



BSB Reprints: Ohio State, Wisconsin With Big Wins In Rivalry

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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

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SONNY BROCKWAY

SCOREBOARD SAYS IT ALL – Ohio State junior quarterback Terrelle Pryor (2) dejectedly walks to the Camp Randall Stadium locker room Oct. 16 after his No. 1-ranked Buckeyes lost a 31-18 decision to Wisconsin.

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By ADAM JARDY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

If he had any doubts about what had just happened, Jim Tressel was given a verbal reminder during his postgame press conference.

The Ohio State head coach sat behind a raised table in the bowels of the Camp Randall Stadium concourse answering questions from the media with the same measured look on his face he wears after most games. This time, however, he was attempting to explain how his No. 1 Buckeyes had lasted exactly one week at the top of the rankings before taking a 31-18 loss Oct. 16 to No. 18 Wisconsin.

Tressel was in the middle of answering the second question of the postgame press conference when a nearby security guard's walkie-talkie inadvertently interrupted his thoughts.

"Attention, fans!" the voice rang out. "Please get off the goalposts and everyone else please move away from the goalposts."

Tressel tried to soldier on, but the public-address announcement that was also being broadcast on the security guard's walkie-talkie could not be silenced.

"Please get off the goalposts," the voice intoned again, forcing Tressel to cut off his remarks and wait for the guard to silence his device.

A few awkward seconds later, the coach resumed

his thoughts and the beat went on for the Buckeyes who were suddenly in charge of trying to make the best of an opportunity lost.

The defeat to the Badgers (6-1, 2-1 Big Ten) represented more than just the first loss of the season for the Buckeyes (6-1, 2-1). It represented the first major blow to a plan that was set in place nearly three years ago.

Fresh off a loss to LSU in the 2008 national championship game, Ohio State managed to retain nearly all of its junior talent that was contemplating heading to the NFL. James Laurinaitis, Malcolm Jenkins, Alex Boone, Brian Robiskie and Marcus Freeman each turned down the chance to turn pro for the opportunity at another shot at a collegiate championship.

Expectations were raised as the team welcomed in the nation's No. 4 recruiting class including the top overall prospect in the nation in quarterback Terrelle Pryor.

It took all of three games for those hopes to be shattered. After a season-opening win against Youngstown State and an unexpected squeaker against Ohio in week two, the Buckeyes headed west for a nationally televised showdown under the lights against USC.

In a game that could best be described as a nightmare, the Buckeyes were run off the field by a Trojans squad that looked quicker, tougher and simply better than their Big Ten opponent.

The game marked more than just a 35-3 loss. It provided the impetus for a changing of the guard within the program as the following week Tressel opted to bench senior co-captain and returning starter Todd Boeckman and hand the quarterback position over to Pryor. In doing so, the coach shifted the focus from winning a title that season to winning one in the future with Pryor and his classmates running the show.

It was not a seamless transition by several accounts with members of the team's senior class upset that their chances to win a national title were being put in the hands of a freshman – albeit a talented one. Junior wide receiver DeVier Posey, a freshman on that team, said he sensed the locker room conflict.

"I feel like that's for any freshman group coming in," Posey said. "You have to abide by the older guys' rules."

The 2008 season would get better from there and the Buckeyes captured a share of the conference title, but a close home loss to Penn State in week 10 firmly removed OSU from the national championship race.

Pryor was not the only one getting a baptism by fire, however. When he made his first career start against Troy the week after the loss to USC, so did classmate Michael Brewster at center. A number

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The Ohio State-Wisconsin rivalry has seen each team spoil each other's seasons in recent years.

In 2010, the No. 1 Buckeyes traveled to Camp Randall Stadium to take on the No. 18 Badgers with Terrelle Pryor leading the way at quarterback. Ohio State fell 31-18 at the hands of the Wisconsin on Oct. 16, 2010.

Four years later, Ohio State would need a convincing win against Wisconsin in the Big Ten Championship game to propel itself into the first College Football Playoff.

With Cardale Jones engineering a high-powered Ohio State offense, the Buckeyes bested the Badgers in the title game, 59-0.

This installment of BSB Reprints travels back to both to 2010 when the Buckeyes were upset by the Badgers, as well as 2014 when the Scarlet and Gray dominated on its way to a national title.

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