreno Valley Canyon Springs.

North (3-3, 2-0) made the most of three turnovers by the Cougars (2-4, 0-2) and got a three-touchdown effort from running back Denzel Foster. Canyon Springs had a chance

Continued On Page 34

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# Massillon Hands Fitch, Price First Defeat

Continued From Page 33

to take a lead in the fourth quarter, trailing 14-12 and driving to the North 15 before losing a fumble. Foster then sealed the win with his third and final touchdown.

In addition to his efforts on offense, Baugh tweeted after the game that he recorded his first sack from his spot at defense end.

• **Joey Bosa, DE, Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas** – For the second straight year, Miramar defeated St. Thomas Aquinas in overtime. This time, however, it was far more controversial as an apparent missed call gave the Patriots a 27-24 double-overtime victory.

On fourth-and-goal in the second OT, Alex Lee appeared to be stopped a half-yard short of the goal line. The officials called the play a touchdown, though, giving Miramar (3-3) the win. Video and a photo taken by the (Ft. Lauderdale) Sun Sentinel showed Lee down short of the end zone.

The Raiders (3-2) forced overtime when quarterback John O’Korn rushed for a 7-yard touchdown with a little more than a minute remaining in the fourth quarter. Both teams missed field goals in the first overtime to set up the final possessions. Raiders kicker Alex Knight made a 37-yard field goal to give his team the lead before the controversial ending.

• **Cameron Burrows, CB, Trotwood (Ohio) Madison** – The host Rams got a solid defensive performance from Burrows and company in a 62-12 win against Greenville.

Trotwood (5-2, 2-0 Greater Western Ohio Conference North Division) dominated from the start, building a 41-6 halftime lead. The Rams won their fourth straight and dropped the Green Wave to 1-6 (0-2).

• **Ezekiel Elliott, RB, St. Louis John Burroughs** – The Bombers (6-0, 5-0 Metro League) had an open week. Burroughs next faces St. Louis Clayton on Oct. 13.

• **Tim Gardner, OT, Indianapolis Lawrence Central** – The host Bears clinched the outright Conference Indiana championship with a 36-22 win against Indianapolis Franklin Central.

The Bears took care of business as second-place Indianapolis Pike fell, giving the Bears the league title. Lawrence Central (8-0, 6-0) got three rushing touchdowns from quarterback Drake Christen, and fullback Alex Rodriguez followed Gardner and the LC offensive line en route to a 259-yard performance on 23 carries. He also scored a pair of touchdowns. In all, the Bears finished with 419 rushing yards. Franklin Central fell to 4-4 (3-3).

• **Michael Hill, DT, Pendleton, S.C.** – The Pendleton defense did its job and Darius Barksdale took care of the rest in a 41-6 victory at Greenville Powdersville.

Pendleton (4-3, 2-2 2A-Region 1) got three touchdown runs from Barksdale, who scored on runs of 23, 24 and 24 yards. He also added a 78-yard scoring reception and finished with 18 carries for 195 yards.

Powdersville (0-7, 0-4) is still looking for its first win in its inaugural season of varsity play. The Patriots allowed the Bulldogs to score on their first three possessions to take command early.

• **Taivon Jacobs, WR, Forestville (Md.) Suitland** – The Rams lost for the first time this season, dropping a 27-6 contest vs. Lanham DuVal.

Jacobs caught three passes for 42 yards but was outshone by Karee Mines, who guarded him at cornerback and led the

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

### 25 Years Ago – 1987

National recruiting analyst Tom Lemming and Ohio State linebackers coach Bill Conley agreed 6-8, 285-pound offensive tackle Paul Sherrick of Middletown was one of Ohio’s best players.

“He’s very tall, but at the same time he keeps good technique,” Conley said.

Despite his speed and talent, Sherrick had to wait until his junior year to join the starting lineup with Middletown because of the presence of current Buckeye OL John Peterson.

### 20 Years Ago – 1992

Joe Jurevicius, a 6-5, 210-pound receiver from Mentor (Ohio) Lake Catholic, got his team off to a 6-0 start without the hassle of endless recruiting calls from college coaches.

That is because after leading the Cougars to the Division III state title the year before, Jurevicius politely asked coaches to wait until after his senior season to resume their courtship of him.

“They seemed to respect that and they’re holding off calling me,” he told BSB. “It’s really taken a lot of pressure off me and is letting me enjoy my senior year.”

Jurevicius added that he did not expect to name a college choice until signing day and declined to name a leader in the meantime.

Tigers by scoring four touchdowns. He ran for scores of 22, 8 and 5 yards and added an 80-yard kickoff return for a TD that opened the second half. The latter score proved to be a big momentum changer, as Suitland (5-1, 4-0 Prince George’s 4A) trailed only 7-6 at the break.

• **Darron Lee, S/QB, New Albany, Ohio** – Lee ran for a pair of second-half touchdowns as the host Eagles earned a 33-14 win vs. Lewis Center Olentangy.

New Albany (5-2, 4-0 Ohio Capital Conference Capital Division) pulled away in the second half, scoring on its first four offensive series following halftime. Lee had a big hand in the win. He rushed for touchdowns of 1 and 32 yards and intercepted a Braves pass – all within a span of 2:31.

“We’ve been preparing for this game and looking forward to it for two weeks,” Lee told This Week newspapers of Columbus. “We were motivated from the start and were determined that they weren’t going to come in here and beat us on our home field.”

Olentangy fell to 6-1 (3-1). The Braves hurt their cause with a missed field goal late in the second quarter and when they failed to recover an onside kick to begin the second half.

• **Tyquan Lewis, DE, Tarboro, N.C.** – A late turnover helped Tarboro remain unbeaten with a 34-27 victory vs. Kinston.

A fumbled pitch with 35 seconds remaining that was recovered by Keithion Battle helped Tarboro (7-0, 3-0 Eastern Plains 2A) seal the victory. Before then, however, the hosts struggled to put away Kinston (4-4, 1-3). After Tarboro raced out to a 14-0 lead, Kinston scored 13 unanswered points. Tarboro later extended the lead to 34-13 before Kinston rallied again. After cutting its deficit to six, Kinston recovered an onside kick – its second successful one of the game – and had a chance to pull off the upset before the final turnover.

• **Evan Lisle, OT, Centerville, Ohio** – In a key GWOC Central showdown, host Centerville earned a 13-0 victory against Clayton Northmont.

All the scoring in the game came in the first quarter. Jimmy Brooks started things by rushing for a 3-yard touchdown run, and

### 15 Years Ago – 1997

The Buckeyes and head coach John Cooper zeroed in on the nation’s top-rated safety, Steve Bellisari of Boca Raton, Fla., who told BSB that Ohio State was among his final nine along with Notre Dame, Florida State, North Carolina, Stanford, Georgia Tech, Clemson, West Virginia and Auburn.

Ohio State told him he could compete at quarterback if he chose to be a Buckeye.

“That’s the plan,” Bellisari said.

### 10 Years Ago – 2002

Even after signing five offensive linemen the previous February (including the recently departed Derek Morris), Ohio State was on the lookout for more help up front with the impending graduation of a total of seven players following the 2002 and ’03 seasons.

“That has been something we have emphasized the last couple of years, and we will emphasize it again this year,” Conley told BSB.

Unfortunately, the crop of linemen in Ohio was not strong. As of press time, the Buckeyes had yet to offer any from a group that included Van Wert’s Andrew Crummey, Cincinnati Anderson’s Ty Hall and Strongsville’s Dan Pribula.

Out of state, Ohio State had offered Jorrie Adams of Jasper, Texas; Andrew

Jake Replogle later added an 8-yard TD pass from Brooks. Following the second score, Centerville’s Jason Kaczala missed the extra-point attempt, keeping the lead at 13 points.

Fortunately for the Elks, that was more than enough. As usual, Centerville (5-2, 2-0) followed its ground attack to victory. The Elks outrushed the T-Bolts 253-20. Nick Bozzo was his team’s leading rusher with 118 yards on 20 carries.

Northmont (4-3, 1-1) was shut out for the first time since losing 32-0 at Centerville on Oct. 16, 2009. The T-Bolts committed three turnovers and missed a field goal.

• **Jalin Marshall, QB, Middletown, Ohio** – The visiting Middies lost three of their seven fumbles and had a punt blocked in a 41-14 defeat at Cincinnati Colerain.

Marshall had two passes intercepted, as Colerain (7-0, 4-0 Greater Miami Conference) cruised to the lopsided victory. The Cardinals rushed for 325 yards and finished with 497 yards of total offense. Middletown’s touchdowns came on a 58-yard second-quarter touchdown run by Williams Peters and a fourth-quarter 5-yard TD rush by Yvonte Glover.

The Middies fell to 2-5 (1-3).

• **Billy Price, DT, Austintown (Ohio) Fitch** – Fitch fell from the ranks of the unbeaten thanks to a 34-14 loss at Massillon Washington.

The Tigers (6-1) scored 28 first-half points and cruised to victory at Paul Brown Tiger Stadium. Massillon was led by quarterback Kyle Kempt, who threw for 308 yards and four touchdowns. Gareon Conley and Marcus Whitfield combined to catch three of those scores.

“Massillon is an excellent football team and an excellent program,” Price told The (Youngstown) Vindicator. “All the credit goes to them. They outplayed us tonight and did what they had to do to get a victory.”

Fitch fell to 6-1.

• **Tracy Sprinkle, DE, Elyria, Ohio** – Elyria never trailed in a 28-14 win at Cuyahoga Falls, but the Pioneers did not seal the win until the final minutes.

The Pioneers (5-2, 1-1 Northeast Ohio Conference River Division) allowed Cuyahoga Falls (3-4, 0-2) to get within a

Bain of Pompano Beach (Fla.) Ely; and Joel Holler of Lancaster (Pa.) McCaskey, among others.

### Five Years Ago – 2007

Scout.com Midwest recruiting analyst Greg Powers called OSU verbal commitment Nathan Williams, a four-star defensive end prospect from Washington Court House (Ohio) Miami Trace, a player who could turn out to be better than the headlines he had garnered thus far.

“Just quite simply because there’s a lot of great players in Ohio this year and he kind of gets swept under the rug a little bit, but he’s physically as impressive as any player you’ll find in the nation,” Powers said.

### One Year Ago – 2011

Ohio State remained in contention for the services of three-star safety Bam Bradley of Trotwood (Ohio) Madison.

He told BSB he was favoring Pittsburgh, Stanford and Penn State but was still considering an offer from Ohio State, whose recent NCAA woes did not concern him.

“It is the name,” Bradley said. “It is *The Ohio State*. Even though they have stuff going on right now, it is still Ohio State. They’re going to get great players and they’re going to rebound regardless just because of who they are.”

touchdown with 8:02 left in the fourth quarter, cutting the deficit to 21-14. The Black Tigers later threatened to tie the game by driving into Elyria territory with under two minutes remaining. That’s when Sprinkle, Zack Woodings and Connor Kamczyk came through to swarm Cuyahoga Falls quarterback Joe Repasky on a fourth-down play.

“We knew defensively we had to make some plays,” Sprinkle told The (Elyria) Chronicle Telegram.

Jumarr Lewis then set the final score with a 41-yard touchdown run.

• **Jayne Thompson, S, Toledo Central Catholic** – The Fighting Irish traveled south to Lima and emerged with a 47-7 win in Three Rivers Athletic Conference play.

Amir Edwards led the Central Catholic attack with two touchdowns and 69 rushing yards in the lopsided victory. The Irish (7-0, 4-0) led 41-0 at halftime. Lima (0-7, 0-4) got its lone score on a 2-yard TD run by Juniel Liles.

• **Johnny Townsend, P, Orlando (Fla.) Boone** – Boone failed to stop host Orlando Dr. Phillips’ 8A District 5 winning streak, falling to the Panthers 23-6.

Dr. Phillips (6-0, 1-0) won its 18th straight district game and its 23rd straight home game. The Panthers were led by running back Eric Harrell, who compiled 173 yards, including 138 on the ground.

Boone fell to 2-3 (0-1).

• **Eli Woodard, CB, Voorhees (N.J.) Eastern** – Twenty first-quarter points helped visiting Williamstown remain unbeaten with a 34-17 win at Eastern.

The Braves (5-0, 3-0 West Jersey American Division) raced out to their quick start behind a 67-yard touchdown run by Kali Boyce, a short-yardage TD run by Eric Coney and a 54-yard interception return for a score by Mike Anderson.

Eastern (3-2, 2-1) got a 1-yard touchdown run from quarterback Tom Flacco in the second quarter and a 4-yard TD run by Tim Kocher in the fourth quarter. Edward Kehoe added a 25-yard field goal in the second quarter.

*BSB staffer Matthew Hager contributed to this report.*



# Elliott Eager To Blaze His Own Trail To OSU

By ARI WASSERMAN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

His parents both were athletes at the University of Missouri, he lives in the St. Louis area and he earned an early scholarship offer from the Tigers. Ezekiel Elliott's recruiting process, at least on the surface, felt more like a mere formality.

Then Elliott, a four-star running back at John Burroughs School, saw Ohio State.

"I thought I was going to take a lot longer in the recruiting process," Elliott told BSB. "I really liked Missouri and I thought I was going to take all five of my official visits, but Ohio State sold me to their program. I just felt at home at Ohio State, and I committed a lot earlier than I ever thought I would."

Elliott's father, Stacy, was an outside linebacker for the Tigers from 1989-92, and his mother, Dawn, was a heptathlete. It was easy to assume that being a Tiger would run in the family.

"Ezekiel grew up a Tiger," Stacy Elliott said. "Every year during the Black and Gold spring game, he was there and we had an annual football reunion. Once he committed to Ohio State, reality hit me that he wasn't going to go to Missouri."

The elder Elliott admitted there was a part of him that wanted to see his son don the same uniform he did roughly 20 years ago, but simply being a father took priority. That became increasingly true once it was apparent that Ezekiel was giving heavy thought to other programs clamoring for his services.

When returning home from a Midwest visit in April that included trips to Notre Dame and Ohio State, the father had a conversation with the son.

"We were talking and everything and we were going back and forth about Ohio State and Notre Dame, and I told him that he had all the time in the world," the elder Elliott said. "Then he went into his bedroom. He came out five minutes later and said, 'Dad, I am ready to commit to Ohio State.'"

Like any father would, Stacy had a brief discussion with his son to confirm the thought process for making the biggest decision of his life. Then after an emotional embrace, he told his son to contact members of the media to announce his decision.

"He had already done it," Stacy said. "That's how I knew it was for real. I was really in tears. It was really emotional for me. We, as a family, we went back and forth in this process with Ezekiel and for us, as his parents, this is the first time that he took some ownership in his life."

Rated the No. 8 running back in the 2013 class according to FoxSportsNext.com, Elliott's decision was more than just a gut feeling. Sure, the Buckeyes offer a lot of things a top prospect would desire – a vast history of producing NFL talent, a tradition-rich football history and a stadium that seats more than 100,000 fans – but the running back saw more than that during his visit.

First was the direct connection he felt to Urban Meyer and the rest of the Ohio State coaching staff. The 6-0, 205-pounder said he immediately felt like he was part of the family, a point of emphasis Meyer said he's tried to instill in the program since taking over.

"I still talk to Coach Meyer or (running backs coach) Stan Drayton once a week," Elliott said. "It just feels like home, to be honest. I am really close with the coaches – they are great people. Coach Meyer, he's

a special guy. He is so humble even though he has accomplished so much and is arguably one of the best college football coaches right now. I feel like I am in a wonderful situation."

Then there was the football aspect. Though Ohio State has faced questions from other running backs about the spread offensive scheme and how runners are utilized, Elliott may fit Meyer's offense perfectly.

That's because the running back is versatile. Though he has some size – which he promises is still increasing – Elliott runs the 40-yard dash in 4.42 seconds and is an excellent receiver out of the backfield who can carry the ball in a variety of ways.

"He's the ideal running back Ohio State is looking for in this offense," BuckeyeSports.com recruiting analyst Bill Greene told BSB. "He fits it like a glove. He may not have fit in past Ohio State schemes or at a place like Alabama, but his skill sets are very consistent with the direction of Meyer's offense."

Elliott's high school team, which is coached by former NFL quarterback Gus Frerotte, runs a complex offense that utilizes its running back's talents in different ways. It's working, especially considering Elliott has put up some of the most impressive statistics of any player in Ohio State's current class.

In his junior season with the Bombers, he rushed for 1,802 yards and 34 touchdowns and also caught 23 passes for 401 yards and six touchdowns. Through six games this season – all wins – Elliott has already scored 25 touchdowns, and several other touchdowns have been called back because of penalty.

Elliott said he wants to set the state record for most touchdowns in a season (which stands at 47) and believes that's an attainable goal if the Bombers advance to the state championship game. That's a possibility, especially given that he's led his team to the Missouri Class 3 state title game in each of the last two seasons. Burroughs, however, lost both championship games in the final minutes.

"This year we're more focused," Elliott said. "We know every little second that we joke or play around, that could cost us. We are a mature team that's been there before."

Perhaps the biggest knock on Elliott is the competition he faces every week, which some experts assert isn't up to par with other areas of the country. He was determined, however, to prove he was worthy of

## Get To Know: Ezekiel Elliott

**High School** – St. Louis John Burroughs School

**Position** – Running back

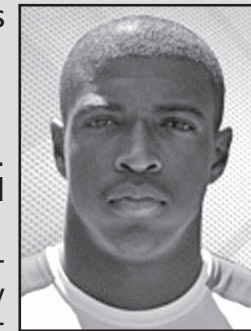
**Height, Weight** – 6-0, 205 pounds

**Rankings** – According to FoxSportsNext.com, Elliott is a four-star prospect ranked the No. 8 running back in the 2013 class.

**Player Evaluation** – "Ezekiel is a multifaceted running back that perfectly fits the direction Ohio State is going at his position. He is a faster, quicker and shiftier version of Jordan Hall. He fits perfectly in their system and should find a lot of success as a Buckeye for the years to come." – BuckeyeSports.com recruiting analyst Bill Greene

**Strengths** – "He is an incredibly fast kid that is very versatile. The biggest thing you get with a prospect like this is familiarity right away with how he can help the team right off the bat, whether it is running the ball or catching it. He is a very athletic prospect that fits into the plans perfectly." – Greene

**Weaknesses** – "If I would have a knock on him, as I do with most high school seniors, it is that his physical shape isn't where it will be in a few years from now. I may question the competition he's played against, but you can't hold that against a kid. He proved what he can do in camps this summer." – Greene



Ezekiel Elliott

his renown when he hit the camp trail this summer.

Though he was a standout performer at all the camps he attended – many of which were witnessed by Greene – perhaps the biggest accomplishment came when Elliott earned the running backs MVP award at the Nike Football Training Camp in Illinois, besting Joliet (Ill.) Catholic running back Ty Issac, a USC commit regarded by many as the best running back in the class.

"This summer I had a lot of motivation because going into the summer I wasn't really a highly ranked player or as highly ranked as I thought I should have been," said Elliott, who said he might also run track for the Buckeyes. "I had to earn a lot of respect because I play in Missouri and I don't play on a high level of Missouri football. I just had to go up there and prove myself and prove that I am able to compete at that high a level."

If his camp performances weren't enough to prove his caliber, his vast scholarship list that included opportunities from programs such as Georgia, Nebraska, Northwestern, Penn State, Tennessee, Wisconsin and many others likely did the trick.

"I'm a Buckeye now," said Stacy Elliott, who is ready to see his son excel on the field and in the classroom in the next stage of his life. "Him not going to Missouri was difficult at first, but we're all excited for Ezekiel and what is ahead for him."

"He has earned this opportunity and it is going to be a fun ride."



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# McDonald Eyeing Bigger Role As Sophomore

One quick glance at Ohio State's depth chart was probably enough for Trey McDonald to read the writing on the wall, at least for how things were shaping up for potential playing time in his freshman season with the Buckeyes.

That didn't stop the center from trying to rewrite the script.

## COURT REPORT Ari Wasserman

"I knew it was going to be a learning experience," McDonald told BSB when describing his first season at Ohio State. "I just took my freshman year as an opportunity to spend a lot of time watching closely at what the people before me did."

McDonald had quite a reference point, given that Jared Sullinger was one of the most efficient big men in OSU program history. Add transfer Evan Ravenel's experience to the equation, and McDonald had all the necessary materials to learn what it takes to be a productive big man at the highest level of college basketball.

That was Ohio State's biggest selling point for McDonald as an emerging prospect out of Battle Creek (Mich.) Central, even more so than immediate playing time.

The 6-8, 240-pound center knew his story wasn't going to be like some others in college basketball, where he'd enroll at a top program and star on the court right away. But being the next in line at a school with an impressive lineage of post players was enough for McDonald to think the wait was worth it.

"It was an honor to play for a team and a program that has always had great big men come out of here," McDonald said, going as far as referencing head coach Thad Matta's first standout center in Greg Oden. "That was part of the reason I came, but I still have a lot to do before I can follow through."

Gone is Sullinger, who left after his sophomore season for the NBA draft, where he was a first-round selection by the Boston

Celtics. Remaining on the Buckeyes' roster in the post is Ravenel, now a senior, and fellow sophomore Amir Williams, who unlike McDonald played some meaningful minutes in his freshman season.

Junior forward Deshaun Thomas, the team's best returning scorer, also has the ability to score in the post and grab offensive rebounds, giving Matta some flexibility in the way he draws up his lineups.

So the same challenge remains for McDonald in his quest for playing time, even without Sullinger on the roster. This year, though, the young center anticipates earning a role.

"Last year helped me out a lot," McDonald said, specifically referencing practice and the challenge of facing Sullinger on a daily basis. "I had to learn quickly or it was going to be a long practice. I just had to adapt on the fly, learn how to play hard and strong and just listen to the coaches. I stole some of his moves once in a while, so it was just a lot of learning. He helped a lot with that."

As the season continued to progress – even without seeing the floor much for actual game action – McDonald said he felt he was able to compete with Sullinger more competently.

"I started to feel more comfortable and things started slowing down and I could see the game better," he said. "I started following the game plan and actually knowing the things I could do once I got to my spot, and that felt good. At the end of the year, it was definitely a better experience and I was a better player."

McDonald played in only 13 games last year for a total of 38 minutes and was the only player on the roster Matta was considering redshirting. Ranked the No. 18 center in the 2011 recruiting class by FoxSportsNext.com, McDonald does have skills that could translate into more playing time as a sophomore.

What attracted Matta to the center out of high school was his rebounding and shot-blocking capability, but what could earn McDonald a quicker route to the floor this season is his ability to score with his back to the basket or knock down 15-foot jump shots.



FILE PHOTO

**BEHIND THE SCENES –** Sophomore center Trey McDonald (55), seen here with classmate Sam Thompson (12) after a game last season, hopes to find more playing time this year.

Though McDonald's natural position is center, he spent the summer working to become well-equipped to play power forward. That could mean chances of playing time concurrently with centers Ravenel or Williams or appearances at center with Thomas playing power forward.

"I worked really hard on just being versatile," McDonald said. "Getting up and down the floor, rebounding and defending – pretty much just what needs to be done at both positions. I feel comfortable playing both."

It's unclear how much Ohio State will go big in packages with McDonald at forward, but it is clear this year's Buckeyes will run

more than they did on their way to the Final Four a year ago.

With the dynamic Sullinger no longer on the team, the coaching staff isn't forced to draw up its offensive game plan around the post. While Ohio State will most certainly still utilize its inside-out game, this season could be more guard-oriented around such players as Aaron Craft, Shannon Scott and Lenzelle Smith Jr.

If that's the case, McDonald feels that he's athletic enough to coexist in a game plan that thrives on constantly running.

"I think I am able to run and that's the biggest thing about being versatile," he said. "I think I can do a lot of different things the coaches may ask me to do, and I hope that turns into more opportunity."

McDonald didn't struggle outwardly like most players who get a taste of life on the bench for the first time in their lives, but that didn't mean he didn't have internal frustrations.

Even with those inner thoughts of uncertainty, McDonald said he channeled all energy toward making sure that wasn't an ongoing feeling.

"It was definitely hard being the star back home where everyone knows your name to just being another guy on the team, but that's what getting better is for," he said. "I spent as much time as I could just learning and watching and staying in the game by keeping up with my teammates and what they were doing while in the game."

### Thomas Preseason All-America

Some thought Thomas would be working out with an NBA team at this point after the string of performances he gave during Ohio State's deep NCAA Tournament run last year. Opting to return to the Buckeyes instead, Thomas will enjoy being one of the most recognized talents in college basketball.

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## OHIO STATE MEN'S BASKETBALL

The preseason accolades started Oct. 1 when Thomas was named a part of Sporting News' 2013 Preseason First Team All-America list. The publication's awards are decided by TSN's editorial staff, which consults with coaches and scouts around the country before formulating the list.

Rounding out the first-team selections are Creighton forward Doug McDermott, Indiana forward Cody Zeller, North Carolina forward James Michael McAdoo and Lehigh guard C.J. McCollum.

Thomas wasn't the Buckeyes' brightest star last year as he played alongside Sullinger, but the junior forward now returns as the team's biggest scoring threat.

A left-handed shooter known as someone who simply loves to score with the basketball, Thomas converted 59.9 percent of his field-goal attempts and 34.5 percent of his three-point shots last season.

Thomas will be one of the closest-watched players in the country after averaging 19.2

points per game in five NCAA Tournament contests, helping the Buckeyes advance to the second Final Four of Matta's Ohio State tenure.

### Hayes Enjoys Official

Toledo Whitmer power forward Nigel Hayes completed his last official visit when he spent the Oct. 6 weekend at Ohio State. The three-star power forward now is left to make a final decision between the Buckeyes, Stanford, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Most figured that Hayes joining OSU's 2013 recruiting class was a foregone conclusion when he earned a scholarship offer from the Buckeyes on Aug. 1, but the 6-7, 214-pounder told BSB that he has a lot of thinking to do before arriving at a decision.

"Since I am done with my last visit, I am really going to just go home, take some time and get down to going over the pros and cons

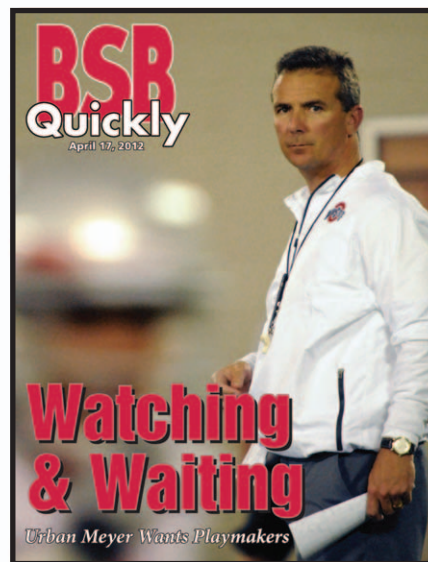
Continued On Page 38



FILE PHOTO

LOFTY EXPECTATIONS – Ohio State junior forward DeShaun Thomas was named to Sporting News' 2013 Preseason First Team All-America squad.

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# Ohio State Makes Final Three For PF

Continued From Page 37

for all the schools and figuring out which one is best for me," Hayes said. "I wouldn't say it is going to be stressful, but just tough. That's the right word for it."

Hayes said Ohio State helped its cause while he was in town for the football Buckeyes' 63-38 win over Nebraska, a night game in Ohio Stadium that set a new attendance record at the Horseshoe. During a break in the first quarter, the basketball team from last season was presented with its Final Four rings.

Hayes said it was a nice experience to spend time with the coaching staff and get to know some of the current players. Life as a Buckeye, he said, seems appealing after spending time with people who could eventually become his future teammates.

"It was very exciting and it was just a great visit," Hayes said. "It was a very exciting game and very high-scoring, and it being a night game, there were a lot of

people there. I think it was a great game experience.

"I really liked how the players felt about the program and the things they told me about how it would be to be a player down here at Ohio State."

When conversing with the OSU coaching staff, Hayes said the main point was that he could be an essential building block who could help the program get back to the Final Four.

"Their plan really was to use me to help them win a national championship," he said. "That's the message they conveyed to me - that coming here I'd be able to get better and ultimately compete for a national championship."

The Buckeyes aren't a slam dunk to land Hayes' services, though, especially given that the power forward had positive official visits at the other three schools he's still considering.

"It is really tough because all four of the schools I really like," he said. "I really like

all the coaching staffs and the people around there, but I ultimately have to pick one.

"It is going to be tough because you just got to build some great relationships with people through the recruiting process and it will be tough to tell them that they were great, but I'd rather go to someone else."

## Williams Has Final Three

Montverde (Fla.) Academy power forward Devin Williams knows the most important months of his young life are rapidly approaching.

After cutting his final list of schools to three - Ohio State, West Virginia and Memphis - things could be getting easier.

According to AAU coach Mike Duncan, Williams recently eliminated UCLA, Xavier and North Carolina State from his list. A 6-8, 225-pound power forward who played for Cincinnati Withrow a year ago, Williams could be close to announcing a decision.

"He is going to commit early and he is making his own decision," Duncan told BSB. "It is totally up to him. Devin said he wanted to commit early to get it over with so he can focus on his books and focus on the season coming up. I don't know when a decision is coming, but it seems like it will be sooner rather than later."

Matta spent an ample amount of time tracking Williams' junior season at Withrow on the big man's way to averaging 15.2 points, 10.5 rebounds and 1.2 assists for the Tigers. The Buckeyes, however, didn't formally offer Williams a scholarship until July. He has been high on the Buckeyes ever since, especially given the program's success developing big men during Matta's tenure.

"He likes what they did with Jared Sullinger because they're similar players," Duncan said. "They both don't really leave the floor and they are very successful. He scores, not like Sullinger, but he really liked the way Thad Matta told him he'd be used, which is similar to the way they did things with Sullinger. They see him as that type of kid, especially once he bulks up in a college weightlifting program."

Duncan added that both Ohio State and West Virginia offer Williams the ability to play close to his friends and family. Being close wasn't the only criterion for the big man's list, however, as he eliminated Xavier because he didn't want to play collegiate basketball in his hometown.

"He wanted to get out of Cincinnati," Duncan said. "But he is from Ohio. He said that if he went to Ohio State, everyone would see him play - all of his friends, his mom and his grandma. The same thing goes for West Virginia."

Memphis remains in the hunt because Williams has developed a strong relationship with Tigers head coach Josh Pastner.

"He said he liked the way the coach

recruited him," Duncan said. "The way Josh Pastner talked to him and recruited him, that was a positive thing."

Williams could take a trip to Ohio State in November, but Duncan said that discussion is ongoing. Williams is already familiar with the Buckeyes given the program's proximity to his Cincinnati home.

Rated the No. 21 power forward in the 2013 class, Williams transferred to Montverde because the Florida program plays a more competitive schedule. Though he feels he is in the best place to properly prepare himself for the college game, Williams has all intentions of returning north after his prep career comes to a close.

Williams was considered by many to be a player who was on the fringe of being elite during the course of last season, but the big man has seemingly picked up his game. That's likely the reason Ohio State eventually came through with a scholarship offer. Duncan, however, said he's seen big ability out of Williams for quite some time.

"In my honest opinion, that kid is a top-50 kid in the country," the AAU coach said. "For the last two summers, he just ate every big man up that he went against, and we play in major tournaments. He just outplayed a lot of the big men he went against."

## Basketball Notes

- Hyattsville (Md.) DeMatha Catholic big man BeeJay Anya was originally scheduled to officially visit the Buckeyes the weekend of Oct. 6, but that visit was cancelled for unspecified reasons. FoxSportsNext ranks the 6-8, 255-pound center the No. 4 player at his position in the 2013 class.

Anya has already visited N.C. State, Pittsburgh and Louisville and is scheduled to visit Indiana during the Oct. 20 weekend Hoosier Hysteria, the program's version of Midnight Madness that takes place a week into its practice.

Whether Anya will still visit Ohio State was unknown as BSB went to press.

- Four-star small forward Ishmail Wainright of Rockville (Md.) Montrose Christian School took an official visit to Ohio State the weekend of Oct. 6. Ranked the No. 11 player at his position in the 2013 class by FoxSportsNext, Wainright was unable to play during the July evaluation period as he was recovering from a stress fracture in his left ankle that required surgery. Ohio State is in the 6-5, 195-pounder's top four along with Baylor, St. John's and Texas.

- Ohio State was the first major-college basketball program to extend a scholarship offer to 2016 Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary prospect V.J. King, but the Buckeyes were soon joined by Wisconsin. The 6-5, 160-pound King will play his freshman season for the Fighting Irish this year.

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# Hill To Be Buckeyes' Focal Point In 2012-13

A look at the 2012 stat sheet easily reveals who should be Ohio State's most indispensable player in 2013. That would be Tayler Hill.

The 5-10 guard led the Buckeyes last season in scoring, steals, three-point shooting percentage, three-point field goals and attempts, free-throw attempts and makes as well as minutes. She was second in assists while checking in third in rebounds and blocks.

All in all, the Minneapolis native was quite the stat sheet stuffer for the Buckeyes, who went 25-7 but could not advance past the first round of the NCAA tournament.

## DOUBLE DRIBBLE Marcus Hartman

On the court, Hill has steadily improved since arriving at Ohio State four years ago as a ballyhooed five-star recruit.

She raised her scoring average from 8.5 points per game as a freshman to 12.4 as a sophomore before exploding for 20.4 last season when she also posted by far her best field-goal percentage (47.5 compared to 42.3 as a freshman and 40.1 as a sophomore).

Hill also raised her three-point shooting percentage significantly from 28.7 percent in her first two seasons combined to 41.8 last season despite more than doubling her attempts (196) as a junior compared to her freshman (80) or sophomore (87) campaigns.

Now, head coach Jim Foster says she is adding a midrange jumper to her game.

"She used to push the ball and float it a little bit, but she's now got a legitimate jump shot," Foster told BSB. "She spends the time in the gym working on her game."

He hopes that is not all that Hill has added in the offseason.

Foster wants to see her take up the mantle of leadership with fiery point guard Samantha Prahalis having exhausted her eligibility and moved on to the Phoenix Mercury of the WNBA.

Taking charge is nothing new for Hill, who could be seen barking out orders on the court even when she was an underclassman, but Foster said she can evolve in that regard.

"There are different ways to lead," he said. "Sometimes it's verbal. Sometimes it's nonverbal. Sometimes it's a kick in the butt. Sometimes it's a pat on the butt. To be a great leader you have to invest the time. She's invested the time to make herself a really good player. She has to invest the time to know which buttons to push."

Hill is more than ready to heed her coach's call.

In fact, she said she is ahead of the pace.

With Prahalis being the only senior last season, other upperclassmen added their voices through the course of the season.

Hill said it was the first time she started to develop an individual relationship with each player on the team, and she feels like it will pay off this season.

"I learned about forming personal relationships with everyone on the team and what it takes to help them deal with frustration," she said. "This year it's fine."

With preseason practice set to begin Oct. 13, Hill acknowledged a realization that she is

a senior with a limited amount of time left to wear scarlet and gray.

She wants to make the most of it.

"It's my last year, my last go-round," Hill said. "I think it's a little more urgent for me."

"You always want to go out in whatever you do, same thing in high school and AAU when it was my last year, knowing you did your best. I think you always want to finish strong."

She looks forward to sharing that journey with fellow seniors Emilee Harmon and Amber Stokes. Their task of molding the team already started during summer workouts.

"We all have the same mind-set," Hill said. "Emilee and Amber are doing a great job making sure everybody is working, whether that is in the weight room or running the mile or on the court. Everybody is focused and has the same mind-set and is on the same page. We're all trying to reach one goal. They do a great job just leading the team together, showing they care and the maturity we need."

### Buckeyes In WNBA Postseason

The WNBA regular season wrapped Sept. 23, but three of the four former Buckeyes in the league saw their teams qualify for the playoffs.

Of that group, post players Jantel Lavender and Jessica Davenport were still playing as of BSB press time.

Davenport and the Indiana Fever were trailing in their series 1-0 to the Connecticut Sun after a 76-64 series-opening loss Oct. 5 in which she did not play.

For the regular season, the 27-year-old Columbus native averaged 6.7 points and 3.4 rebounds per game while starting two of 34 contests. The fifth-year pro blocked 26 shots and had 23 steals while playing 15.1 minutes per game.

Lavender, a second-year player from Cleveland, averaged 5.6 points and 3.9 rebounds in 34 games (including one start) for the Los Angeles Sparks during the regular season. She shot 50.6 percent from the field while playing 14.4 minutes per game. Lavender was scoreless in just under five minutes of action during the Sparks' series-opening 94-77 loss to the defending WNBA champion Minnesota Lynx.

Katie Smith, whose Ohio State career scoring record was broken by Lavender two years ago, saw her 14th WNBA season come to an end Sept. 28 with a 78-70 loss by her Seattle Storm to the Lynx in game three of the Western Conference semifinal series. She scored 12 points and had two steals along with three assists in that contest, leaving her with averages of 9.3 points, 2.3 rebounds and 2.0 assists for the best-of-three series.

She averaged 6.7 points, 2.7 rebounds and 2.1 assists during the regular season.

Prahalis' rookie season did not include a trip to the playoffs, but the No. 6 overall pick in the most recent WNBA draft put together a solid campaign. She averaged 11.6 points, 4.5 assists, 3.2 rebounds and 1.6 steals while starting all 28 of the games she played. Prahalis shot 35.2 percent from the floor and 27.1 percent from three-point range. She was second among the league's rookies in scoring and steals while leading first-year players in assists and minutes played (31.6 per game).

Prahalis was the WNBA Rookie of the Month in June when she averaged 13.8 points, 5.1 assists and 1.8 steals per contest.



FILE PHOTO

**STANDOUT SENIOR** – Guard Tayler Hill (4) led Ohio State in minutes, scoring, steals, three-point shooting percentage, three-point field goals, three-point attempts, free-throw attempts and free-throws made last season.

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# Osiecki Era Enters Third Season On OSU Ice

By JEFF SVOBODA  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Last year was a crazy year for the Ohio State men's hockey team, and it's fair to say the young squad wasn't quite ready to handle its ups and downs.

First, the Buckeyes got off to a tremendous start, opening with a 14-4-1 record that vaulted them all the way as high as No. 2 in the national rankings. But as soon as the calendar flipped to 2012, it all fell apart. OSU won only one of its last 16 games, dropped to ninth place in the league and was swept out of the first round of the Central Collegiate Hockey Association playoffs by Notre Dame.

Looking back, the Buckeyes say they were simply too young to handle the massive ups and downs of the roller-coaster campaign.

"We were definitely better than what the outcome was," head coach Mark Osiecki said. "There were different circumstances that happened. I think that we had a lot of youth and inexperience in terms of how to handle winning. You have to go through a situation like that to gain experience.

"You just don't flip a switch and all of a sudden you're going to go from a struggling program to an automatic national championship. There's a progression you have to go through, and I think that was part of it last year."

Now in his third season, Osiecki – who has been a part of highly successful programs at North Dakota and Wisconsin – believes he's starting to build the program into what he wants. All of last season, he praised his team's work ethic, and he said the coaches never had to raise their voices or criticize the team's effort even as the team's record started to go downhill.

After losing just four seniors from a year ago, Osiecki thinks he has a group with a similar focus ready to go this year. For the first time since the coach came to OSU, players spent time asking the coaches how they could get in extra skating or workouts on the Value City Arena ice before official team practices began.

"I like their character, their work habits," Osiecki said. "They take care of everything away from the rink and do a lot of good things away from the rink so when they step on the ice or step in the locker room, they're ready to go. The mentality with being a hockey player has really changed. It's fun to see that growth."



FILE PHOTO

**THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM? – Ohio State men's hockey head coach Mark Osiecki (center) enters his third season with the Buckeyes hoping to improve on his club's difficult ending to the 2011-12 season.**

The next step is finding consistency in results. Going into the last CCHA season before conference realignment hits, Ohio State has been picked sixth in the preseason coaches' poll and seventh in the media vote, but junior forward Chris Crane thinks the Buckeyes have the team to do even better.

"We have hardworking guys," Crane said. "We have guys that come to work every day and work their hardest in practice. It's hard-nosed and gritty, and I think that's good. The CCHA is all about going out there and working. We can outwork any team, and that's how hockey is played in my opinion."

But whether everything comes together depends on how a young team continues to mature. Ohio State has only four seniors and six juniors on its 27-man roster, so development will be a key, especially among

an 11-person group of second-year players who will be counted on heavily on all parts of the ice.

There is also the hope that last year's rough finish can serve as not only a motivating factor but something the team can take lessons from.

"I think last year was something that the guys learned from," Crane said. "We started off second in the country and we looked at that a little bit too much, but I think the best thing that we can take from last year is to learn from it. We're not looking at the polls this year. We're going to play Ohio State hockey, keep our nose to the grindstone and see what happens."

The following is a position-by-position preview of the 2012-13 Ohio State men's hockey team.

## Young, Talented Offense

One place Ohio State has struggled the past two years is when it comes to goal scoring, especially down the stretch. The Buckeyes scored 2.60 goals per game last year to place seventh in the CCHA, and OSU scored only three goals in its last four games and was shut out four times in the second half of the season.

"We were young," Crane said. "I think that we were gripping our stick a little bit too hard, knowing that we had struggled. We weren't getting the bounces."

Osiecki thinks the Buckeyes could put more goals on the board this year, as an influx of speed has created a team he thinks can excel in the transition game.

"We're much more appealing to the eye right now in terms of our transition and our speed," he said. "It's funny. We had a short practice here (Oct. 3) and I had my dad in town. He's been in the game for a long, long

time, and he's sitting up top. His first comment right away was, 'You can definitely see the skill level is way different than last year. Your speed factor is way different than last year.' Certainly you want to focus on that."

Still, there aren't a lot of players with offensive capabilities that have been proven at the college level. Crane returns as OSU's active leader in career points with 34 – which would have placed eighth in the CCHA last year – over two seasons, and Osiecki described his team's ability to put pucks in the net as unknown.

Crane, a West Chester, Ohio, native and seventh-round draft pick of the San Jose Sharks, led Ohio State a year ago with 14 goals and tied for the team best with 24 points. He boasts good size at 6-1 and 193 pounds and is a grinder who still has the skill to make things happen with the puck on his stick.

The Buckeyes will also look to a group of talented second-year players to provide scoring, a list that includes Max McCormick, Ryan Dzingel, Tanner Fritz and Riley Simpson.

Dzingel is a flashy player who was picked in the seventh round of the 2011 draft by Ottawa. He got off to a hot start a season ago and tailed off a bit at the end, but the 6-0, 196-pounder who can play both center and wing still had a team-best 17 assists and tied with Crane for the team lead with 24 points.

After missing much of the first half last year, McCormick (5-11, 192) was an excellent addition to the attack once the calendar flipped. In 27 games, the sixth-round draft pick of Ottawa had 10 goals on only 46 shots and added 12 assists.

This year, Osiecki would like to see those two players become more aggressive on the offensive end.

"They have to shoot the puck more," he



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FILE PHOTO

**GOOD START – Sophomore forward Tanner Fritz (29) scored six goals and notched eight assists during his freshman campaign and will be one of many Buckeyes called upon to provide some offense this season.**

said. “Dzingel has great skill, but they don’t want to shoot as much as you might like. What’s interesting with Max, he’s not afraid to shoot. It’s weird, the puck is on and off his tape quickly. He shares the puck real quick, but then he puts himself in a scoring area, and he’s got a great shot – a heavy shot with a quick release. We expect him to have bigger numbers, much more than last year even.”

Fritz is another player who had a good second half. A former MVP of the Alberta Junior Hockey League, the 5-11, 202-pounder showed he can score in bunches when he put up a 4-5-9 line in a six-game stretch of January and February. Overall he finished his freshman campaign with six goals and eight assists.

Simpson is a second-year player but is a redshirt freshman because an injury ended his freshman season after just two games. In junior hockey, the 5-8, 178-pounder had 76 points in 59 games two years ago with Brooks of the AJHL, and Osiecki is bullish on his future.

“Before it’s all said and done, he could be an All-American here,” the OSU coach said. “He hasn’t been able to show what he can do because of his limitations last year.”

There are some other sophomores who could provide scoring depth. Darik Angeli and Nick Oddo got off to hot starts last year before finishing with a 7-8-15 line and five goals and five assists, respectively. Angeli (6-3, 193) has great speed and a lethal shot, while Oddo (6-0, 174) is an opportunistic center whose hard work results in scoring chances.

The team’s upperclassman forwards haven’t been huge point producers in their careers. Senior Alex Carlson and junior

Travis Statchuk are two-way skaters who chip in on the penalty kill, while juniors Alex Lippincott and Alex Szczuchura do provide a little more of an offensive charge.

Szczuchura isn’t the biggest player at 5-9, 181 pounds, but he comes from a hockey family as his brother, Paul, played at Western Michigan and has made a few cameos in the NHL. Szczuchura burst onto the scene his freshman year with seven goals – including a pair of game winners – and seven assists then posted four goals and four assists last year.

Carlson (6-2, 192) has played in 52 career games, posting four goals and eight assists while winning 53.7 percent of his faceoffs. Statchuk (5-10, 195), a center, has played in 48 games the past two years, scoring one goal with eight assists, while the 6-1, 195-pound Lippincott hails from Akron and has some offensive upside with nine goals and 10 assists in 60 career games.

In the sophomore class, OSU also has Matt Johnson (5-10, 195) and Chad Niddery (5-10, 173). Johnson is a dependable two-way forward who had five points last year, while Niddery is a pest who can also work well on the penalty kill. He had a goal and three assists in 23 games last year.

The two freshman forwards are Anthony Greco and Tyler Lundey. Greco could contribute offensively immediately, as the 5-10, 165-pounder from Faribault, Minn., led the Des Moines Buccaneers of the United States Hockey League last year with 24 assists and 46 points.

“Anthony Greco is easily the fastest guy on our team right now,” Osiecki said. “He jumps over the boards and it’s like, ‘Whoa!’ Guys are going to be stepping backwards.”

Lundey (5-10, 179) hails from Middleton,

Wis., and was an alternate captain last year with Dubuque of the USHL, putting up 20-25-45 in 60 games.

### Defense Building

Ohio State has the pieces to have an effective blue line, but a lot will depend on the growth of some of the younger members of the group.

At the top of the list is junior Curtis Gedig, whom Osiecki has called the team’s highest-profile defenseman. A seventh-round draft pick of the New Jersey Devils in the 2009 draft, Gedig has the size (6-3, 200) and skill to be a dominant defenseman at the college level but hasn’t quite reached that level yet.

The British Columbia native has played in 68 games the past two years, scoring two goals and adding 24 assists while posting a plus-1 rating. He’s also blocked 110 shots, but Gedig did miss some summer development as he rehabbed an injury.

“He’s a phenomenal kid, first of all,” Osiecki said. “Secondly, what an athlete. The unfortunate part of Curtis is he’s gone through some injuries here. He’s never really had a full summer to train. That being said, he looks outstanding. He looks fresh. He’s probably one of the best skaters on our squad. His skating ability is tremendous. We’re trying to get him to understand the game a little bit more.”

Then there is a pair of seniors who will provide experience and leadership in Devon Krogh and Brandon Martell. Krogh has been a constant part of the OSU lineup since arriving as a freshman, posting six goals and 26 assists in 98 games along with a plus-10 rating. Last year the 6-1, 188-pounder had two goals among his 14 points.

“I just want to improve everything – my defensive game, my offensive game, just keep progressing,” he said. “I’ve been able to progress every year so far, so hopefully I can keep that up.”

Martell provides a big body at 6-3, 212 pounds, and he can be effective in both zones for the Buckeyes. He’s played in 34 career games, posting a goal and five assists.

Moving down to the sophomores, Al McLean should again be one of the more dependable players on the squad. Though the 6-2, 191-pounder isn’t the flashiest player, he did improve his offensive game as his freshman season went on, scoring three goals and adding eight assists in 31 games while finishing plus-4.

“I enjoy playing with him,” Krogh said. “He really turned it on in the second half. I think he just got a lot more confident as the season went on. He’s one of the best players I’ve ever played with in terms of neutral-zone passing.”

If Ohio State truly wants size in the lineup, it turns to second-year player Justin DaSilva, who checks in at 6-6, 230 pounds. Last year, DaSilva played in 24 games and earned four assists with a plus-1 rating.

The third sophomore blue liner on the team is Clark Cristofoli, a native of Lewis

Center, Ohio, who played sparingly last year. He needed to add strength in the offseason, but the 5-10, 182-pounder played in 16 games in 2011-12 with a single assist.

Osiecki said a pair of freshman defensemen should help quite a bit as well. The headliner is Sam Jardine, a sixth-round draft pick of Chicago in the 2011 draft who has already caught Osiecki’s eye.

“In my time at Wisconsin, we were lucky enough to have a bunch of first- and second-rounders, and this kid is right in that mix,” Osiecki said. “The first day you step on the ice with him, you go, ‘Whoa, he’s got something here.’ He’s going to be playing in the NHL for a long time.”

Jardine (6-1, 196) won a gold medal while captaining Team Canada West at the 2011 World Junior A Challenge, and last year he was the MVP of his junior team, the Camrose Kodiaks of the AJHL, after posting an 11-19-30 line in 51 games.

He’s joined by Craig Dalrymple, a massive new addition who checks in at 6-5, 214 pounds. However, Osiecki said Dalrymple’s size belies his talent.

“His hockey sense is tremendous,” the head coach said. “He’s obviously got size, and you might think he’s a little bit of a bruiser, but he’s not that. He’s going to play smart. He’s kind of like a poor man’s (NHL defenseman) Ryan Suter – that style. He’s a puck mover, smart, good stick. I think he’ll eat up some minutes here.”

Dalrymple played with DaSilva and Niddery previously at Powell River of the British Columbia Hockey League. Last year, he was named the league’s Coastal Conference’s best defenseman after finishing with 20 goals and 29 points in 55 games.

Ben Gallacher had 12 points in 24 games last year as a freshman but chose to leave school to go to the USHL.

### Competition In Net

Last year, Ohio State had a clear-cut starter in goal coming into the year in senior Cal Heeter, but he now plies his trade in the Philadelphia Flyers organization after completing his four years of eligibility.

That leaves just one experienced goaltender in senior Brady Hjelle, who saw action in eight games last year in spot duty.

“He’s played college games before and he’s had experience,” Osiecki said. “The unfortunate part is that last year at times when he went in, he faltered a little bit. He is in a true competition, and he knows that.”

Hjelle stands just 5-11 and weighs 190 pounds, and he is known as a battler who is active between the pipes. He started five contests last year, going 2-4-0 overall with a 2.53 goals-against average and a .922 save percentage.

A Minnesota Duluth transfer who also starred in the USHL two years ago, Hjelle said he hopes his second year in the program will result in improvement.

Continued On Page 42

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# Ohio State Hits Road To Start 2012-13 Season

Continued From Page 41

"I'm obviously more comfortable being in my second year, just knowing the coaches better, knowing what the everyday operations are and that kind of thing," he said. "It's going to be a big help this year. I felt like it went pretty well last year. I didn't finish the way I wanted to, but you learn from your mistakes. I feel like I'm ready to go this year."

His main competition should come from true freshman Collin Olson, who enters with plenty of hype. A sixth-round draft pick of the Carolina Hurricanes, Olson played for the U.S. National Team Development Program the past two seasons, helping Team USA win the gold medal at last year's World Under-18 Championships.

Olson boasts extensive international experience in addition to that gold medal, and he posted a 2.44 goals-against average and .902 save percentage last year for the USNTDP in 38 games vs. both international and USHL competition.

At 6-3 and 200 pounds, the Apple Valley, Minn., native boasts prototypical size for a goaltender, and Osiecki expects his two net-minders to rotate at the start of the season.

"Ollie coming in is a tremendous talent, but he's young," Osiecki said. "It's hard to give him the ball and let him run with it automatically coming into college hockey, but the competition is going to be outstanding for that position."

Ohio State also has a pair of players who will battle to get into the top two in redshirt junior Jeff Michael and true freshman Peter Megariotis. Michael (6-0, 175) has played in

one game his first three seasons at OSU, giving up one goal in a 22:05 cameo at Alaska in January 2011, but has an injured leg and will not be ready at the start of the season.

Megariotis (6-2, 205) hails from Anaheim Hills, Calif., and played with Port Huron and Fresno of the North American Hockey League the past two seasons, where he was named the top prospect in the NAHL North Division in 2012.

## Inside The Schedule

Ohio State's young team will have a chance to bond in the early going. The Buckeyes will play their first three regular-season series on the road before the home-opening two-game set Nov. 9-10 vs. Alaska.

"It's probably a good thing for us to be on the road and get out, get away, grow as a group, then come back here and build excitement," Osiecki said. "In the USHL, you could kind of move your schedule around a little bit, and you would try to go on the road as much as you could early. If you can go on the road early quite often, grow a young group that we have, hopefully it can play to your advantage. We're excited about that."

On the flip side, the Buckeyes will be home for four of the last six weekends of the year as the postseason nears.

"That's the time where the playoff hockey mentality starts really clicking," Crane said. "We get to come home for those games, get a nice little streak going there, and it's good momentum going into the playoffs."

The season starts Oct. 12-13 with two games at No. 12 Minnesota Duluth, an early-season test against Hjelle's old team that

could give the Buckeyes an early sense of where they are.

The nonconference slate also includes a two-game set at Quinnipiac on Oct. 19-20 before OSU plays a home-and-home series Dec. 7-8 vs. Robert Morris.

The Buckeyes will also return to the Steel City for the Three Rivers Classic in Pittsburgh's Consol Energy Center on Dec. 28-29, starting with a game against Miami (Ohio). OSU will then play Robert Morris or Penn State's first-year program in either the consolation or championship game on night two.

Ohio State's last trip through the 28-game CCHA slate kicks off Oct. 26-27 with a series at Bowling Green. That also begins competition for BSB's Ohio Cup, the intra-state trophy that goes to the school with the best record in Ohio-only play. The round-robin tournament continues Dec. 14-15 when OSU hosts cup holder Miami, and the RedHawks and Falcons meet Jan. 25-26 in Oxford.

Because of the unbalanced slate, OSU will play four league opponents – Northern Michigan, Lake Superior State, Alaska and No. 9 Miami (Ohio) – four times, twice at home and twice away, and the other six foes twice apiece. The Buckeyes will face BG, No. 16 Michigan State and No. 11 Ferris State – the defending national runner-up – only on the road while hosting two-game sets with No. 14 Notre Dame, No. 10 Western Michigan and No. 3 Michigan.

The league coaches picked Notre Dame to emerge as the regular-season champion while the media tabbed Michigan.



FILE PHOTO

**LAST GO-ROUND** – Senior goaltender Brady Hjelle hopes to find plenty of playing time in his final collegiate season.

For the fourth year in a row, a regulation or overtime win in CCHA play will earn a team three points, while a shootout win will be worth two in the league standings. A shootout loss is worth one and a regulation or OT loss yields zero points.

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# Buckeyes Waiting To See Leaders Emerge

By JEFF SVOBODA  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Leadership is prized in all sports and across all facets of life, but there are few sports that put as much of a premium on the hard-to-quantify skill as hockey.

One of the ultimate honors in the sport is the ability to take the ice with the captain's "C" stitched onto one's sweater, and from Steve Yzerman to Mark Messier, those who could not only wear that designation but define its lofty standard are among the most celebrated players in the game.

That certainly stays true as the game moves down to the college level.

For example, it's no coincidence that some of Ohio State's best years in the early 2000s came as the fiery and inspiring JB Bittner wore the "C" for two years, or that the team seemed to struggle finding its way following Bittner's departure.

For any squad that laces up the skates, having someone to follow at the top seems to be essential if a high level of success is to be achieved.

"It's huge," Ohio State junior forward Chris Crane said. "You look at guys in the NHL like Sidney Crosby – he's a great leader who does everything right. I think it starts from the top down. If you don't have a good leader up front, it's just going to trickle down. I think if you do have a good leader, it's very good for your organization."

With that in mind, it's fair to say OSU head coach Mark Osiecki faces a challenge going into the season. With the Buckeyes boasting a young team and a fair share of upperclassmen possessing a paucity of experience, Osiecki has already decided he might have to get a bit creative when it comes to finding his leaders.

As the regular season gets ready to begin Oct. 12-13 with two games at 12th-ranked Minnesota Duluth, Osiecki said he is going to go with a rotating leadership council at the start of the season. No permanent captains will be named at the start of the campaign as the team tries to see which players move to the fore when it comes to leading the squad.

It's a system that has been used by former Minnesota Wild and New Jersey Devils head coach Jacques Lemaire at the professional level, and Osiecki and his staff are going to give it a try as the season begins for Ohio State.

"We'll do a rotational deal, kind of like a Jacques Lemaire-style, early on and build into that and see if someone can grab that and stick with it," he said. "We have a lot of good leaders in the room, we just don't have someone that has emerged as that person yet to be the guy who can shoulder the load."

Osiecki also gets inspiration on the subject from Green Bay Packers boss Mike McCarthy. A former Wisconsin player and assistant coach as well as a junior coach in Green Bay, Osiecki has become close with the Packers organization through his career and has looked to the team's 2010 Super Bowl-winning coaching staff for inspiration on the subject of leadership.

"We like his thought process," he said. "I spent about an hour and a half with Coach McCarthy down in Cincinnati (during the NFL preseason) and talked to them about leadership, and they do a rotational

deal and it's kind of fun to listen and pick different people's brains."

Generally in college hockey, captains either come from those who have played the most games or made the most impact on the ice, but the Buckeyes simply don't have a lot of upperclassmen with extensive experience.

The senior on the squad with the most games played is defenseman Devon Krogh, who has suited up 98 times over the past three seasons. Among the rest of the seniors, forward Alex Carlson has played in 52 games, defenseman Brandon Martell in 34 and goaltender Brady Hjelle in eight after transferring into the program following two years at Minnesota Duluth.

Of that group, Krogh's on-ice performance makes him a logical choice to emerge as a team leader, while Martell has been tabbed by a number of players as one of the more vocal players on the squad.

"I'm a big believer in leading by example, not so much yelling at them in the locker room," Krogh said. "I think it's just the little things like giving them advice before the game, but pretty much just leading by example, keeping the team up-tempo. There are no easy games in college. I think they'll figure that out pretty quickly."

There are some juniors who have made their mark the past few years, but no one who stands out as either a driving force on the ice or in terms of inspiration. Crane returns as the team's active career leader in points with 34 over two seasons, while Curtis Gedig has also been a regular and Travis Statchuk, Alex Lippincott and Alex Szczechura have seen their fair share of ice time as well.

Add in redshirt junior Jeff Michael, a reserve goalie who has played in only one game, and the Buckeyes have 10 upperclassmen to go with 10 sophomores, a red-shirt freshman and six newcomers.

"We're all about the same age, but the juniors and seniors have a little bit more experience," Crane said. "Personally, I try to lead by example. I think it's the best way

to lead. I try to stay positive on the bench and get the guys going."

The West Chester, Ohio, native also pointed to such sophomores as Max McCormick and Ryan Dzingel as some of the more vocal players on the team. McCormick's leadership abilities stand out – something Osiecki liked about the De Pere, Wis., native during the recruiting process – and he has served as a team captain at multiple lower levels.

"I think I can be a sophomore leader," McCormick said. "I'm not much of a rah-rah guy. I like to just go out there and do it. I think you need the quieter guys that go out and lead by example and get some energy on the bench, and I think you need guys that will talk a little bit, give you a tap on the butt, pick you up when you're down."

Dzingel and classmates Justin DaSilva, Tanner Fritz, Matt Johnson and Chad Niddery have also been assistant captains at the junior level.

There have even been leadership capabilities shown by the freshman class, as defenseman Sam Jardine captained Team Canada West to the 2011 World Junior A Challenge gold medal a year ago and Tyler Lundey and Craig Dalrymple have served as alternate captains on their United States Hockey League junior teams.

So while there are plenty of candidates to step up, how things will develop remains a bit of a mystery. Osiecki has never used a rotation of captains before, but he admits he is interested to see how it goes as the season dawns.

"I am," he said. "We're optimistic it could help the room. It's kind of their team. It's not so-and-so's and so-and-so's team, the captain's team and they're going to be the guys shouldering the load. It's going to be the guys that are in the locker room. It's going to be their team."



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# BUCKEYE BRIEFS

## Icers Post Overtime Win In Exhibition

Freshman Anthony Greco scored in overtime to give the Ohio State men's hockey team a 3-2, overtime victory against Canadian university squad Waterloo in the team's lone exhibition game Oct. 7 in Value City Arena.

Ohio State never led until Greco potted a rebound of a shot by Clark Cristofoli just 2:04 into the extra frame.

"It was a tight game that forced us to show some character," head coach Mark Osiecki said. "Having to fight for a victory in an exhibition game is much better than skating to a 6-0 win because you get a chance to see what you're made of. At this point in the year, this type of game was great for us."

Waterloo took a 1-0 lead 1:47 into the second period on a power-play goal past senior Brady Hjelle before OSU quickly answered. Freshman defenseman Sam Jardine drew the Buckeyes even at 3:19, scoring on a 2-on-1 with assists to Alex Lippincott and Darik Angeli.

The Warriors again took the lead late in the second on a goal past OSU freshman netminder Collin Olson, but the Buckeyes didn't wait long to tie the game in the third. Sophomore forward Max McCormick tallied on the power play with assists to Greco and Tanner Fritz.

Ohio State held a 42-22 edge in shots, including a 19-4 lead over the third period and overtime. Hjelle finished with 15 saves while Olson had five.

## Seniors Lead Women's Hockey To Sweep

Seniors Hokey Langan, Minttu Tuominen, Paige Semenza and Tina Hollowell have always been in an interesting spot for the Ohio State women's hockey team.

All four spent the past three seasons one year behind Natalie Spooner and Laura McIntosh, two players who rewrote the program's record book during their careers. Now, with those players gone, the team in some ways belongs to the current seniors.

"I think it lends itself for new people to step up," head coach Nate Handrahan said. "There's probably a lot of times last year where they learned an awful lot. They grew in their own ways. I think it's their time, and we're going to go as far as our senior class allows us to go."

So far, the results have been positive. Ohio State swept No. 8 Minnesota Duluth on Oct. 5-6 on the road behind standout performances by those seniors, allowing the Buckeyes to move to four wins in four games on the young campaign.

Ohio State posted a 3-1 win in the opening game of the series. Langan, Semenza and sophomore Kayla Sullivan scored, with Semenza and Hollowell each adding assists. The Buckeyes limited Duluth to only 17 shots on goal.

The Buckeyes captured the second contest by a 3-2 final. Tuominen scored twice, notching the game winner with 3:44 to play, while Hollowell, Langan and Semenza each had assists. Sophomore Taylor Kuehl also had a tally for the Buckeyes while goalie Chelsea Knapp had 23 saves.

## Kobelt Reaches National Tennis Final Before Loss

Last year, Ohio State men's tennis head coach Ty Tucker said Peter Kobelt has the talent to be one of the best players in the country. He just needed two things - experience and confidence.

It appears Kobelt is all stocked up on both now. One year after holding down the No. 3 spot in the OSU singles lineup, Kobelt reached the singles final of the Intercollegiate Tennis Association All-American Championships before falling to sixth-seed Alex Domijan of Virginia in the final.

Domijan knocked off Kobelt by a 7-5, 6-1 final Oct. 7 at the University of Tulsa's Case Tennis Center.

Kobelt reached the final by knocking off a pair of top-10 foes. The junior opened the tournament with a three-set win over No. 10 Anthony Rossi of Kentucky before three straight-sets wins against Memphis' Joe Salisbury, UCLA's Marcos Giron and Virginia's Mac Styslinger. In the semifinal, Kobelt beat eighth-ranked Ku Singh of Georgia by a 7-5, 1-6, 6-4 score.

In addition, senior Connor Smith reached the consolation final of the event before falling to Mississippi's Jonas Lutjen. Smith had fallen in the first round of the singles draw before ripping off four straight wins.

Kobelt and Smith also paired to go 1-1 in doubles, while redshirt freshman Chris Diaz made it through the singles prequalifier before losing a tight match in round two of the main draw to the top-ranked player, Duke's Henrique Cunha.

## Women Spikers Sweep Big Ten Road Trip

At the start of the season, the Ohio State women's volleyball team has become known for its refusal to give up on a point or a match.

If the proof can be found in the results, it might be found in one place: The 19th-ranked Buckeyes are now 3-1 in five-set matches following a 3-2 win at No. 21

Illinois, a victory that started a 2-0 weekend for the Buckeyes on the road that boosted the team's record to 4-2 in Big Ten play.

"We've learned when our backs are against the wall to show character, and we've come back to win some games," senior Mariah Booth said. "We've handled some tough games before so if we're in a tough situation we have something to fall back on."

Ohio State came from behind to beat the Illini, capturing the last three sets in the 3-2 (16-25, 25-27, 25-21, 25-15, 15-12) victory. Kaitlyn Leary led the attack with 14 kills while Mari Hole had 13. Emily Danks added 10 kills with five assist blocks and two aces, and OSU had 11½ blocks in the match.

After the Buckeyes fell in the 2-0 hole, they captured set three on a block by Andrea Kacsits then used a 9-0 run to pull away in the fourth set. Hole and Leary had key kills in the deciding set before an Illinois error ended the game.

The Buckeyes finished the perfect weekend with a 3-0 (25-13, 25-23, 25-23) win at Northwestern. Hole led the team with 18 kills, while Amanda Peterson recorded 36 assists. Danks and Anna Faul each recorded seven blocks against the Wildcats, and in three sets, the Buckeyes recorded 51 digs.

## Cameron Keeps Going As Soccer Nets A Win

Tiffany Cameron's special senior season for the Ohio State women's soccer team continued Oct. 7 as the Canadian scored the lone goal in the Buckeyes' 1-0 win against Purdue.

The goal was Cameron's seventh game winner and 10th goal overall as the Buckeyes improved to 8-4-1.

Ohio State celebrated "Buckeyes Go Pink Day," its annual breast cancer awareness game, at Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium.

"It was a little slow and methodical but we were able to do what we needed to today," head coach Lori Walker said. "Tiffany was extremely special today, and it was nice to honor a lot of women we really look up to. They represent what courage really stands for so it was nice to honor them on our breast cancer awareness day."

Cameron is now three goals away from the program single-season record of 13 set by Lara Dickenmann in 2004 and matched by Lisa Collison a year later. Her tally came in the 41st minute against the Boilermakers as she beat the defense down the field and shot under the body of goalkeeper Clara Kridler.

Kridler finished with seven saves while Jillian McVicker had two and Rachel Middleman had zero in net for OSU as each played a half.

## Field Hockey Drops League Game, Comes Back For Win

The No. 16 Ohio State field hockey team rebounded from a 1-0 loss to Big Ten rival Michigan State on Oct. 5 with a 9-1 thumping of Ball State two days later.

Ohio State left the Michigan State game frustrated as the 20th-ranked Spartans shut down the potent Buckeye attack in a game staged at Buckeye Varsity Field. OSU led the shot count 14-4 but could not beat goalie Molly Cassidy, who made three saves. The Buckeyes also had 10 penalty corners, and

Danica Deckard hit the post late in the contest.

Michigan State's Allie Ahern scored the only goal of the contest just 3:02 into play. Emma Voelker made three saves the rest of the way for the Buckeyes.

The frustrations were let out in the game against Ball State, as the Buckeyes filled the cage through the entire game. Mona Frommhold and Paula Pastor-Pitarque each claimed her first career hat trick for the Scarlet and Gray while OSU got single tallies from Deckard, Nora Murer and Carly Mackessy. The Buckeyes sent 43 shots toward the Cardinals' goal.

## Men's Soccer Downed By Michigan State

A disappointing season for the Ohio State men's soccer team has left head coach John Bluem frustrated, to say the least.

Bluem was sharp in his criticism of the team after the Buckeyes fell to 4-7-1 overall and 0-3 in the Big Ten with a 2-1 loss Oct. 7 to Michigan State at Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium.

"I am extremely disappointed in our team," Bluem said. "That was a very bad performance. There was no courage. We lacked effort. We lacked discipline. Nobody wants to work hard."

The Buckeyes outshot the Spartans, 10-4, in the first half, but neither team could get on the board. Michigan State pulled away midway through the second, getting goals from Luke Norman and Sean Conerty in the 68th and 70th minutes.

Sophomore Yianni Sarris got his first goal as a Buckeye in the 81st minute, scoring from 12 yards out, but OSU could not tie the score.

Goalie Alex Ivanov finished with four saves.

## Women's Golf Competes In Illinois Tournament

The No. 32 Ohio State women's golf squad posted a 10th-place finish of 15 teams at the Windy City Collegiate Classic on Oct. 1-2.

The three-round tournament, which featured 10 top-50 teams, was staged at the par-72 Glen View Golf Course in Golf, Ill. Ohio State posted a score of 43-over 907.

Senior Rachel Rohanna posted the best score, carding a 7-over 223 to tie for 20th. Susana Benavides shot 227 to tie for 34th, while Amy Meier was one shot behind her to tie for 40th.

## Buckeye Notes

- The Scarlet squad took a 1-0 lead on the Gray team in the five-game Scarlet and Gray World Series, the baseball team's fall intrasquad battle, on Oct. 7 in Bill Davis Stadium. Scarlet downed Gray by a 4-3 score behind two RBI from senior infielder Ryan Cypret, who was hit by a pitch to end the game. Brian King gave up two runs in five innings, and Greg Greve got the win in relief. There will be future games Oct. 9, 12 and 15 in Bill Davis Stadium with Game 4 being held Oct. 13 in Chillicothe.

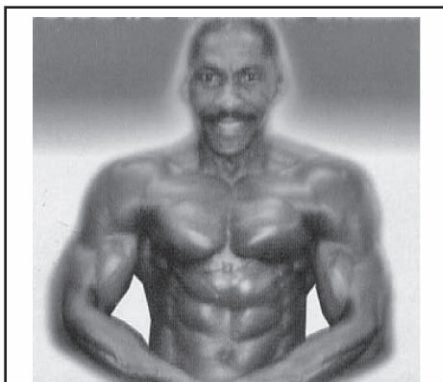
- Former Ohio State men's lacrosse player Brock Sorensen was taken No. 2 overall in the National Lacrosse League draft Oct. 1 by the Minnesota Swarm. Sorensen was a two-time captain at OSU who finished with 22 goals in his career while playing every position but goalie. The NLL is the top indoor league in North America.



Anthony Greco



Peter Kobelt



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# BUCKEYE SCOREBOARD

## 2012 FOOTBALL (6-0, 2-0 Big Ten)

**Sept. 1** MIAMI (OHIO), W 56-10; **8** CENTRAL FLORIDA, W 31-16; **15** CALIFORNIA, W 35-28; **22** UAB, W 29-15; **29** at (20) Michigan State, W 17-16.

**Oct. 6** (21) NEBRASKA, W 63-38; **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, Noon.

## 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.

**Dec. 7** Big Ten Championship Game at Indianapolis.

## 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.

**Dec. 6** Big Ten Championship Game at Indianapolis.

## 2015 FOOTBALL

**Sept. 5** NORTH CAROLINA; **12** NORTHERN ILLINOIS; **19** at Virginia Tech; **26** TBA.

**Oct. 3** at Purdue; **10** PENN STATE; **17** MICHIGAN STATE; **31** at Minnesota.

**Nov. 7** WISCONSIN; **14** at Illinois; **21** INDIANA; **28** at Michigan.

**Dec. 5** Big Ten Championship Game at Indianapolis.

## 2016 FOOTBALL

**Sept. 3** BOWLING GREEN; **10** TULSA; **17** at Oklahoma; **24** TBA.

**Oct. 1** PURDUE; **15** at Michigan State; **22** ILLINOIS; **29** at Penn State.

**Nov. 5** MINNESOTA; **12** at Wisconsin; **19** at Indiana; **26** MICHIGAN.

**Dec. 3** Big Ten Championship Game at TBA.

## MEN'S BASKETBALL

**Oct. 30** WALSH (Exhibition), 7 p.m.

**Nov. 9** Carrier Classic at Charleston, S.C., vs. Marquette; **11** ALBANY, 2 p.m.; **17** vs. at Uncasville, Conn., vs. Rhode Island; **18** at Uncasville, Conn., vs. Washington or Seton Hall; **23** MISSOURI-KANSAS CITY, 6 p.m.; **28** at Duke.

**Dec. 1** NORTHERN KENTUCKY, 4:30 p.m.; **8** LONG BEACH STATE, Noon; **12** SAVANNAH STATE, 7 p.m.; **15** UNC ASHEVILLE, Noon; **18** WINTHROP, 7 p.m.; **22** KANSAS, 4 p.m.; **29** CHICAGO STATE, 4:30 p.m.

**Jan. 2** NEBRASKA, 6:30 p.m.; **5** at Illinois; **8** at Purdue; **13** MICHIGANm 1:30 or 4:30 p.m.; **19** at Michigan State; **22** IOWA, 6:30 p.m.; **26** at Penn State; **29** WISCONSIN, 7 p.m.

**Feb. 2** at Nebraska; **5** at Michigan; **10** INDIANA, 1 p.m.; **14** NORTHWESTERN, 7 p.m.; **17** at Wisconsin; **20** MINNESOTA, 7 p.m.; **24** MICHIGAN STATE, 1, 4 or 6 p.m.; **28** at Northwestern.

**March 5** at Indiana; **10** ILLINOIS, 1, 4 or 6 p.m.; **14-17** Big Ten Tournament at Chicago.

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

**Nov. 9** Carrier Classic at Charleston, S.C., vs. Notre Dame; **14** CINCINNATI, 7 p.m.; **17** WINTHROP (at St. John Arena), 2 p.m.; **20** SAINT FRANCIS (PA.), 7 p.m.; **25** WRIGHT STATE, 1 p.m.; **28** at North Carolina.

**Dec. 1** EVANSVILLE, Noon; **9** LAFAYETTE, 1 p.m.; **15** at Washington State; **17** at Gonzaga; **21** SOUTHERN, 7 p.m.; **27** VCU, 7 p.m.; **30** HOWARD, 7 p.m.

**Jan. 3** at Iowa; **6** ILLINOIS, 2 p.m.; **10** at Minnesota; **14** at Purdue; **17** INDIANA, 7 p.m.; **20** at Wisconsin; **27** PENN STATE, 1 p.m.; **31** NEBRASKA, 8:30 p.m.

**Feb. 3** at Indiana; **7** WISCONSIN, 7 p.m.; **10** at Northwestern; **14** at Nebraska; **21** MINNESOTA, 6 p.m.; **25** MICHIGAN STATE, 6:30 p.m.; **28** at Illinois.

**March 3** MICHIGAN, TBA; **7-10** Big Ten Tournament at Hoffman Estates, Ill.

## CROSS COUNTRY

**Sept. 1** Meijer Flyer 5K Challenge at Kettering, Ohio, Men 1st/4, Women 1st/6; **14** Spartan Invitational at East Lansing, Mich., NTS; **28** Notre Dame Invitational at South Bend, Ind., Men 13th/20, Women 11th/18.

**Oct. 12** Wisconsin adidas Invitational at Madison, Wis.; **28** Big Ten Championships at East Lansing, Mich.

**Nov. 9** NCAA Great Lakes Regional at Madison, Wis.; **17** NCAA Championships at Louisville, Ky.

## FIELD HOCKEY

(9-5, 1-2 Big Ten)

**Aug. 25** vs. UMass at Durham, N.H., L 2-1 (OT); **26** at (18) New Hampshire, W 1-0; **31** at (25) American, W 2-0.

**Sept. 2** at (1) Maryland, L 5-0; **9** MIAMI (OHIO), L 2-1; **12** at Ohio, W 1-0 (SO); **16** at Bucknell, W 3-1; **19** KENT STATE, W 8-2; **21** (10) NORTHWESTERN, W 3-2; **23** MISSOURI STATE, W 10-1; **26** ROBERT MORRIS, W 6-0; **30** at (11) Iowa, L 2-1.

**Oct. 5** (20) MICHIGAN STATE, L 1-0; **7** BALL STATE, W 9-1; **14** at Michigan; **19** PENN STATE, 3 p.m.; **22** at Louisville; **27** at Indiana.

**Nov. 1-4** Big Ten Tournament at Iowa City, Iowa; **10-11** NCAA First and Second Round at TBA; **16** NCAA Semifinal at Norfolk, Va.; **18** NCAA Championship at Norfolk, Va.

## MEN'S GOLF (FALL)

**Sept. 10-11** Marshall Invitational at Huntington, W.Va., T2nd/16; **15-16** Wolf Run Intercollegiate at Zionsville, Ind., 3rd/14; **23-24** Windon Memorial at Glencoe, Ill., 1st/15.

**Oct. 8-9** JACK NICKLAUS INVITATIONAL (at Muirfield Village, Dublin); **29-30** Royal Oaks Intercollegiate at Dallas.

## WOMEN'S GOLF (FALL)

**Sept. 17-18** Branch Law Firm/Dick McGuire Invitational at Albuquerque, N.M., T2nd/17.

**Oct. 1-2** Windy City Invitational at Chicago, 10th/15; **15-17** Susie Maxwell Berning Classic at Norman, Okla.; **26-28** Landfall Tradition at Wilmington, N.C.

## MEN'S ICE HOCKEY

**Oct. 7** WATERLOO (Exhibition), W 3-2 (OT); **12-13** at Minnesota Duluth; **19-20** at Quinnipiac; **26-27** at Bowling Green.

**Nov. 9-10** ALASKA, 7:05 p.m.; 7:05 p.m.; **16-17** NORTHERN MICHIGAN, 7:05 p.m.; 7:05 p.m.; **23-24** at Lake Superior State; **30-Dec. 1** at Michigan State.

**Dec. 7** ROBERT MORRIS, 7:05 p.m.; **8** at Robert Morris; **14-15** MIAMI (OHIO), 7:05 p.m.; 8:05 p.m.; **28** Three Rivers Classic at Pittsburgh vs. Miami (Ohio); **29** Three Rivers Classic at Pittsburgh vs. Robert Morris or Penn State.

**Jan. 11-12** at Ferris State; **18-19** at Northern Michigan; **25-26** LAKE SUPERIOR STATE, 7:05 p.m.; 7:05 p.m.

**Feb. 1-2** NOTRE DAME, 7:05 p.m.; 7:05 p.m.; **8-9** at Alaska; **15-16** WESTERN MICHIGAN, 7:05 p.m.; 7:05 p.m.; **22-23** MICHIGAN, 6:35 p.m.; 7:05 p.m.

**March 1-2** at Miami (Ohio); **8-10** CCHA Tournament First Round at TBA; **15-17** CCHA Tournament Quarterfinals at TBA; **23** CCHA Tournament Semifinals at Detroit; **24** CCHA Tournament Championship at Detroit; **29-31** NCAA Tournament Regionals at TBA.

**April 11-13** NCAA Frozen Four at Pittsburgh.

## WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY

(4-0-0, 2-0-0 WCHA)

**Sept. 28-29** LINDENWOOD, W 4-0; W 7-2.

**Oct. 5-6** at (8) Minnesota Duluth, W 3-1, W 3-2; **12-13** NORTH DAKOTA, 7:07 p.m.; 4:07 p.m.; **19-20** at Minnesota; **26-27** BEMIDJI STATE, 7:07 p.m.; 4:07 p.m.

**Nov. 2-3** at St. Cloud State; **16-17** WISCONSIN (at the Schottenstein Center), 2:07 p.m.; 2:07 p.m.; **23-24** at Princeton; **30-Dec. 1** at Minnesota State.

**Dec. 8-9** RIT, 7:07 p.m.; 2:07 p.m.

**Jan. 5** DURHAM WEST (Exhibition), 3:07 p.m.; **11-12** at Wisconsin; **18-19** ST. CLOUD STATE, 7:07 p.m.; 4:07 p.m.; **25-26** MINNESOTA DULUTH, 2:07 p.m.; 2:07 p.m.

**Feb. 1-2** at Bemidji State; **8-9** MINNESOTA, 7:07 p.m.; 1:07 p.m.; **15-16** at North Dakota; **22-23** MINNESOTA STATE (at the Schottenstein Center), 2:07 p.m.; 1:07 p.m.

## MEN'S SOCCER

(4-7-1, 0-3-0 Big Ten)

**Aug. 13** DUQUESNE (Exhibition), W 2-1; **17** vs. Duke (Exhibition) at Fort Wayne, Ind., T 0-0; **24** at Dayton, L 3-2; **26** ILLINOIS-CHICAGO, L 2-0; **31** WOLSTEIN CLASSIC VS. (16) COASTAL CAROLINA, T 1-1.

**Sept. 2** WOLSTEIN CLASSIC VS. DAVIDSON, W 3-2 (OT); **7** Courtyard Marriott SD Central Soccer Tournament at San Diego vs. San Diego, L 2-0; **9** Courtyard Marriott SD Central Soccer Tournament at San Diego vs. San Diego State, W 2-1; **14** DEPAUL, W 2-1; **18** at Louisville, L 4-0; **23** (15) INDIANA, L 2-0; **26** BUTLER, W 4-1; **30** at Michigan, L 3-2 (2 OT).

**Oct. 7** MICHIGAN STATE, L 2-1; **10** BOWLING GREEN, 7 p.m.; **14** at Northwestern; **19** WRIGHT STATE, 7:30 p.m.; **23** AKRON, 8 p.m.; **28** at Penn State.

**Nov. 4** WISCONSIN, 1 p.m.; **7-11** Big Ten Tournament at Evanston, Ill.; **15** NCAA First Round at TBA; **18** NCAA Second Round at TBA; **25** NCAA Third Round at TBA; **30** NCAA Quarterfinal at TBA.

**Dec. 7** NCAA College Cup Semifinal at Hoover, Ala.; **9** NCAA College Cup Championship at Hoover, Ala.

## WOMEN'S SOCCER

(8-4-1, 3-2-1 Big Ten)

**Aug. 10** at Louisville (Exhibition), L 1-0; **12** MIAMI (FLA.) (Exhibition), L 1-0; **17** at Hofstra, L 2-0; **19** at Rutgers, L 1-0 (2OT); **24** NORTHEASTERN, W 3-0; **26** (17) MARYLAND, W 1-0.

**Sept. 2** SYRACUSE, W 2-0; **6** (13) MISSOURI, W 1-0 (OT); **9** DUQUESNE, W 3-0; **16** MINNESOTA, W 2-1 (OT); **21** at Illinois, L 1-0; **23** at Northwestern, W 2-0; **27** (8) PENN STATE, L 3-0; **30** WISCONSIN, T 0-0 (2OT).

**Oct. 7** PURDUE, W 1-0; **12** at Iowa; **14** at Nebraska; **18** MICHIGAN, 8 p.m.; **21** MICHIGAN STATE, 1 p.m.; **26** at Indiana; **31-Nov. 4** Big Ten Tournament at Bloomington, Ind.

## WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

(13-5, 4-2 Big Ten)

**Aug. 24** SPORTS IMPORTS DC KOEHL CLASSIC VS. HOUSTON, W 3-0 (25-21, 25-20, 25-21); **25** SPORTS IMPORTS DC KOEHL CLASSIC VS. TOLEDO, W 3-0 (25-19, 25-20, 25-14); VS. (20) OREGON, L 3-2 (17-25, 21-25, 25-14, 26-24, 15-10); **31** Maryland Invitational at College Park, Md., vs. Binghamton, W 3-0 (25-11, 25-20, 25-11).

**Sept. 1** Maryland Invitational at College Park, Md., vs. Seton Hall, W 3-0 (25-21, 25-22, 25-14); vs. Maryland, W 3-2 (14-25, 22-25, 25-13, 25-22, 15-5); **7** WKU Tournament at Bowling Green, Ky., vs. (10) Dayton, W 3-2 (25-22, 21-25, 25-20, 21-25, 15-12); vs. IUPUI, W 3-1 (25-9, 22-25, 26-24, 25-16); **8** WKU Tournament at Bowling Green, Ky., vs. Western Kentucky, W 3-1 (25-17, 25-18, 21-25, 25-23); **14** Flo Hyman Collegiate Cup at Houston vs. (18) Pepperdine, L 3-0 (26-24, 25-22, 25-20); **15** Flo Hyman Collegiate Cup at Houston vs. (11) Florida State, L 3-1 (25-18, 22-25, 25-13, 25-13); vs. Houston, W 3-1 (25-19, 25-16, 19-25, 25-13); **21** IOWA, W 3-0 (25-18, 25-20, 25-16); **22** (3) NEBRASKA, L 3-1 (17-25, 25-12, 25-20, 25-14); **28** at (10) Minnesota, L 3-0 (25-23, 25-23, 25-22); **29** at Wisconsin, W 3-1 (25-21, 25-11, 19-25, 25-20).

**Oct. 5** at (21) Illinois, W 3-2 (16-25, 25-27, 25-21, 25-15, 15-12); **6** at Northwestern, W 3-0 (25-13, 25-23, 25-23); **12** INDIANA, 7 p.m.; **13** PURDUE, 7 p.m.; **17** PENN STATE, 8 p.m.; **20** at Michigan State; **26** at Nebraska; **27** at Iowa.

**Nov. 2** WISCONSIN, 7 p.m.; **3** MINNESOTA, 7 p.m.; **7** NORTHWESTERN, 8 p.m.; **10** ILLINOIS, 7 p.m.; **16** at Purdue; **17** at Indiana; **21** at Penn State; **23** MICHIGAN, 7 p.m.

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# Hard To Overstate Importance Of MSU, NU Wins

Even the most optimistic and loyal fans could not have imagined being so justifiably pleased after watching Ohio State give up 38 points.

But by the end of the night in Ohio Stadium, the 38 points scored by Nebraska didn't seem to matter a whole lot. One reason, of course, is that the Buckeyes scored 63 points themselves.

The other reason for joy – or relief – all over Buckeye Nation is that it is clear following back-to-back wins over Michigan State and Nebraska that this team coming off a losing season is so drastically improved that it can make a run at an undefeated season.

## THE EXNER POINT Rich Exner

We didn't know the answer to that question after the nonconference portion of the schedule because the opposition was so weak and the Buckeyes looked sloppy and unimpressive at times.

But the victory over Nebraska, a week after winning at Michigan State, means that:

- Ohio State is the only remaining unbeaten team in the Big Ten.
- Ohio State is the highest ranked Big Ten team nationally.
- Ohio State is the favorite to win its division title in the Big Ten, the only officially sanctioned title the Buckeyes can win this year (though they will be considered in The Associated Press voting for the national championship).

Ohio State will be a solid favorite to defeat Indiana and Purdue over the next two weeks and go into Penn State on Oct. 27 atop the Big Ten – and probably knocking on the door of the AP's top five teams in the country.

That game against the Nittany Lions will no doubt draw attention as a "Probation Bowl," pitting two traditional powers that aren't allowed to go to bowl games this year.

But for the football fan willing to put NCAA sanctions aside for a weekend, it

could be a very intriguing matching. Ohio State could be 8-0 while Penn State could be riding a five-game winning streak after starting the season 0-2 with losses to Ohio University and Virginia.

The Nittany Lions are off Oct. 13 and play a night game at Iowa on Oct. 20 ahead of hosting the Buckeyes on Oct. 27.

So much is looking better for Ohio State these days that it's fair to set aside the memory of allowing a few too many big plays against Nebraska in favor of the bigger picture.

The 2012 Ohio State football team is now in position to make a run at the school's first undefeated season in 10 years, the best it can achieve while on probation.

### Smiles And Frowns

One hates to try to be a mind-reader, but Luke Fickell sure looks happy on the OSU sideline these days. Television cameras multiple times over the last few weeks have caught him grinning ear to ear in reaction to the play of his defense.

No doubt, Fickell would rather be the Buckeyes' head coach. But it looks like he's still having plenty of fun at work with the consolation prize – that as defensive coordinator for a football program on the rebound.

On the opposite sideline during the Ohio State-Nebraska game was another former Buckeye player turned coach – Bo Pelini.

Now in his fifth year as head coach at Nebraska, Pelini's demeanor seems as if it would fit in better decades ago rather than modern times in college football. Everyone is entitled to his own style, but mark me down as not being a fan of chewing out players in face-to-face confrontations on the sideline when things don't go right.

Urban Meyer is an intense coach as well. But to date, we haven't seen him engage in a public display of confrontation with his players.

### Defensive Stars

A 63-38 victory might not seem like the right time to discuss dominating performances on defense. But the Nebraska game served as highlight performances for three topflight Ohio State defenders.

Junior defensive tackle Johnathan Hankins has become such a remarkable

player that it's now fair to compare him to the best Buckeyes over the last few decades. He dominates the interior of the line and plays havoc in the offensive backfield.

Hankins is listed at 322 pounds and looks every bit of that, but it's really amazing to see his quick feet at work. No wonder so many people are projecting Hankins as a very high NFL draft pick next spring. Ohio State fans, of course, would prefer he stick around for his senior year.

One of the reasons Hankins has been able to showcase his talent is that senior defensive lineman John Simon is nearby. Opposing game-planners cannot simply design plays to avoid Hankins and Simon with both playing so well at the same time. Simon may not go as high in the draft as Hankins, but you have to like his chances of becoming a solid NFL defensive lineman.

A third star has arrived this year – sophomore defensive back Bradley Roby. His coverage skills have been on display as the season has gone along, and he is capable of the big play. His two interceptions against Nebraska were solid plays that showed off his speed, athletic ability and smarts.

Though just a sophomore eligibility-wise, Roby is completing his required third year in college and would be eligible for next April's draft. The hunch is that he will be back for his junior season next year, though.

### Extra Points

• Ohio Stadium sure is a different place when the lights are on and a quality opponent is in the house. It was an electric atmosphere for the Nebraska game, the way a stadium with 100,000-plus fans should be. Unfortunately, it was the first such game this season. Noon kickoffs against Miami (Fla.), Central Florida and UAB get few people excited.

• ABC's Brad Nessler got under my skin with this observation just before the start of the third quarter: "It would be a lot closer if it hadn't been for the turnovers." Yeah, and if Ohio State didn't tackle, Nebraska would have scored on every play. Nessler is hardly the first person to make such an observation about turnovers, apparently treating them as if the team making the interceptions had nothing to do with the turnovers. But it's a silly thought. Ohio State, at that point, had collected two turnovers because of outstanding interceptions by Roby, not because Nebraska QB Taylor Martinez walked across the field and handed Roby the football. Sure, Martinez could have made better decisions. But they were not gifts like an unforced fumble.

• It's interesting how many sacks untouched defenders make. A good example came during the third quarter when Storm Klein found a seam in Nebraska's line and sacked Martinez for a 12-yard loss, the first person Klein came in contact with on the play. Then on the next play, Simon cut into the Nebraska backfield untouched and tossed down Martinez for a 3-yard loss.

• Usually when a player is described as having a hop in his step, it's merely a way to describe him as a fast or quick runner. With Braxton Miller, he really does have a hop in his step. He is perhaps the only player I've seen who commonly hops backward to avoid a defender before exploding forward again with a burst of speed. Miller used the

hop move just 7 yards into his 72-yard run early in the second quarter, but it wasn't the only time during the game that he avoided tacklers by hoping backward or sideways.

### Not Exactly Hog Heaven

Remember all the excitement over the Ohio State-Arkansas matchup in the Sugar Bowl just two seasons ago? Arkansas entered that game ranked eighth in the country, and only a late turnover preserved a 31-26 win for the No. 6 Buckeyes.

Things turned bad for OSU the following season, and now hard times have hit Arkansas.

The reminder came while watching score updates a couple of weeks back when the Razorbacks lost a 58-10 decision to Texas A&M, dropping them to 1-4 on the season.

Arkansas' lone victory at that point had come in the opener against Jacksonville State. Then the team lost consecutive games to Louisiana-Monroe, Alabama, Rutgers and Texas A&M. They rebounded to beat Auburn on Oct. 6 by a 24-7 final.

Speaking of teams on the slide, Auburn stood at 1-4 overall and 0-3 in the SEC after its loss to Arkansas. That is the same Auburn team only two years removed from a national championship.

### BCS For OU?

Though Ohio State is out of the mix this year, it's fair to begin discussions about another school with Ohio in its name making a run at a BCS game invitation this season.

Following its 38-31 win over Buffalo on Oct. 6, Ohio University was 6-0, and an undefeated season – including a win in the Mid-American Conference Championship Game – could land the Bobcats in the BCS. A 13-0 record could lift Ohio to a top-12 ranking in the BCS standings as other teams fall along the way.

Finishing No. 12 or better is important because under BCS rules, a top-12 team from a non-BCS conference is guaranteed a spot in one of the big-money bowls. But that guarantee goes only to the best non-BCS team in the top 12, not multiple teams.

The USA Today coaches' rankings released Oct. 7 had just one non-BCS conference team in its top 25 – Boise State at No. 22.

If OU does win out, it will undoubtedly move into the rankings. The question would be whether an undefeated Bobcats team could reach as high as No. 12 and, in doing so, pass Boise State.

It is possible. Undefeated Ball State went into the 2008 MAC Championship Game ranked 12th in the coaches' poll but lost that game and slipped to 22nd.

There is one other way for a non-BCS school to gain a guaranteed spot – finish at least 16th in the BCS standings and ahead of at least one BCS conference champion. At the beginning of October, the top-ranked Big East team was Louisville, situated at 16th in the coaches' poll.

The first BCS standings are due out Oct. 14.

The Bobcats are halfway through their regular season, with games remaining against Akron, Miami (Ohio), Eastern Michigan, Bowling Green, Ball State and finally Kent State on the Friday after Thanksgiving. Then they would have to win the MAC championship game, potentially against a solid Toledo team.

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# Victory Could Be Start Of Something Big At OSU

After witnessing the first signature victory of the Urban Meyer era at Ohio State the week before, fans finally saw the type of scoring explosion in the Buckeyes' 63-38 victory over Nebraska they had been anticipating since the announcement that Meyer was returning to Ohio to take over the reins of the OSU program.

On display was the contrast those fans had visualized between Meyer's coaching style and that of the highly-successful, yet notoriously bland and conservative Jim Tressel. Tressel's teams wouldn't hang 63 on Youngstown State, let alone a ranked traditional power such as the Cornhuskers.

The record 106,102 in attendance at Ohio Stadium and a national television audience saw several interesting things from the Buckeyes. They saw a fake punt try. (I know it didn't work, but I thought Ben Buchanan executed it well.) They saw Meyer forgo a field-goal attempt and instead run a fourth-down play that resulted in a 31-yard Braxton Miller touchdown with the game still contested in the third quarter. And they saw Miller throw three passes to the tight ends and another to the fullback that resulted in a total of 92 yards and a touchdown.

Additionally, in a move that had been widely anticipated among Ohio State fans and the move that may have most clearly demonstrated the difference in styles between Meyer and Tressel, with the game secure and the final seconds ticking away – the traditional time for a victory formation on offense – Meyer called Carlos Hyde's number for a 16-yard scoring run with 48 seconds remaining. That touchdown set the final margin at 25 points in a game Las Vegas predicted only as a 3½-point victory for the Buckeyes with a badly misjudged over-under of 56½.

Seconds later, Nebraska head coach and former Buckeye Bo Pelini barely brushed by Meyer for the postgame handshake. It must have been clear to Pelini and anyone else watching that with Meyer on the sidelines in Columbus, the Big Ten might be changed forever.

While those watching witnessed these phenomena new to Columbus, at least from the home team, they also witnessed Miller continue to demonstrate that he is one of the most dynamic players in all of college football – but perhaps a revelation to those in the television audience viewing the sophomore quarterback for the first time.

Those new to Miller might have been wondering what all the fuss was about as the Buckeyes stumbled to just 17 net yards on 13 plays without a first down on their first four drives of the game. Miller had minus-9 yards on the ground and was just 1 of 4 passing for 7 yards while Ohio State trailed 17-7 early in the second quarter.

But those skeptics quickly learned how quickly Miller can change a game when he turned in a 72-yard burst. Though he was caught from behind at the Nebraska 3-yard line and briefly knocked out of the game, the Buckeyes scored two plays later, and with Miller back at the controls on OSU's next possession, the Buckeyes were off and running.

By the time all was said and done, Miller had carried 16 times for 186 yards and a touchdown (an 11.6-yard average), and thrown for another 127 yards and a score, giving him 313 total yards for the game.

What is interesting is that while the 63 points is what most Buckeye fans might have envisioned under Meyer, I think those fans might also have envisioned scoring those 63 points in a much more wide-open manner.

## THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH

### Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

The way Ohio State went about racking up its points and the nearly 500 yards that came with them would probably have pleased Tressel and even the legendary Woody Hayes.

The Buckeyes piled up 371 of their 498 yards on the ground, their highest rushing total since 1991, and threw the ball only 14 times in the game, including just three times in the second half – not at all in the fourth quarter.

The 232-pound Hyde joined Miller in breaking the 100-yard mark, looking like an old-time OSU running back while carrying 28 times for 140 yards and four touchdowns. Hyde had no negative yardage in the game, although Tressel, Hayes and Meyer would all cringe at his early fourth-quarter fumble.

Rod Smith also shone in brief action, carrying twice for 38 yards, including a strong 33-yard scoring run in the fourth quarter.

Meyer has been assuring fans the Buckeyes would not abandon the run during his tenure, but even the coach seems a bit surprised by the way his offense is going about its business.

"You can see what we are," Meyer said after the big victory. "We're kind of a pound-you offense right now. I don't mind that. I've not had a lot of those. But that's a pound-you offense."

While that type of offense stays true to the Ohio State tradition, such coaches as Tressel and Hayes would have certainly raised an eyebrow at the 38 points and numerous big plays yielded by the Buckeyes' defense.

But the Ohio State stop troops continued to play opportunistic defense, making plays when they had to, a trend that started in the first game of the season and has continued throughout the first half of the season.

Against Nebraska, Ohio State forced three interceptions, recovered a fumble and recorded four sacks among nine tackles for loss.

I also look to a key Nebraska possession where the defense rose to the occasion.

The Buckeyes had turned the ball over at the Ohio State 31 late in the first quarter after Buchanan's failed fake punt.

The Cornhuskers, already having scored 14 straight points to lead 14-7, could have easily seized momentum after Meyer's risky gambit. Instead, the OSU defense stiffened, stopping Nebraska 4 yards short of the end zone and forcing a 26-yard Brett Maher field goal to make it 17-7 in favor of NU.

A touchdown there, aside from making the score 21-7, could have had a huge psychological effect – negatively on the Buckeyes and their fired-up crowd and positively on Nebraska. Instead, Ohio State was able to score two straight touchdowns and go back on top, 21-17.

The Nebraska possession after the fake punt was the second straight Cornhuskers drive to start well into Ohio State territory because of a special teams gaffe. On the previous drive, NU set up shop at the Buckeyes' 28 after Ameer Abdullah returned a Buchanan punt 43 yards. On that occasion, the OSU defense was not as stout, allowing Abdullah to ultimately score on a 3-yard run.

So as you are critiquing the defense for allowing 38 points, that's 10 points that can at least be partially blamed on special teams.

On the flip side, I was a little distressed

by the return of missed tackles on Taylor Martinez's 9-yard touchdown run midway through the second quarter. The way the Buckeyes pinballed off the Huskers quarterback reminded me of Keith Mumphery's missed-tackle-filled 29-yard touchdown catch-and-run the previous week for Michigan State.

While you can't overlook the many continued foibles of the Ohio State defense, you also can't overlook the fact that three bona fide stars have emerged for the Buckeyes on that side of the ball.

Perhaps people didn't take notice of Bradley Roby until his game against the Cornhuskers with his two interceptions, including one for a touchdown, a pass breakup and four tackles. But he has been all over the field all season after a fine redshirt freshman campaign in 2011 that included 47 tackles and three interceptions.

With the emergence of big Johnathan Hankins as another star on the defense, coupled with a strong game against Nebraska by fellow lineman Garrett Goebel, who had eight tackles including one for loss, John Simon was able to break loose for an epic game. In case anyone forgot just how good the 6-2, 263-pound senior is, all he did was make seven tackles, including six solos against the Huskers, with five TFLs and two sacks. For good measure, he forced a fumble.

Now that opposing defenses can no longer key on Simon, look for him to have even more games like that.

In addition to Simon, Hankins and Roby, there are several other defenders who could emerge as stars. One of those is linebacker Ryan Shazier, who had a team-leading 11 tackles, including two for loss and a sack. The sophomore has an amazing knack for getting to the football but sometimes seems like he is more interested in getting on SportsCenter than playing fundamentally-sound football.

Shazier was one of the guilty parties who missed a tackle on Martinez's TD run (as was Roby), and he tried to scoop up a fumble deep in Nebraska territory and run for a score rather than just falling on it. The Cornhuskers recovered Shazier's bobble and were able to punt rather than potentially setting up another Ohio State score.

Shazier and some of the other defenders would do well to watch film of Simon on his late sack of Martinez. He showed outstanding tackling form while simultaneously stripping the ball for Michael Bennett to recover.

While I thought the defense holding Nebraska to a field goal after the failed fake punt was important, I thought the OSU offense returned the favor by bailing their comrades out later in the game.

Nebraska went to the locker room at the intermission trailing 35-24 and was set to receive to start the second half. Sparked by three plays of 20 yards or more, the Huskers marched 77 yards in just 2:15 to jump back into the ballgame at 35-31.

All the Buckeye offense did in response was march 75 yards in 10 plays over 4:35 for a Hyde score and a 42-31 lead. Ohio State was never really threatened after that.

After the big win over Michigan State the previous Saturday, Meyer said he had seen his team come finally together. There was

plenty of evidence of that also in the win over Nebraska as the offense, defense and special teams all contributed to the critical victory.

### Move Him?

I remain amazed by Miller's use of his feet to elude would-be tacklers on his way to one solid rushing game after another. He has moves that would make any running back envious.

That got me thinking back to a few years ago when some fans were clamoring for Tressel to move Terrelle Pryor to wide receiver. I figured it was only a matter of time before someone suggested that Miller be moved to running back.

Sure enough, on the Sunday morning after the win over Nebraska, there was a letter writer to The Columbus Dispatch calling for Miller to make such a move.

I have never understood why you would not want the ball in the hands of your best offensive threat on every play if that player had the ability to play quarterback. In the case of Pryor, a move to wide receiver would have put Joe Bauserman at the controls. We all know how that would have most likely turned out.

In the case of Miller, with Hyde, Smith and hopefully Jordan Hall to ease the rushing load, why would you turn to an unproven Kenny Guiton? Miller has had no problems getting his carries from the quarterback spot, and his running threat will ultimately open up the passing game.

I think Miller is a better pure runner at this stage of his career than Pryor, though Pryor had the size and strength to break out of would-be sacks and use that gliding running style of his to gain big yards by fooling defenders on their pursuit angles.

Through six games of their sophomore seasons, Miller has the far better numbers. He has rushed for 763 yards on 106 carries for a 7.2-yard average, a long of 72 and eight touchdowns. In 2009, Pryor had run 65 times for 333 yards and a 5.1-yard average with three scores and a long of 43 after six games.

Pryor had completed 72 of 128 passes for 948 yards, nine TDs and six interceptions with a 56.2 completion percentage. Miller is 83 of 135 for 61.5 percent, 1,060 yards, nine touchdowns and three picks.

I'll always wonder, however, what Pryor might have looked like if he had been in Meyer's system and maybe received a little more coaching.

### Clarett Stays In Spotlight

In our continuing celebration of the 10th anniversary of Ohio State's 2002 national football championship, the Buckeyes extended their record to 6-0 with a mistake-riddled 27-16 victory under the lights at Northwestern.

Freshman running back sensation Maurice Clarett continued to grow his legend, but this time for the wrong reasons. Though he totaled 140 yards on 29 carries and scored two touchdowns, he lost three fumbles that night. Worse yet, those in attendance and a national television audience saw him arguing on the sidelines with his position coach, former Buckeye great Tim Spencer, prompting many to wonder why Tressel continued to send his youthful star back into the game.

It was one of the first inklings of problems to come with Clarett.

For more coverage of OSU's 2002 victory over Northwestern, including my column following that game, be sure to check out our Oct. 12 electronic issue, free to all current print subscribers. If you are a subscriber who has yet to access our 36 additional electronic newsletters, see the instructions on page 5.





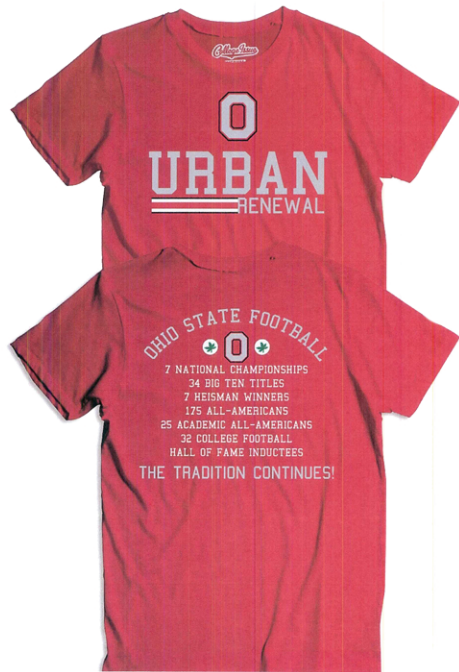
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