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C M Y K

End Brings A Beginning

TIM MOODY

CALL IT A CAREER – Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer is set to retire after leading the Buckeyes for seven seasons, leaving Columbus with a national championship and three Big Ten titles to his name.

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Rose Bowl To Be Meyer's Finale

By TIM MOODY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

There's no one perfect way to sum up Urban Meyer's seven-season run as Ohio State's head football coach.

There's the good – an 82-9 overall record, a 54-4 mark in the Big Ten, a Cotton Bowl win over USC, a Fiesta Bowl victory against Notre Dame.

Then there's the great – three Big Ten championships, a perfect 7-0 mark against Michigan, that Sugar Bowl win over Alabama and the first-ever College Football Playoff National Championship against Oregon. He led the Buckeyes to a 12-0 season his first year in Columbus and didn't lose a game until the following December.

There was some bad, too. The Buckeyes lost back-to-back games to end the 2013 season, first to Michigan State in the Big Ten title game then to Clemson in the Orange Bowl. They fell, 31-0, to Clemson in the 2016 College Football Playoff as well. Then came 2018, when Meyer was placed on paid administrative leave ahead of fall camp before being suspended for three games for mishandling the employment of former wide receivers coach Zach Smith. Then Meyer collapsed with a severe headache during the Indiana game, an issue caused by an arachnoid cyst on his brain. Those health issues persisted throughout the season – they've actually been persisting for years – and Meyer eventually found himself making a decision that he later admitted had been in the back of his mind for a while.

That all culminated Dec. 4 when, three days after Ohio State beat Northwestern for the Big Ten championship, Meyer announced that he would be retiring after the Rose Bowl, paving the way for offensive coordinator Ryan Day to take over as the 25th head coach in program history.

So came the end of one of the most decorated coaching tenures in program history – one of the most successful careers in the history of the sport, in fact – an end brought on by the negatives, but a career that will be remembered in Columbus for the highs.

The school officially announced Meyer's retirement early that Tuesday morning before holding a press conference in the afternoon. When the time came to give his first remarks as the soon-to-be-former head coach, Meyer took a moment to wish his grandson, Troy, a happy second birthday before expanding on his decision.

"I'm honored to have represented my home state and this great university the past seven sea-

Continued On Page 12

Day Pegged As Ohio State's 25th Head Football Coach

By TIM MOODY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

When 2018 comes to an end, Ryan Day will have never served as the full-time head coach of a football team. The same will be true the next day, when Ohio State faces Washington in the Rose Bowl.

When Day wakes up Jan. 2, 2019, though, he will officially be the 25th head football coach in program history. But the 39-year-old from Manchester, N.H., isn't your average first-time head coach. In fact, Day will begin his first season as the lead man in Columbus with a 3-0 head coaching record to his name.

Ryan Day

When Urban Meyer was placed on paid administrative leave before fall camp, Ohio State selected Day to be the interim head coach instead of elevating defensive coordinator Greg Schiano, a former collegiate and NFL head coach, or offensive coordinator Kevin Wilson, whose last job was as head coach at Indiana.

That showed a trust in Day from the start, and it also served as a chance for athletic director Gene Smith to evaluate the coach and, in the long run, played a role in him being named Meyer's successor when Meyer announced his imminent retirement Dec. 4, the same day Ohio State named Day the next man up and gave him a five-year contract worth an initial $4.5 million annually.

"We all know the tremendous job he did and the challenging time," Smith said Dec. 4. "He led our program through unbelievable adversity earlier in the year. He offers us a terrific, terrific skill and talent. We're just so fortunate that he was here."

Day's appointment as head coach comes amid somewhat of a meteoric rise in the profession. He played collegiately as a quarterback at New Hampshire from 1998-2001 then got his first job as the tight ends coach there in 2002. After that, Day had collegiate coaching stops at Boston College (2003-04, 2007-11, 2013-14), Florida (2005 as a gradu-

Continued On Page 14

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From The Forum

Heading into the season, the goal for Ohio State was to get both J.K. Dobbins and Mike Weber over the 1,000-yard mark. With the Rose Bowl approaching, Dobbins has reached that goal (1,029 yards on 223 attempts, 4.6-yard average), but Weber has some work to do (157 att., 858 yds., 5.5). With that in mind, BSB subscriber Terrier Buck posed this question on the BSB Forum on BuckeyeSports.com: Which Ohio State back has had the better season?

Weber. Do not know yards per carry but he seemed more apt to get more yardage per carry to me.

– mrbigbux

Dobbins. It's not even close. Does so much more.

– Garrett Stepien, BSB

Take away the fumbles and I say Weber. But you can't take away the fumbles. The other question might be who had the more "disappointing" season, and there I would say Dobbins.

– Frank Moskowitz, BSB

Dobbins looked a step slower than last year.

– Blufftonbuck

If Weber didn't have so many issues squeezing the ball, I would go with him. Dobbins was more reliable, therefore got more carries and yards.

I love Weber, but he can't always be trusted in crucial moments.

– James Grega, BSB

I've been impressed more with Dobbins as I think his running ability is a bit better. Not that Weber isn't great but I think Dobbins has the edge. He took a beating for one whole game when (Weber) was out and kept on ticking.

– PeyoteBuck

Weber probably had the better individual games like Oregon State and Michigan State, but Dobbins was the much better player all year. The coaching staff obviously trusts him more, and you can't just discount Weber's issues with holding onto the ball. Plus Dobbins scored 11 total touchdowns. End of story.

– AcrossTheField

Bosa Should Have Stayed

I have been a passionate Buckeye fan since 1951. It pains me to say anything negative about an Ohio State player. But I feel that I must do so in this case.

The behavior of defensive end Nick Bosa in abandoning his teammates and moving to California has provoked both anger and dismay in me. In all my years of watching Buckeye football, I have never seen such arrogant selfishness as that displayed by Bosa. I am no doctor and am unable to evaluate when Bosa would have been able to play, but many doctors have expressed the opinion that he easily would have recovered in plenty of time to play vs. the hated Wolverines of Michigan, and Kirk Herbstreit, Tim Tebow and David Pollack have harshly criticized Bosa for not trying to return for this purpose.

But even if you assume that he could not have played this season, Bosa could have provided great help to the Buckeyes if he had only stayed in Columbus. He is clearly an expert in the playing of the defensive end position. He could have provided helpful coaching tips to Jonathon Cooper and Chase Young as they seek to improve.

Perhaps even more important, Bosa could have assisted Urban Meyer and his colleagues in recruiting the 2019 class. The prime 2019 defensive end target Zach Harrison lives less than 20 miles from Ohio Stadium. And he plays Bosa's position. Surely Bosa could have been useful in making the case to Harrison to become a Buckeye.

If Bosa had fulfilled his responsibilities as a captain, he could have moved to California in early January and would have had almost four months to prepare for the draft. And he would have had use of the Ohio State training facilities up to that time.

Bosa was quoted in May as saying that his primary goal was to help Ohio State win a national championship this season. Obviously he must have changed his mind. Because of Nick's selfishness, I propose that his name be expunged from the list of 2018 Buckeye captains.

Gilbert E. Gildea
Newport Beach, Calif.

How Do They Stack Up?

Congratulations to the 2018 Ohio State Buckeye football team on a very good, not great season. Any year in which the Buckeyes beat That Team Up North and go to the Rose Bowl as Big Ten champions deserves acknowledgment.

Having said that, I am inclined to look back into the history of Ohio State football when considering the legacy of this year's team. In that regard, the 1969, 1970, 1973, 1975, 1979, 1996, 1998, 2006, 2010 and 2015 teams all would be an apt comparison. Would the national media's perception of Ohio State be similar as to how Alabama is currently viewed (14 national championships) had the Buckeyes prevailed in that single game lost in just half of those years?

Personally, I am once more disappointed in a season without an opportunity to play for a national championship, simply because the Buckeyes lost yet again another game they could have easily won.

Dan Carusone
Girard, Ohio

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 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.

From The Pages Of BSB

35 Years Ago – 1983

BSB reported the death of Alisha Kathleen Disher, a member of the Ohio State softball team. She was killed in a one-car accident at the Breezewood interchange of the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

A freshman, Disher was a walk-on addition for the Buckeyes and was scheduled to see action as a reserve at first base and designated hitter.

30 Years Ago – 1988

Although Ohio State's season ended with disappointment at 4-6-1 after its 34-31 loss to Michigan on Nov. 19, junior placekicker Pat O'Morrow was a bright spot for the Buckeyes. Morrow made 18 of 23 field goals and nailed 23 consecutive conversion kicks to end the campaign. His only misses came from 49 yards twice, 50 yards once and 56 yards twice, coming to a 78.3-percent mark.

"Personally, (tying the record) feels great," O'Morrow said of OSU's single-season mark of 18 field goals set by Vlade Janakievski in 1979. "I just wish I wouldn't have tied it. I wish I would have beaten it. But there's always next year."

25 Years Ago – 1993

While Ohio State was waiting on its postseason plans, one Buckeye thought he and his team did not deserve to reach the Rose Bowl.

"To go out there and play a championship game like we did today, we don't deserve to be in the Rose Bowl," offensive lineman Dan Wilkinson said bluntly. "I hope Wisconsin wins and (does) what they have to do. Playing like that, we don't deserve it."

Wilkinson was referring to OSU's 28-0 shutout loss to Michigan on Nov. 20, which dropped head coach John Cooper's record to 0-5-1 in The Game. Wisconsin had a game with Michigan State in Tokyo remaining.

"As a team, I don't know if a lot of players were focused in," Wilkinson said of Ohio State, which awaited its bowl fate on Dec. 4. "Everybody was either not focused or not ready to play. We feel we betrayed ourselves as a team. We feel we let everybody down, which we did."

20 Years Ago – 1998

Based on the terms of the contract extension he received after the 1994 season, Ohio State head coach John Cooper automatically earned a $10,000 bonus and a one-year extension for leading the Buckeyes to at least a nine-win campaign – with one of the victories coming against Michigan.

According to the terms of the deal, it marked the third and final time he was able to receive an automatic renewal of his contract. Any further extension had to be done through negotiation.

Cooper, 61, also achieved automatic renewals after the 1995 season for a top-10 finish and following the 1996 campaign for a Rose Bowl appearance. The initial contract extension covered 1995-99, but the renewals changed the terms to go through 2002.

Ohio State athletic director Andy Geiger, who had been on the job just six months at the time, constructed Cooper's contract after the Buckeyes downed the Wolverines in 1994.

15 Years Ago – 2003

In the aftermath of Ohio State's 35-21 loss at Michigan on Nov. 22 to end the regular season, a quarterback controversy of sorts unfolded. Head coach Jim Tressel reinserted Craig Krenzel, who had been injured in the third quarter, for Scott McMullen in the fourth quarter and the offense sputtered.

McMullen led the Buckeyes on a 10-play, 93-yard scoring drive that cut the Wolverines' lead to 28-21 before a three-and-out on the ensuing drive. Tressel had McMullen on a short leash, however, and subsequently pulled him for Krenzel, who was ineffective with a pair of three-and-outs upon entry.

"There may have been a little – I don't want to use the word sentiment," Tressel said. "That might be too strong a word. But there might have been a little loyalty there or whatever. I didn't pretend to know who would be more effective, but you still have to make decisions."

Tressel's choice was debatable, but McMullen did not question the move. Krenzel completed 20 of 33 passes for 221 yards and two touchdowns while McMullen went 8 of 13 with 108 yards.

"Of course I would have liked to have been in there and hopefully lead the team back to victory," McMullen said. "But Craig was the choice and I'll do whatever this team wants me to do."

10 Years Ago – 2008

After the regular season concluded, Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany considered the need for a conference title game.

"The big issue is it would impact a series of games that have a lot of equity and tradition," he told Sporting News. "With Michigan and Ohio State, we have two institutions who strongly feel that game should be on the last week of the Big Ten season. It's not just that game; there are people who would feel a championship game would undermine the tradition of the league and those types of games."

On the other hand, Delany admitted that a win to end the campaign could potentially help a Big Ten team needing one more victory and grab the attention of voters for the BCS National Championship Game.

"It helped LSU last year vault all the way from (No. 7) to the top," Delany said. "It's at the end of the season, when it has more impact."

Five Years Ago – 2013

After they missed nearly three quarters of Ohio State's 42-41 win over Michigan on Nov. 30 for their roles in a brawl, head coach Urban Meyer decided that senior right guard Marcus Hall and freshman running back Dontre Wilson were not going to be disciplined further by the Buckeyes.

On the Big Ten Championship Game teleconference Dec. 1, Meyer said he had no plans to suspend the duo for the conference title matchup with Michigan State on Dec. 7. As long as the Big Ten did not discipline Hall or Wilson, Meyer was fine with his players' three-quarter absence.

"I'm disappointed," Meyer said. "There's no place for fighting in football, and I think the Big Ten did an excellent job getting people out of there on both sides. I'm real disappointed in our team for leaving the bench, which is not what that's all about.

"I already met the players involved, and the rule is very clear – you get in a fight, you lose a game. They already lost a game. They didn't play from that point forward because they were ejected from the game."

Hall's actions were at the center of the conversation after he was ejected and threw a sideline tantrum, kicking a bench and walking to the tunnel into the locker room with both middle fingers extended to the Michigan Stadium crowd. On the day after the game, he took to Twitter and apologized for his antics.

"My actions do not reflect who I am as a person and teammate," Hall's tweet read. "I love The Ohio State University and appreciate everything it has done for me. From the bottom of my heart, I am truly sorry and hope everyone can accept my sincere apology."

One Year Ago – 2017

As the Buckeyes entered their critical recruiting stretch of December with college football's first early signing period set for Dec. 20-22, head coach Urban Meyer revealed Nov. 30 on his radio show that he had three assistants turn down coaching opportunities elsewhere to stay at Ohio State.

"We have had two coaches contacted about becoming a head coach," Meyer said. "And then one assistant coach just turned down an opportunity to be a coordinator somewhere."

In addition to defensive coordinator Greg Schiano, who was on the verge of becoming head coach at Tennessee before things fell through with the Volunteers after an outraged reaction from the fan base, those two assistants were believed to have been co-offensive coordinators Kevin Wilson and Ryan Day.

"A wise old man once told me there are two types of coaches: ones they want and ones they don't want, and we've got a bunch of wants," said Meyer, who did not ultimately disclose which coaches were involved and where. "As long as that's happening, that means I've hired the right people. So that comes with life in the big city. I can't stand it, but that's part of the deal."

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No. 1	Sept. 8	No. 13	Dec. 15
No. 2	Sept. 15	No. 14	Jan. 19
No. 3	Sept. 22	No. 15	Feb. 2
No. 4	Sept. 29	No. 16	Feb. 16
No. 5	Oct. 6	No. 17	March 9
No. 6	Oct. 13	No. 18	March 23
No. 7	Oct. 20	No. 19	April 6
No. 8	Nov. 3	No. 20	April 20
No. 9	Nov. 10	No. 21	May
No. 10	Nov. 17	No. 22	June
No. 11	Nov. 24	No. 23	July
No. 12	Dec. 1	No. 24	August

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A Simple Answer To Meyer's Legacy Question

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK
Mark Rea

During the Dec. 4 press conference to announce his retirement from coaching, Urban Meyer was asked what he would like for his legacy to be. He mentioned on-the-field accomplishments, his relationship with his players, doing things the right way – most of what we'd all like for our legacies to be if asked the same question.

But, really … what should Meyer's legacy be?

Discussion of anyone's place in history is a complicated matter. For example, was Meyer a better coach than Knute Rockne or Bud Wilkinson? I'm not sure that is a question that can be properly debated considering the widely different eras in which each man coached.

I know what the raw numbers say, and they would seem to indicate Meyer is on par with the greatest of the greats.

Rockne compiled a career record of 105-12-5 (a winning percentage of .814) with three national championships in 13 seasons at Notre Dame, but he coached from 1918 to 1930 when the college game was in its infancy. Wilkinson coached at Oklahoma from 1947 to 1963 when football was evolving into more of a finesse game, and he finished with an overall record of 145-29-4 (.826) and a conference mark of 93-9-3 (.900). He also won three national titles with the Sooners.

Meyer, who early during his career seemed to master the complexities of the way the game is played today, finished with a career record of 186-32 (.853) that included a 54-4 mark in conference play with the Buckeyes. No matter the era, that .931 winning percentage is practically unheard of.

For the past several years, Meyer and Nick Saban of Alabama have been regarded as the top coaches in college football, and rightfully so. A team coached by either Meyer or Saban has won eight of the last 12 national championships, and the reason is fairly simple. In addition to being pretty good with their X's and O's, Meyer and Saban simply outclass every one of their peers in recruiting.

What has separated Ohio State from the rest of the Big Ten these past seven years was the take-no-prisoners approach to recruiting Meyer brought with him from Florida. That was never more evident than during this year's 62-39 pummeling the Buckeyes administered to archrival Michigan, an opponent that was working on a 10-game winning streak during which it was outscoring the opposition by an average of 26.1 points per game.

Although they scored 39 points and totaled 401 yards of offense against an oftentimes leaky Ohio State defense, the Wolverines were dominated in nearly every other facet of the game. That was especially true of what had been the No. 1-ranked defense in the nation, a Michigan unit that was shredded for 62 points and 567 yards of total offense.

The players Meyer put on the field were simply bigger, stronger and faster than the ones at the disposal of Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh, and I contend the Wolverines will continue to struggle in the rivalry game until Harbaugh begins to recruit to the level of his archrival.

When historians begin to write the legacy of Meyer as a head coach, there will likely be a disingenuous handful of ax-grinders who will want to bring up the off-the-field problems at Florida, and I suppose Zach Smith's name will also have to be mentioned.

In terms of a coaching legacy, however, there will come a time when experts as well as Ohio State fans look back upon the Meyer era, shake their heads in disbelief and marvel at the level of success that included a division title every year, three Big Ten championships, a .901 overall winning percentage, countless All-Americans and first-round NFL draft choices, and a national championship.

Oh, yeah … and a perfect 7-0 record against Michigan.

In my humble opinion, when it comes time to write the legacy of one Urban Frank Meyer III, the first line of that legacy should include the words "the best head coach the Buckeyes have ever had."

Right Man? Right Time?

Unless you peddle in conspiracy theories, it's preposterous to believe one of the reasons behind Meyer's retirement was the way he was treated by university president Michael Drake and athletic director Gene Smith during the time that led to his suspension earlier this year.

While I'm not totally buying what the coach and athletic director went out of their way to profess during the retirement press conference – that they share a deep and abiding friendship that borders on some kind of "bromance" – Meyer and Smith have had a good working relationship, and it is one that could have continued for many years.

The simple truth is that Meyer cannot continue working in a pressure-cooker environment when the reportedly inoperable cyst on his brain reacts unfavorably to stressful situations. With the demands of Meyer's chosen career, it's a wonder some coaches last as long as they do.

Ara Parseghian won nearly 85 percent of his games and two national championships in 11 years at Notre Dame before he retired at the age of 51, telling friends he was exhausted by the demands of the job. Two decades earlier in South Bend, Frank Leahy, who led the Fighting Irish to four national championships in the 1940s, retired in 1953 at the age of 45 because of what were described at the time as stress-related illnesses. Leahy apparently indicated in later years that he walked away because he no longer felt wanted by university officials and boosters, but he did collapse during halftime of a 1953 game and was actually administered the last rites of the Catholic Church when it was feared he was dying.

In those days, Notre Dame was a college football juggernaut. Beginning in 1924 under Rockne and continuing through Leahy's era more than a quarter-century later, the Fighting Irish won nearly 85 percent of their games and captured seven national championships. But there were yips along the way.

In the wake of Rockne's death in a plane crash in 1931, Notre Dame elevated assistant coach Heartley "Hunk" Anderson to the head coaching position. Anderson, who had two years of head coaching experience at Saint Louis, was handed college football's premier program and guided the Irish to a 6-2-1 record during his first season. Two years later, however, after Notre Dame finished 3-5-2, Anderson was fired.

In other words, despite taking over a talent-laden roster and a program infrastructure that runs like a well-oiled machine, Ryan Day has a herculean task ahead of him. Whether or not the 39-year-old coach is ready for what's coming is anyone's guess because Day has never before been a head coach. He has never been in charge of his own program at any level, much less a program the scope and magnitude of Ohio State.

Yes, Day was successful as Meyer's stand-in during the first three games of this season, but those three games are hardly enough of a sample size to determine future achievement. After all, there was no question that despite being away from the sideline on game day, the program was still very much under Meyer's control.

With the early signing period for recruits rapidly approaching, I understand the rush to name a successor who will provide continuity to Meyer's program and ease the minds of prospective players. But I'm not entirely sure I understand why interest was not at least gauged from other coaches with regard to taking over for Meyer.

I would contend that any coach not named Saban or Belichick would jump at the chance to take over what Meyer has built at Ohio State. But you don't even pick up the phone and ask Bob Stoops if he might be interested? You don't owe it to yourself and your program to pick up the phone and ask Stoops, Chris Petersen, and yes, even Dabo Swinney if they are interested even if you think all you're going to get at the other end of the conversation is uncontrollable laughter?

The point I'm trying to make is that the aforementioned names have proven track records as head coaches while Day does not. The 24/7/365 demands of being head coach at Ohio State are unfathomable to most of us and involve much more than what we see on 12 Saturdays each fall.

First and foremost is recruiting, and Day will have an extremely tough act to follow. In the first 24 hours that followed the announcement of Meyer's retirement, Ohio State already suffered a pair of decommitments in its prospective class of 2020.

Day has been an effective recruiter for Meyer, but there is a huge difference between going on the road to establish a relationship with a player and closing the deal when that prospect is on your campus. Not only could Meyer flash three national championship rings, his was a face the up-and-coming crop of recruits have seen on television practically all of their lives. That strategic edge in recruiting is now lost to Ohio State.

None of this is meant with any disrespect to Day. He has been in the coaching profession since graduating from the University of New Hampshire in 2002. He is a proponent of up-tempo offensive attacks, adopting much of that philosophy from current UCLA head coach Chip Kelly, for whom Day played at New Hampshire and coached in the NFL with both the Eagles and 49ers.

There are success stories to be found with first-time head coaches, and Swinney comes immediately to mind. But again, with all due respect, the program Swinney took over at Clemson is not on par with what Day is inheriting at Ohio State. The Tigers hadn't had a 10-win season in 18 years and therefore had little to lose when they rolled the dice and elevated Swinney after Tommy Bowden abruptly resigned midway through the 2008 season.

And it's worth mentioning Swinney's record was a pedestrian 19-15 during his first 2½ years on the job. Does anyone believe that kind of record would be acceptable at Ohio State?

INSIDER

Buckeyes Face Huskies In 105th Rose Bowl

Ohio State won the Big Ten but missed out on the College Football Playoff for the second year running, but the Buckeyes ended up back where they historically belong this time around.

In 2017, Ohio State was placed in the Cotton Bowl to face Pac-12 champion USC, a matchup that would traditionally be played at the Rose Bowl. Last year, the "Granddaddy of Them All" served as one of two CFP semifinals, but in 2018-19 the No. 6 Buckeyes (12-1) are heading back to Pasadena, Calif., to face Pac-12 champ No. 9 Washington (10-3).

The Rose Bowl, which will be Urban Meyer's first as Ohio State's head coach, will also serve as his final game leading the Buckeyes. Meyer is retiring after the game, giving way for offensive coordinator Ryan Day to take over as head coach Jan. 2.

The Rose Bowl is scheduled for a 5 p.m. kick on New Year's Day on ESPN.

Despite missing out on the playoffs, Meyer stressed the pride he has in the 2018 Buckeyes.

"It's hard to say I've ever been more proud of a group of players and people – not just players, but people, the way they demonstrated their resilience and toughness and love for one another," he said Dec. 2.

Meyer, who was born in Toledo and grew up in Ashtabula, Ohio, before earning degrees from both Cincinnati and Ohio State, said he's always looked forward to the possibility of being part of a Rose Bowl.

"I dreamt of it," he said. "We came close a few times. I know Florida one time I thought we were close to going. Then here in '14 I thought we were going. There was one other time that I thought we were going, and we didn't. And no disrespect to the other bowl games, because they're awesome, but the Rose is the one we've always looked forward to."

For more information on Ohio State's Rose Bowl opponent, Washington, see the opponent preview on pages 18-19. Ohio State's history against the Huskies can be found on pages 22-23, and the Buckeyes' history in the Rose Bowl can be found on pages 24-25. Other news and notes related to the matchup can be found on pages 26-27 in Rose Bowl Insider while a rundown of some Los Angeles area attractions can be found on pages 28-29.

Carter Opens Up On Meyer's Health

After the university announced Meyer's imminent retirement Dec. 4, former Buckeye receiver Cris Carter, who has a close relationship with the coach, broke down his thoughts on Meyer's health and his decision to step down while speaking on FOX Sports' "FIRST THINGS FIRST," a show he co-hosts.

While many have speculated about additional reasons for Meyer's retirement, Carter made it clear that health was the main factor.

"He wants to coach, but physically he can't," Carter said. "He can't do this anymore. I think it's been well-documented as far as the cyst on his brain.

"Urban and I had a very, very frank conversation. Urban was my wide receiver coach at Ohio State, and what I was afraid of was happening over the last four weeks."

Carter even said he was concerned for Meyer's immediate well-being.

"I was worried that I was going to have to speak at my friend's funeral, and that's not something you want to do," he said. "You don't want to have to think about that."

As mentioned above, the university quickly appointed Day to replace Meyer. According to Carter, Meyer pegged Day as the best offensive coordinator he's ever worked with – and that's a list that includes multiple other Division I head coaches.

"Urban thinks he's the best offensive coordinator he's ever had," Carter said. "Now, he's got three or four guys out there. (Florida head coach) Dan Mullen, (Texas head coach) Tom Herman … He says Ryan Day is even better than them. You can see it in the way he runs his offense. It's definitely far more creative. And you've seen him develop (OSU sophomore quarterback) Dwayne Haskins in a very special way."

Haskins Finishes 3rd In Heisman Vote

Haskins had a record-setting season, but it didn't lead to a Heisman Trophy.

Haskins, a first-year starter from Potomac (Md.) Bullis School, set the single-season program and Big Ten records in passing yards (4,580), total touchdowns (51) and passing touchdowns (47). He leads the nation in each of those categories this season in addition to being a first-team All-Big Ten selection, the Big Ten Offensive Player of the Year, the Big Ten Quarterback of the Year, the conference championship game MVP and the recipient of the Chicago Tribune Silver Football.

The accolades weren't quite enough for the Heisman, though, as Haskins finished third in the vote, which was announced Dec. 8 in New York City. The award was won by Oklahoma quarterback Kyler Murray, while Alabama signal caller Tua Tagovailoa was second.

Murray's final point tally was 2,167 while Tagovailoa had 1,871 and Haskins had 783. The Ohio State quarterback finished with 46 first-place votes, 111 second-place votes and 423 third-place votes.

Team success might have played into the final vote as Murray's Sooners and Tagovailoa's Crimson Tide were in the thick of the College Football Playoff discussion throughout the year. The two teams are set to face off in the playoff semifinals on Dec. 29 in the Orange Bowl.

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Next BSB Mails Jan. 15

The next print issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin is scheduled to be mailed Jan. 15, 2019.

However, the Buckeye Sports Bulletin staff will be providing plenty of coverage leading up to the early football recruiting signing period that begins on Dec. 19 as well as coverage of the Rose Bowl on the electronic BuckeyeSports.com, free to all Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers.

Readers will also want to follow both basketball teams, the hockey and wrestling teams and much, much more. Additionally, subscribers can talk about the events of the day with members of the BSB staff and other Buckeye fans on BuckeyeSports.com's Forum.

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Readers who have been experiencing postal delivery problems can also read the complete edition of each issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin online at BuckeyeSports.com on Mondays during football season and Tuesdays the rest of the year.

Your copy of the paper will still arrive in your mailbox at its usual time.

If you have any questions about BuckeyeSports.com or your mail service, feel free to call us at the above number.

Alabama is the top seed while Oklahoma is No. 4.

The winner, Murray, is among the most dynamic players in the sport. The Texas A&M transfer has thrown for 4,053 yards and 40 touchdowns to just seven interceptions this season to go with 892 rushing yards and 11 more scores on the ground.

Tagovailoa, a Honolulu native, has thrown for 3,353 yards and 37 touchdowns to just four interceptions for the undefeated Crimson Tide.

Haskins was the first Heisman finalist from Ohio State since Troy Smith won the award in 2006. The trophy has gone to a Buckeye a total of seven times to six players – Les Horvath (1944), Vic Janowicz (1950), Howard "Hopalong" Cassady (1955), Archie Griffin (1974-75), Eddie George (1995) and Smith. Griffin is the only two-time winner of the award.

2018-19 Ohio State Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Result/Time (ET)	TV	Record, Bowl Game
Sept. 1	OREGON STATE	W, 77-31	ABC	2-10, not eligible
Sept. 8	RUTGERS	W, 52-3	BTN	1-11, not eligible
Sept. 15	vs. TCU#	W, 40-28	ABC	6-6, Cheez-It Bowl vs. California
Sept. 22	TULANE	W, 49-6	BTN	6-6, Cure Bowl vs. Louisiana
Sept. 29	at Penn State	W, 27-26	ABC	9-3, Citrus Bowl vs. Kentucky
Oct. 6	INDIANA	W, 49-26	FOX	5-7, not eligible
Oct. 13	MINNESOTA	W, 30-14	FS1	6-6, Quick Lane Bowl vs. Georgia Tech
Oct. 20	at Purdue	L, 49-20	ABC	6-6, Music City Bowl vs. Auburn
Nov. 3	NEBRASKA	W, 36-31	FOX	4-8, not eligible
Nov. 10	at Michigan State	W, 26-6	FOX	7-5, Redbox Bowl vs. Oregon
Nov. 17	at Maryland	W, 52-51 (OT)	ABC	5-7, not eligible
Nov. 24	MICHIGAN	W, 62-39	FOX	10-2, Peach Bowl vs. Florida
Dec. 1	vs. Northwestern@	W, 45-24	FOX	8-5, Holiday Bowl vs. Utah
Jan. 1, 2019	vs. Washington&	5 p.m.	ESPN	10-3, Rose Bowl vs. Ohio State

– at Arlington, Texas (AT&T Stadium)
@ – Big Ten championship game at Indianapolis (Lucas Oil Stadium)
& – Rose Bowl at Pasadena, Calif. (Rose Bowl Stadium)

Hartline Sheds Interim Tag

After firing wide receivers coach Zach Smith in July, Meyer quickly appointed former Buckeye wide-out Brian Hartline to the position in an interim capacity. On Dec. 8, four days after Meyer announced his retirement and Day was pegged as his replacement, Hartline shed that interim tag, becoming a full-time assistant on Day's first staff in Columbus.

Brian Hartline

"Brian is a terrific young coach and mentor to our players, and I am thrilled he is on our staff permanently now," Day said. "Brian was displaying outstanding leadership qualities when he was a quality control coach, and his efforts coaching the wide receivers this season are a huge reason we are Big Ten champions and headed to the Rose Bowl."

Hartline initially returned to OSU as a quality control coach on Meyer's staff in 2017.

Hartline played for the Buckeyes from 2005-08 with 90 receptions for 1,429 yards and 12 touchdowns. He also played 104 games in the NFL (73 starts) with 344 receptions for 4,766 yards and 14 touchdowns for Miami and Cleveland.

His experience at the collegiate and professional levels helped Hartline earn rave reviews early in his coaching career.

"He's just very good technically, obviously, because that's how he's made a living for quite a while in the NFL," Meyer said Oct. 17. "Where he's improved is the tactical part, which is what goes

Continued On Page 6

INSIDER

Continued From Page 5

on in (the meeting room). He's much improved there."

On the field and on the recruiting trail, Hartline had to earn his role. He stepped in and notched two commitments at wide receiver since taking over, securing pledges from St. Louis Cardinal Ritter College Prep 2019 four-star Jameson Williams on Sept. 28 and Rockwall, Texas, 2020 four-star Jaxon Smith-Njigba on Nov. 4.

"We kind of earn our badges and earn our titles daily," Hartline said Oct. 17. "So whether you're a player or you're a coach, I think you're always trying to justify your position or trying to justify a greater position. So to me, I always had that approach as a player. I think these guys have had that approach as players, and I think that that hasn't changed. I don't think that approach will ever change for me.

"So again, it's kind of like that same idea. When you're a player, you're trying to start more or get paid more or wherever else. And then once you get it, you're trying to justify it. So as a coach, whether you're trying to earn the opportunity or earn more or have a bigger role, once you get it, you have to maintain that and justify it. So it's an ongoing process, day in and day out, and you earn your badges and your title daily."

Hartline stepped into a veteran room with Ohio State's wide receivers and helped take the position group's game to the next level. Led by fifth-year seniors Parris Campbell, Johnnie Dixon and Terry McLaurin, plus junior K.J. Hill, the unit caught 291 passes for 4,211 yards and 43 touchdowns in 13 games. Those marks broke the Buckeyes' single-season records of 287 receptions (2017), 3,707 yards (2014) and 42 touchdowns (2014).

The wide receivers room became OSU's first ever with four players to amass 1,000 career receiving yards. Ohio State enters the Rose Bowl with Campbell (1,697), Hill (1,642), McLaurin (1,219) and Dixon (1,119) all over the thousand-yard mark. Campbell paces the rotation with a career-best season – 79 receptions for 992 yards and 11 touchdowns.

"As receivers, I think each and every one of us has developed, just become more polished receivers," Campbell said Oct. 9. "Not that the guys weren't before, but I just think that we've added more little tweaks and techniques to our game. We think about the game really different now than we did a year ago. I just feel like when we go into a game now, it's completely different than it was in the past."

2018 Big Ten Individual Award Winners

Dungy-Thompson Humanitarian Award: Jake Wood, Wisconsin
Ford-Kinnick Leadership Award: Antwaan Randle El, Indiana
Graham-George Offensive Player of the Year: Dwayne Haskins, Ohio State
Nagurski-Woodson Defensive Player of the Year: Devin Bush, Michigan
Thompson-Randle El Freshman of the Year: Rondale Moore, Purdue
Hayes-Schembechler Coach of the Year (coaches vote): Pat Fitzgerald, Northwestern
Dave McClain Coach of the Year (media vote): Pat Fitzgerald, Northwestern
Griese-Brees Quarterback of the Year: Dwayne Haskins, Ohio State
Richter-Howard Receiver of the Year: Rondale Moore, Purdue
Ameche-Dayne Running Back of the Year: Jonathan Taylor, Wisconsin
Kwalick-Clark Tight End of the Year: T.J. Hockenson, Iowa
Rimington-Pace Offensive Lineman of the Year: Michael Deiter, Wisconsin
Smith-Brown Defensive Lineman of the Year: Kenny Willekes, Michigan State
Butkus-Fitzgerald Linebacker of the Year: Devin Bush, Michigan
Tatum-Woodson Defensive Back of the Year: Amani Hooker, Iowa
Bakken-Andersen Kicker of the Year: Chase McLaughlin, Illinois
Eddleman-Fields Punter of the Year: Will Hart, Michigan
Rodgers-Dwight Return Specialist of the Year: Ihmir Smith-Marsette, Iowa

Meyer: Bosa Injury 'Changed' Buckeyes

Heading into the season, Ohio State was expected to have one of the best players in the nation making plays and taking over games. And no, that player wasn't supposed to be Haskins, the eventual Heisman finalist.

Junior defensive end Nick Bosa entered the year as one of the best in the nation, widely expected to post another dominant season before leaving early for the NFL. That's exactly how things were going early in the year, too. By the third quarter in week three against TCU, Bosa had amassed 14 tackles, six tackles for loss and four sacks, including a strip sack that led to a touchdown against the Horned Frogs. He also recovered a fumble in the end zone in week one against Oregon State.

But, in that same third quarter, Bosa suffered a core muscle injury. He then underwent surgery and eventually opted to leave the team, focusing instead on getting healthy before preparing for the NFL draft.

After Ohio State's CFP fate was announced, Meyer admitted that he didn't realize right away how much of an impact losing Bosa would have.

"When Nick Bosa went down, that changed our team, and I didn't realize how much until witnessing the change made," Meyer said. "It changed everybody not seeing him.

"I know he's a great player, but he was so much more than that. Nick Bosa was your rock, man. He was your guy. He was your guy at practice, he was (strength coach Mickey) Marotti's guy. I know, if I feel that way about him, imagine what the defense felt about him and the team."

Meyer also noted that losing junior wide receiver Austin Mack toward the end of the Purdue game and fifth-year senior right guard Demetrius Knox in the fourth quarter against Michigan were major injuries for the Buckeyes as well.

Dobbins Cracks 1,000-Yard Mark For 2nd Time

For much of the season, Ohio State's struggles in the run game on offense were a point of focus. That didn't keep sophomore running back J.K. Dobbins from doing something nobody had ever accomplished in program history, though.

Dobbins, a La Grange, Texas, native, cracked the 1,000-yard mark during the Big Ten Championship Game against Northwestern, becoming the first Buckeye to ever rush for 1,000 yards or more as both a freshman and a sophomore. Heading into the Rose Bowl, he has 223 carries for 1,029 yards and nine touchdowns, with an average of 79.2 rushing yards per game.

Dobbins has also become involved in the pass offense, catching 23 balls for 248 yards and two scores this season.

Before the campaign, the Buckeyes laid out the goal of having both Dobbins and junior back Mike Weber crack the 1,000-yard plateau after Weber rushed for 1,096 yards as a redshirt freshman in 2016. That's still a possibility, but it might be a long shot as Weber has 858 yards and five scores on 157 attempts this season. He has gone over the century mark just twice this year – 186 yards on 20 carries against Oregon State in week one and 104 yards on 22 carries at Michigan State on Nov. 10.

Weber, who has worn his childhood jersey number – 5 – for the past two games, is widely expected to declare for the NFL draft after the Rose Bowl.

13 Freshmen Still Eligible For Redshirts

Ohio State brought in 25 scholarship freshmen for the 2018 season, and just over half that number are still eligible to take a redshirt thanks to an offseason NCAA rule change.

In past years, playing for even one snap meant a player lost the year of eligibility unless he was eligible for a medical waiver. Starting with this season, a new NCAA rule allows athletes to appear in up to four

games – regardless of timing – and still take a redshirt season.

Out of those 25 freshmen, 13 have played in four games or fewer heading into the Rose Bowl. Running back Master Teague is sitting on four appearances, meaning he'll lose the year of eligibility if he plays against Washington. Wide receiver Kamryn Babb (0; torn ACL over the summer), quarterback Matthew Baldwin (0), H-back Jaelen Gill (2), safety Marcus Hooker (2), defensive end Javontae Jean-Baptiste (0), cornerback Tyreke Johnson (3), offensive lineman Matthew Jones (0), offensive tackle Nicholas Petit-Frere (3), wide receiver L'Christian Smith (3), running back Brian Snead (2), defensive end Alex Williams (0) and offensive lineman Max Wray (0) could all take redshirts even if they play in the Rose Bowl.

Wide receiver Chris Olave, linebacker Dallas Gant and defensive end Tyreke Smith lead the group, each having appeared in all 13 games so far. Tight end Jeremy Ruckert and defensive tackle Tommy Togiai have played in 12 contests, linebackers Teradja Mitchell and K'Vaughan Pope have played 11 times, and safety Josh Proctor and defensive tackle Taron Vincent each have 10 appearances. Defensive end Tyler Friday has played nine times while cornerbacks Sevyn Banks and Cameron Brown have played in five games each.

Haskins, Jordan Earn All-America Honors

Haskins and junior center Michael Jordan each found their names on All-America lists this season, but only Jordan will be getting a tree in Buckeye Grove.

Jordan, in his first year at center after starting at left guard in 2016 and 2017, was named a first-team All-American by Sports Illustrated and CBS Sports and a third-team selection by The Associated Press.

Haskins was also a third-team honoree by the AP.

Jordan's inclusion as a first-team honoree marks the third straight year the Ohio State starting center has received that accolade. Pat Elflein was a unanimous first-team All-American in 2016, as was Billy Price in 2017. All three were named All-American at center in their first season after switching from guard.

This season marks the first time since Meyer took over in 2012 that the Buckeyes had fewer than two first-team All-American selections. They had none in 2011.

Fuller Earns Another Academic All-American Honor

Ohio State junior safety Jordan Fuller, a team captain, was named a first-team Academic All-American, marking the fifth straight year Ohio State has had at least one academic honoree.

Previously, center Jacoby Boren (2014-15), kicker Jack Willoughby (2015), defensive end Sam Hubbard (2016) and Fuller last season had also earned Academic All-American honors under Meyer.

Fuller is the 30th Ohio State player to be given first-team honors by the College Sports Information Directors of America and 54th to receive academic honors overall.

The Norwood (N.J.) Old Tappan product has a cumulative 3.81 grade-point average as a business major. He earned second-team Academic All-American honors last season.

Fuller, in his second season as a starter,

Continued On Page 8

2018 All-Big Ten Football Teams

Here is a look at the All-Big Ten football teams as selected by the coaches and media.
(Ohio State players in **bold**; unanimous selections in all caps).

Coaches Team

FIRST-TEAM OFFENSE:
QB – Dwayne Haskins, Ohio State
RB – Karan Higdon, Michigan
RB – JONATHAN TAYLOR, WISCONSIN
WR – Rondale Moore, Purdue
WR – Parris Campbell, Ohio State
C – Tyler Biadasz, Wisconsin
G – Michael Deiter, Wisconsin
G – Beau Benzschawel, Wisconsin
T – Jon Runyan, Michigan
T – Isaiah Prince, Ohio State
TE – Noah Fant, Iowa

FIRST-TEAM DEFENSE:
DL – Chase Winovich, Michigan
DL – Rashan Gary, Michigan
DL – Kenny Willekes, Michigan State
DL – Dre'Mont Jones, Ohio State
LB – Devin Bush, Michigan
LB – Joe Bachie, Michigan State
LB – Paddy Fisher, Northwestern
DB – Amani Hooker, Iowa
DB – Lavert Hill, Michigan
DB – David Long, Michigan
DB – Amani Oruwariye, Penn State

FIRST-TEAM SPECIAL TEAMS:
K – Chase McLaughlin, Illinois
P – Will Hart, Michigan
Returner – Rondale Moore, Purdue

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE:
QB – Trace McSorley, Penn State
RB – J.K. Dobbins, Ohio State
RB – Miles Sanders, Penn State
WR – Stanley Morgan Jr., Nebraska
WR – Tyler Johnson, Minnesota
C – Michael Jordan, Ohio State
G – Ross Reynolds, Iowa
G – Ben Bredeson, Michigan
T – Alaric Jackson, Iowa
T – David Edwards, Wisconsin
TE – T.J. Hockenson, Iowa

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE:
DL – A.J. Epenesa, Iowa
DL – Carter Coughlin, Minnesota
DL – Joe Gaziano, Northwestern
DL – Chase Young, Ohio State
LB – Tre Watson, Maryland
LB – Markus Bailey, Purdue
LB – T.J. Edwards, Wisconsin
DB – Antoine Brooks Jr., Maryland
DB – Darnell Savage Jr., Maryland
DB – Josh Metellus, Michigan
DB – Justin Layne, Michigan State

SECOND-TEAM SPECIAL TEAMS:
K – Logan Justus, Indiana
P – Drue Chrisman, Ohio State
Returner – Ihmir Smith-Marsette, Iowa

THIRD-TEAM OFFENSE:
QB – Shea Patterson, Michigan
RB – Reggie Corbin, Illinois
RB – Anthony McFarland, Maryland
WR – JD Spielman, Nebraska
WR – Donovan Peoples-Jones, Michigan
C – Cesar Ruiz, Michigan
G – Michael Onwenu, Michigan
G – Connor McGovern, Penn State
T – Rashawn Slater, Northwestern
T – Ryan Bates, Penn State
TE – Zach Gentry, Michigan

THIRD-TEAM DEFENSE:
DL – Anthony Nelson, Iowa
DL – Raequan Williams, Michigan State
DL – Yetur Gross-Matos, Penn State
DL – Shareef Miller, Penn State
LB – Blake Cashman, Minnesota
LB – Ryan Connelly, Wisconsin
LB – Andrew Van Ginkel, Wisconsin
DB – David Dowell, Michigan State
DB – Dicaprio Bootle, Nebraska
DB – Montre Hartage, Northwestern
DB – D'Cota Dixon, Wisconsin

THIRD-TEAM SPECIAL TEAMS:
K – Matt Coghlin, Michigan State
P – Joe Schopper, Purdue
Returner – Donovan Peoples-Jones, Michigan

HONORABLE MENTION: ILLINOIS: Nick Allegretti, Blake Hayes; INDIANA: Brandon Knight, Donavan Hale, Stevie Scott, Wes Martin, Jonathan Crawford, Marcelino Ball, J-Shun Harris II; IOWA: Keegan Render, Tristan Wirfs, Jake Gervase, Matt Nelson, Miguel Recinos; MARYLAND: Brendan Moore, Derwin Gray, Byron Cowart, Tino Ellis, Wade Lees, Ty Johnson, Joseph Petrino; MICHIGAN: Juwann Bushell-Beatty, Nico Collins, Bryan Mone, Josh Ross, Josh Uche, Khaleke Hudson, Tyree Kinnel; MICHIGAN STATE: Felton Davis III, Andrew Dowell, Khari Willis, Mike Panasiuk; MINNESOTA: Donnell Greene, Jacob Huff, Jacob Herbers, Emmit Carpenter; NEBRASKA: Adrian Martinez, Brenden Jaimes, Devine Ozigbo, Carlos Davis, Luke Gifford, Mohamed Barry, Isaac Armstrong; NORTHWESTERN: Cameron Green, Clayton Thorson, Flynn Nagel, Blake Gallagher, J.R. Pace, Nate Hall; **OHIO STATE: Demetrius Knox, K.J. Hill, Malcolm Pridgeon, Mike Weber, Thayer Munford, Damon Arnette, Jeffrey Okudah, Jonathon Cooper, Jordan Fuller, Kendall Sheffield, Malik Harrison, Robert Landers, Tuf Borland**; PENN STATE: KJ Hamler, Pat Freiermuth, Steven Gonzalez, Garrett Taylor, John Reid, Robert Windsor, KJ Hamler; PURDUE: Brycen Hopkins, D.J. Knox, David Blough, Kirk Barron, Matt McCann, Antonio Blackmon, Derrick Barnes, Jacob Thieneman, Lorenzo Neal, Spencer Evans; RUTGERS: Jonah Jackson, Raheem Blackshear, Saquan Hampton, Adam Korsak, Justin Davidovicz; WISCONSIN: Jake Ferguson, Rafael Gaglianone.

BIG TEN SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD HONOREES: Nick Allegretti, ILL; Jacob Robinson, IND; Parker Hesse, IOWA; Brett Kulka, MD; Zach Gentry, MICH; Khari Willis, MSU; Blake Cashman, MINN; Luke Gifford, NEB; Chad Hanaoka, NU; **Johnnie Dixon, OSU**; Nick Scott, PSU; David Blough, PUR; Isaiah Wharton, RU; Alec Ingold, WIS.

Media Team

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QB – Dwayne Haskins, Ohio State
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G – Michael Deiter, Wisconsin
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G – Ross Reynolds, Iowa
G – Demetrius Knox, Ohio State
G – Connor McGovern, Penn State
T – Damian Prince, Maryland
T – Ryan Bates, Penn State
TE – Brycen Hopkins, Purdue

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DL – Joe Gaziano, Northwestern
DL – Chase Young, Ohio State
DL – Shareef Miller, Penn State
LB – Mohamed Barry, Nebraska
LB – Blake Gallagher, Northwestern
LB – Markus Bailey, Purdue
DB – David Long, Michigan
DB – Khari Willis, Michigan State
DB – Dicaprio Bootle, Nebraska
DB – D'Cota Dixon, Wisconsin

THIRD-TEAM SPECIAL TEAMS:
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Returner – Donovan Peoples-Jones, Michigan

HONORABLE MENTION: ILLINOIS: Alex Palczewski, Del'Shawn Phillips, Bobby Roundtree ; INDIANA: Brandon Knight, Wes Martin, Stevie Scott, Marcelino Ball, Jonathan Crawford, J-Shun Harris II; IOWA: Ihmir Smith-Marsette, Tristan Wirfs, Jake Gervase, Parker Hesse, Matt Nelson, Geno Stone, Miguel Recinos; MARYLAND: Derwin Gray, Brendan Moore, Antoine Brooks Jr., Byron Cowart, Tino Ellis, Ty Johnson, Wade Lees, Joseph Petrino; MICHIGAN: Juwann Bushell-Beatty, Zach Gentry, Sean McKeon, Michael Onwenu, Shea Patterson, Donovan Peoples-Jones, Cesar Ruiz, Khaleke Hudson, Tyree Kinnel, Kwity Paye, Josh Uche; MICHIGAN STATE: Felton Davis III, Andrew Dowell, David Dowell, Mike Panasiuk, Connor Heyward; MINNESOTA: Blaise Andries, Daniel Faalele, Donnell Greene, Mohamed Ibrahim, Conner Olson, Jared Weyler, Jacob Huff, Emmit Carpenter, Demetrius Douglas, Jacob Herbers; NEBRASKA: Brenden Jaimes, Adrian Martinez, Boe Wilson, Khalil Davis, Luke Gifford, Isaac Armstrong; NORTHWESTERN: Cameron Green, Flynn Nagel, Rashawn Slater, Clayton Thorson, Nate Hall, J.R. Pace; **OHIO STATE: J.K. Dobbins, Terry McLaurin, Thayer Munford, Malcolm Pridgeon, Damon Arnette, Tuf Borland, Nick Bosa, Jonathan Cooper, Malik Harrison, Kendall Sheffield, Pete Werner**; PENN STATE: Pat Freiermuth, Steven Gonzalez, KJ Hamler, Micah Parsons, John Reid, Nick Scott, Garrett Taylor, Robert Windsor, KJ Hamler; PURDUE: Kirk Barron, Matt McCann, Isaac Zico, Antonio Blackmon, Kenneth Major, Lorenzo Neal, Jacob Thieneman, Spencer Evans, Joe Schopper; RUTGERS: Jonah Jackson, Saquan Hampton, Trevor Morris, Adam Korsak; WISCONSIN: Jake Ferguson, Ryan Connelly, Andrew Van Ginkel.

INSIDER

Continued From Page 7

is second on the team with 72 tackles so far this year. He had 70 stops last season.

Powell Police Release Zach Smith Records

The Powell (Ohio) Police Department released a set of records Dec. 11 detailing the 2015 investigation into domestic violence allegations against then-wide receivers coach Zach Smith by his then-wife Courtney Smith, The Columbus Dispatch reported.

According to the Dispatch, the set of records includes various videotaped interviews, summaries, text messages, subpoenas, a grand jury report and other items.

The couple is now divorced. Zach Smith was fired July 26 after the allegations became public, and Meyer was suspended for the first three games of the season for his handling of Smith's employment at the university.

According to the reports, the records included body-camera footage of Courtney Smith detailing the allegations to officer Ben Boruchowitz, who told local prosecutors he was concerned for her safety.

"She's petrified, and I really believe her," he said, according to the Dispatch. "… Based on the degree of violence that he's done against her, you and I both know when there's strangling and choking and those kinds of violence, (they) are pretty good indicators that there's a high chance he may actually follow through with it."

Many of the details released had previously been reported, including allegations of a long history of abuse.

In an interview with the Dispatch, Delaware County prosecutor Carol O'Brien explained that there was not enough evidence to prove felony charges, which is why the case was never presented to a grand jury.

"We didn't present it because after going through everything we went through, we didn't find any felony charges that we thought we could prove," O'Brien told the Dispatch.

Spielman, Ohio State Settle Lawsuit

Former Ohio State linebacker Chris Spielman and the university reached a settlement on a lawsuit pertaining to the school's use of the names and images of athletes in late November. The settlement includes a payment of $140,000 that Ohio State must make to Spielman for the alleged damages, centered around the use of his and others' images without their permission and without compensation. The suit was originally filed against Ohio State and IMG in July 2017.

As part of the settlement, Spielman agreed to "release Ohio State from any liability or further claims in the state Court of Claims case or the federal civil case," according to the Dispatch.

After the settlement, Spielman and the university issued a joint statement.

2018-19 Bowl Schedule

Date	Bowl	Site	Matchup	Time (ET)	TV
Dec. 15	Celebration	Atlanta	North Carolina A&T vs. Alcorn State	Noon	ABC
Dec. 15	Cure	Orlando, Fla.	Tulane vs. Louisiana	1:30 p.m.	CBSSN
Dec. 15	New Mexico	Albuquerque, N.M.	North Texas vs. Utah State	2 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 15	Las Vegas	Las Vegas	No. 21 Fresno State vs. Arizona State	3:30 p.m.	ABC
Dec. 15	Camellia	Montgomery, Ala.	Georgia Southern vs. Eastern Michigan	5:30 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 15	New Orleans	New Orleans	Middle Tennessee vs. Appalachian State	9 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 18	Boca Raton	Boca Raton, Fla.	UAB vs. Northern Illinois	7 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 19	Frisco	Frisco, Texas	San Diego State vs. Ohio	8 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 20	Gasparilla	Tampa, Fla.	Marshall vs. USF	8 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 21	Bahamas	Nassau, Bahamas	FIU vs. Toledo	12:30 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 21	Famous Idaho Potato	Boise, Idaho	Western Michigan vs. BYU	4 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 22	Birmingham	Birmingham, Ala.	Memphis vs. Wake Forest	Noon	ESPN
Dec. 22	Armed Forces	Fort Worth, Texas	Houston vs. Army	3:30 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 22	Dollar General	Mobile, Ala.	Buffalo vs. Troy	7 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 22	Hawaii	Honolulu	Hawaii vs. Louisiana Tech	10:30 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 26	First Responder	Dallas	Boston College vs. No. 25 Boise State	1:30 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 26	Quick Lane	Detroit	Minnesota vs. Georgia Tech	5:15 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 26	Cheez-It	Phoenix	California vs. TCU	9 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 27	Independence	Shreveport, La.	Temple vs. Duke	1:30 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 27	Pinstripe	Bronx, N.Y.	Miami (Fla.) vs. Wisconsin	5:15 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 27	Texas	Houston, Texas	Baylor vs. Vanderbilt	9 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 28	Music City	Nashville, Tenn.	Purdue vs. Auburn	1:30 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 28	Camping World	Orlando, Fla.	No. 16 West Virginia vs. No. 20 Syracuse	5:15 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 28	Alamo	San Antonio	No. 24 Iowa St. vs. No. 13 Washington St.	9 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 29	Belk	Charlotte, N.C.	South Carolina vs. Virginia	Noon	ABC
Dec. 29	Peach	Atlanta	No. 10 Florida vs. No. 7 Michigan	Noon	ESPN
Dec. 29	Arizona	Tucson, Ariz.	Arkansas State vs. Nevada	1:15 p.m.	CBSSN
Dec. 29	Cotton (CFP Semifinal)	Arlington, Texas	No. 3 Notre Dame vs. No. 2 Clemson	4 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 29	Orange (CFP Semifinal)	Miami Gardens, Fla.	No. 4 Oklahoma vs. No. 1 Alabama	8 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 31	Military	Annapolis, Md.	Cincinnati vs. Virginia Tech	Noon	ESPN
Dec. 31	Sun	El Paso, Texas	Stanford vs. Pittsburgh	2 p.m.	CBS
Dec. 31	Redbox	Santa Clara, Calif.	Michigan State vs. Oregon	3 p.m.	FOX
Dec. 31	Liberty	Memphis, Tenn.	No. 23 Missouri vs. Oklahoma State	3:45 p.m.	ESPN
Dec. 31	Holiday	San Diego	No. 22 Northwestern vs. No. 17 Utah	7 p.m.	FS1
Dec. 31	Gator	Jacksonville, Fla.	N.C. State vs. No. 19 Texas A&M	7:30 p.m.	ESPN
Jan. 1	Outback	Tampa, Fla.	No. 18 Mississippi State vs. Iowa	Noon	ESPN2
Jan. 1	Fiesta	Glendale, Ariz.	No. 11 LSU vs. No. 8 UCF	1 p.m.	ESPN
Jan. 1	Citrus	Orlando, Fla.	No. 14 Kentucky vs. No. 12 Penn State	1 p.m.	ABC
Jan. 1	**Rose**	**Pasadena, Calif.**	**No. 9 Washington vs. No. 6 Ohio St.**	**5 p.m.**	**ESPN**
Jan. 1	Sugar	New Orleans	No. 15 Texas vs. No. 5 Georgia	8:45 p.m.	ESPN
Jan. 7	CFP National Championship	Santa Clara, Calif.	TBA	8 p.m.	ESPN

College Football Playoff

No. 1 Alabama vs. No. 4 Oklahoma
Orange Bowl • Miami, Fla. • Dec. 29, 2018 • 8 p.m.

No. 2 Clemson vs. No. 3 Notre Dame
Cotton Bowl • Arlington, Texas • Dec. 29, 2018 • 4 p.m.

CFP National Championship Game
Santa Clara, Calif. • Jan. 7, 2019 • 8 p.m.

Final CFP Rankings

Rk.	Team	Record
1.	Alabama	13-0
2.	Clemson	13-0
3.	Notre Dame	12-0
4.	Oklahoma	12-1
5.	Georgia	11-2
6.	**Ohio State**	**12-1**
7.	Michigan	10-2
8.	UCF	12-0
9.	Washington	10-3
10.	Florida	9-3
11.	LSU	9-3
12.	Penn State	9-3
13.	Washington State	10-2
14.	Kentucky	9-3
15.	Texas	9-4
16.	West Virginia	8-3
17.	Utah	9-4
18.	Mississippi State	8-4
19.	Texas A&M	8-4
20.	Syracuse	9-3
21.	Fresno State	11-2
22.	Northwestern	8-5
23.	Missouri	8-4
24.	Iowa State	8-4
25.	Boise State	10-3

"Chris Spielman and The Ohio State University jointly share that they have resolved their differences concerning the use of Mr. Spielman's name and image on banners that used to hang in Ohio Stadium," the statement read. "Both parties are pleased that the dispute has been resolved.

Spielman plans to donate the money from the settlement to the William White Family Fund for ALS and the Stefanie Spielman Fund for Breast Cancer Research at Ohio State. Spielman's wife, Stefanie, died of breast cancer in 2009.

Youngstown State Extends Tressel's Contract

Youngstown State University announced Dec. 6 that they had extended school president Jim Tressel's contract an additional year, keeping him at YSU until June 2020. Tressel served as Ohio State's head football coach from 2001-10. He took over as YSU's ninth president in 2014.

"By every measure, President Tressel has excelled in leading YSU over the past four years," said YSU trustee chair Dee Crawford in a statement. "His vision and determination have resulted in unprecedented gains in many important areas of the university's operations. We look forward to continuing that momentum."

At the time of his extension, Tressel released a statement as well.

"Much has been accomplished, and thanks certainly goes to the Board of Trustees, everyone here at YSU, our alumni and supporters," he said. "While challenges remain, we are committed to further advancing the university on behalf of our students and the community."

Under the new contract, Tressel's annual salary will remain at $300,000.

Tressel guided Ohio State to the national title in 2002 in addition to winning seven Big Ten championships. Before joining the Buckeyes, he was the head coach at YSU from 1986-2000, winning four Division I-AA national titles.

Women's Golfer Going Pro

Each year, plenty of attention is paid to which football or men's basketball players

Continued On Page 10

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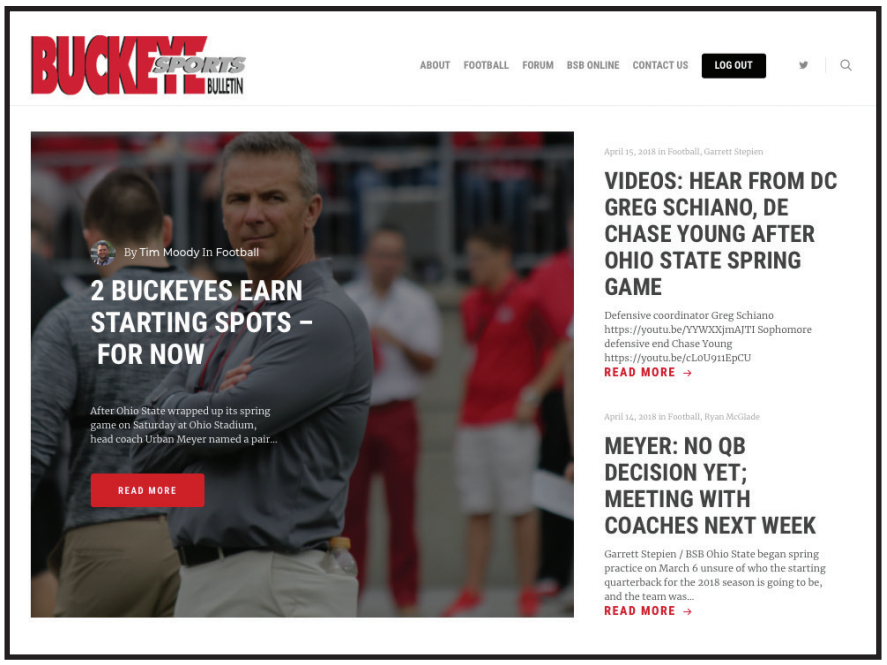

Buckeye Sports Bulletin has expanded its online presence to a full-service website to complement the 24 annual print editions. Access to BuckeyeSports.com is free to all print subscribers and includes numerous great features like:

- Daily features, analysis and breaking news stories.
- A fan forum where readers can interact with the BSB staff and other subscribers while catching up on the latest Buckeye news.
- Rosters, scholarship charts, schedules and commit lists for the football team to keep up to date with the Buckeyes.
- Electronic versions of the BSB print editions.
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INSIDER

Continued From Page 9

leave Ohio State early to join the professional ranks in their respective sports. While such players as Haskins and Weber haven't announced their choices just yet, at least one Buckeye athlete is ready to head for the next level.

Women's golfer Jaclyn Lee will forgo her final season of eligibility in order to join the LPGA Tour, the school announced Dec. 11. She placed sixth at the LPGA Q-Series last month in Pinehurst, N.C.

"With mixed emotions we are saying farewell and the very best of luck to Jaclyn Lee, who will be departing early from Ohio State for the LPGA Tour," said Therese Hession, Ohio State's director of golf and women's golf head coach. "Jaclyn entered Ohio State ranked 622 in the World Amateur Golf Ranking and in three and a half years quickly moved to the Top 20 in the world! We are thrilled for the opportunity ahead of her and are so proud she will have the opportunity to play with the best in the world and still complete her degree. We will miss her this spring but are so proud of all she helped accomplish while at Ohio State."

Lee, a Calgary, Alberta, native, was the medalist at the 2018 Big Ten championships in addition to being a second-team WGCA All-American and first-team All-Big Ten honoree.

She said the decision was not made lightly but expressed excitement for the next steps in her career.

"I'm extremely touched by all the support I have received from all parties involved in my decision," Lee said. "While my time at Ohio State is eventually going to come to an end, it's bittersweet to be leaving the team a little early. I'm going to miss my Buckeye family, but I'm also excited to start my new chapter."

Bucks Have 106 Fall Academic B1G Honorees

Ohio State tied its own record mark as 106 fall student-athletes earned academic All-Big Ten honors, the conference announced Dec. 5. The 106 honorees represented almost 10 percent of the Big Ten's total.

The fall honorees come from sports such as field hockey, football, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's soccer and women's volleyball. Eligible student-athletes must have been enrolled at the institution for at least 12 months while carrying a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or better.

Field hockey senior Kelsey Nolan held a perfect 4.0 GPA, one of 40 fall student-athletes with that distinction in the conference.

The list of honorees included 28 from the football team, including a number of starters – punter Drue Chrisman, defensive end Jonathon Cooper, tight end Luke Farrell, safety Jordan Fuller, quarterback Dwayne Haskins, kicker Blake Haubeil, linebacker Pete Werner, defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones and long snapper Liam McCullough. The football team's 28 honorees were the most of any Ohio State program this fall.

What follows is a complete list of Ohio State's fall academic All-Big Ten honorees, including their class year and major. The list is in alphabetical order by sport.

Men's Cross Country – Steven Bauers, So., finance; Paul Bete, So., finance; Noah Corbett, So., actuarial science; Tyrese Fajardo, So., chemical engineering; Peter Hayden, So., economics; Luke Landis, Sr., finance; Aaron Wood, Jr., civil engineering.

Women's Cross Country – Devon Leahy, Jr., biology; Abby Nichols, Jr., speech and hearing science; Lainey Studebaker, Jr., exercise science education; Grace Thomas, Jr., health promotion, nutrition and exercise science; Annie Ubbing, Jr., communications; Aziza Ayoub, So., biology; Emma Hoellrich, So., chemistry; Kacee Soehnlen, So., human nutrition; Kalee Soehnlen, So., exercise science education; Brittany Atkinson, Sr., accounting; Courtney Clody, Sr., marketing; Sarah Kanney, Sr., marketing; Julia Rizk, Sr., finance; Vanessa Robinson, Sr., communications; Lilly Saniel-Barney, Sr., architecture; Emily Stoodley, Sr., environmental science; Claire Wiles, Sr., operations management.

Field Hockey – Esther Clotet, Jr., international business; Whitney Harris, Jr., strategic communications; Jennica Jonovich, Jr., strategic communications; Adelaide Penzone, Jr., marketing; Genevieve Penzone, Jr., biology; Mara Hunter, So., public management, leadership and policy; Sammy Stone, So., marketing; Julianna Sweeney, So., animal science; Nikki Trzaska, So., marketing; Casey Cole, Sr., sociology; Courtney Daniels, Sr., accounting; Kelsey Nolan, Sr., linguistics; Ellen Westfall, Sr., environmental policy and decision making.

Football – Chris Chugunov, Gr., kinesiology; Sean Nuernberger, Gr., sociology; Alex Badine, Jr., communications; Drue Chrisman, Jr., consumer and family financial services; Jonathon Cooper, Jr., consumer and family financial services; Gavin Cupp, Jr., child and youth studies; Brock Davin, Jr., finance; Luke Farrell, Jr., health promotion, nutrition and exercise science; Jordan Fuller, Jr., business; Dwayne Haskins, Jr., communications; Jake Hausmann, Jr., communications; Logan Hittle, Jr., sport industry; Hayden Jester, Jr., operations management; Amari McMahon, Jr., biology; Bradley Robinson, Jr., human development and family science; Aaron Cox, So., exploring; Kevin Dever, So., business; Blake Haubeil, So., business; Garyn Prater, So., exploring; Mitch Rossi, So., sport industry; Pete Werner, So., exploring; Marcus Williamson, So., history; Dre'Mont Jones, Sr., sociology; Bryan Kristan, Sr., finance; Liam McCullough, Sr., finance; Jake Metzer, Sr., engineering; C.J. Saunders, Sr., finance; Kevin Woidke, Sr., real estate and urban analysis.

Men's Soccer – Brennon Davis, Jr., finance; Jack Holland, Jr., air transportation; Leo Kossaka, Jr., finance; CC Uche, Jr., economics; Mitch Bergman, So., industrial and systems engineering; Chase Carraher, So., biology; Jacob Goyen, So., management and industry exploration; Christian Harter, So., biology; Will Hirschman, So., health sciences program; Joshua Jackson-Ketchup, So., science and technology exploration; Matt Kiley, So., human resources; John Swann, So., science and technology exploration; Brady Blackwell, Sr., sport industry; Alex Nichols, Sr., biology; Michael Prosuk, Sr., sport industry; Jake Scheper, Sr., accounting; Parker Siegfried, Sr., environment, economy, development and sustainability.

Women's Soccer – Alyssa Baumbick, Jr., sport industry; Courtney Gazmarian, Jr., sport industry; Meghan Kammerdeiner, Jr., psychology; Marike Mousset, Jr., biology; Haley Walker-Robinson, Jr., sport industry; Marissa Birzon, So., marketing; Riley Bowers, So., health sciences; Bailey Kolinski, So., exploration; Lexxe Lipsey, So., English; Izzy Rodriguez, So., finance; Maggie Samanich, So., business; Eleanor Gabriel, Sr., psychology; Brianna Gazmarian, Sr., sport industry; Arden Holden, Sr., environment, economy, development and sustainability; Devon Kerr, Sr., sport industry; Kylie Knight, Sr., human resources; Sarah Roberts, Sr., sport industry.

Women's Volleyball – Audra Appold, Sr., communications; Bia Franklin, Jr., marketing; Camry Halm, Jr., logistics management; Madison Smeathers, Jr., communications; Hanna Gruensfelder, So., biomedical engineering; Becca Mauer, So., health sciences; Lauren Witte, So., health sciences.

– Tim Moody

Buckeyes React To Meyer Retirement, Day Hire

By GARRETT STEPIEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

A week and a day after Dec. 4, when Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer announced his retirement – effective Jan. 2 as he passes the baton to offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Ryan Day – Buckeye players met with the media Dec. 12 at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center.

Terry McLaurin

With final exams for the fall semester wrapping up and the No. 6 Buckeyes (12-1) shifting their focus from the classroom to the field for the Rose Bowl vs. No. 9 Washington (10-3), how have they taken the news of Meyer's departure and Day's promotion?

Talking to reporters for the first time since the plan went public, team captains and prominent players from both sides of the ball discussed their reaction.

Junior running back Mike Weber on Meyer's sense of relief since he announced his retirement: "You could see it. He's got a smile on his face, coming around in a good mood just feeling like he did what he could for this program. He did a hell of job, and I'm proud of what he has done for me and my family and I wish him the best."

Fifth-year senior wide receiver Terry McLaurin on Meyer's decision and Day's ability: "The night before he announced it, he called me and (fifth-year senior wide receiver) Parris (Campbell) in and we talked probably about an hour or so. He asked us for our opinions and when he did that, I felt like it was pretty serious. I didn't think he was going to announce it. I thought he had maybe another year or so.

"But that next day, he told the team, and me and Parris were looking at each other like, 'This is for real.' But first and foremost, his health was his biggest concern. He's always preached to us – his family and us. That's really all he has going in his life. That's all he cares about. When something like his health is affecting the way he can coach and the way how intensive he is, he probably just felt like he couldn't give it his all anymore and he's brought this program to where it needs to be. It's going to be sad to see him go.

"I won't necessarily be here, but I know Coach Day is going to do a great job. He did a great job when Coach Meyer wasn't here. Just his personability with the players – he has that respect among guys, and obviously everybody's seen what he can do for his offense. He's really changed our offense since he's been here. I have no doubt he's going to do a great job. Coach Meyer's leaving it – Ohio State is still in great hands."

Junior defensive tackle Robert Landers on Meyer's team meeting and stepping down: "It was emotional, but at the same time it was one of those things where we understand why he made the choice that he made. I look at it like if you care about a person like that you would understand why he took the route that he took, and like I've said and will say many times, I appreciate everything he's done for me and everything he's taught me."

Robert Landers

Sophomore running back J.K. Dobbins on Day replacing Meyer: "I don't think much will change at all. He's a winner. I'm excited for him. We have a great relationship, and I can't wait to see what he can do. He's going to be a legendary head coach."

Sophomore linebacker Tuf Borland on what makes Meyer stand out: "Obviously his record and all the bowl wins, national championships and all the wins against That Team Up North – that speaks for itself. But I think it's what he does off the field that sticks with players. Real Life Wednesdays and job opportunities off the field, I think that is what sets him apart."

Jordan Fuller

Junior safety Jordan Fuller on why Meyer has been able to have so much success: "It's because he doesn't let anything slip. Coming in as a freshman, you realize pretty quick that if you don't run through a line all the way, it's the biggest deal in the world. If you don't do a rep right, it's the biggest thing in the world. All of the little things we try and take care of."

Sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins on Day's NFL pedigree: "I just feel like we have a lot of NFL-background coaches as far as (Coach Larry) Johnson with the defensive line, (defensive coordinator Greg) Schiano, (wide receivers coach Brian) Hartline played in the NFL and then you have (head strength coach Mickey Marotti), who's coached a ton of first-round draft picks. It just helps to have a whole bunch of insight in this university and this program with people that have to deal with NFL players, dealt with NFL coaches and some have been in the NFL like (linebackers coach Billy) Davis and a few other people. It helps to have a lot of different information as far as trying to get there to the NFL. You come to Ohio State ultimately to play in the NFL. They definitely develop you for that situation, and I feel like Coach Day will do a great job."

Junior defensive end Jonathon Cooper on Day as head coach: "In the first three games of the season and all through training camp, we had him, he was our (acting) coach. So I kind of know what to expect with him. He's the same way. He's a great guy. He's a guy I can come to and talk to . . . (even though) we didn't see each other or talk to each other that much because I'm on defense. I know that he's a great guy. I know that he's going to take this job and run with it."

Meyer Ranks Among Best In Program History

Continued From Page 1

sons," Meyer said. "I want to thank Buckeye Nation, our students and faculty, our state high school coaches, (athletic director) Gene Smith for giving me this opportunity, my awesome family and most importantly our staff and student-athletes for all they've done during this time.

"My goal has always been to make this one of the premier and most comprehensive programs in America. It's always been a goal to see a healthy, strong program handed to an elite coach and person to make it even better."

Meyer went on to congratulate Day, who is taking over as a head coach for the first time in his career, a move that is almost unprecedented in the history of Ohio State football.

A Coaching Legend

Retirement is usually a one-time thing, but that's not the case for Meyer. But to get to his second retirement, you have to start at the beginning.

Meyer, 54, was born in Toledo and grew up in Ashtabula, Ohio, where he attended St. John High School. More talented at baseball than football, he spent a couple of years playing in the Atlanta Braves' minor league system before joining the Cincinnati football team as a defensive back and graduating with a degree in psychology in 1986.

From there, Meyer became a Buckeye, serving as a graduate assistant under Earle Bruce from 1986-87, forging a lifelong bond with both the school and the head coach.

After that, Meyer had various coaching stops as an assistant, including stints at Illinois State (1988-89), Colorado State (1990-95) and Notre Dame (1996-2000). Then came his first head-coaching gig back in the Buckeye State at Bowling Green, where he posted a 17-6 record in two seasons. Then Meyer went 22-2 in two years at Utah before taking over the Florida program in 2005. In his second season with the Gators, Meyer led his team to a national championship victory over Ohio State, of all teams.

In total, Meyer spent six seasons with Florida, winning two national titles and posting a 65-15 overall record. He nearly quit after the 2009 season before deciding to return, then he retired after 2010, citing some health concerns and a need to spend more time with his family – his wife, Shelly, his daughters, Nicki and Gigi, and his son, Nate.

That ended up being a one-year hiatus before Gene Smith hired Meyer to replace Jim Tressel (there was a season with Luke Fickell serving as interim head coach in between).

That marked the start of what Meyer called a collective effort to build Ohio State into an undefeated, bowl-banned squad in year one, a national champion in year three, and a three-time conference champion and one of college football's premier programs in every facet by year seven.

"It's not my tenure, it's our tenure," Meyer said during his retirement press conference. "And we did it the right way. I learned this from Woody Hayes to Earle Bruce, to (former OSU coach John Cooper) and Jim Tressel. And that is you have to be a tough guy to play at Ohio State. You have to be a tough guy."

But it wasn't all about the on-field effort in Columbus under Meyer. The Buckeyes churned out graduates and academic honorees in the classroom in addition to first-round NFL draft picks on an annual basis. Meyer built the Real Life Wednesdays program, which serves both as a key recruiting tool and a legitimate outlet for Ohio State football players to be set up for life.

"You have to place a premium on education," Meyer said. "And it's not a wink-wink. You have to place a premium on education. And you have to win every game you play, including that game up north. And that's something that you have to embrace, because not every place is like that."

Gene Smith stressed Meyer's work off the field as well and pointed out the success the Buckeyes have had in all facets during his tenure.

"What Urban has brought to Buckeye Nation by far exceeded expectations," the AD said. "Not only has he elevated the quality and status of our program, but his presence has elevated Big Ten football. To compete with Urban-coached teams, the Big Ten colleagues have had to elevate their programs. Urban has a very, very special gift. He's an elite coach. His Ohio State teams excel both on and off the field. And I emphasize off the field. He was a brilliant leader of men. His command of football strategy is second to none. He's a tireless recruiter and an innovator in creating programs for student-athletes beyond the field.

"The Real Life Wednesday program is certainly an elite program. A hallmark of great leadership is to leave a program better than you found it. There's little doubt that Urban has done that. Buckeye Nation is deeply grateful for the peak experiences we've all had cheering for his magnificent teams."

Meyer reached the top of his profession by being one of the most intense individuals ever to lead a program. He was full-go night and day, texting recruits at the dinner table before getting to the office at 5 a.m. the next day.

The intensity that brought him to the top eventually led to the end of his time with the Buckeyes as well.

Time For A Change

A year ago, retirement might not have been in Meyer's mind. At least not with this timing.

The health issues were real, though, and Meyer had surgery in 2014 to help relieve the stress from the cyst on his brain. He said 2015 was good, health-wise, and 2016 wasn't bad. Then the headaches flared up again in 2017, and the issue got even worse this year, culminating with his

collapse during the Indiana game in early October.

Many were quick to point to Meyer's suspension early in the year and all of the off-field issues that came with it, but he stressed that while that was a very difficult time, his health issues were years in the making, and his retirement was a decision made for a multitude of reasons.

"I've had to deal with the headaches for many years, and it came to a head in 2014 and again last year and this year as well," Meyer said. "As difficult a time as (the suspension) was, that didn't have an impact as much on the headaches. But it did have an impact (on the decision to retire)."

He admitted that he started thinking about his longevity in the profession – or lack thereof – while speaking with doctors as far back as 2014. There was the diagnosis, a long-range prognosis and, eventually, a decision to retire now.

With his health issues in mind, Meyer admitted that he tried to take a step back from his intense style. That didn't work, and he had to dive back in. But that style, combined with his health issues and everything else that went into his decision to retire, was no longer going to work long term.

"They style of coaching that I've done for 33 years is a very intense, very demanding, very … you can ask our former players the expectations, the way I've been," he said. "And I've tried to delegate more and CEO-ish more, and the product started to fail.

"And I had to go right back to – first, I didn't feel like I was doing right by our players and by Gene. And the challenge was can I continue to do that in that style?"

The answer to that question ended up being no, and Meyer made his choice – step down after the Rose Bowl, leaving behind a healthy program and moving forward with a legacy that features some of the highs and lows for himself personally and professionally.

Meyer wasn't afraid to admit that the off-field issues of this fall will play into his legacy, and it was clear that's something that irked him.

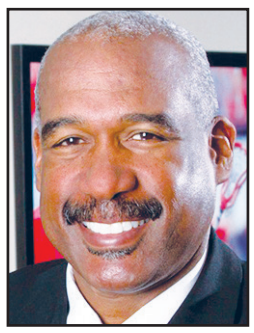
"I'm sure it will," he said. "I haven't really thought that through. That was a disappointing time, obviously. But I think today, and this is about celebrating a new football coach, this is about a very strong program and a group of players that just won back-to-back championships.

"So the legacy is – you can only control so much. And I can lie to you and say that's not important to me. Any human being, that's important to you. And people will have their opinions."

Expanding on his legacy, Meyer simply said he hopes "the truth" will be remembered.

"The truth is that you have a football coach who has devoted 33 years of my life to the love of student-athletes and not just on the football field. I've never treated a player as No. 36 or a number. I've got to know their families. I want to make sure – and we, we, have even taken that to the nth degree now that we want 100 percent job placement when they're done playing. They deserve that.

"I hope it's our legacy. And we won a lot of games and represented this great university and great state the right way."



Gene Smith

The Future

Until the clock strikes zero in Pasadena, Calif., Meyer will still be the man leading the Buckeyes. When he wakes up Jan. 2, 2019, though, Day will be the head coach and Meyer will be, well, unemployed.

At least for now.

He admitted during his retirement press conference that he's not quite sure what the future holds, but he doesn't see himself ever coaching again despite retiring once previously.

"I believe I will not coach again," Meyer said before adding, "I'm certain."

So, with coaching out of the picture – whether it be at Ohio State or elsewhere – Meyer has plenty of options. He's an avid golfer, yes, but for a man used to working untold hours, that won't cut it. He's done TV work in the past, and that will certainly be on the table as well.

For now, though, Meyer said he expects to stick around in Columbus, and he and Gene Smith have even discussed a role for the former coach in the Ohio State athletic department.

"I've always been a Buckeye as long as I can remember," Meyer said. "Gene Smith, like I said, our relationship has always been good. It's over the top now. And I trust him with my life. And our families are very close.

"So, when he says jump, I'll still say – I'm going to still call him boss. However I can help this – I believe in Ohio State. I believe in the spirit when you walk around this campus. I believe in Buckeye Nation, because I lived it my entire life. I believe that this is a different place. And I want to help in any way I can. And I believe in our new head coach."

Gene Smith, for his part, joked that he would have put a stop to the switch if Meyer had changed his mind that morning. He even said he hopes Shelley Meyer will continue in her role as an adjunct professor in the college of nursing, joking that he hadn't actually talked to her about that just yet.

As yet, though, no firm role for Meyer is set. He could take a step back and evaluate, he might help mentor athletes and players from various sports at Ohio State, or he might end up in a role not yet thought up.

For now, though, Meyer still has one more game to coach.

"I look forward to working with our staff and players in preparing to play Washington in the Rose Bowl," he said during his statement at the Dec. 4 press conference. "It's always been a dream of mine and many of our coaches and players to compete in the Rose Bowl. And it's going to be an honor to represent the Big Ten Conference in that game."

After that, it will be the next step for Meyer. And as much as he cherishes winning, and working, and the grind of coaching, it will be the players he'll no longer see on a daily basis that he misses most.

"I called (fifth-year senior wide receivers and two-time team captains Terry McLaurin and Parris Campbell) in last night and we just sat and talked for an hour in my office about maybe this and other things," Meyer said. "The good thing is I'm hopefully in a position I don't lose that. I'm going to miss that. I'm going to miss building teams. But the players without question are what I'm going to miss (most)."

Complete coverage of Meyer's retirement and Day's hiring can also be found on BuckeyeSports.com, BSB's full-service website. The site is free to all print subscribers and signup information can be found on page 5.

AD Smith Skips National Search To Hire Day

Continued From Page 1

ate assistant for Meyer) and Temple (2006, 2012) and he worked in the NFL as the quarterbacks coach with Philadelphia (2015) and San Francisco (2016).

Day was then hired by Meyer in 2017 as co-offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach. He was an instant success, being promoted to offensive coordinator with Wilson in 2018 in addition to receiving $1 million for this year – one of the first two assistant coaches in program history, along with Schiano, to make seven figures.

Then, after leading Ohio State to wins over Oregon State, Rutgers and TCU as interim head coach, Day proved to Smith that he was the right man to lead the program forward while replacing one of the most successful coaches in Buckeye history.

"We all are part of something special here at Ohio State," Day said. "And the culture that Urban Meyer has created here is strong. And my pledge to the players is that our staff is going to give you every opportunity to maximize yourself as a football player, as a student in establishing your career after football."

No Search Needed

In almost any scenario, Ohio State would undertake a national search while trying to replace a coach, let alone a coach like Meyer. Smith admitted that he considered that option this time around before deciding he did, in fact, have a ready-made replacement.

"I'm blessed," Smith said. "As I said earlier, it's rare that you have the opportunity to create a succession plan where you have the right person in place. Any CEO in the public or private environment, you hope that you have that opportunity.

"We recognized the talent that Ryan Day had early. And I spent a great deal of time getting to know him. I did that this summer.

"This is a complex place. And so having someone to be able to continue the stability and consistency that we have was important to me. So I did not feel I needed to conduct a public national search."

Not only was Smith comfortable hiring Day as the coach, but he felt the chance to have some stability within the program is key. Almost as soon as Day was hired, multiple reports surfaced saying that he would keep four key staff members – strength coach Mickey Marotti, director of operations Brian Voltolini, director of player personnel Mark Pantoni and director of player development Ryan Stamper – in place. Those four are Meyer's men, and they'll help Day mold his program going forward.

"Our program does not need disruption," Smith said. "It does not need to blow up and have people come in and try and adapt to our standards of operation and try and change the infrastructure that we've put in place for the student-athlete."

SONNY BROCKWAY

NEXT UP – Ohio State announced Dec. 4 that Ryan Day would replace Urban Meyer as head coach after the Rose Bowl.

Smith wasn't the only one comfortable with handing the keys to Day. Meyer, who has called Day "elite" on a regular basis, stressed that his goal was always to "see a healthy, strong program handed to an elite coach and person to make it even better."

That's what the Buckeyes are attempting with Day, despite his lack of experience.

Game Plan

During his statement at the Dec. 4 press conference, Day made it clear that he gets it – as in he gets the expectations at a place like Ohio State. He knows the importance of winning on and off the field, of recruiting, of beating Michigan on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

"On-field expectations," Day read from his prepared speech, "it didn't take long for me to figure out what the expectations were of Ohio State football. Number one, win the rivalry game. And number two, win every game after that."

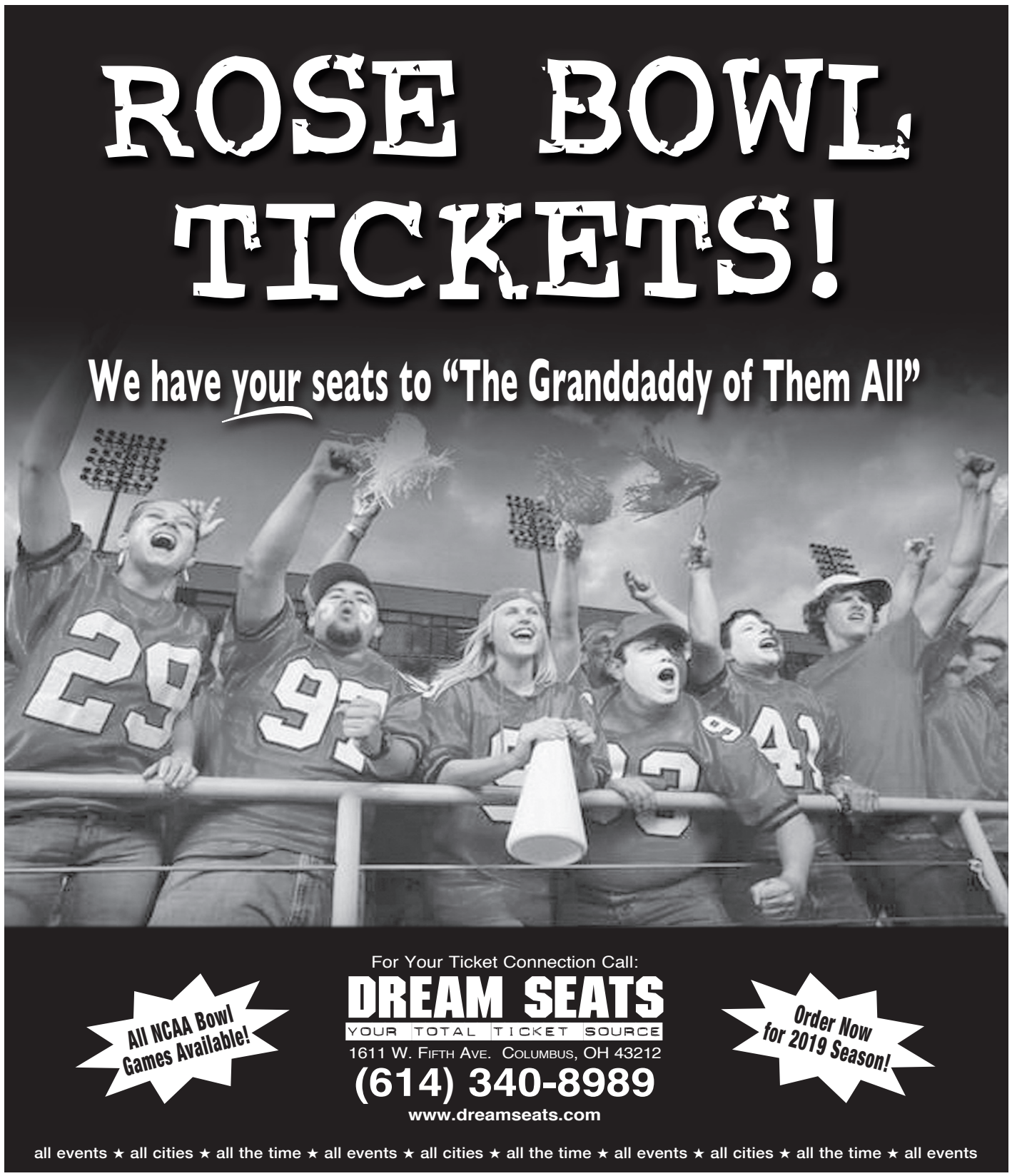
He went on to describe a setup that will feature energy and creativity on offense, built around the personnel each season. He said the defense will play with aggression and simplicity, allowing the players to thrive. And special teams – Meyer's baby – will continue to be key.

Day also addressed Ohio's high school coaches directly, stressing that recruiting within the Buckeye State will be paramount. And he acknowledged the school's deep commitment to molding players on and off the field.

All in all, he was a coach getting ready to fill the biggest shoes imaginable, and he made it clear he understood that.

"And lastly," Day said, "every coach who ever put a whistle around their neck strives to be the head coach at the Ohio State University. I fully understand the challenges that await for me. And being on the same list as Paul Brown, Woody Hayes, John Cooper, Jim Tressel and Urban Meyer, it's extremely humbling, but I'm prepared and ready for the task."

Complete coverage of Meyer's retirement and Day's hiring can also be found on BuckeyeSports.com, BSB's full-service website. The site is free to all print subscribers, and signup information can be found on page 5.



No Consensus Yet On Meyer's Future, Legacy

By TIM MOODY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

Urban Meyer announced Dec. 4 that the Rose Bowl would be his last game as Ohio State's head football coach.

The move came just three days after the Buckeyes secured a second straight Big Ten title and just over a week after Ohio State dispatched Michigan, 62-39. Those wins marked Meyer's third conference championship and seventh win in The Game since taking over as Ohio State's head coach for the 2012 season.

As Meyer announced his retirement, the school also announced the hiring of offensive coordinator Ryan Day as the 25th head coach in program history, bringing an end to one of the most prolific tenures ever in Columbus.

After Meyer announced his decision, opinions poured in about his choice, his future and the future of Ohio State's program under Day's leadership. What follows is a collection of opinions from columnists – both local and national – regarding the changes in Columbus.

• **Dave Briggs, The (Toledo) Blade:** "Meyer leaves behind an outsized legacy and – for Ohio State – a bigger question. What now?

"For me, the hire of offensive coordinator Ryan Day felt a little reactionary and rushed. When Meyer arrived here in November 2011, Ohio State was already as plum as any job in the country, and his name-taking tenure only elevated it. To promote a 39-year-old first-time head coach without a national search struck us as a long-term decision based too much on the short-term aim of preserving the Buckeyes' latest – and soon-to-be-signed – blue-chip recruiting class.

"As far as Ohio State remaining a national powerhouse, a cynic might call the succession plan a *secession* plan. Now, we won't go that far. I like Day and believe he can be very good. He is a bright offensive mind, a nimble recruiter, and understands the expectations here."

• **Doug Lesmerises, Cleveland.com:** "Had the Buckeyes put this job on the market, candidates like Iowa State's Matt Campbell, Syracuse's Dino Babers and Northwestern's Pat Fitzgerald may have been interested. For a coach like former OSU assistant Luke Fickell, now the head coach at Cincinnati, this was always the great conflict. If Ohio State was your dream job, you almost certainly needed to leave Ohio State to have a chance at it. You needed to run your own program in order to prove you could lead the Buckeyes.

"That idea has changed.

"There are plenty of reasons for Ohio State fans to be enthused about Day's hiring. He's an innovative play caller, and the offense should continue to thrive. He's proven he can recruit on a national level, helping the Buckeyes land players like five-star Texas receiver Garrett Wilson, who tweeted (Dec. 4) that he remains committed.

"And he impressed his fellow assistant coaches while leading the Buckeyes through training camp, and the first three games of the season, while Meyer was on administrative leave and then under suspension. …

"… But Day must have the freedom to shape his own program. This isn't an interim coaching situation, or a guy filling in for a suspension.

"This is 39-year-old Ryan Day, first-time head coach, taking over one of the top five programs in college football and replacing a three-time national champion.

"There is reason for optimism. But there's some risk to it as well."

• **Rob Oller, Columbus Dispatch:** "If Meyer's exit was obvious, his next chapter is a mystery. He could take a few years off, get healthy and return to coaching in some capacity. Or he could take a job as a TV analyst – as he did in 2011 after leaving Florida, also for health reasons – and spend more time with family. He is 54. Ara Parseghian was only 51 when he retired from Notre Dame and moved to the broadcast booth, never to return to coaching.

"Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith said he has plans to keep Meyer plugged in to the program – possibly to help with recruiting? – and Meyer wants to stay involved. Just not as a coach. 'I'm certain, yes,' he said, reiterating that his coaching days are behind him.

"I'll believe it when I don't see it. Mack Brown thought the same thing but recently came out of retirement at age 67 to return to coach North Carolina. …

"… The hire (of Day) comes with some risk. The step up from offensive coordinator to head coach is like a baby doing ballet one day after learning to crawl. It can work – look at Oklahoma, where 35-year-old Lincoln Riley has the Sooners in the playoff for a second straight year despite no previous head-coaching experience before last season — but Ohio State is not a place where you learn as you go."

• **Marcus Hartman, Dayton Daily News:** "On more than one occasion, I have heard John Cooper say something to the effect of, 'If you are coaching football at Ohio State, you're going to win games if you don't screw it up.'

"Win games Urban Meyer did, and at a higher rate than anyone else ever has. (The fact 'anyone else' includes six College Football Hall of Fame members is probably worth mentioning.)

"Meyer did not face the rebuilding job Cooper did when Cooper was hired in 1988 or have as many fires to put out off the field as Jim Tressel reportedly did when Tressel replaced Cooper 13 years later.

"But Meyer did arrive to almost impossibly high expectations and came about as close to meeting them as anyone could, winning three Big Ten championships and a national championship.

"In light of news he plans to retire next month, it is appropriate to acknowledge Meyer did what he was hired to do – steer Ohio State through the wake of the NCAA mess that ended Tressel's time, continue dominating the Big Ten and win the national championship again.

"As high as the program rose under Tressel, Meyer was expected to bring it to another level and he did.

"Now in tapping Ryan Day to replace Meyer as head coach, Ohio State is betting not only is Cooper correct the program is practically too big to fail but also that Meyer unlocked the best practices for maximizing its potential."

• **Pat Forde, Yahoo Sports:** "When Meyer returned to the sideline, he was misery personified – doubled over at times, grabbing his head, appearing the very antithesis of calm and collected. At times he appeared to barely be keeping himself upright and functioning. Amid nationwide conjecture about his well-being, Meyer attempted an explanation a few weeks ago by publicly discussing a cyst on his brain that he said has caused him persistent pain, and for which he had surgery in 2014.

"Still, it was fair to wonder whether this was actual physical pain. Had Meyer been sucked back into the vortex of tunnel-visioned, winning-obsessed stress that nearly ruined him at Florida? The sideline discomfort flared during this wildly inconsistent season that saw Ohio State frequently underachieve and flirt with defeat. When the Buckeyes played their best game of the season and blew out archrival Michigan on Nov. 24, Meyer looked rather comfortable on the sideline.

"Whatever it is that has ailed Meyer this season, it is chasing him off the sideline. For now. He leaves a giant void at Ohio State and in college football in terms of coaching acumen and accomplishment – but also carries enough baggage with him to significantly complicate his legacy.

"It's been an incredibly dramatic ride for Urban Meyer since the innocent days at Utah. A fragile genius walks away, and nobody knows what comes next."

• **Adam Rittenberg, ESPN:** "The (Big Ten) needed a jolt.

"Meyer immediately provided one, especially when it came to recruiting. As Meyer retires from Ohio State, his impact on a league he dominated – three conference championships, division titles in all seven seasons, a 54-4 record in conference games – is undeniable.

" 'Not only has he elevated the quality and status of our program, but his presence has elevated Big Ten football,' Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith said during Meyer's retirement news conference. 'To compete with Urban-coached teams, our Big Ten colleagues have had to elevate their programs.'

"The Meyer effect was felt most on the recruiting trail. Meyer didn't care about the Big Ten's outdated gentleman's agreement not to pursue players verbally committed to other league schools. His first full recruiting class in 2013 ranked No. 3 nationally, according to ESPN. …

"… Ryan Day hopes to be the next Buckeye coach to bully the Big Ten. Thanks to his predecessor, it will be a much tougher task."

• **Teddy Greenstein, Chicago Tribune:** "The news of Urban Meyer's pending retirement – in a scoop delivered by Yahoo's Pete Thamel and confirmed by Ohio State – will elicit strong reactions around college football.

"Will people offer their honest take? Probably not. So I will hazard a guess.

"Michigan fans: *Hallelujah. Now we have a chance.*

"Big Ten Commissioner Jim Delany: *Oh, great. The Big Ten whiffed on the playoff the last two seasons. And now we'll be without the coach who won it all in 2014 and got back in the final four two seasons later.*

"ESPN's Paul Finebaum: *I was right! I predicted 2018 would be Meyer's last season.*

"Stadium Network's Brett McMurphy: *My reporting on Zach Smith, which was shredded by the Ohio State mob, will never be forgotten.*

"New Ohio State coach Ryan Day: *Yea, I'm getting my chance!*

"Also Ryan Day: *Oh, man, I have no chance to be as good as my predecessor. He went – gasp – 54-4 in Big Ten games, 82-9 overall and 7-0 against Michigan.*

"Michigan coach Jim Harbaugh: *Where do I send the thank-you note?*

"Buckeyes players: *Morning, Coach Day. Can I get the door for you?*

"Buckeyes recruits: *Hmmm … should I look around?*

"Washington coach Chris Petersen: *Ugh. The Buckeyes might have sleepwalked into the Rose Bowl. Now they'll be pumped to send Urban off right.*

"Meyer's doctor: *Smart move, sir.*

"Meyer's family: *Thank you.*

"Guys like me: *Bummer.*

"No joke. The perception is that Meyer is dour and unpleasant to be around. That's not so at all."

OSU's Top Play Came From Surprising Source

By JAMES GREGA
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

For the second straight season, Ohio State missed out on the College Football Playoff in large part due to a befuddling blowout loss on the road. That said, there were still plenty of great moments on the field for the Buckeyes as they picked up a second consecutive Big Ten title.

Dwayne Haskins accounted for 51 touchdowns on his way to finishing third in the Heisman Trophy voting while J.K. Dobbins rushed for more than 1,000 yards for the second straight season. Seven different Buckeyes made 20 or more receptions in 2018, and perhaps the two biggest plays of the season came from unlikely sources.

With just one game left in the 2018-19 season, BSB takes a look back at the top 10 plays and on-field performances of the campaign.

10. Jones' Blocked Punt (Nebraska, Nov. 3)

After an off week and following a 29-point loss to Purdue, Ohio State came out of the gates sluggish against lowly 2-6 Nebraska.

The Buckeyes, trailing 7-0 midway through the first quarter, were set to get the ball back via punt before junior linebacker Keandre Jones stepped in front of the kick, blocking it and chasing the ball out of the end zone for an Ohio State safety. It was the first of 16 unanswered points the Buckeyes scored on their way to a pedestrian 36-31 win over the Cornhuskers.

Ohio State punter Drue Chrisman also excelled, punting four times with an average of 47.8 yards per kick.

9. Bosa's Strip Sack (TCU, Sept. 15)

Junior defensive end Nick Bosa played in just three games in his final season as a Buckeye, but he made sure his presence was felt before his junior campaign was cut short due to injury.

In the first quarter of Ohio State's win over TCU, Bosa sacked and stripped Horned Frogs quarterback Shawn Robinson near the goal line, which resulted in a Davon Hamilton touchdown, Ohio State's first score of the game.

The play sparked the Buckeyes, but the high of Bosa's play would be short-lived as he was knocked out of the game with an abdomen injury. After further medical evaluation, he eventually announced his decision to leave the team weeks later to focus on getting healthy and preparing for the NFL draft.

8. Martell's Perfect Game (Rutgers, Sept. 8)

With Ohio State dominating the Rutgers at home in the second game of the year, backup quarterback Tate Martell got extended playing time and did not disappoint.

Martell completed all 10 of his pass attempts for 121 yards, including a 51-yard touchdown pass to Terry McLaurin in the second quarter. In the fourth quarter, Martell scampered 47 yards for a touchdown to finish with 95 rushing yards on nine attempts. He was named the Big Ten Freshman of the Week for his performance and said after the game that he had been waiting for his chance to play for a long time.

"I've been waiting for quite some time now ever since, I think, really the end of my senior year (of high school at Las Vegas Bishop Gorman). After redshirting last year, it was just fun getting out there," he said after the 52-3 win. "I just want to go out there and just play. That's just how I go out there. I've improved a ton as a passer. And I want to be able to go out there and show that, and I just went out there and made plays with my legs when I had to.

"And obviously Dwayne is our starter. That's how it is. And I'll be there if something goes wrong, whatever, whatever goes on with the coaches, whatever they want to do."

7. Arnette Picks Off Thorson (Northwestern, Dec. 1)

The play itself wasn't all that impressive, but the timing of junior cornerback Damon Arnette's interception against the Wildcats was as important as any play in the Big Ten title game.

JOSH WINSLOW

DENIED – Freshman wide receiver Chris Olave (17) blocked a punt that was returned for a touchdown in Ohio State's 62-39 win over Michigan.

Northwestern had cut Ohio State's 17-point halftime lead down to three and had the ball with a chance to tie the game or take the lead. Sophomore defensive end Chase Young pressured Wildcat quarterback Clayton Thorson and altered the throw over the middle. The ball deflected off an offensive lineman and bounced straight up into the air before Arnette came down with it.

The play didn't result in any points after junior running back Mike Weber fumbled on Ohio State's ensuing possession, but the interception took away the furious momentum that the Wildcats had in the third quarter. It was one of two interceptions Thorson threw on the night, the other coming from redshirt freshman cornerback Shaun Wade in the first half.

6. Hill's 1-Handed Catch (Minnesota, Oct. 13)

Ohio State was sleepwalking through the first half against Minnesota at home, and the Golden Gophers carried a 14-10 lead late into the second quarter.

With four minutes remaining in the first half, Haskins fired a pass over the middle to junior wideout K.J. Hill, who had just enough time to get one hand on the ball. He completed the one-handed stab in open space and sprinted to the end zone, where he then celebrated by pretending to kick the football off of his sticky hand.

The play electrified an Ohio Stadium crowd that had been waiting for something to cheer about for much of the first half.

"At first, I was kind of mad because that play we've been working on all week in practice, and it happens a lot faster," Haskins said of the play. "So I wanted him to get his head around, so when he looked, the ball was already there, and it was a little behind him. But he made a crazy play. Of course, K.J. is a little character. He was pretty hyped up. He had a career day today."

Hill finished with a career-high 187 yards receiving on nine receptions against the Gophers and finished with two scores on the day.

5. Jones' Pick-6 (TCU, Sept. 15)

Ohio State's defense didn't exactly have a stellar season. However, against TCU when the Buckeyes needed a spark, the Silver Bullets made plays.

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First it was Bosa's strip sack. Then, after Bosa went out with an injury, Ohio State still needed a defensive boost, and junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones delivered.

With the Buckeyes trailing 21-19, the Cleveland native stepped in front of a shovel pass from TCU quarterback Shawn Robinson and rumbled 28 yards for a touchdown to put Ohio State ahead for good.

"I would say the defensive score was the biggest one," Jones said when discussing the play. "Anytime you're playing in a game like this and you can win the turnover battle, that's our plan to win. We didn't turn the ball over, and we got three turnovers, two of them for scores. That's huge.

"No play is bigger than the other. It's all about the game momentum. Once we found it, we hung onto it and didn't let it go."

Jones also finished with a season-high six tackles from his interior defensive line position.

4. Haskins Strikes Heisman Pose (Northwestern, Dec. 1)

Haskins' performance against Northwestern in the Big Ten title game was statistically the best game ever by an Ohio State quarterback.

The Big Ten Offensive Player of the Year, Quarterback of the Year, Chicago Tribune Silver Football recipient and conference title game MVP completed 34 of 41 passes for a school-record 499 yards and five touchdowns to just one interception. After his final touchdown pass, a 17-yard strike to running back J.K. Dobbins, Haskins struck the Heisman pose in the back of the end zone while celebrating with his teammates.

After the game, his head coach officially campaigned for the gunslinger to, at the very least, get invited to the Heisman ceremony in New York City.

"He's without question a Heisman candidate," Urban Meyer said. "I've seen the statistics of the other two great players, and there's no doubt. Dwayne Haskins is a Heisman candidate, and he should be in New York City."

Haskins was invited to the Big Apple where he finished third in the voting behind Alabama quarterback Tua Tagovailoa and the Heisman winner, Oklahoma quarterback Kyler Murray.

3. Terps' Failed 2-pt Conversion (Maryland, Nov. 17)

Ohio State might not have been in Indianapolis had it not been for its 52-51 win over Maryland, and it would not have won against the Terps had it not been for an errant throw by quarterback Tyrrell Pigrome.

After answering Ohio State's overtime touchdown with one of its own, Maryland and interim head coach Matt Canada elected to go for two and the win against the Buckeyes. As Pigrome rolled to his right, it appeared he had a receiver open in the end zone. However, Pigrome misfired as the ball fell incomplete, sealing a close win for the Buckeyes.

Dre'Mont Jones, who was part of a defense that allowed more than 500 yards in the win, acknowledged that the receiver was open and that the Buckeyes got lucky.

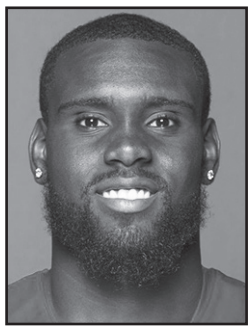
"My job is to rush the passer, stop the run and whatever happens in the back end happens," he said. "I knew they were going to roll out but that they were going to roll away from my side. So I just got penetration and luckily it was a bad pass because he looked open from my standpoint."

2. Victor Silences Happy Valley (Penn State, Sept. 29)

Just when it appeared all hope was lost for the second straight trip to State College, Pa., the Buckeyes got a big play from an unlikely source.

Junior wide receiver Binjimen Victor, who entered the tilt against the Nittany Lions with just five catches in four games, made an acrobatic catch over the middle with Ohio State trailing by two scores and dodged multiple defenders on his way to a 47-yard touchdown. The score brought the Buckeyes back to within a possession, and Ohio State went on to win, 27-26, in a game that most had chalked up as a loss in the fourth quarter.

"Ben has made some plays in some games, but to make a play in a moment like that and change momentum of a whole game, that is a lot for him," offensive coordinator Ryan Day said after the game. "It started a few weeks ago. He made some big blocks in the TCU game, and we hadn't seen a ton of that from him, then he makes that play and I think it was a defining moment for him."


Binjimen Victor

Victor's performance against Penn State didn't exactly carry over into the rest of the season however, as he finished his junior campaign with just 19 receptions for 320 yards and four scores.

1. Olave Stuns U-M (Michigan, Nov. 24)

The most surprising performance of the 2018 season came in the regular-season finale against Michigan.

Getting more playing time in recent weeks due to an injury to junior Austin Mack suffered Oct. 20 at Purdue, freshman wide receiver Chris Olave entered the Michigan game with just five receptions on the season. Against the Wolverines, however, Olave made a statement.

The true freshman from California caught two passes, both for touchdowns, in a 62-39 win over Ohio State's archrival. He also contributed to a third touchdown in the second half, when he blocked a Michigan punt that was returned for a touchdown by fellow freshman cornerback Sevyn Banks.

The blocked punt brought Ohio Stadium to a fever pitch and gave the Buckeyes all the momentum they needed to rout the Wolverines in the second half.

"Get used to that one now. That's the real deal," Meyer said of Olave after the game. "He comes from an incredible family. He came all the way across the country to be a Buckeye. And you could see right out of the jump when he started practicing, he's got the 'it.'

"And he's on my punt team. He's obviously a punt blocker. (Defensive coordinator) Greg Schiano picked him to go block that punt. There's very few that can get there. And he did it."

Olave added five receptions for 79 yards and a score in Ohio State's win over Northwestern in the conference title game a week later to finish with 12 receptions for 197 yards on the season heading into the Rose Bowl.

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Rose Bowl Caps Up-And-Down Season For UW

By JAMES GREGA
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Two seasons ago, Washington was one win away from playing in the national title game. Last season, the Huskies saw their season come to an end in the Fiesta Bowl with a 35-28 loss to Penn State.

For the third straight season, Washington is set to appear in a New Year's Six bowl. On the surface, that would appear to be a major step in the right direction for the Huskies, but considering where Chris Petersen's squad was expected to be at the beginning of the year, the Rose Bowl comes as a slight disappointment.

Chris Petersen

Washington entered the year ranked No. 6 in the nation but dropped its first game of the season to then-No. 9 Auburn. The Huskies rebounded with five straight victories to get back to No. 7 in the Associated Press top 25 but fell in two of their next three games with losses at Oregon and California bookending a victory over Colorado at home.

Despite ending the season with four straight wins over Stanford, Oregon State, Washington State and Utah, the latter in the Pac-12 title game, Petersen described the Huskies' season as rocky.

"It has been tough. It has been hard, (but) that is why I have a lot of respect for these kids. They have been through a lot. There were a lot of expectations put on them, and they have played really well and other times we haven't played as well," Petersen said on the Rose Bowl coaches teleconference Dec. 2. "A month ago, things were not looking real good. We played a game and we played well on defense but not on offense, and I think everybody had counted us long out."

The game Petersen referenced was the 12-10 loss to California in which the Huskies lost despite not surrendering a touchdown. The Golden Bears finished the season with a 7-5 record.

Washington's 10-3 win over Utah in the Pac-12 title game followed a similar theme, as the Huskies did not give up a touchdown but also failed to score one on offense. The game's lone trip to the end zone came on a pick-six by Washington defensive back Byron Murphy.

Petersen's squad started the season with expectations of being in the College Football Playoff, but even though those expectations were not met, a conference title and an appearance in the Rose Bowl to play Ohio State are quite the consolation prize.

"It's a special feeling," senior quarterback Jake Browning said. "I don't think it's totally set in yet, just because we beat a really good Utah team, and we're still excited about that. But I think once it sets in, I grew up in California and watched a lot of Rose Bowls and to be able to play in one now, it's a special game, and this is a special team, and definitely excited."

If there is one player who fully embodies an up-and-down season or career, it is Browning, the four-year starting quarterback for the Huskies.

His first season as a starter in 2015 resulted in a 7-6 campaign in which he finished with 16 touchdown passes to 10 interceptions. It was a modest opening act for what would end up being a stellar sophomore year.

Browning led the Huskies to an 11-1 regular season in 2016 and finished sixth in the Heisman Trophy voting. He threw for 3,430 yards and 43 touchdown passes to just nine interceptions as the Huskies not only won the Pac-12 championship but also earned the final spot in the CFP. Washington fell 24-7 in the semifinals to Alabama but figured to contend again for a final four spot in 2017.

Jake Browning

Instead, the Huskies and Browning took a step back, finishing with a 10-2 regular season and missing out on the Pac-12 title game. Browning's numbers dropped drastically, as he threw for just 2,719 yards and 19 touchdowns to five picks in 2017 despite playing in every game.

Browning's junior season came to an end with the loss to Penn State in the Fiesta Bowl, but once again, the Huskies entered the ensuing season with plenty of optimism.

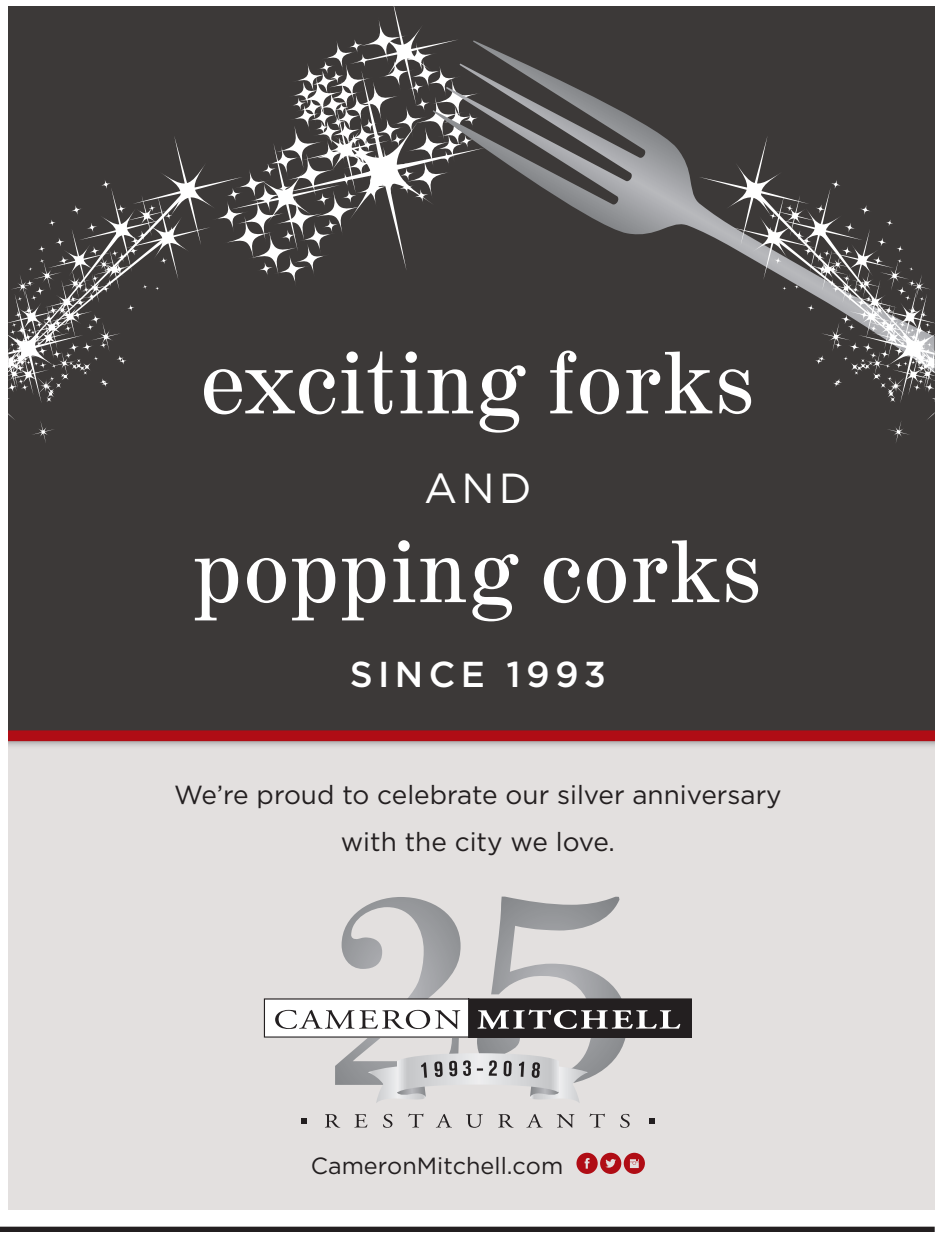
This season, Browning's numbers dipped again, resembling his freshman campaign more than any other season in his career. In 13 games, Browning has thrown for 2,879 yards and 16 touchdowns to 10 interceptions. Yet he led the Huskies to their first Rose Bowl appearance since the 2000 season when Washington defeated Drew Brees and Purdue, 34-24.

Even though his numbers haven't been what he would have liked them to be, Browning said his four years at UW have been about re-establishing expectations, and getting to the Rose Bowl is a big part of that.

"It's kind of hard to take four years and put

About Washington

- **2018 record:** 10-3, 7-2 Pac-12.
- **Team Information:** Offensive Formation – Pro-Style; Defensive Formation – Multiple; Starters Returning – Offense 8, Defense 9, Specialists 1.
- **Head Coach:** Chris Petersen, 139-32, 12th season (fourth at Washington, 47-20).
- **Series History:** 12th meeting; Ohio State leads, 8-3.
- **School Facts:** Location – Seattle, Wash.; Enrollment – 44,786; Nickname – Huskies; Colors – Purple & Gold; Conference – Pac-12 (North Division); Stadium – Husky Stadium (Surface, FieldTurf; Capacity, 70,183).



Washington Season Statistics

2018-19 Game-By-Game

Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd
Sept. 1	(6) vs. Auburn (9)*	L, 21-16	70,103
Sept. 8	(9) NORTH DAKOTA	W, 45-3	68,093
Sept. 15	(10) at Utah	W, 21-7	47,445
Sept. 22	(10) Arizona State	W, 27-20	71,200
Sept. 29	(11) BYU (20)	W, 35-7	70,155
Oct. 6	(10) at UCLA	W, 31-24	51,123
Oct. 13	(7) at Oregon (17)	L, 30-27	58,691
Oct. 20	(15) COLORADO	W, 27-13	68,798
Oct. 27	(15) at California	L, 12-10	39,138
Nov. 3	STANFORD	W, 27-23	69,690
Nov. 17	(18) OREGON STATE	W, 42-23	66,469
Nov. 23	(16) at Wash. St. (7)	W, 28-15	32,952
Nov. 30	(11) vs. Utah (17)**	W, 10-3	35,134
Jan. 1	(9) vs. Ohio St. (6)#	5 p.m.	–

UW's gameday CFP ranking is in parentheses before the opponent, while the opponent's ranking is after the name. (AP ranking used through California game.)
* – at Atlanta (Mercedes-Benz Stadium)
** – Pac-12 title game at Santa Clara, Calif. (Levi's Stadium)
# – Rose Bowl at Pasadena, Calif. (Rose Bowl Stadium)

Team Statistics

	WASH	Opp
First Downs	283	215
Rushing	120	81
Passing	142	121
Penalty	21	13
Average Per Game/Rush	179.9	116.4
Average Per Game/Pass	232.5	185.4
Total Offense	5,361	3,923
Total Plays	878	849
Average Per Game	412.4	301.8
Average Per Play	6.1	4.6
Penalties-Yards	63-573	65-559
Fumbles-Lost	11-5	23-9
Third Down Efficiency	79-174	78-201
Percentage	45%	39%
Fourth Down Efficiency	10-18	12-22
Percentage	56%	55%
Sacks-Yards	21-171	22-158
Time Of Possession Avg.	32:08	27:52

Score By Quarters

	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.
Washington	114	103	64	62	3	346	26.6
Opponents	49	49	47	50	6	201	15.5

Individual Statistics

Rushing

	Att.	Net	Avg.	Long	TD
Myles Gaskin	235	1,147	4.9	10	80
Salvon Ahmed	99	604	6.1	7	59
Sean McGrew	49	219	4.5	1	30
Kamari Pleasant	41	214	5.2	2	23
Jake Browning	81	141	1.7	4	25
Andre Baccellia	2	50	25.0	0	37
Chico McClatcher	4	7	1.8	0	8
Malik Braxton	2	7	3.5	0	4
Jake Haener	1	-9	-9.0	0	0
TEAM	14	-41	-2.9	0	0
WASH Totals	**528**	**2,339**	**4.4**	**24**	**80**
OPP Totals	**429**	**1,513**	**3.5**	**12**	**69**

Passing

	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT	Effic.
Jake Browning	217	334	65.0	2,879	16-10	147.20
Jake Haener	9	13	69.2	107	1-1	148.37
Andre Baccellia	1	2	50.0	14	0-1	8.80
Aaron Fuller	1	1	100.0	22	1-0	614.80
WASH Totals	**228**	**350**	**65.1**	**3,022**	**18-12**	**147-49**
OPP Totals	**270**	**420**	**64.3**	**2,410**	**9-11**	**114.32**

Receiving

	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Aaron Fuller	51	794	15.6	4	46
Andre Baccellia	43	475	11.0	0	48
Ty Jones	28	469	16.8	6	43
Drew Sample	23	251	10.9	2	33
Salvon Ahmed	18	148	8.2	0	26
Myles Gaskin	18	78	4.3	1	14
Cade Otton	12	158	13.2	3	24
Chico McClatcher	9	134	14.9	0	36
Quinten Pounds	8	166	20.8	1	57
Hunter Bryant	7	187	26.7	1	59
Sean McGrew	6	110	18.3	0	41
Kamari Pleasant	3	18	6.0	0	10
Alex Cook	1	26	26.0	0	26
Jacob Kizer	1	8	8.0	0	8
WASH Totals	**228**	**3,022**	**13.3**	**18**	**59**
OPP Totals	**270**	**2,410**	**8.9**	**9**	**39**

Scoring

	TD	EPK	EPR	EPRC	FG	PTS
Peyton Henry	–	41-42	–	–	15-21	86
Myles Gaskins	11	–	–	–	–	66
Salvon Ahmed	7	–	1-1	–	–	44
Ty Jones	6	–	–	–	–	36
Aaron Fuller	4	–	–	–	–	24
Jake Browning	4	–	–	–	–	24
Cade Otton	3	–	–	–	–	18
Kamari Pleasant	2	–	–	–	–	12
Drew Sample	2	–	–	–	–	12
Byron Murphy	1	–	–	–	–	6
Hunter Bryant	1	–	–	–	–	6
Quinten Pounds	1	–	–	–	–	6
Sean McGrew	1	–	–	–	–	6
WASH Totals	**43**	**41-42**	**1-1**	**–**	**15-21**	**346**
OPP Totals	**22**	**16-17**	**0-2**	**0-2**	**17-25**	**201**

FG Distance

	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Peyton Henry	9-10	5-8	1-3	0-0	15-21
WASH Totals	**9-10**	**5-8**	**1-3**	**0-0**	**15-21**
OPP Totals	**5-5**	**5-6**	**5-11**	**2-3**	**17-25**

Punting

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Joel Whitford	28	1,164	41.6	0	59
Race Porter	17	719	42.3	1	63
Jake Browning	1	35	35.0	0	35
TEAM	1	0	0.0	0	0
WASH Totals	**47**	**1,918**	**40.8**	**1**	**63**
OPP Totals	**64**	**2,546**	**39.8**	**0**	**62**

Interceptions

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Byron Murphy	4	78	19.5	1	66
Ben Burr-Kirven	2	22	11.0	0	20
Taylor Rapp	2	0	0.0	0	0
Jordan Miller	2	0	0.0	0	0
Greg Gaines	1	0	0.0	0	0
WASH Totals	**11**	**100**	**9.1**	**1**	**66**
OPP Totals	**12**	**164**	**13.7**	**1**	**37**

Punt Returns

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Aaron Fuller	19	114	6.0	0	28
Chico McClatcher	1	0	0.0	0	0
WASH Totals	**20**	**114**	**5.7**	**0**	**28**
OPP Totals	**20**	**204**	**10.2**	**0**	**42**

Kickoff Returns

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Sean McGrew	6	110	18.3	0	25
Myles Gaskin	4	74	18.5	0	25
Chico McClatcher	2	44	22.0	0	22
Salvon Ahmed	1	31	31.0	0	31
Max Richmond	1	6	6.0	0	6
WASH Totals	**14**	**265**	**18.9**	**0**	**31**
OPP Totals	**42**	**884**	**21.0**	**0**	**56**

Def. Leaders

	Solo	Ast.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Ben Burr-Kirven	85	80	165	4.0-12	1.0-6
Tevis Bartlett	41	27	68	5.0-15	1.0-5
Taylor Rapp	33	26	59	6.0-37	5.0-33
Byron Murphy	37	19	56	4.0-13	–
Myles Bryant	33	22	55	4.5-49	3.5-46
Greg Gaines	22	30	52	5.5-34	3.5-31
Jojo McIntosh	27	24	51	–	–
Benning Potoa'e	19	19	38	6.0-27	1.0-14
Jaylen Johnson	16	18	34	3.5-12	1.0-4
Levi Onwuzurike	15	18	33	5.5-24	2.0-13
Ryan Bowman	17	11	28	3.5-10	–
Elijah Molden	19	8	27	–	–
Jordan Miller	17	6	23	2.0-5	–
Brandon Wellington	12	9	21	1.0-1	–
Joe Tryon	9	8	17	2.0-9	1.0-5
Keith Taylor	10	5	15	1.5-2	–
Brandon McKinney	5	10	15	1.0-2	–
DJ Beavers	13	1	14	–	–
Josiah Bronson	6	5	11	1.0-9	1.0-9
Ariel Ngata	7	4	11	1.0-1	–
Kyler Manu	2	8	10	–	–
Jake Wambaugh	5	3	8	–	–
Shane Bowman	4	3	7	1.0-5	1.0-5
Amandre Williams	2	5	7	–	–
Austin Joyner	3	3	6	–	–
John Clark	2	3	5	–	–
Dominique Hampton	3	1	4	–	–
MJ Tafisi	2	1	3	–	–
Drew Sample	1	1	2	–	–
Sam Taimani	1	1	2	–	–
WASH Totals	**486**	**384**	**870**	**58-267**	**21-171**
OPP Totals	**528**	**308**	**836**	**78-338**	**22-158**

Fumbles Forced: 18 – Ben Burr-Kirven 4, Tevis Bartlett 3, Jordan Miller 2, Edefuan Ulofoshio 2, Byron Murphy, Myles Bryant, Jojo McIntosh, Elijah Molden, Ariel Ngata, Shane Bowman, Jackson Sirmon.
Fumbles Recovered: 9 – Ben Burr-Kirven 3, Taylor Rapp 3, Elijah Molden, Kyler Manu, Peyton Henry.

it into one sentence on what this program is now. But I think there is definitely more of an expectation to win," he said. "And like Coach P said, Pac-12 championships are hard, but that's kind of the standard we've set around here."

Defense Carries Huskies

While Browning and the Washington offense have struggled throughout the season, the Huskies defense has been the pillar of the 2018 team.

Through 13 games, the Huskies rank No. 12 in the country in total defense, surrendering just more than 300 yards per game (301.8). In addition, Petersen's defense ranks No. 5 in the nation in scoring, allowing just 15.5 points per game.

In the Pac-12 title game, Washington gave up just 137 yards to Utah and, as previously mentioned, scored the only touchdown of the game on an interception return. Murphy, who made the play, leads the Huskies in interceptions this season with four and said he knows the defense always has to play well for Washington to win.

"Going in, we knew as a defense we had to come to play," he said after the Pac-12 title game. "This whole week of practice, the defense has been going hard in practice, knowing they were going to come to play, and the defense had to play better throughout this whole game."

The most points Washington has allowed all season is 30 in an overtime loss to Oregon.

Players To Watch

The stingy Husky defense is led by linebacker Ben Burr-Kirven, who leads the FBS in tackles with 165, 10 more than the second player on that list (Malik Fountain, Central Michigan).

Burr-Kirven registered double-digit tackles in all but two games in 2018 and tallied a career-high 20 stops in a 27-20 win over Arizona State on Sept. 22. For his stellar season, he was named the Pac-12 Defensive Player of the Year.

"It's pretty crazy," Burr-Kirven said. "It's something I don't think I ever imagined having an opportunity to win when I first got here in 2015."

Burr-Kirven was also named the Pac-12 Football Scholar Athlete of the Year.

The star linebacker isn't the only player on the sideline with superstar potential. Perhaps the most dynamic player on Washington's roster is running back Myles Gaskin.

Much like Browning, Gaskin is a four-year starter for the Huskies and has led Washington in rushing each season since arriving on campus. For his career, Gaskin has rushed for 5,202 yards and has missed just two games, both this season. In 2018, Gaskin has accumulated 1,147 yards and 10 touchdowns on 235 carries.

Gaskin's junior campaign was statistically the best of his career as he rushed for 1,380 yards on 222 carries and accumulated 21 rushing scores, adding three more receiving touchdowns.

After so much success and an up-and-down season, Petersen is grateful for everything his senior class has given the program over the last four seasons.

"It seems like it was yesterday when they came in in some ways, but they've been here a long time. And we thought we had some really good players when we got them," he said. "We really did. You don't know until you put them through the grind. But we knew they were good players and we felt the type of people they were, but you don't know until they go through all these hard things."

Ohio State vs. Washington

Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2019 • 5 p.m. • ESPN
Rose Bowl Stadium; Pasadena, Calif.

Projected Depth Charts

WHEN OHIO STATE HAS THE BALL...

14 JOJO MCINTOSH, 6-1, 205, SR.
18 Isaiah Gilchrist, 5-11, 202, So.

8 BENNING POTOA'E, 6-3, 277, JR.
55 Ryan Bowman, 6-0, 263, So.

17 TEVIS BARTLETT, 6-3, 233, SR.
53 Jake Wambaugh, 6-2, 224, Sr.

7 TAYLOR RAPP, 6-0, 200, JR.
11 Brandon McKinney, 6-0, 201, So.

25 BEN BURR-KIRVEN, 6-0, 221, SR.
30 Kyler Manu, 6-1, 238, Jr.

S — LB — LB — LB — S

23 JORDAN MILLER, 6-1, 181, SR.
27 Keith Taylor, 6-2, 200, So.

95 LEVI ONWUZURIKE, 6-3, 282, SO.
97 Jason Scrempos, 6-6, 292, Jr.

92 JAYLEN JOHNSON, 6-3, 286, SR.
90 Josiah Bronson, 6-3, 280, Jr.

1 BYRON MURPHY, 5-11, 182, SO.
27 Keith Taylor, 6-2, 200, So.

99 GREG GAINES, 6-2, 316, SR.
57 John Clark, 6-4, 275, Jr.

5 MYLES BRYANT, 5-8, 182, JR.
3 Elijah Molden, 5-11, 190, So.

CB — DL — DL — DL — CB

WR — LT — LG — C — RG — RT — TE

83 TERRY MCLAURIN, 6-1, 204, 5TH-SR.
OR 9 BINJIMEN VICTOR, 6-4, 200, JR.
15 Jaylen Harris, 6-5, 215, So.

75 THAYER MUNFORD, 6-6, 319, SO.
58 Joshua Alabi, 6-5, 305, Jr.

66 MALCOLM PRIDGEON, 6-7, 310, 5TH-SR.
61 Gavin Cupp, 6-4, 308, So.

73 MICHAEL JORDAN, 6-7, 310, JR.
71 Josh Myers, 6-5, 308, R-Fr.

52 WYATT DAVIS, 6-4, 315, R-FR.
76 Branden Bowen, 6-7, 312, Jr.

59 ISAIAH PRINCE, 6-7, 310, SR.
76 Branden Bowen, 6-7, 312, Jr.
77 Nicholas Petit-Frere, 6-6, 272, Fr.

89 LUKE FARRELL, 6-6, 250, SO.
13 Rashod Berry, 6-4, 259, Jr.
OR 88 Jeremy Ruckert, 6-6, 240, Fr.
81 Jake Hausmann, 6-4, 245, So.

QB — WR

7 DWAYNE HASKINS, 6-3, 218, SO.
18 Tate Martell, 5-11, 207, R-Fr.

83 TERRY MCLAURIN, 6-1, 204, 5TH-SR.
OR 1 JOHNNIE DIXON, 5-11, 198, 5TH-SR.
17 Chris Olave, 6-1, 170, Fr.

P — RB — H

91 DRUE CHRISMAN, 6-3, 215, SO.
96 Sean Nuernberger, 6-1, 228, 5th-Sr.

2 J.K. DOBBINS, 5-10, 212, SO.
OR 5 MIKE WEBER, 5-10, 214, JR.
33 Master Teague, 5-11, 215, Fr.

21 PARRIS CAMPBELL, 6-1, 208, 5TH-SR.
14 K.J. Hill, 6-0, 198, Jr.
30 Demario McCall, 5-9, 193, So.
80 C.J. Saunders, 5-10, 185, Jr.

K

95 BLAKE HAUBEIL, 6-4, 225, SO.
96 Sean Nuernberger, 6-1, 228, 5th-Sr.

WHEN WASHINGTON HAS THE BALL...

25 BRENDON WHITE, 6-2, 210, SO.
24 Shaun Wade, 6-1, 192, R-Fr.
12 Isaiah Pryor, 6-2, 197, So.

39 MALIK HARRISON, 6-3, 240, JR.
16 Keandre Jones, 6-2, 228, Jr.

20 PETE WERNER, 6-3, 235, SO.
52 Dante Booker, 6-3, 240, 5th-Sr.

4 JORDAN FULLER, 6-2, 204, JR.
10 Amir Riep, 5-11, 195, So.
OR 23 Jahsen Wint, 5-11, 196, So.
29 Marcus Hooker, 5-11, 192, Fr.

32 TUF BORLAND, 6-1, 230, SO.
5 Baron Browning, 6-4, 238, So.
47 Justin Hilliard, 6-1, 230, Jr.

SS — LB — MLB — LB — FS

67 ROBERT LANDERS, 6-1, 283, JR.
OR 53 DAVON HAMILTON, 6-4, 310, JR.
72 Tommy Togiai, 6-2, 300, Fr.
98 Jerron Cage, 6-2, 290, R-Fr.

8 KENDALL SHEFFIELD, 6-0, 193, JR.
24 Shaun Wade, 6-1, 192, R-Fr.

18 JONATHON COOPER, 6-4, 257, JR.
9 Jashon Cornell, 6-3, 274, Jr.

2 CHASE YOUNG, 6-5, 265, SO.
11 Tyreke Smith, 6-3, 260, Fr.
OR 54 Tyler Friday, 6-3, 262, Fr.

86 DRE'MONT JONES, 6-3, 290, JR.
92 Haskell Garrett, 6-2, 293, So.
OR 6 Taron Vincent, 6-2, 285, Fr.

3 DAMON ARNETTE, 6-0, 195, JR.
OR 1 JEFFREY OKUDAH, 6-1, 199, SO.

CB — DE — DT — DT — DE — CB

WR — LT — LG — C — RG — RT — SB

5 ANDRE BACCELLIA, 5-10, 173, JR.
28 Terrell Bynum, 6-1, 194, R-Fr.

70 JARED HILBERS, 6-7, 313, JR.
59 Henry Roberts, 6-6, 303, Jr.

76 LUKE WATTENBERG, 6-5, 307, SO.
66 Henry Bainivalu, 6-5, 321, R-Fr.

56 NICK HARRIS, 6-1, 300, JR.
75 Jesse Sosebee, 6-5, 312, Sr.

51 JAXSON KIRKLAND, 6-7, 315, R-FR.
71 Matt James, 6-5, 300, Sr.

58 KALEB MCGARY, 6-7, 318, SR.
77 Devin Burleson, 6-8, 333, Jr.

88 DREW SAMPLE, 6-5, 251, SR.
OR 87 CADE OTTON, 6-5, 249, R-FR.
OR 1 HUNTER BRYANT, 6-2, 224, SO.

QB — WR

3 JAKE BROWNING, 6-2, 210, SR.
13 Jake Haener, 6-0, 196, R-Fr.

2 AARON FULLER, 5-11, 186, JR.
82 Jordan Chin, 6-0, 171, So.

P — TB — WR

32 JOEL WHITFORD, 6-3, 212, JR.

9 MYLES GASKIN, 5-10, 193, SR.
26 Salvon Ahmed, 5-11, 195, So.

20 TY JONES, 6-4, 209, SO.
15 Alex Cook, 6-1, 193, R-Fr.

K

47 PEYTON HENRY, 5-11, 195, R-FR.

How We See It

OHIO STATE RUSH OFFENSE vs. WASHINGTON RUSH DEFENSE

The Buckeyes can run the ball, but the duo of junior Mike Weber and sophomore J.K. Dobbins played secondary roles most games to quarterback Dwayne Haskins and his assault on the record book. Much like the season, there's a sense that the running game underachieved. Some of the blame (credit?) goes to Haskins. When you have a talent like him, who needs a running game? The Buckeyes do. It's still an important part of the game plan, and OSU wants desperately for Weber, in what could be his final game, to get the 142 yards needed to join Dobbins (1,029) as a 1,000-yard rusher this season. (Here's the disclaimer: As BSB went to press, no Buckeyes had declared they would skip the Rose Bowl to protect their NFL draft stock. Weber could be a candidate.) OSU is an un-Woodyish 57th in rushing nationally with a 175.8 average. Washington is 16th against the run, allowing 116.4 yards per game. UW linebacker Ben Burr-Kirven is the nation's leading tackler with 165. **EDGE: WASHINGTON**

WASHINGTON RUSH OFFENSE vs. OHIO STATE RUSH DEFENSE

Senior running back Myles Gaskin was named All-Pac 12 second team after rushing for 1,147 yards and a 4.9 average with 10 touchdowns, including a long of 80 yards. That spells trouble for a defense that allows big gains almost on a weekly basis, such as the 77-yard jaunt by little-known Northwestern backup John Moten IV. Maybe the extra-long time in between games will give the coaches and players an opportunity to correct those season-long mistakes. Gaskin's 5,202 career yards is third most in Pac-12 history. UW is 55th in running (179.9). OSU's rush defense is 61st (160.5). **EDGE: EVEN**

OHIO STATE PASS OFFENSE vs. WASHINGTON PASS DEFENSE

Haskins. Haskins. Haskins. That's all you need to know about the Ohio State passing game. He can cap the greatest statistical season ever for a Big Ten quarterback with a farewell (?) performance in the Rose Bowl. He leads the nation with an astounding 47 TD passes, seven more than Oklahoma's Kyler Murray, and has thrown for 4,580 yards against eight interceptions. Haskins has 13 TD passes in the past three games and has distributed the ball to a variety of receivers that will make it hard for the Huskies to defend, though they will try with Pac-12 first-team defensive backs Byron Murphy and Taylor Rapp. Murphy has four interceptions, and the most recent was returned 66 yards for the only TD in the Huskies' 10-3 win over Utah in the Pac-12 championship game. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

WASHINGTON PASS OFFENSE vs. OHIO STATE PASS DEFENSE

Quarterback Jake Browning was 217 for 334 (65.0 percent) for 2,879 yards, 16 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. His favorite target is Aaron Fuller, who had 794 yards on a 15.6 average and four TD catches. Ty Jones led the team with six scoring receptions. Washington is 64th in passing at 232.5 yards a game; the Buckeyes' defense is 82nd due to giving up 239.8. The battle could be won in the trenches as Pac-12 first-team offensive linemen Nick Harris and Kaleb McGary try to protect their QB. Chase Young re-emerged as a force on the OSU D-line vs. Northwestern, but will junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones stick around for the bowl game? **EDGE: EVEN**

SPECIAL TEAMS

Punter Drue Chrisman gives the Buckeyes the edge with his ability to boot them out of trouble or laser-drop the ball inside the 10-yard line. Washington punter Joel Whitford averaged 41.6 per punt. Washington averaged 5.7 yards on 20 punt returns with a long of 28 by Fuller. Their longest kickoff return was 31 by Salvon Ahmed. UW's Peyton Henry made 15 of 21 field goals (71.4 percent) with a long of 41 and one blocked. OSU's Blake Haubeil is 10 of 13 (76.9 percent) with a 47-yarder. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

INTANGIBLES

A traumatic offseason has ebbed into a dramatic postseason with the announcement of Urban Meyer's retirement after the Rose Bowl. The players have been able to put the distractions aside and will be asked to do so one more time in Pasadena. Washington will rightly feel slighted as all the attention will be on Meyer, Haskins and the Buckeyes. The Huskies showed off their defensive prowess in shutting down Utah for their first trip to the Rose Bowl since the 2000 season. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

PREDICTION

Any Buckeye letdown from not being chosen for the College Football Playoff evaporated when Meyer decided to step away. There's only one way to carry him off the Rose Bowl field, and that's with a victory. **OHIO STATE 45, WASHINGTON 30**

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"Your Head to Toe Buckeye Source"

Buckeyes Hold 8-3 Edge All Time Vs. Huskies

By CRAIG MERZ
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The New Year's Day 2019 Rose Bowl matchup against the Washington Huskies has a strange feel for Ohio State fans.

When it comes to the Pac-12 (or 10 or 8 in previous incarnations) the first program that comes to mind is Southern California. The Buckeyes and Trojans have met in some classic Rose Bowls with national title implications on the line for one or both teams.

Last year they met for the 24th time, but instead of the Rose Bowl it was the Cotton Bowl in Arlington, Texas, as one of the College Football Playoff semifinal games was played in Pasadena, Calif., instead.

Longtime OSU followers probably still get riled thinking about Rose Bowl losses to Stanford and UCLA in the 1970s when the Buckeyes were ranked second and first, respectively.

So, it might surprise many that the Pac-12 opponent in the upcoming Rose Bowl has a lengthy history against the Buckeyes. Maybe because OSU has dominated, or there hasn't been a signature game or moment, there isn't a "rivalry" feel when Washington is mentioned.

The biggest reason for the lack of heat might be because they have never met in the Rose Bowl. All 11 prior meetings have come early in the season when an outcome did not have a direct impact on a national title bid.

Nonetheless, the Buckeyes hold an 8-3 advantage since the first game in 1957 and have won the past three, the last being in 2007.

Even though neither team was selected for the four-team College Football Playoff this season, there is still something to play for when the No. 6 Buckeyes (12-1) face No. 9 Washington (10-3).

OSU owns a 7-7 record in the Rose Bowl while the Huskies are 7-6-1. The winner breaks a tie with Stanford (7-7-1) and moves into a second-place tie with Michigan (8-12) for the most Rose Bowl victories behind USC (25-9). An Ohio State loss would give the Buckeyes the third-most defeats, trailing the Wolverines and Trojans.

Ohio State and the Huskies are scheduled to meet again in the 2024 (Seattle) and 2025 (Columbus) seasons.

Of note, the Huskies played the Buckeyes the season after OSU won national titles in 1957, 1968 and 2002. Also, the teams met in 2007 after Ohio State lost the 2006 BCS title game to Florida.

Here is a recap of the previous games in the series, listed in chronological order:

Oct. 5, 1957 (Seattle): OSU 35, Washington 7

The season started ominously when Texas Christian University, a two-touchdown underdog, upset the Buckeyes 18-14 in Columbus to hand Woody Hayes his first season-opening loss in seven years at OSU.

Next was a trip to the Pacific Northwest against the Huskies under first-year coach Jim Owens. Washington had already played two games – a 6-6 tie at home with Colorado and a resounding 46-7 loss at No. 6 Minnesota – and the crowd of 36,328 wasn't sure what to expect.

What they got was a 7-7 halftime score that remained that way until Don Sutherin raced 81 yards for a touchdown on a punt return and the floodgates opened for the Buckeyes.

He took the punt, faked a handoff on the reverse and moved down the left side of the field. He used a block at the UW 40 to spring free and was not challenged from there.

Fullback Galen Cisco would add a 7-yard touchdown run. Halfbacks Don Clark and Dick LeBeau had big games as well with Clark rolling to his right to find LeBeau for a 9-yard scoring play early in the final quarter.

Hayes years later would credit Sutherin's return as the play that turned the season around. Indeed.

The Buckeyes would finish 9-1, including wins over Michigan (31-14) and Oregon (10-7) in the Rose Bowl to win the national championship.

The Huskies had a 3-6-1 record that season.

Oct. 4, 1958 (Columbus): No. 3 OSU 12, Washington 7

Ohio State was the preseason choice to win back-to-back championships, but the Buckeyes had to hold off visiting Southern Methodist 23-20 in the season opener and were installed as 20-point favorites the following game against Washington.

Someone should have told the Huskies, who won their first two games at home vs. San Jose State (14-6) and Minnesota (24-21). They would win one game the rest of the season for a 3-7 mark.

The Huskies took a 7-0 lead, but Bob White's interception at the UW 27 set up backup quarterback Jerry Fields, playing for the injured Frank Kremblas, for a 1-yard sneak to make it 7-6 after the failed extra point. That's how the game entered the fourth quarter.

OSU finally eased the anxiety a bit of the 79,477 in Ohio Stadium when Oscar Hauer blocked a punt and Jim Marshall recovered it at the Washington 27. Clark rushed for a 4-yard TD for the final margin as the Huskies reached the OSU 21 with 2:14 left before the drive stalled.

Oct. 2, 1965 (Seattle): OSU 23, Washington 21

Ohio State was coming off a 14-3 loss to North Carolina in the first game when it traveled to Seattle and extended the win streak to three in the series before a turnout of 54,132.

OSU led 14-13 at the half on runs by Tom Barrington and Willard Sander. UW eventually went ahead 21-20 after the teams traded touchdowns, the Buckeyes were headed for defeat until Bob Funk, whose missed extra point on the third OSU TD was the difference, made a 27-yard field goal with 59 seconds left.

Oct. 1, 1966 (Columbus): Washington, 38, OSU 22

The Buckeyes should have seen the first loss to Washington coming after an unimpressive 14-7 win over TCU in the opener.

Washington rolled into Ohio Stadium and silenced the 80,241 partisans by building a 21-0 lead. The Huskies rushed for 413 yards, 221 by Don Moore, to OSU's 34.

OSU sophomore Bill Long passed for 228 yards, but the Buckeyes allowed their most points since Illinois posted 41 in 1953.

Ohio State would end the year 4-5; the Huskies were 6-4.

Oct. 4, 1969 (Seattle): No. 1 OSU 41, Washington 14

A then-record crowd of 57,150 jammed Husky Stadium to watch the defending national champion Buckeyes win their 16th straight game over three seasons.

Junior QB Rex Kern got the game's first score with a 64-yard run off the option en route to 267 total yards and two running TDs.

Fullback Jim Otis barreled his way to 111 yards and scored three short touchdowns, and backup QB Ron Maciejowski added a 5-yard TD run. OSU had 502 total yards, and the defense had two interceptions and three fumble recoveries.

OSU, of course, would remain undefeated

Ohio State vs. Washington

Date	Location	Result
Oct. 5, 1957	Seattle	Ohio State 35, Washington 7
Oct. 4, 1958	Columbus	Ohio State 12, Washington 7
Oct. 2, 1965	Seattle	Ohio State 23, Washington 21
Oct. 1, 1966	Columbus	Washington 38, Ohio State 22
Oct. 4, 1969	Seattle	Ohio State 41, Washington 14
Sept. 13, 1986	Seattle	Washington 40, Ohio State 7
Sept. 11, 1993	Columbus	Ohio State 21, Washington 12
Sept. 10, 1994	Seattle	Washington 25, Ohio State 16
Sept. 16, 1995	Columbus	Ohio State 30, Washington 20
Aug. 30, 2003	Columbus	Ohio State 28, Washington 9
Sept. 15, 2007	Seattle	Ohio State 33, Washington 14

until the infamous 24-12 loss at Michigan to start the Ten-Year War between Hayes and Bo Schembechler.

Sept. 13, 1986 (Seattle): No. 17 Wash. 40, No. 10 OSU 7

After the usual 9-3 record under coach Earle Bruce in 1985, the Buckeyes' hope for a breakout season were quickly dashed with consecutive defeats for the worst start since losing to Akron and Wittenberg in 1894.

OSU first lost 16-10 to Alabama in the Kickoff Classic in East Rutherford, N.J., before being embarrassed by the Huskies for the worst setback since a 41-6 loss at Purdue in 1967.

On a rainy afternoon, the Huskies scored 24 points in the second quarter to the delight of 61,071.

UW dominated in yardage (408-186), first downs (24-11) and possession (37:50-22:10), and OSU's three fumbles led to UW scores.

It was a sweet win for Washington coach Don James, who was born in Massillon, Ohio, previously was head coach at Kent State and had a brother, Tommy, who played for OSU's 1942 national championship team.

To their credit, the Buckeyes rebounded to finish as Big Ten co-champs and with a 10-3 record after a Cotton Bowl win vs. Texas A&M.

Sept. 11, 1993 (Columbus): No. 16 OSU 21, No. 12 Wash. 12

The Buckeyes with John Cooper at the helm defeated first-year coach Jim Lambright as 94,109 attended the second night game in Ohio Stadium history.

Washington was led by quarterback Damon Huard and halfback Napoleon Kaufman, but the Buckeyes assumed a 14-9 halftime lead on a run by Raymont Harris and a Bobby Hoying to Joey Galloway pass of 35 yards.

A field goal moved the Huskies to within two at 14-12 early in the fourth quarter, but Butler By'not'e sped 49 yards for the more comfortable nine-point lead.

Sept. 10, 1994 (Seattle): No. 25 Wash. 25, No. 18 OSU 16

Washington scored 19-first quarter points and was up 22-0 at the half.

Kaufman shredded the defense for 211 yards on 22 carries, including a 38-yard weave through the Buckeyes for the first score. He was the first back to surpass 200 yards vs. OSU since Jamie Morris had 210 for Michigan in 1986.

It was a different story in the second half, but it was too little too late. Eddie George rushed 24 yards to the end zone, and Hoying threw a 13-yard TD pass to Buster Tillman. Hoying also passed for a pair of two-point conversions, but the Huskies held on to the cheers of 70,861.

Sept. 16, 1995 (Columbus): No. 10 OSU 30, No. 18 Wash. 20

OSU beat Boston College 38-6 in the Kickoff Classic on Aug. 27 then waited 20 days to play the Huskies. It was worth it as 94,104 witnessed the Buckeyes take a 30-7 lead in the fourth quarter before two turnovers on their side of the field allowed the Huskies to creep closer.

Cooper said the Buckeyes desperately wanted to make amends for the loss the previous year.

"There's no question I have revenge in my mind," he said. "We started slow, made turnovers, and they jumped on us."

George had 212 yards and two touchdowns on 36 carries as a precursor to winning the Heisman Trophy.

The Buckeyes were efficient in the red zone, scoring 5 of 6 times, and made 11 of 16 third-down attempts.

Aug. 30, 2003 (Columbus): No. 2 OSU 28, No. 17 Wash. 9

Cooper was long gone and Jim Tressel was leading the defense of a national title for the season opener that drew 105,078 to Ohio Stadium. The Buckeyes won despite the multigame suspension of star running back Maurice Clarett for violating NCAA rules.

In his stead, Maurice Hall had 58 yards on 15 carries and Lydell Ross ran 12 times for 43 yards. Also, quarterback Craig Krenzel picked up slack with two first-half scores.

Krenzel was 15 of 27 for 203 yards plus 27 more on the ground in the sixth home night game in program history. A 37-yarder to Drew Carter preceded a 2-yard run by Hall for the 7-0 lead. Krenzel ran 23 yards to make it 14-0, then ran it in from 11 yards with 11 seconds left in the half.

A Ross 15-yard run made it 28-3.

Sept. 15, 2007 (Seattle): No, 10 OSU 33, Washington 14

OSU scored 24 consecutive points in the second half to pull away in front of 74,927 spectators.

Chris "Beanie" Wells ran for 135 yards and a touchdown, and Todd Boeckman threw for two more in the rout as the Buckeyes tied the school record with 21 consecutive wins in the regular season.

Boeckman was 14 of 25 for 218 yards, and linebacker James Laurinaitis intercepted Jake Locker twice deep in OSU territory.

The Buckeyes trailed 7-3 before Brian Robiskie's 68-yard TD catch early in the third quarter. Just 39 seconds later, after a UW fumble on the kickoff, Wells had runs of 11 and 14 yards to make it 17-7.

OSU padded the lead to 27-7 with a 23-yard field goal by Ryan Pretorius and 36-yard TD pass to Brian Hartline with 3:30 left in the game.

Bucks Aiming To Go Above .500 In Pasadena

By JOE DEMPSEY
Special To Buckeye Sports Bulletin

After defeating Northwestern in the Big Ten Championship Game on Dec. 1, No. 6 Ohio State booked its 15th trip to Pasadena, Calif., to take on the champions of the Pac-12, No. 9 Washington, in the Rose Bowl. The Buckeyes are 7-7 overall in the "Granddaddy Of Them All," with their victory against Oregon in 2010 being their most recent appearance.

What follows is a breakdown of Ohio State's first 14 trips to Pasadena.

1920: Cal Too Much

The first time the Scarlet and Gray participated in the Rose Bowl was 97 years ago. In fact, the seemingly ever-famous Rose Bowl was not even named yet; it was referred to simply as the Tournament East-West football game.

The undefeated Buckeyes traveled to Pasadena for a showdown with undefeated California in the seventh edition of the Rose Bowl in January 1921. The Golden Bears dominated the Buckeyes 28-0 with end Harold Muller earning Player of the Game honors for throwing a long touchdown pass to Brodie Stephens after receiving a toss. Pesky Sprott carried the rock 20 times for 80 yards and two touchdowns in what represents the only time Cal defeated OSU.

The Bears wrapped up an astonishing season, outscoring their opponents 540-14 on the year. Cal displayed its dominance beyond that season, remaining undefeated from 1920 until 1924. Ohio State All-American Gaylord Stinchcomb rushed for 82 yards in the loss, which marked the only Rose Bowl win for a Pacific Coast Conference (PCC) team against a Big Ten team until the 1953 edition.

1949: Redemption For OSU

Ohio State received the opportunity for Rose Bowl redemption against the Golden Bears in its second appearance in the game.

The Buckeyes defeated Cal 17-14 on Jan. 2, 1950 – the game was played on Jan. 2 because New Year's Day had fallen on a Sunday.

Fred "Curly" Morrison took home MVP honors for the Scarlet and Gray in front of 100,963 fans, marking the first bowl game to have at least 100,000 spectators in attendance.

1954: Woody's 1st Rose Bowl

Legendary Ohio State head coach Woody Hayes entered his first Rose Bowl in a dead heat for the national championship with PCC champion UCLA. However, instead of facing the Bruins for what would be the Rose Bowl title and national title, the Buckeyes took on USC because No. 2 UCLA was locked out of the game due to the "no-repeat" rule.

The first OSU-USC Rose Bowl was also the first time a rainstorm had hit Pasadena during a Rose Bowl, persisting the entire game and turning the field to mud. Hayes expressed his displeasure with the bands performing the halftime show on the field, which had been muddied from a half of football coinciding with the storm. Ohio State prevailed 20-7 and Buckeye quarterback Dave Leggett was named MVP, completing 6 of 11 passes with a touchdown to Robert Watkins.

The Buckeyes dominated on the ground, rushing for 304 yards, including 92 yards from Howard "Hopalong" Cassady, who went on to win the Heisman Trophy the next season. The Trojans were outgained 360-206 in total offense, and their lone touchdown came on an 86-yard punt return by Aramis Dandoy.

Ohio State won a shared national championship for the 1954 season, marking the first shared championship in college football. The writers had selected the Buckeyes, but the coaches chose the Bruins.

1957: Oregon QB Wins MVP In Loss

After dropping its season opener to TCU, Ohio State rattled off eight straight wins before facing off with Oregon in the Rose Bowl. The Webfoots (now known as the Ducks) were coming off a loss to Oregon State in their rivalry game, which had resulted in a tie between the two programs for PCC champion. Since the Beavers had won the head-to-head matchup, they normally would have gone to the Rose Bowl, but the no-repeat rule kept them out. Instead, Oregon went to Pasadena to take on the heavily-favored Buckeyes.

Frank Kremblas put Ohio State on the board first with a 1-yard touchdown run in the first quarter. Jim Shanley scored the equalizer for Oregon in the second quarter, and the score remained 7-7 well into the second half.

With 5:20 remaining in the third quarter, Oregon's Jack Morris lined up for a 34-yard field goal and the lead but hooked it wide left. Early in the fourth quarter, Ohio State kicker Don Sutherin attempted a kick from the same spot. Sutherin nailed his try, and the Buckeyes led 10-7 with 14 minutes left. The Ohio State defense concluded a solid game with a fumble recovery and turnover on downs, securing the victory.

The Webfoots outgained the Buckeyes 351 to 304 in yardage and converted 21 first downs to 19 for Ohio State. Oregon end Ron Stover hauled in 10 receptions for 144 yards from quarterback Jack Crabtree. Despite the loss, Crabtree was named Player of the Game on 10-of-17 passing for 135 yards, becoming the second, and last, player in Rose Bowl history to win the award outright as a member of the losing team.

Ohio State earned a share of the national championship, its third, and Hayes was named Coach of the Year.

1968: 'Super Sophs' Beat USC

Following a 9-0 season, No. 1 Ohio State met No. 2 USC in the second showdown between the nation's top two teams in Rose Bowl history.

Rex Kern

After a scoreless first quarter, Southern Cal jumped out to a 10-0 lead on an 80-yard touchdown run by Heisman Trophy-winning tailback O.J. Simpson in the second frame. Ohio State got on the board with a 1-yard touchdown run by Jim Otis with just 1:45 until halftime. The Buckeyes were then able to kick an equalizing 26-yard field goal only three seconds before intermission.

Ohio State went ahead 13-10 with another field goal with less than two minutes left in the third quarter. Then, with a national championship on the line, the Ohio State defense rose to the occasion.

The Trojans fumbled at their 21-yard line early in the fourth quarter, setting up a Leo Hayden 4-yard touchdown reception from OSU quarterback Rex Kern. Another fumble cost Southern Cal the ball at its own 16. Kern connected with Ray Gillian for another Buckeye touchdown, extending the lead to 27-10 with 10:05 remaining.

The Trojans scored again, but Ohio State prevailed 27-16 with Kern earning Player of the Game honors. Simpson ran for 171 yards for Southern Cal, but the Trojans' five turnovers led to a loss.

1970: Title Chance Spoiled

Entering its Rose Bowl matchup with Stanford, Ohio State was ranked second in the country behind Texas. On New Year's Day, the Longhorns fell to Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl, giving the Buckeyes a chance to secure the national championship with a victory.

Stanford took a 10-0 lead to start the game, but Ohio State responded with two John Brockington touchdowns. Each team hit a field goal in the third quarter, and the Scarlet and Gray had a 17-13 lead entering the final frame.

Ohio State had a national title on the line and four-point lead, but the Indians scored two touchdowns within two minutes. Stanford held on to win 27-17, and the Heisman Trophy winner – quarterback Jim Plunkett – earned Player of the Game honors.

1972: Trounced By Trojans

No. 3 Ohio State traveled to Pasadena for a heavily-anticipated Rose Bowl matchup with No. 1 USC. The Trojans were voted the No. 1 team unanimously in both major polls, representing the first such occurrence in college football history.

The Buckeyes battled the Trojans in the first half but were overwhelmed in the second half. After heading to halftime tied 7-7, Southern Cal outscored Ohio State 35-10 to close out the game, winning 42-17. USC running back Sam Cunningham was Player of the Game for his four-touchdown performance in the second half.

The attendance of 106,869 set the Rose Bowl Stadium record as well as the NCAA bowl game record.

1973: Bucks Seek Revenge

Ohio State went undefeated with a 10-10 tie against rival Michigan in the 1973 season. The Buckeyes were led by sophomore tailback Archie Griffin offensively and a defense that held its opponents to less than 100 yards of total offense per game.

The Trojans took a 14-7 lead in the second quarter, but a 1-yard touchdown run by Pete Johnson tied the contest 14-14 at the half. USC opened the second-half scoring with a touchdown, giving it a 21-14 advantage, but OSU came alive after that.

Four unanswered touchdowns would be more than enough, with Ohio State winning 42-21. Quarterback Cornelius Greene (now Green) was Player of the Game, running in a touchdown and two-point conversion in game where the Buckeyes scored six times in the ground game.

1974: Buckeyes Fall In 4th

No. 5 USC and No. 3 Ohio State met in the Rose Bowl for the third consecutive year, and the rubber match was quite the game in front of 106,721 spectators.

The Buckeyes led the Trojans 7-3 entering the fourth quarter, and drama ensued. USC regained the lead on a 9-yard touchdown by Jim Obradovich from Pat Haden. However, OSU answered with a 3-yard touchdown by Greene.

The Scarlet and Gray extended the lead to 17-10 on a field goal. Then Haden found John McKay Jr. for a 38-yard touchdown with two minutes left to bring USC within one point. The Trojans elected to go for the win and attempt a two-point conversion with the season on the line.

Haden found Shelton Diggs to give USC an 18-17 lead and eventual Rose Bowl victory. Haden and McKay Jr. shared Player of the Game honors for the Trojans in a heartbreaking Buckeye loss.

1975: UCLA Upset

The No. 1 Buckeyes entered the Rose Bowl undefeated and heavily favored in a rare rematch of a regular-season game with UCLA. Ohio State gave the Bruins their first loss of the season, 41-20, at Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum on Oct. 4. After the game, Hayes prophetically told his team they would be facing UCLA again in the Rose Bowl. The Bruins were the only team to score more than 14 points on the Ohio State defense, and they did it twice.

Ohio State controlled the first half but scored only a field goal. The Bruins did not even gain a first down until late in the second quarter, but a couple of Buckeye turnovers and a pivotal fourth-and-1 stop kept the score at 3-0.

Underdog UCLA opened up its offense in the second half, utilizing play-action passes and throwing on first down. The Bruins marched down the field for a tying field goal to open the second half. Then after stopping Ohio State, UCLA went on another scoring drive for a 9–3 lead (missed PAT). After stopping the Buckeyes again, the Bruins hit a big-time play, a 67-yard touchdown pass from John Sciarra to speedy flanker Wally Henry, giving them a 16-3 advantage.

Ohio State ran the ball down the field in response, scoring early in the fourth quarter to cut the Bruins' lead to 16-10. However,

Ohio State In The Rose Bowl

Date	Opponent	Result	Attendance
Jan. 1, 1921	California Golden Bears	L, 28-0	42,000
Jan. 1, 1950	California Golden Bears	W, 17-14	100,963
Jan. 1, 1955	USC Trojans	W, 20-7	89,191
Jan. 1, 1958	Oregon Webfoots	W, 10-7	98,202
Jan. 1, 1969	USC Trojans	W, 27-16	102,063
Jan. 1, 1971	Stanford Indians	L, 27-17	103,839
Jan. 1, 1973	USC Trojans	L, 42-17	106,869
Jan. 1, 1974	USC Trojans	W, 42-21	105,267
Jan. 1, 1975	USC Trojans	L, 18-17	106,721
Jan. 1, 1976	UCLA Bruins	L, 23-10	105,464
Jan. 1, 1980	USC Trojans	L, 17-16	105,526
Jan. 1, 1985	USC Trojans	L, 20-17	102,594
Jan. 1, 1997	Arizona State Sun Devils	W, 20-17	100,635
Jan. 1, 2010	Oregon Ducks	W, 26-17	93,963

after regaining possession, Greene was intercepted by Pat Schmidt. UCLA capitalized with a backbreaking 54-yard touchdown run by Wendell Tyler. Another Greene interception was the nail in the coffin for Ohio State, which fell 23-10 in Woody Hayes' final Rose Bowl. Sciarra was named Player of the Game for his performance.

1979: Bruce Falls To Trojans

The Buckeyes entered their first Rose Bowl with Earle Bruce at the helm undefeated and No. 1 in the Associated Press poll.

USC took a 10-0 lead in the second quarter, but Ohio State responded with a field goal and a 67-yard touchdown reception by Calvin Murray from Art Schlichter.

After coming out of the locker room tied 10-10, the Buckeyes could muster only two field goals but held a 16-10 lead in the fourth quarter. Heisman Trophy-winning USC tailback Charles White tied the game with a 1-yard touchdown plunge, and the ensuing Eric Hipp extra point made it 17-16 with just more than a minute remaining.

The Trojans were victorious and White won Rose Bowl Player of The Game for the second time. White had shared the award with Rick Leach the prior year, but his 247-yard performance with the game-winning touchdown earned him the honor outright in 1980.

1984: Another Loss To USC

Ohio State took its first and final lead against USC on a Rich Spangler field goal with 12:08 left in the first quarter. USC kicker Steve Jordan tied the game 3-3 before a pair of Tim Green touchdown passes gave the Trojans a 17-3 advantage. Spangler hit another field goal as the first half concluded, but OSU still trailed 17-6.

The Scarlet and Gray scored first in the second half on a Rose Bowl record 52-yard field goal by Spangler. However, Jordan hit a 51-yarder himself, pushing the Trojan lead back to two scores, 20-9. OSU quarterback Mike Tomczak hit Cris Carter for an 18-yard touchdown and ran in the two-point conversion to cut the lead to three.

The Trojans held on to win 20-17. Green and linebacker Jack Del Rio shared Rose Bowl MVP honors.

1996: Bucks Play Spoiler

No. 4 Ohio State entered the Rose Bowl against No. 2 Arizona State after losing to Michigan, ending its perfect season and national title aspirations.

The Buckeyes scored first on a 9-yard touchdown by freshman David Boston from quarterback Stanley Jackson. The Sun Devils eventually scored shortly before halftime on a 25-yard pass from Jake Plummer to Ricky Boyer.

Arizona State broke a 7-7 tie with a field goal on the opening drive of the second half. Ohio State answered just two plays later – quarterback Joe Germaine hit Dimitrious Stanley for a 72-yard touchdown, giving OSU a 14-10 lead.

The Buckeyes had a field-goal attempt blocked in the fourth quarter, and what had appeared to be a game-changing return for a touchdown was overturned for an illegal forward lateral. Known for late comeback drives, Plummer, nicknamed "Jake the Snake," drove the Sun Devils down the field, connecting with Lenzie Jackson for a crucial fourth-down conversion before scrambling for an 11-yard touchdown on third-and-goal to give Arizona State a 17-14 advantage with just over a minute left.

Germaine led the Buckeyes down the field quickly, with help from two third-down receptions by Stanley and two pass interferences against Arizona State. Ohio State found itself at the 5-yard line, down three points, and Germaine hit Boston for his second touchdown. The extra-point attempt was blocked, but OSU held on to win 20-17.

2009: Pryor Leads Bucks Vs. Ducks

Ohio State won the Big Ten for the fifth consecutive season with a 27-24 victory against Iowa and a subsequent 21-10 victory over Michigan. Oregon won the 2009 Pac-12 title with a 37-33 victory against Oregon State.

Running back Brandon Saine put the Buckeyes on the board first with a 13-yard touchdown reception from quarterback Terrelle Pryor. Devin Barclay pushed the Buckeye lead to 10-0 on a 19-yard field goal.

The Ducks responded in the second quarter with a field goal and a 3-yard touchdown run by tailback LeGarrette Blount. Barclay hit a 30-yarder with 1:05 until half, and then Ohio State's other kicker, Aaron Pettrey, hit a 45-yarder as time expired, giving OSU a 16-10 halftime advantage.

Jeremiah Masoli put the Ducks up 17-16 on a 1-yard touchdown run, but the Buckeyes answered with a 38-yard field goal by Barclay, regaining a narrow, 19-17 lead.

Pryor extended the Ohio State lead by hitting DeVier Posey for a 17-yard touchdown, and the Buckeyes won 26-17.

The dual-threat quarterback earned the game's offensive Most Valuable Player honor with a season-high 266 passing yards and two touchdowns with 72 rushing yards as well. Oregon defensive end Kenny Rowe was the game's Most Valuable Player on defense, tying a Rose Bowl record with three sacks.

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INSIDER

OSU, Washington Meet In Rose Bowl For 1st Time

Ohio State and Washington have met 11 times on the gridiron, but never on arguably the biggest stage in college football.

The champions of the Big Ten and the Pac-12 will meet for the first time in the Rose Bowl Game on New Year's Day, with the Buckeyes holding a three-game winning streak in the series. The two teams last played in Seattle with a Jim Tressel-led Ohio State team coming away with a 33-14 win in 2007.

Ohio State has not played in the Rose Bowl since the 2009 season – a 26-17 win over Oregon – and the Huskies have not played in the "Granddaddy of Them All" since the 2000 season when they defeated Drew Brees and Purdue, 34-24.

Coaching in the Rose Bowl has been a lifelong dream for Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer, who will retire after the game, giving way to Ryan Day effective Jan. 2.

"It is an honor to represent the Big Ten conference and the East Division and go out to the tradition-rich Pasadena and the Rose Bowl," Meyer said on the bowl game teleconference Dec. 2. "I grew up in the state of Ohio watching the Rose Bowl for many, many years. It has been a bucket list and a dream to coach out there."

Meyer has never coached against Washington's head coach Chris Petersen but was a part of Ohio State's coaching staff as a graduate assistant when the Buckeyes dropped a 40-7 contest to the Huskies in 1986.

Petersen, who is in his fifth season as the Huskies' head coach, said he has tremendous respect for Ohio State's outgoing coach after having first met him when he was the offensive coordinator at Boise State.

"I remember the first time I met him might have been when he was the head coach at Utah. We were at a high school in Southern California when I met him, and he was doing wonderful things out there," Petersen said. "After talking to him, I remember thinking, 'This guy might go on to do some pretty incredible things.' From there, I have gotten a chance to cross paths numerous times.

"When I first came to Washington, Urban was gracious enough to let me come out for a couple of days and pick his brain and watch him practice. He knows how to run a program and win a lot of games. I have always been a huge fan."

JOSH WINSLOW

PASADENA DEBUT – Head coach Urban Meyer is set to lead Ohio State in the Rose Bowl for the first time since taking over in 2012. It will also be his final game as the Buckeyes' head coach.

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Petersen has had the Huskies in a New Year's Six bowl in each of the last three seasons, including the upcoming Rose Bowl. Washington fell in the College Football Playoff semifinal to Alabama in the Peach Bowl in 2016-17 and dropped a 35-28 contest in the Fiesta Bowl to Penn State last year.

Haskins To Play Despite Draft Stock

With his play in 2018, it comes as no surprise that Ohio State quarterback Dwayne Haskins is one of the top projected quarterbacks in the upcoming 2019 NFL draft.

In recent years, many highly-rated prospects have started a trend of sitting out non-playoff bowl games in order to protect themselves from injury, including Ohio State cornerback Denzel Ward, who sat out the Cotton Bowl last year before being selected fourth overall by the Cleveland Browns.

Haskins, whom many consider to be one of the top quarterback prospects, if not the top, said there was never any doubt in his mind he would play in the Rose Bowl despite not making the playoff. Haskins is widely expected to declare for the draft but had not yet done so when BSB went to press.

"Just being a quarterback, it's your job to lead the team," Haskins told The Athletic at the Heisman Trophy ceremonies in New York City "And for you to say you don't want to play, you're not about the team or winning or losing. You just want to get out while you can. There was no doubt in my mind about playing in the game because I know I can help this team win. So whether I was thinking about leaving or not, just knowing I have the opportunity to leave is great, but there is no doubt about me playing in the bowl game."

Multiple players across the country announced their intentions to skip their respective bowl games to protect their draft stock. Such names include West Virginia quarterback Will Grier, Houston defensive lineman Ed Oliver, Michigan defensive lineman Rashan Gary and Iowa tight end Noah Fant, among others.

The trend of players skipping bowl games stems partially from the Fiesta Bowl following the 2015 season, when Notre Dame linebacker Jaylon Smith, who had been projected as a top-five pick, tore his ACL and LCL in a 44-28 loss to Ohio State. Smith dropped out of the first round before he was selected in the second by the Dallas Cowboys. A year later, Michigan tight end Jake Butt, who was projected as one of the top tight end prospects, suffered a torn ACL in the Orange Bowl and dropped all the way to the fifth round of the 2017 draft.

Ohio State junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones, widely projected as a first-round pick, officially declared for the NFL draft Dec. 12 after previously indicating this would be his last season in Columbus. Jones also confirmed that he will play in the Rose Bowl despite speculation that he might chooes to sit out.

Meyer's Retirement Boosts Ticket Sales

As if Ohio State's fan interest weren't high enough with the Buckeyes playing in the Rose Bowl for the first time in nearly a decade, the desire for tickets went up even more on Dec. 4 when Meyer announced his plans to retire after the game.

As of Dec. 10, Ticketmaster, the official ticket website of the bowl game, had sold out all non-club level tickets on the Ohio State sideline. The cheapest non-club level ticket available was $215 dollars on the Washington sideline. After that, club level seats were running anywhere from $850 to $1,250.

A spokesperson for the Ohio AAA Group told Fox 28 in Columbus that interest spiked when Meyer announced his plans to retire.

"Now you have the chance to see Urban Meyer's last game with the Buckeyes, and so that has drawn a lot of people in," AAA Spokesperson Kimberly Schwind said.

Prices for ticket packages that include airfare and in some cases lodging have been listed anywhere from $1,600 to $4,000.

Buckeyes To Wear Scarlet As Home Team

In each of the last three Rose Bowl appearances, Ohio State has worn white to Pasadena, Calif. For the first time since its 1980 appearance, the Buckeyes will wear their home scarlet jerseys.

As the No. 6-ranked team in the College Football Playoff standings, Ohio State is three spots ahead of No. 9 Washington and therefore earned home-team honors in the 105th Rose Bowl. The Buckeyes will occupy the West sideline at the Rose Bowl.

The home sideline is backed by sections 13-24, including club level seating and the press box. The Rose Bowl served as one of the semifinal games last season, pitting Oklahoma and Georgia against each other. The 2019 Rose Bowl will be the first time in five years that the game has pitted the Big Ten champion against the Pac-12 champion. The game following the 2013 season saw Big Ten champ Michigan State defeat Pac-12 champ Stanford, 24-20.

Ohio State Listed As Early Favorite

Shortly after the bowl games were announced, Ohio State was listed as an early four-point favorite over the Huskies in the Rose Bowl. As of Dec. 10, that line had jumped to seven, according to Bovada, an online betting service.

Ohio State was favored to win in all but one game in 2018. The Buckeyes were underdogs for the first time since 2014 against Michigan this season before blasting the Wolverines 62-39 in the regular-season finale. As of Dec. 10, neither team had any additional players announcing they would skip their bowl game.

Rose Bowl Part Of Littered New Year's Schedule

The 105th Rose Bowl isn't the only game being played on New Year's Day. In fact, there are four other games being played on the first day of 2019, three of which will pit ranked opponents against each other.

The new year will be kicked off with the Outback Bowl, which matches No. 18 Mississippi State against unranked Iowa with kick scheduled for noon on ESPN2.

An hour later, the Fiesta Bowl will feature No. 11 LSU against eighth-ranked and undefeated Central Florida. The Tigers are led by former Ohio State quarterback Joe Burrow, and the game is set to be televised on ESPN.

At the same time on ABC, No. 12 Penn State is set to take on No. 14 Kentucky in the Citrus Bowl. After the Rose Bowl, set for a 5 p.m. kick on ESPN, the day will conclude with the Sugar Bowl, which pits No. 15 Texas against No. 5 Georgia. The Longhorns are coached by former Buckeye offensive coordinator Tom Herman.

Trip To LA Area Offers No Shortage Of Options

By JAMES GREGA
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

A trip to the Los Angeles area might not come on a budget, but Tinseltown has no shortage of options for entertainment, food and lodging as you prepare to watch Ohio State take on Washington in the 105th Rose Bowl Game.

What follows is a list of places in a number of different categories that could serve as fun spots to visit before taking in the "Granddaddy of Them All."

Places To Eat

If you can't agree on what to get for dinner, might we suggest a food that almost anyone can agree on: pizza.

Settebello Pizzeria Napoletana in Pasadena is just a 10-minute drive from the Rose Bowl Stadium and offers a variety of specialty gourmet pizzas. If pizza isn't your thing, Settebello also offers a selection of different pasta dishes. For a menu, visit www.settebello.net.

If you are looking for a more traditional American-style eatery, then **Cole's French Dip** is where you need to be. Opened in 1908, Cole's claims to be the originator of the French dip sandwich. The interior of the bar/restaurant resembles that of a Prohibition-era joint and offers a variety of food items that fit the traditional American cuisine. If French dips aren't your style, then perhaps give the turkey or tuna salad sandwiches a try. Cole's also offers a bowl of chili and mac 'n' cheese along with a selection of salads and signature cocktails. For a menu, visit www.213hospitality.com/project/coles/.

If you are in need of an old-fashioned hamburger and need it quick, then **In-N-Out** is your destination. In-N-Out is famous on the West Coast for their burgers, fries and milkshakes. Scattered throughout the Los Angeles area, In-N-Out is also your destination for late-night food, as the chain restaurant is open until 1 a.m. And don't forget to ask about their "secret" menu options!

There is no shortage of places to get Mexican food in Southern California, but if you are looking for top-notch Mexican cuisine in Los Angeles, look no further than **Broken Spanish**. Broken Spanish offers multiple traditional options in additional to numerous alcoholic beverages for those looking to take their night to the next level. Visit www.brokenspanish.com for a menu.

If you are out and about in the morning hours and want to stop for breakfast or brunch, then **Vees Café** might just be the place for you. Vees offers a healthy option of omelets, breakfast burritos and more. Vees has two locations in the Los Angeles area and is traditionally open until 4 p.m. For full breakfast and lunch menus, visit www.veescafe.net.

Things To Do

There is so much to do in Los Angeles any time of year, but during the holiday season, it would take months to list all of the possible options. That said, we tried to narrow it down for you.

If you are a sports junkie and the Rose Bowl just isn't enough, the **Los Angeles Lakers**, led by Akron native LeBron James, will be in the middle of a four-game homestand from Dec. 28-Jan. 4. The Lakers are set to take on the Los Angeles Clippers, with whom they share the Staples Center, on Dec. 28 before hosting the Sacramento Kings on Dec. 30. If you plan on staying a few extra days after the Rose Bowl, the Lakers are also set to take on the Oklahoma City Thunder on Jan. 2 and the New York Knicks on Jan. 4. If you plan on taking in a Lakers game, though, make sure to bring your pocketbook. Tickets on the secondary market will run you more than $100 apiece.

If basketball isn't your thing and you just need more football, the **Los Angeles Rams** are set to play host to the San Francisco 49ers on Dec. 30 at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. Tickets on the secondary market are much more affordable than Lakers games, and you could get into the stadium for under $70 on StubHub as of Dec. 11.

Rounding out your sports options for the week are the **Los Angeles Kings** of the NHL, who play twice at Staples Center during the week leading up to the Rose Bowl. The Kings play host to the Arizona Coyotes on Dec. 27 and the Vegas Golden Knights on Dec. 29. Tickets on the secondary market are running less than $40 apiece, so if you enjoy hockey, get your tickets before they run out.

Trying to avoid the sporting scene until the big game or just enjoy music? There are a number of concerts to attend in the Los Angeles area the week of the game.

If an hour-long drive isn't too much of a deterrent, you can go see **Smokey Robinson** perform at the Cerritos Center in Cerritos, Calif. Once again, however, you will have to dig deep into your pockets for tickets, which start at $389 on Ticketmaster.com.

If you are in Cerritos a night earlier and still in the holiday spirit, you can catch a performance by **Mannheim Steamroller**

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at the same venue. Tickets for Mannheim Steamroller, known for their rock 'n' roll interpretations of Christmas music, are significantly more affordable and will run you about $132 on Ticketmaster.com.

For those of you who like to remain active, the Los Angeles area offers a number of hiking trails in the **San Gabriel Mountains**, which are particularly famous for providing the backdrop to the Rose Bowl. The San Gabriel Mountains feature more than 20 different trails for you to explore, each providing their own unique and breathtaking views. Trails vary in distance from under a mile to 12 miles and feature altitudes as high as 4,000 feet. For a full list of trail options, make sure to visit www.hikespeak.com/los-angeles/san-gabriel-mountains.

Courses To Play

If golfing is your guilty pleasure, or just a pleasure in general, the Pasadena area has plenty of options for you.

The first course that jumps out is in the shadow of the famed Rose Bowl stadium. **Brookside Golf Club** is tucked between the stadium and the San Gabriel Mountains and offers two 18-hole courses for you to play. First is the E.O. Nay Course, a par 70 measuring 6,025 yards. It is joined by the C.W. Koiner Course, a par 72 measuring 7,104 yards. The course is owned and operated by the city of Pasadena and is the oldest golf course in Los Angeles County. The complex also features a pro shop, putting greens and a driving range. To book a tee time, visit www.brooksidegc.com or call (626) 585-3594.

Looking for something a little less intense? Take a trip to **Arroyo Seco**, which offers an 18-hole par-3 course covering 1,953 yards. The venue, which will only run you $15 for 18 holes during the week, is tucked away in South Pasadena, less than a 15-minute drive from the Rose Bowl. Traveling with little ones? Arroyo Seco also offers a 9-hole miniature golf course for those who are young or just young at heart. A round of miniature golf will set you back only $4, and if you plan on staying late, the entire complex is illuminated until 10 p.m. For more information or to book a tee time, visit http://www.arroyosecogc.com or call (323) 255-1506.

In a bit of a rush and can fit in only 9 holes but want the character of an 18-hole course? Make a trip to **Eaton Canyon Golf Course**, where you will be challenged on a par-35, 3,000-yard track. Built in 1962, Eaton Canyon also offers a driving range, restaurant and bar. A round on the course will run you $17.25 on the weekdays and an even $21 on the weekend. For more information, visit www.playeatoncanyon.com or call (626)794-6773.

For a more extensive list of golf courses in the Los Angeles area, visit www.discoverlosangeles.com and search "golf courses" in the search tab in the upper right corner.

Where To Stay

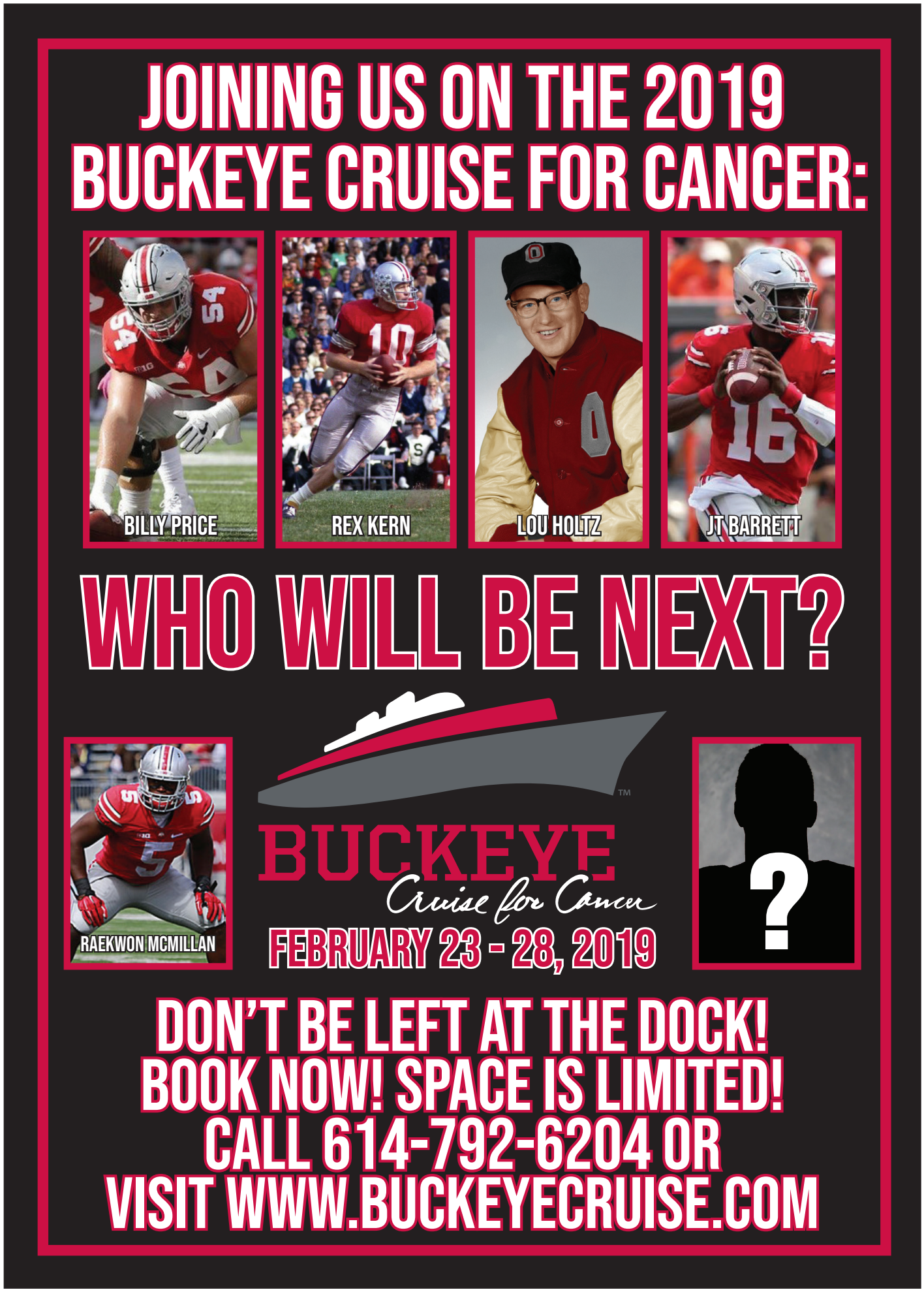
The Pasadena and Los Angeles areas offer numerous places for you to stay while you prepare to take in the Rose Bowl game.

If you are looking to stay near the stadium, Pasadena has a variety of options for you. **The Westin in Pasadena** combines luxury with proximity to the most well-known stadium in college football. While a room during the week will run you close to $500 a night, you will have a hard time finding a place that combines both class and immediacy to the big game.

Staying in Pasadena, the **Vagabond Inn Executive** is less than three miles from the stadium and prices start at just under $300 a night. Breakfast is included in your package as is free Internet and parking.

Finally, the **Hotel Constance** in Pasadena is right in the middle of the first two hotels listed, and as of Dec. 12, will cost you around $360 a night. Just more than two miles from the stadium, the Hotel Constance offers free Internet and, if you book online, will not charge you any Internet fees.

For a more extensive list of lodging options in the Los Angeles area, visit www.discoverlosangeles.com and click the "Where to Stay" tab at the top of your computer screen.



Haskins Leads Bucks To 2nd Straight B1G Title

By CRAIG MERZ
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Ohio State was challenged by pesky Northwestern, but ultimately sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins was his usual spectacular self as the No. 6 Buckeyes held off the 21st-ranked Wildcats 45-24 in the Big Ten Championship Game at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on Dec. 1.

Haskins threw for a school-record 499 yards to go along with five touchdowns to lead the Buckeyes (12-1) to their second straight title and third in five seasons.

The victory put the Buckeyes in the Jan. 1 Rose Bowl against Pac-12 winner Washington after OSU failed to earn a spot in the College Football Playoff.

Northwestern (8-5), in its first conference title bout, trailed 24-7 at the half but pulled to within three at 24-21 midway through the third quarter before Haskins tossed three touchdown passes in a little more than 12 minutes beginning late in the third quarter.

Haskins was 34 of 41 with one interception before a largely Ohio State crowd of 66,375.

"We had great protection all game," Haskins said. "Receivers bringing a lot of clutch plays on third down and first down. We had great play calling, and the biggest thing was execution."

Senior wide receiver Johnnie Dixon had seven catches for 129 yards and a score. Senior receiver Parris Campbell's seven catches went for 89 yards. Freshman receiver Chris Olave had five receptions for 79 yards plus a score, and senior wideout Terry McLaurin, an Indianapolis native, had three catches for 78 yards and two touchdowns.

SONNY BROCKWAY

WINNERS AGAIN – Ohio State clinched the Big Ten championship for the third time in head coach Urban Meyer's (center) tenure.

Sophomore running back J.K. Dobbins ran for 68 yards on 17 carries, and junior Mike Weber added 51 on 17 runs. Dobbins also added four receptions for another 50 yards and a touchdown through the air.

Northwestern quarterback Clayton Thorson was 27 of 44 for 267 yards, a TD and two interceptions.

John Moten IV had a 77-yard TD run for the Wildcats' first score but did less than nothing the rest of the game, finishing with 76 yards on four carries.

OSU had 607 total yards (499 pass, 108 run). Northwestern had 418 yards (267 pass, 151 run).

Junior linebacker Malik Harrison led the Buckeyes with 10 tackles (six solo). Sophomore defensive end Chase Young had three of the five OSU sacks and forced a fumble.

How It Happened

The Buckeyes started the first possession of the game at their 23 and sliced their way 77 yards in 10 plays and 4:29 time used for a 7-0 lead at the 10:31 mark.

Campbell was the go-to man with catches of 14, 11 and 16 yards, the latter for a first down at the NU 26. Dobbins ran for 11 and another first at the 15. He then lost 3 on a run and a Haskins' carry gained only 2 back before he scrambled to his right for a 16-yard touchdown pass to McLaurin.

Following a Northwestern three-and-out, the Buckeyes thought they had something going with a 27-yard reception by junior K.J. Hill to the NU 31, but a personal foul on right tackle Isaiah Prince nullified the yardage and sophomore Drue Chrisman boomed a 58-yard punt for a touchback.

A 2-yard loss on a run followed by an offside penalty against the Buckeyes placed the ball on the 23. That's when Moten burst through the right side 77 yards to make it 7-7 at 6:27 of the first quarter.

Haskins then engineered an eight-play, 65-yard drive in 2:58, capped by Dobbins' 2-yard bull rush up the gut for a 14-7 lead with 3:29 left in the first quarter.

Dixon had a 13-yard grab, McLaurin snared a 20-yard pass and junior Binjimen Victor made a catch for 17 yards to the Northwestern 2 before Dobbins scored on the next play.

After an exchange of punts, there was an exchange of interceptions – redshirt freshman corner Shaun Wade intercepted Thorson in the end zone and Haskins was picked at the NU 16 – before the Buckeyes took advantage of a Thorson fumble to go ahead 17-7 with a 42-yard field by sophomore Blake Haubeil with 6:09 left in the half.

Young had sacked Thorson for 7 yards as he was attempting to throw. The play was initially ruled an incomplete pass, but the call was reversed to a fumble after video review.

The Buckeyes got the ball at the NU 46 and got one first down but stalled at the 25, and Haubeil booted the three-pointer. Weber accounted for all 21 yards on the drive, running five straight times and then taking a 6-yard pass from Haskins.

OSU got the ball back at its 22 after a punt with 5:14 before the half, and Weber caught a 12-yarder on the first snap. Haskins later had consecutive completions of 10 to Campbell and 11 to Dixon.

Another penalty on Prince moved the ball back to the Northwestern 42, and Haskins ultimately faced third-and-20 when he threw a pinpoint pass down the right sideline to McLaurin in stride for the touchdown to make it 24-7 with 1:21 remaining. The drive was nine plays, 78 yards in 3:53.

Northwestern exploded out of the gate to start the third quarter with two TD drives.

On the first drive Thorson had two straight passes to Kyric McGowan for a combined 33 yards, and a 15-yarder to Isaiah Bowser moved the Wildcats to the OSU 18. Thorson then ran for an 18-yard score to make it 24-14 at the 13:23 mark to finish the 75-yard, five-play, 1:42 series.

Haskins sustained a 9-yard sack on third-and-4 from the OSU 49 on its next possession and Chrisman's 45-yard punt put Northwestern at its 15. The Wildcats marched 85 yards in 11 plays in 3:24 and used a reversed call after a review to make it 24-21 with 8:03 left in the third on a 2-yard Thorson pass to Cameron Green.

During the series, Thorson had a 17-yard pass to Charlie Fessler to the OSU 3 that was first ruled a fumble recovery for junior cornerback Damon Arnette after he pried the ball free. However, the call was overturned when it was determined that Fessler's knee barely touched the ground before he lost the ball.

OSU punted on its next possession, but Thorson was intercepted by Arnette at the NU 35 and returned a yard. The Buckeyes squandered the turnover when Weber lost a fumble at the Wildcats 19 that was recovered by Travis Whillock at the 22.

A 20-yard punt and an illegal formation call on NU gave the Buckeyes the ball at their 40 to set up a 31-21 lead. A key play was a 16-yard toss to Victor to the NU 28. After Dobbins lost a yard, Olave's 29-yard TD reception with 1:21 to go in the third capped the six-play, 60-yard drive that took 1:29.

The Buckeyes' attempt to extend the lead then failed when a 27-yard field goal by Haubeil was blocked early in the fourth quarter. The Buckeyes had put themselves in position for the attempt with a 15-yard pass from Haskins to Dixon to the NU 15.

Northwestern used a 33-yard pass to Jelani Roberts to ignite the Wildcats after that stop. Thorson added a pass of 15 yards to Bennett Skowronek to the OSU 32, and a pass interference on Wade put the ball at the 17.

Bowser ran 11 yards to the 6 for a first down. He then rushed for 2, but back-to-back incomplete passes forced a 21-yard field goal by Charlie Kuhbander with 10:34 left in the game for a 31-24 score.

Just four plays later the Buckeyes had covered 75 yards in 1:23 for a 38-24 advantage with 9:11 to go as Haskins passed the 400-yard mark. He found Dixon down the middle for 63 yards to the 15. Weber carried for 6 yards before Dixon had a 9-yard TD catch.

Haskins completed the scoring with a 17-yard scoring strike to Dobbins with 4:09 left. Olave had two catches for 29 yards in the series, the latter of 19 yards to the NU 17 prior to the TD pass. The drive was eight plays, 54 yards and 2:32.

Northwestern's last possession resulted in a punt to the Ohio State 31. The Buckeyes got 7 yards from Weber before two kneels to end the game at the OSU 32.

The Numbers Game

Ohio State 45, Northwestern 24

Dec. 1, 2018 – Lucas Oil Stadium; Indianapolis

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4		F
NORTHWESTERN (8-5)	7	0	14	3	–	24
OHIO STATE (12-1)	14	10	7	14	–	45

First Quarter

OSU – McLaurin, 16 yard pass from Haskins (Haubeil kick), 10:31; 10 plays, 77 yards, 4:29 TOP.

NU – Moten IV, 77 yard run (Kuhbander kick), 6:27; 2 plays, 80 yards, 0:51 TOP.

OSU – Dobbins, 2 yard run (Haubeil kick), 3:29; 8 plays, 65 yards, 2:58 TOP.

Second Quarter

OSU – Haubeil, 42 yard field goal, 6:09; 8 plays, 21 yards, 3:26 TOP.

OSU – McLaurin, 42 yard pass from Haskins (Haubeil kick), 1:21; 9 plays, 78 yards, 3:53 TOP.

Third Quarter

NU – Thorson, 18 yard run (Kuhbander kick), 13:23; 5 plays, 75 yards, 1:37 TOP.

NU – Green, 2 yard pass from Thorson (Kuhbander kick), 8:03; 11 plays, 85 yards, 3:24 TOP.

OSU – Olave, 29 yard pass from Haskins (Haubeil kick), 1:21; 6 plays, 60 yards, 1:29 TOP.

Fourth Quarter

NU – Kuhbander, 21 yard field goal, 10:34; 7 plays, 76 yards, 1:50 TOP.

OSU – Dixon, 9 yard pass from Haskins (Haubeil kick), 9:11; 4 plays, 75 yards, 1:23 TOP.

OSU – Dobbins, 17 yard pass from Haskins (Haubeil kick), 4:09; 8 plays, 54 yards, 2:32 TOP.

Att. – 66,375.

Weather – Indoors.

Team Statistics

	NU	OSU
First Downs	21	31
Rushing	66	6
Passing	13	25
Penalty	2	0
Rushes-Yards	24-151	46-108
Passing Yards	267	499
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	27-44-2	34-41-1
Offensive Plays	68	87
Total Net Yards	418	607
Third Down Efficiency	5-15	10-18
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-1	1-1
Punts-Avg.	7-41.1	4-54.8
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	1-1
Penalties	3-15	9-90
Time of Possession	24:08	35:52

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) – NU: Moten IV 4-76; Bowser 13-60; Lees 1-18; Thorson 6-(-3). **OSU:** Dobbins 17-68; Weber 17-51; Haskins 10-(-5); TEAM 2-(-6).

PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD) – NU: Thorson 27-44-2-267-1. **OSU:** Haskins 34-41-1-499-5.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) – NU: McGowan 4-50; Skowronek 4-42; Green 4-26; Fessler 3-33; Pugh 2-25; Bowser 2-24; Nagel 2-13; Holman 2-7; Roberts 1-33; Lees 1-6; Hanaoka 1-5; Vault 1-3. **OSU:** Dixon 7-129; Campbell 7-89; Olave 5-79; Dobbins 4-50; McLaurin 3-78; Weber 3-21; Victor 2-33; Hill 1-8; McCall 1-8; Berry 1-4.

PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) – NU: Collins 7-41.1-56. **OSU:** Chrisman 4-54.8-62.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.) – NU: Lees 1-1. **OSU:** Hill 2-9.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.) – NU: None. **OSU:** McCall 2-43.

MISSED FIELD GOALS (Yds.) – NU: None. **OSU:** Haubeil 27 (blocked).

FORCED FUMBLES – NU: Thompson. **OSU:** Young.

FUMBLE RECOVERIES (No.-Yds) – NU: Whillock 1-17. **OSU:** Fuller 1-0.

INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) – NU: Hartage 1-0. **OSU:** Arnette 1-1; Wade 1-0.

TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) – NU: Brown IV 2.5-10; Miller 2.0-8; Thompson 1.0-7; Miller 1.0-6; McGee 1.0-4; Hall 1.0-3; Gaziano 0.5-5; Fisher 0.5-1; Goens 0.5-0. **OSU:** Young 3.0-19; Vincent 1.0-10; D. Jones 1.0-6; Togiai 1.0-4; Fuller 1.0-2; Landers 1.0-2.

SACKS (No.-Yds.) – NU: Thompson 1.0-7; Miller 1.0-6; Miller 1.0-3; Gaziano 0.5-5; Brown IV 0.5-4. **OSU:** Young 3.0-19; Vincent 1.0-10; D. Jones 1.0-6.

TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.) – NU: Fisher 8-3-11; Gallagher 7-1-8; Whillock 5-2-7; Miller 4-1-5; Pace 4-1-5; Hall 3-2-5; Brown IV 3-1-4; Gaziano 3-1-4; Hartage 3-1-4; Mayo 3-0-3; Miller 3-0-3; Thompson 3-0-3; Newsome II 3-0-3; Ruiz 2-0-2; Goens 1-1-2; Bergin 1-0-1; Oxley 1-0-1; Wyatt 1-0-1; Bergin 1-0-1; McGee 1-0-1; Gillikin 1-0-1; Thorson 1-0-1; Chiaokhiao 1-0-1; Vault 1-0-1. **OSU:** Harrison 6-4-10; Fuller 7-2-9; White 4-1-5; Arnette 4-0-4; D. Jones 2-2-4; Wade 3-0-3; Young 3-0-3; Landers 2-0-2; Cooper 2-0-2; Borland 1-1-2; Dixon 1-1-2; Okudah 1-0-1; Vincent 1-0-1; Cornell 1-0-1; Togiai 1-0-1; Haskins 1-0-1; Garrett 1-0-1; Hamilton 1-0-1; Sheffield 0-1-1.

PLAYERS IN THE GAME – NORTHWESTERN: Offense, Hance, Butler, Thomas, Doles, Slater, McGowan, Nagel, Skowronek, Thorson, Bowser, Green, Kuhbander. Defense, Gaziano, Thompson, Wyatt, Miller, Gallagher, Fisher, Hall, Hartage, Williams, Pace, Whillock, Collins. Reserves, Mayo, Hanaoka, Ruiz, Bergin, Vault, Fessler, Roberts, Niro III, Campbell, Green, Holman, Lees, Moten IV, Jackson, Newsome II, Mueller, Klock, McGee, Gillikin, Prather, Bergin, Pugh, Chiakhiao, Goens, Mangieri, Spivak, Oxley, Miller, Brown IV. **OHIO STATE:** Offense, Munford, Pridgeon, Jordan, Davis, Prince, Farrell, Dixon, McLaurin, Haskins, Dobbins, Campbell, Haubeil. Defense, Young, Landers, D. Jones, Cooper, Harrison, Borland, Werner, Sheffield, Arnette, White, Fuller, Chrisman. Reserves, Okudah, Proctor, T. Smith, Gant, Hill, Browning, Vincent, Mitchell, Cornell, Victor, Riep, Banks, Berry, Pryor, K. Jones, Olave, Wint, Wade, Weber, McCall, Pope, Hilliard, McCullough, Booker, Hamilton, Alabi, Cupp, Woidke, Myers, Togiai, Saunders, Hausmann, Ruckert, Garrett.

Season Statistics

2018-19 Game-By-Game

Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd
Sept. 1	(5) OREGON STATE	W, 77-31	102,169
Sept. 8	(4) RUTGERS	W, 52-3	93,057
Sept. 15	(4) vs. TCU* (15)	W, 40-28	64,362
Sept. 22	(4) TULANE	W, 49-6	103,336
Sept. 29	(4) at Penn State (9)	W, 27-26	110,889
Oct. 6	(3) INDIANA	W, 49-26	104,193
Oct. 13	(3) MINNESOTA	W, 30-14	100,042
Oct. 20	(2) at Purdue	L, 49-20	60,716
Nov. 3	(10) NEBRASKA	W, 36-31	104,245
Nov. 10	(10) at Mich. St. (18)	W, 26-6	74,633
Nov. 17	(10) at Maryland	W, 52-51 (OT)	38,177
Nov. 24	(10 MICHIGAN (4)	W, 62-39	106,588
Dec. 1	(6) vs. NU (21)**	W, 45-24	66,375
Jan. 1	(6) vs. Washington (9)#	5 p.m.	–

OSU's CFP ranking is in parentheses before the opponent, while the opponent's ranking is after the name. (AP ranking used through Purdue game.)

* – at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas

** – Big Ten championship game vs. at Indianapolis (Lucas Oil Stadium)

– Rose Bowl at Pasadena, Calif. (Rose Bowl Stadium)

Team Statistics

	OSU	Opp
First Downs	381	256
Rushing	129	92
Passing	217	131
Penalty	35	33
Average Per Game/Rush	175.8	160.5
Average Per Game/Pass	373.0	239.8
Total Offense	7,134	5,204
Total Plays	1,062	888
Average Per Game	548.8	400.3
Average Per Play	6.7	5.9
Penalties-Yards	107-1,002	75-735
Fumbles-Lost	17-9	24-12
Third Down Efficiency	92-191	58-185
Percentage	48%	31%
Fourth Down Efficiency	13-20	8-16
Percentage	65%	50%
Sacks-Yards	39-261	20-100
Time Of Possession Avg.	31:20	28:40

Score By Quarters

	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	123	152	111	172	7	565	43.5
Opponents	68	101	71	88	6	334	25.7

Individual Statistics

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
J.K. Dobbins	223	1,029	4.6	9	42
Mike Weber	157	858	5.5	5	49
Tate Martell	22	128	5.8	2	47
Dwayne Haskins	73	122	1.7	4	17
Master Teague	17	106	6.2	1	33
Demario McCall	6	38	6.3	0	15
Brian Snead	11	37	3.4	1	5
Parris Campbell	9	24	2.7	0	18
C.J. Saunders	0	8	0.0	0	0
K.J. Hill	1	-3	-3.0	0	0
TEAM	19	-62	-3.3	0	0
OSU Totals	**538**	**2,285**	**4.2**	**22**	**49**
OPP Totals	**454**	**2,086**	**4.6**	**24**	**93**

Passing	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT	Effic.
D. Haskins	348	496	70.2	4,580	47-8	175.77
Tate Martell	23	28	82.1	269	1-0	174.63
OSU Totals	**371**	**524**	**70.8**	**4,849**	**48-8**	**175.71**
OPP Totals	**236**	**434**	**54.4**	**3,118**	**17-11**	**122.58**

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Parris Campbell	79	992	12.6	11	78
K.J. Hill	67	831	12.4	6	42
Johnnie Dixon	40	642	16.0	7	63
Terry McLaurin	34	669	19.7	11	75
Austin Mack	26	331	12.7	1	48
J.K. Dobbins	23	248	10.8	2	35
Mike Weber	20	104	5.2	1	15
Binjimen Victor	19	320	16.8	4	47
Luke Farrell	19	196	10.3	1	24
Chris Olave	12	197	16.4	3	29
C.J. Saunders	10	73	7.3	0	19
Demario McCall	9	110	12.2	0	35
Rashod Berry	8	77	9.6	1	15
Jaylen Harris	2	22	11.0	0	15
Garyn Prater	1	13	13.0	0	13
Jeremy Ruckert	1	13	13.0	0	13
Jaelen Gill	1	11	11.0	0	11
OSU Totals	**371**	**4,849**	**13.1**	**48**	**78**
OPP Totals	**236**	**3,118**	**13.2**	**17**	**93**

Scoring	TD	EPK	EPR	EPRC	FG	PTS
Parris Campbell	11	–	–	–	–	66
J.K. Dobbins	11	–	–	–	–	66
Terry McLaurin	11	–	–	–	–	66
Blake Haubeil	–	33-33	–	–	10-13	63
S. Nuernberger	–	39-39	–	–	3-5	48
Johnnie Dixon	7	–	–	–	–	42
K.J. Hill	6	–	–	–	–	36
Mike Weber	6	–	–	–	–	36
Dwayne Haskins	4	–	0-1	0-2	–	24
Binjimen Victor	4	–	–	–	–	24
Chris Olave	3	–	–	–	–	18
Dre'Mont Jones	2	–	–	–	–	12
Tate Martell	2	–	–	–	–	12
Sevyn Banks	1	–	–	–	–	6
Rashod Berry	1	–	–	–	–	6
Nick Bosa	1	–	–	–	–	6
Luke Farrell	1	–	–	–	–	6
Davon Hamilton	1	–	–	–	–	6
Austin Mack	1	–	–	–	–	6
Brian Snead	1	–	–	–	–	6
Master Teague	1	–	–	–	–	6
Keandre Jones (1 safety)						2
TEAM (1 safety)						2
OSU Totals	**75**	**72-72**	**0-1**	**0-2**	**13-18**	**565**
OPP Totals	**43**	**37-38**	**0-1**	**0-4**	**13-21**	**334**

FG Distance	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
S. Nuernberger	2-2	1-2	0-1	0-0	3-5
Blake Haubeil	6-7	2-3	2-3	0-0	10-13
OSU Totals	**8-9**	**3-5**	**2-4**	**0-0**	**13-18**
OPP Totals	**3-3**	**8-10**	**2-6**	**0-2**	**13-21**

Punting	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Drue Chrisman	53	2,294	43.3	0	65
OSU Totals	**53**	**2,294**	**43.3**	**0**	**65**
OPP Totals	**80**	**3,152**	**39.4**	**3**	**56**

Interceptions	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Shaun Wade	3	12	4.0	0	12
Kendall Sheffield	2	0	0.0	0	0
Brendon White	1	49	49.0	0	49
Dre'Mont Jones	1	28	28.0	1	28
Malik Harrison	1	13	13.0	0	13
Jordan Fuller	1	4	4.0	0	4
Damon Arnette	1	1	1.0	0	1
Isaiah Pryor	1	0	0.0	0	0
OSU Totals	**11**	**107**	**9.7**	**1**	**49**
OPP Totals	**8**	**211**	**26.4**	**2**	**46**

Punt Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
K.J. Hill	14	76	5.4	0	23
C.J. Saunders	8	50	6.2	0	20
Demario McCall	3	32	10.7	0	26
Sevyn Banks	1	33	33.0	1	33
Keandre Jones	1	22	22.0	0	0
Chris Olave	0	3	0.0	0	3
OSU Totals	**27**	**216**	**8.0**	**1**	**33**
OPP Totals	**10**	**35**	**3.5**	**0**	**12**

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Johnnie Dixon	13	240	18.5	0	38
Demario McCall	10	195	19.5	0	42
C.J. Saunders	2	24	12.0	0	14
K.J. Hill	1	4	4.0	0	4
OSU Totals	**26**	**463**	**17.8**	**0**	**42**
OPP Totals	**31**	**472**	**15.2**	**0**	**31**

Def. Leaders	Solo	Ast.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Malik Harrison	48	26	74	8.5-31	2.5-17
Jordan Fuller	53	19	72	2.5-4	–
Tuf Borland	29	31	60	9.0-29	3.0-16
Pete Werner	36	17	53	7.5-20	3.0-10
Dre'Mont Jones	23	17	40	13.0-69	8.5-61
Brendon White	19	19	38	2.0-6	–
Damon Arnette	29	8	37	–	–
Chase Young	23	9	32	14.5-80	9.5-68
Isaiah Pryor	19	11	30	1.0-1	–
Kendall Sheffield	22	8	30	2.0-4	–
Jeffrey Okudah	22	7	29	–	–
Shaun Wade	25	3	28	–	–
Jahsen Wint	21	5	26	0.5-1	–
Robert Landers	12	10	22	5.0-17	1.0-6
Jonathon Cooper	11	11	22	5.5-16	2.5-9
OSU Totals	**494**	**268**	**762**	**93-392**	**39-261**
OPP Totals	**613**	**430**	**1,043**	**65-199**	**20-100**

Fumbles Forced: 11 – Tuf Borland 2, Chase Young 2, Pete Werner 2, Nick Bosa, Dwayne Haskins, Dre'Mont Jones, Kendall Sheffield, Shaun Wade.

Fumbles Recovered: 12 – Dre'Mont Jones 3, Nick Bosa 2, Jordan Fuller 2, Jonathon Cooper, Davon Hamilton, Malik Harrison, Jeffrey Okudah, TEAM.

Haskins Posts Another Record-Setting Game

Week by week, Ohio State sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins has seemingly set record after record. It's gotten to the point that he has to bump his own name down in the history books.

GAME NOTEBOOK
Tim Moody

Against No. 21 Northwestern in the Big Ten Championship Game on Dec. 1, Haskins threw for a school-record 499 yards, breaking the single-game mark of 470 he had set earlier this season at Purdue. Haskins completed 34 of 41 passes for 499 yards and five touchdowns on his way to MVP honors at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

After the game, though, Haskins put more weight on the No. 6 Buckeyes winning another conference title than his huge individual day and falling just short of 500 yards passing.

"I mean, we got the one. That was the win. That's all that matters," he said after leading Ohio State to a 45-24 victory. "I could have thrown for 80 yards or 600 yards. All we needed to do is win the game. I'm proud of how we played today. Sure, one (more) yard would have been great. But we're Big Ten East champions, Big Ten champions. What else would you want to be?"

While the Buckeyes ended up as 21-point winners, the game was in question in the second half. Thanks to a pair of first-half touchdown passes to fifth-year senior Terry McLaurin, Haskins had guided Ohio State to a 24-7 lead at the break. In the third quarter, though, the Wildcats came out hot with 14 straight points to make it 24-21. Haskins responded by guiding a six-play, 60-yard drive that was capped with a 29-yard touchdown pass to freshman receiver Chris Olave.

Haskins, a Potomac, Md., native, added touchdown strikes to fifth-year senior wide receiver Johnnie Dixon and freshman running back J.K. Dobbins in the fourth quarter to ice the game.

SONNY BROCKWAY

TOP HONORS – Sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins (left) was named MVP of the Big Ten title game after throwing for 499 yards and five scores.

Once the game was over, the big question came up early and often: Was Haskins a Heisman candidate? The main competition for the award was likely to be Alabama quarterback Tua Tagovailoa and Oklahoma signal caller Kyler Murray, but Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer stressed that his man should be in the mix.

"He's without question a Heisman candidate," Meyer said. "I've seen the statistics of the other two great players, and there's no doubt. Dwayne Haskins is a Heisman candidate, and he should be in New York City."

Young Leads Dominant Defensive Front

Ohio State's defense wasn't perfect against Northwestern. The Buckeyes allowed 418 total yards, including 267 through the air, and saw Northwestern running back John Moten IV was able to bust through for a 77-yard touchdown.

The leaks were plugged when it mattered most, though, and that effort was often led by the defensive line – most notably sophomore end Chase Young.

Young, a Hyattsville (Md.) DeMatha Catholic product, finished with three sacks and a forced fumble but caused even more havoc in the backfield than those numbers suggest. Junior defensive tackle Dre'Mont Jones added four tackles and a sack, while freshman defensive tackle Taron Vincent had the first sack of his career as well.

After the game, Young noted that the Buckeyes had a directive from defensive coordinator Greg Schiano to go after Northwestern quarterback Clayton Thorson throughout the game.

"Coming in, we knew he was a real good quarterback and NFL pro-style type of quarterback," Young said. "And Coach Schiano said we have to get after him. We ran certain blitzes to block the storm press. And today, we just won. And we followed what Coach Schiano said and we got the win."

Bucks Bounce Back From 3rd-Quarter Letdown

As mentioned above, the third quarter opened on a low note for the Buckeyes. Northwestern took the kickoff and marched 75 yards in just five plays, capped by an 18-yard touchdown run from Thorson. After a quick Ohio State punt, the Wildcats then sustained an 11-play, 85-yard drive on their way to another score – this one a 2-yard pass from Thorson to Cameron Green. That made it 24-21 with 8:03 to play in the third quarter.

Jones, who was animated and energetic during postgame interviews, admitted that Northwestern got the best of Ohio State for a quarter, but he said the Buckeyes played a complete game on defense otherwise.

"I felt like you take out that big run, we take out that third quarter, and we had a complete game," Jones told BSB. "I mean, they got going on us a little bit in the third quarter, (but) we found a way to manage it and bring it back and have control over the game."

It was Ohio State's ability to respond to that adversity on defense that helped propel the Buckeyes to the win.

After Green's touchdown, Northwestern scored just three more points. Apart from that field goal, the rest of the Wildcats' drives ended with an interception, a punt, a punt, a turnover on downs and another punt.

For a defense that had at times been reeling throughout the season, the ability to hold on was important. Jones even admitted that the team might not have responded in a similar fashion even a month ago.

"I'm not going to lie – no," he said when asked if the Buckeyes could have bounced back from such a rough third quarter earlier in the year. "Because early in the season we were hot, middle of the season we got a little fuzzy in our defense and then towards the end of the season we're starting to show how we are."

Davis Makes 1st Start On Championship Stage

Continuity along the offensive line is key. There's a reason teams don't rotate in more than five players very often.

For the Buckeyes against Northwestern, though, complete continuity wasn't an option. Fifth-year senior right guard Demetrius Knox suffered a Lisfranc injury against Michigan, meaning redshirt freshman Wyatt Davis lined up for his first career start in the Big Ten title game.

Overall, the line play was solid as Ohio State racked up 607 yards of total offense, including 108 on the ground, but the Buckeyes also allowed Haskins to be sacked four times.

Davis was optimistic after the game, saying he has plenty of room for improvement as his career kicks off.

"You know, I feel like overall as an offensive line I feel like we played pretty good," Davis said. "Obviously for me personally, I felt like there's still stuff I can fix, and now I've got some game experience, I know what a game's like. I feel like the only thing I can do now is just get better and watch film and learn from the mistakes that I made."

The Bellflower (Calif.) St. John Bosco product noted that his week of preparation was very intense, but he felt he was ready for the stage.

"I mean, there was no room for mistakes – we're playing for the Big Ten championship," Davis said. "I'm expected – we always have the saying, 'Next man up,' and I felt like that was my role, being the backup for Meech (Knox), to come in and not let there be any drop-off and just to play hard and have confidence in myself. This week in practice I was going as hard as I could, and I felt like that helped me in the game."

Ohio State Overcomes Penalties, Turnovers

Taking care of the ball on offense and avoiding penalties are always two of the main focuses for a football team, especially when it comes to trying to win championships. Against the Wildcats, both of those areas were issues for Ohio State – but it didn't end up mattering.

Haskins threw one interception and the Buckeyes lost a fumble by junior running back Mike Weber on offense, but they were able to tally a pair of interceptions themselves – one from Damon Arnette and another from Shaun Wade – while recovering a Northwestern fumble as well.

Ohio State also committed nine penalties for 90 yards compared to just three for 15 yards by the Wildcats. The penalties have been a persistent issue this season – win or lose – but the Buckeyes were able to stay disciplined in the biggest moments.

The Buckeyes also fared well in the field-position battle, downing two of four punts inside the 20-yard line as sophomore Drue Chrisman averaged 54.8 yards per boot.

News & Notes

- Ohio State's victory over Northwestern marked its third Big Ten Championship Game win and 37th Big Ten title overall. The Buckeyes improved to 3-1 in Indianapolis, adding to victories in 2014 and 2017, which both came against Wisconsin. Ohio State fell to Michigan State in the conference title bout in 2013.
- The Buckeyes (12-1) reached 12 wins in a season for just the eighth time in school history and for the second year in a row. Ohio State finished 12-2 last season after beating USC in the Cotton Bowl.
- The win marked Ohio State's seventh in a row against Northwestern, and the Buckeyes lead that series, 62-14-1.

Game Analysis

What Worked Well

The Ohio State passing attack. Sophomore quarterback Dwayne Haskins picked apart the Northwestern secondary, connecting on a wide variety of passes – many of them in clutch moments. The signal caller drove the Buckeyes 77 yards on their opening drive, capped by a 16-yard touchdown to fifth-year senior Terry McLaurin on third-and-11. After a regrettable interception in the second quarter, Haskins regrouped and led Ohio State on a 78-yard drive, culminating in a pristine 42-yard touchdown pass to McLaurin on third-and-20.

The quarterback from Potomac, Md., struck again in the third quarter with the Scarlet and Gray leading 24-21, finding Chris Olave for a 29-yard touchdown. The sophomore gunslinger was not done yet, completing a 63-yard bomb to Johnnie Dixon and then connecting with Dixon on a 9-yard touchdown. Haskins finished his record-setting game with a 17-yard touchdown pass to J.K. Dobbins, giving him 499 yards on 34-of-41 passing with five touchdowns and one interception. The yardage total broke his own single-game program record of 470, which had he set in a loss at Purdue earlier this year.

What Didn't Work

Discipline. Typically, in a championship game, it is pivotal to limit penalties and take care of the football. The Buckeyes failed to do either of those two tasks but were fortunate to escape with a victory.

The Buckeyes committed nine penalties for 90 yards, which both mark the most by a team in the eight-year history of the Big Ten Championship Game. Turnovers often change the course of a game, and Ohio State is fortunate Northwestern did not capitalize off its mishaps. Driving down the field early in the second quarter with a 14-7 lead, Haskins threw an ill-advised pass downfield from the NU 42 on first-and-10. Montre Hartrage picked off Haskins' pass at the NU 16. However, the Wildcats gave the ball away themselves via a Clayton Thorson fumble.

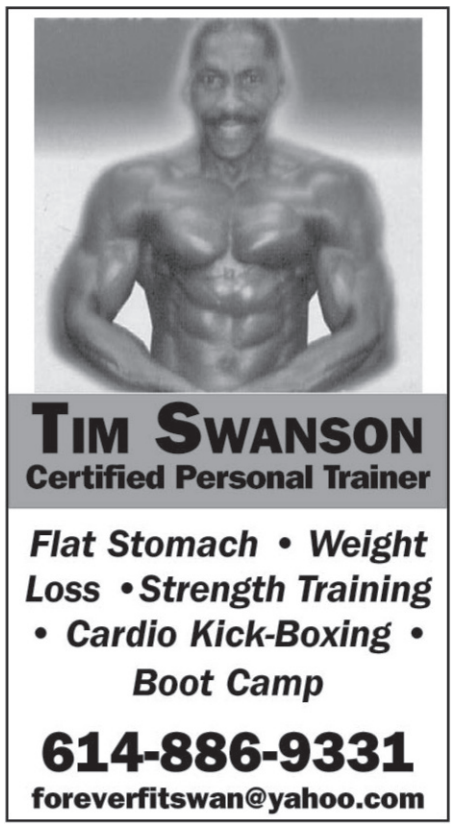
Then, in a 24-21 game, Ohio State gained possession in Northwestern territory via interception, but Mike Weber coughed up the football at the NU 19. Fortunately for the Buckeyes, Northwestern went three-and-out, and what could have been the most-costly miscue of the game ended up as a unfortunate blemish in a big win.

Play Of The Game

With Ohio State holding a narrow, 24-21 lead against Northwestern with the Big Ten championship on the line, an unlikely hero stepped up for Ohio State. The Wildcats had scored on their first two drives to start the second half, including completions of 16, 17 and 17 yards against Buckeye cornerback Damon Arnette.

Offensively, the Buckeyes failed to convert a first down on either of their first two drives to open the third quarter, and Northwestern regained possession down just three. With Thorson finding his groove, the Wildcats started on their own 30-yard line. Thorson dropped back to pass on second-and-8 and his throw was deflected at the line of scrimmage, apparently off his own lineman, as he attempted to throw under pressure from sophomore defensive end Chase Young. The ball ricocheted in the air and Arnette leaped up and snagged it. Although the interception was not directly turned into points, Ohio State never looked back, outscoring Northwestern 21-3 to close out the game.

– Joe Dempsey



Recruiting, Staff Stability Top Day's To-Do List

Ohio State is headed to the Rose Bowl, but the game itself won't be the center of attention on New Year's Day in Pasadena, Calif.

On Dec. 4, head coach Urban Meyer announced that he is retiring after the Rose Bowl, paving the way for Ryan Day to take over starting Jan. 2.

The news caps a tumultuous season for the Buckeyes after Meyer was suspended for the first three games for mishandling the employment of former wide receivers coach Zach Smith. Day served as interim coach when Ohio State opened 3-0. Then Meyer led the Buckeyes to a second Big Ten title in a row, but they missed the College Football Playoff because of a shocking 49-20 loss at Purdue.

With the Rose Bowl a matter of weeks away, BSB editor Tim Moody and staff writers James Grega and Garrett Stepien discussed Meyer's retirement, Day's hiring, quarterback Dwayne Haskins' big season and the upcoming bowl game.

SONNY BROCKWAY

NEXT UP – Urban Meyer (left) announced his retirement Dec. 4, the same day athletic director Gene Smith (right) named Ryan Day (center) his successor.

Let's dive right in with the story of the year – Meyer's retirement. How would you assess his legacy at Ohio State? Do you think he'll coach again?

Garrett Stepien: Never say never, but I do believe Meyer's done. The thing about Meyer's coaching career, particularly from arrivals and departures between Florida and Ohio State, has been the unpredictability and drama behind his future. Meyer's health has been a real issue, culminated by an offseason in which an off-field investigation and subsequent suspension made him have to climb back into Ohio State's season and keep his head above water as he fought off mounting stress. Behind the scenes, I do think there's a disconnect at the university level with president Michael Drake.

But I don't believe those were ultimately the deciding factors.

The bottom line, though, is that coming back to Ohio and leading the Buckeyes was Meyer's dream job. His legacy is, at least on the field, intact as an 82-9 coach with a national championship in the inaugural College Football Playoff under his belt. The overall off-field culture of Real Life Wednesdays and postgraduate help for student-athletes is a feather in his cap as well. Meyer has admitted to how much he cares about his legacies. Between his health and where he's leaving OSU, what more is there to accomplish?

James Grega: I can't shake the idea that Meyer will return to the sideline at some point, but I think it would only be for one job and one job only: Notre Dame.

Meyer has made it pretty clear he has no interest in the NFL and he isn't the kind of guy who is going to take a less-than-premier job. As of now, Notre Dame appears to be in good hands with Brian Kelly, who has the Irish in the College Football Playoff for

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the first time. However, there have been rumblings that Kelly could be interested in potential NFL jobs one day, which would open the door for Meyer to return to South Bend, Ind.

His legacy at Ohio State is completely intact as is, but a move to Notre Dame, a place many Ohio State fans love to hate, might complicate things a bit. If I had to say right now, I would say there is a 20 percent chance he returns to the sideline one day.

Tim Moody: Within Ohio, Meyer will always be remembered as one of the best coaches the Buckeyes have ever had. He won a national title and three Big Ten championships, and that will always top the list.

Outside of Ohio, he'll be remembered as a great coach who let too many players get in trouble while at Florida and then "looked the other way" while employing a serial domestic abuser. Neither of those points are the complete truth, but that's how it will go for Meyer. During his retirement press conference, he spoke like a man who understands that.

As for Meyer's future, I don't see him coaching again. His health was the main factor in him stepping down, so why would he risk his long-term outlook in order to get back to a job that would pale in comparison to Ohio State? I just don't see it.

As soon as Meyer retired, Ohio State already had its man in Ryan Day. What are your expectations for Day? Was it the right choice or should the Buckeyes have gone for a national search?

TM: Day had to be the choice for Ohio State. A lot of people have pointed to the fact that he doesn't have head coaching experience, but he has Ohio State experience, and I think that's much more important.

Matt Campbell (Iowa State's head coach)

Continued On Page 36

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Rose Bowl Was Right Spot For 2018 Buckeyes

Continued From Page 35

might have been great if Gene Smith had gone in that direction, but does coaching at Toledo and Iowa State really make his résumé that much better? I say no.

Going forward, I expect Day to have everything rolling at a high level right away. He's keeping the key guys like Mark Pantoni in place, meaning the recruiting machine won't skip a beat. Day is awesome from an X's and O's standpoint as well, but getting a staff in place will be really important for his chances of immediate success.

If I were a betting man, I'd have Ohio State as the favorites in the Big Ten next year.

GS: The beat goes on under Day, who should have Ohio State operating at Meyer's expectations all across the program. I thought his three-game debut, while you can't draw long-term conclusions off it, showed what Day could do as a gameday manager and overall leader on the sideline. He's been exposed to Meyer's recruiting blueprint for two years, emerging among the Buckeyes' best assistants on staff in that department and working relentlessly to keep the 2019 class together – and even build upon it further.

I think his promise as a head coach was cemented between August and September, followed by the way Ohio State's offense adjusted and took off down the stretch. I think Gene Smith's case against an outside replacement was legitimate in the sense that you don't necessarily want to tear apart what Meyer built. The best way for OSU to keep that going was with Day, who's earned the chance to take over entirely. Expectations remain the same across the board.

JG: The only other man I would have even considered for the job if I were Gene Smith would have been Campbell, but with a new coach comes a major shakeup and that is not what Ohio State needed.

In 2011, Ohio State needed a shakeup. In 2018, Ohio State is a machine that continues to win Big Ten titles and contend for national titles every year. To shake things up more than they already were would be have been a mistake, so Gene Smith made the right decision.

That said, Ryan Day steps into a situation where expectations are as high as ever. If he doesn't win and win early and often, Ohio State fans will immediately begin calling for his removal. And if Gene Smith, who is nearing retirement, is not there much longer, that will make Day's job that much more strenuous.

What is the most important step for Day going forward?

TM: Well, priority one has to be trying to get Dwayne Haskins to stick around for another year, but let's be honest, that's not going to happen.

After that it comes down to getting his staff in place. Day should keep guys like running backs coach Tony Alford, offensive line coach Greg Studrawa and offensive coordinator Kevin Wilson (if at all possible). He's already got his guy for the wideouts in Brian Hartline, and I think he'll probably make Corey Dennis quarterbacks coach.

On defense, it's a different story. I don't see Greg Schiano sticking around, so he should be a head coach somewhere next year, but Alex Grinch will probably be the DC, getting his chance to run his own system. Day should call down to Cincinnati and hire Marcus Freeman away from Luke Fickell's staff. He would be a huge upgrade over Billy Davis as linebackers coach.

There will be some moving parts on this staff, but Day has a chance to put together a really impressive group.

JG: Piecing together the coaching staff is the most important thing as Day takes over the job. Having already promoted Hartline, I expect Day to keep the majority, if not the entire offensive coaching staff around. As Tim said, Dennis, who is also Urban Meyer's son-in-law, is probably in line to become the next quarterbacks coach with the idea that Day will also work extensively with the unit.

Defensively, I expect Day to clean house except for Larry Johnson, who I believe will at least consider retirement now that Meyer is gone. Perhaps Grinch stays, but Schiano is surely done at Ohio State and it would not surprise me if the rest of the defensive staff goes with him. Freeman would be a great hire as linebackers coach and is probably the leading candidate for that job, although I wouldn't be shocked if Day made a call to James Laurinaitis to at least gauge his interest. More likely however would be Laurinaitis going the Hartline route and joining as a quality control coach first before being put in charge of an entire position group without any coaching experience.

GS: Day's top priority has to be in recruiting, where he's been ahead of the game since being named Meyer's successor. Day has been able to keep the Buckeyes' 2019 class intact, building momentum with room for several big pickups by early signing day (Dec. 19). Part of Day's success has been due to early moves made on OSU's support staff and assistant coaches, from keeping Meyer's four-person cabinet to removing wide receivers coach Brian Hartline's interim tag.

So after Ohio State finalizes the majority of its 2019 class in the early signing period, Day has to have his coaching staff sorted out. I'm actually skeptical about seeing that many changes outside of potentially Davis – I think Schiano might stick for another year and then head somewhere such as Rutgers – but where Day takes this will be interesting to see. Freeman would absolutely be an upgrade, but he's going to be tough to pry from Cincinnati with his coordinator duties there. Regardless, I think Day will be working this behind the scenes leading up to the Rose Bowl and have it finalized not long after.

Now, for the Rose Bowl. What's the No. 1 thing you'll be watching for on New Year's Day when the Buckeyes take on Washington?

JG: When it comes to the on-field matchup, I cannot wait to see what Dwayne Haskins can do against Washington's secondary. The Huskies boasted the top pass defense in the Pac-12 this season, surrendering just 185.4 yards per game through the air. They also held Utah to just 137 yards through the air in the Pac-12 title game and allow just 15.5 points per game.

Otherwise, I am looking forward to seeing how Urban Meyer handles the day. Knowing it is his last game, I expect him to be emotional and I wonder if that will spill into the game or if he can keep himself in check until the postgame, assuming the Buckeyes win.

As you will read later in our online predictions which we will post to BuckeyeSports.com before the game, I don't expect this one to be particularly close, and the emotion behind Meyer's retirement has a lot to do with that.

TM: How many points can Ohio State score in this one? Yeah, I get that Washington has one of the top defenses around, as James mentioned, but the Buckeyes have been firing on all cylinders of late. Remember when they put up 62 on Michigan's No. 1 D?

Haskins needs three touchdown passes to reach 50 on the season – that's a number I never thought we'd see at Ohio State.

I'll also be looking for Parris Campbell to get the 8 yards necessary to reach 1,000 receiving yards for the season. He's been a revelation this year, and he deserves to have his name in the record books with a season like that. Campbell has worked harder than anyone to get where he is, and I'm looking forward to seeing him suit up for Ohio State one last time.

GS: Between the Heisman disrespect for Haskins, Meyer's last game due to retirement and Ohio State missing out on the College Football Playoff, how much fire do the Buckeyes bring against Washington?

The Rose Bowl certainly isn't a bad consolation to the CFP and OSU is embracing its first trip back to Pasadena, Calif., since the 2009 season, but don't be fooled – this team has a lot to play for. After the way Washington wiggled its way past Utah in the Pac-12 title game, Ohio State might be on the fast track to something absurd like 600 passing yards from Haskins and an exclamation point of an offensive explosion against the Huskies' stout defense.

On paper, UW figures to be a decent opponent for the Buckeyes in a regular New Year's Six game. But between the fuel to the fire and the "Ohio Against the World" mentality for OSU over what will be exactly a month since the Big Ten title game by Jan. 1, this Rose Bowl is the furthest thing from a consolation

Do you think the Rose Bowl was where Ohio State deserved to be, or should the Buckeyes have gotten a playoff shot?

TM: In a four-team system, Ohio State did not deserve to be in. The committee probably got it right – although I'd argue that UCF, not Oklahoma, should be the fourth seed. If you win all your games, you have to be given a chance, but I know not many people agree with me there.

Oklahoma won its conference and didn't get blown out on the road by a mediocre team. That's an easy call any day.

We'll see if Day can guide Ohio State to a season without an embarrassing road loss next year.

JG: Ohio State was not a top-four team, plain and simple. The committee got it right, although I do think Notre Dame is significantly worse than the other three teams in the final four. The reality is, an undefeated Notre Dame will never miss out on the playoff.

Buckeye fans and apologists need to realize that getting throttled on the road by 6-6 Purdue is the only reason Ohio State did not get in. I wish the committee would just come out and say that, but they won't. If the Buckeyes lost that game by, say, three points, Ohio State might have just gotten in over Oklahoma. Want to play for a national title? Don't get embarrassed by a significantly less talented team on national television.

GS: Tim had me until UCF. In all seriousness, though, Ohio State definitely didn't deserve to crack the CFP's top four. James alluded to it best – don't get smoked by an eventual 6-6 team and completely quit in the fourth quarter to lose by 29 points if you want to have everything in front of your team. The truth of the matter Oct. 20 in West Lafayette, Ind., was that these Buckeyes weren't built for the playoffs. Sluggish performances against Nebraska, Michigan State and Maryland after the Oct. 27 off week confirmed that notion.

OSU turned on the jets in its rivalry game – arguably an anomaly if you look at how Northwestern had Ohio State on the ropes in the third quarter of the Big Ten Championship Game before the Buckeyes' speed and talent outlasted the Wildcats' scheme and scrappiness. In a perfect world, OSU would have made an eight-team postseason, but that's not the reality right now.

As for Dwayne Haskins, this will likely be his final game at Ohio State. How do you assess what he's done this season overall?

GS: Where do you begin? Haskins has exceeded every bit of the hype. My take on Haskins, since he earned his starting job, has been that he was going to be one-and-done for the NFL as long as he had a good enough season – and he blew that out of the water. Haskins obliterated Ohio State and Big Ten single-season records, and there really isn't much more for him to accomplish now.

Beyond the numbers, though, I think Haskins evolved the Buckeyes' offense. Just look at how OSU has recruited the position under Day with freshman Matthew Baldwin, 2019 four-star Dwan Mathis and 2020 four-star Jack Miller. Haskins' development under Day paved the way for Ohio State to welcome the best possible quarterbacks out there and not just limit its efforts on the trail to the most dynamic dual-threat prospects.

JG: Haskins will go down, at least in my eyes, as the best pure quarterback in Ohio State history and it is not close. The loss to Purdue is not on him and he is very much the reason the Buckeyes won the majority of their games this season.

The numbers he has posted in just one year are second to none in program and Big Ten history, and if he were to shock everyone and return to school, he would be an immediate favorite to win the 2019 Heisman Trophy. That said, I expect Haskins to leave and I contend he should be the first quarterback taken in the 2019 NFL draft. His legacy at Ohio State will be similar to what Cam Newton's was at Auburn, except for all the off-the-field nonsense. He won't leave Ohio State a national champion, but a Big Ten and Rose Bowl title is the next best thing.

TM: Plain and simple: Haskins had the best season of any Ohio State quarterback in history. He's the best passer the Buckeyes have ever had on the roster, and the records he set this year might never be broken.

It's a shame he won't have a national title or Heisman Trophy to his name, but Haskins only needed this one season as a starter to go down as an Ohio State legend. He's just that good.

That said, I'll be curious to see what happens in the draft process. I think he could really pop at the combine, but his lack of starting experience could prove to be a hindrance – it's never easy to guess what NFL teams will do.

Since he only started for one year, and that one year was overshadowed by the news surrounding Meyer, it's hard to say exactly what Haskins' lasting legacy will be in Columbus, though. I'll say this – a Rose Bowl win would help.

4-Star 2020 Comfortable With Fit At Ohio State

By GARRETT STEPIEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

As soon as he returned to Texas after a trip to Ohio, Rockwall 2020 four-star wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba knew where he wanted to spend his college career.

A whirlwind 12 months on the recruiting trail with unofficial visits to Power Five programs across the United States stopped spinning the weekend of Nov. 3. In attendance for Ohio State's 36-31 win over Nebraska at Ohio Stadium, Smith-Njigba's first trip to Columbus culminated with a commitment to the Buckeyes.

"I think when you know, you know," Rodney Webb, Smith-Njigba's head coach at Rockwall High School, told BSB. "That's what he told me. He's like, 'Coach, when you know you know.' He definitely felt like it was the right fit for him, and we're really fired up for him."

Smith-Njigba's decision gave OSU its seventh member for the 2020 recruiting class, the group's first wide receiver, bolstering the star-studded cycle with a four-star addition.

But beyond the latest wave of star power he brings to Ohio State's early efforts for the next cycle as the 247Sports composite's No. 287 overall prospect, No. 59 wide receiver and No. 36 player in Texas, Smith-Njigba gives the Buckeyes a necessary future skill player.

In studying Smith-Njigba since he arrived at Rockwall for his freshman season two years ago, CBS Sports Network recruiting analyst Tom Lemming's evaluation detailed why OSU wide receivers coach Brian Hartline had prioritized the junior wideout since the Sept. 16 offer.

"The staff loves him," Lemming said of Smith-Njigba. "He's about 6-1, 195. He's got a good vertical, strong hands and he can spread a defense with his speed, which I liked. He was, in Texas, one of the top wide receivers for next year."

After Ohio State offered Smith-Njigba, the national recruiting spotlight started to find him. Ole Miss (Sept. 29) and Notre Dame (Oct. 1) were his latest offers before he set up the trip to Columbus, where top-target treatment from Hartline and head coach Urban Meyer sent a clear message of how the Buckeyes viewed him as a class-changing piece for 2020.

"They just recruited me hard, treated me like family," Smith-Njigba said. "Just told me on a daily basis – I talked to Coach Hartline, Coach Meyer – that they wanted me to be their man. The tradition there is just unbelievable, so I'm happy to be a part of that. Just seeing the people and the guys that have come through there, it definitely gave me a goal that when I come to Ohio State, I want to be legendary."

While Smith-Njigba's first visit to OSU resulting in a commitment surprised many, Webb wasn't as shocked.

"One thing about Jaxon – he's a very thoughtful, calculated kid," Webb said. "So it wasn't any kind of a real knee-jerk deal. His parents are awesome. His dad has taken him around. They've been on so many unofficials over the past 12 months. They've had a great opportunity to (see different campuses)."

Smith-Njigba doesn't tower over defenders. But with 4.5-second speed in the 40-yard dash and a natural nose for the ball, his junior campaign at Rockwall led to eye-catching numbers.

In 10 games, Smith-Njigba caught 82 balls for 1,552 yards (18.9 per catch) and a long of 82 with 17 touchdowns. He added 22 rushes for 194 yards and six touchdowns (8.8 per carry), showing his versatility in the way Ohio State tends to use H-backs.

"The thing about Jaxon is that his physical development has been really impressive," Webb said. "He's just gotten so big and strong. He's just gotten so much faster that, in addition to that playmaking ability, now he's just got – he's a very difficult guy to tackle. When he competes for a football, he's got the strength to go up and win. So a lot of people call them 50-50 balls when it's a 1-on-1 situation. I call them 9-in-10 balls with Jaxon, because he's going to go catch it."

Webb believes Smith-Njigba fits the Buckeyes' plans regardless of quarterback or coordinator.

"Here's the thing about Jaxon – he's going to fit into anybody's offense," Webb said. "He really is because he's so versatile and he's such a team-first guy. He's not – you don't have to throw to him 15 times a game to keep him happy. He's a team-first guy. But he does so many things. He's so versatile that he would be such a good fit in so many different offensive schemes. He's going to be successful no matter who's calling the offense, no matter what the personnel dictates.

"Let's be honest – right now, Ohio State is throwing it all over the place, but who's to say in three years or four years what it's going to look like? Sometimes, within a season, there's an injury to a quarterback or something and the dynamic changes. But he's just one of those guys that's going to fit in any system. He can play inside, he can play outside, you can hand it to him and he is an elite kick returner. I would imagine that he would return punts up there from day one. I would imagine he'll be on the field as a receiver, too, but he is electric when it comes to that kind of stuff.

"So he just brings so many things to the table. I don't necessarily think it's a matter of, 'Is the scheme going to fit him or the system going to fit him,' because he'll make it fit him no matter what it is."

With more than a year left until the 2020 early signing period, offers are likely to flow in for Smith-Njigba, but his commitment should stay solid.

"I don't want to speak for Jaxon, but I can tell you this – he and his dad both have a very strong sense of loyalty," Webb said. "After the season he's had, there's no way (other schools) won't offer. Texas is going to offer. He's going to get an offer from Texas A&M. There's no question about it. He's had the best season of any receiver in Texas. But at the same time, he understands the people that have shown a commitment to him. He's an astonishingly loyal kid. I would not expect any kind of wavering from him."

Get To Know: Jaxon Smith-Njigba

High School – Rockwall, Texas
Position – Wide Receiver
Height, Weight – 6-1, 195 pounds
Rankings – Smith-Njigba is rated a four-star prospect, the No. 59 wide receiver and No. 287 overall player in the 247Sports composite for 2020.
Player Evaluation – "There's a lot where it just comes down to getting to know that offense at Rockwall. He was always good. He always had speed. A lot of times, it's just pure athletic ability. But now he's developed into a very steady wide receiver over the past couple of years too. But he's always been a talent, offensively. Wide receivers and corners, they're born as athletes. Quarterbacks, linemen, they've got to be developed. But not wide receivers and corners." – CBS Sports Network's Tom Lemming

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Coaching Change Leads Into Critical Weekend

Recruiting never stops, even when a coaching change occurs. Ohio State underwent its staff shuffle Dec. 4 when it was announced that offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Ryan Day was set to replace retiring head coach Urban Meyer after the Rose bowl.

RECRUITING OUTLOOK
Garrett Stepien

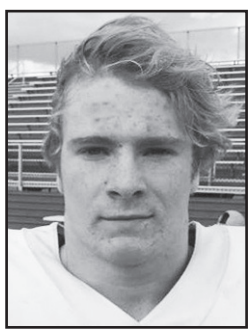
With Meyer's retirement, Day will take over Jan. 2, the day after the No. 6 Buckeyes (12-1) face No. 9 Washington (10-3) in Pasadena, Calif. But until then, Day is already OSU's head coach on the recruiting trail while Meyer remains in Columbus and meets with recruits on campus.

The two-man approach, along with the rest of the 10 assistant coaches and four-person support staff, creates an interesting dynamic for Ohio State during a pivotal stretch. Senior offensive quality control coach Corey Dennis, Meyer's son in law, is reportedly serving as the 10th assistant for recruiting purposes.

As the Buckeyes scramble to keep together their classes of 2019 and 2020, they do so under strict deadlines with the early signing period running from Dec. 19-21 and the traditional National Signing Day following on Feb. 6.

Since Meyer's retirement, OSU's recruiting has taken off on somewhat of a roller-coaster ride. Ohio State picked up a commitment from a top local target to bring its 2019 group to 16 members, but not before the Buckeyes lost two pledges from their 2020 cycle.

Between the 2019 pickup for OSU and a key loss at Michigan, which saw Tulsa (Okla.) Booker T. Washington five-star safety Daxton Hill (6-0½, 186) flip to Alabama on Dec. 8, OSU ascended back into the top 10 of the 247Sports composite team rankings. Ohio State's class of two five-stars, 10 four-stars and four three-stars overtook the Wolverines – 23 commitments for No. 11 in the nation and No. 2 in the Big Ten – at No. 9 overall and first in the conference for 2019.


Tommy Eichenberg

With the attrition in 2020, the Buckeyes' five-member class – one five-star and four four-stars – fell to fourth in the country. OSU now sits behind No. 3 LSU (seven commits), No. 2 Miami (Fla.) (10 commits) and No. 1 Alabama (10 commits) in the 247Sports composite team rankings.

Eichenberg Commits To Ohio State

Ohio State got the boost its 2019 recruiting class needed Dec. 6 when Cleveland St. Ignatius four-star linebacker Tommy Eichenberg announced his commitment to the Buckeyes.

"I've always wanted to go there, my entire life," Eichenberg said through St. Ignatius on Dec. 7. "That's my dream school. I couldn't pass up the opportunity."

Formerly committed to Boston College since June 27, he was recruited by OSU over the past year. Ohio State jumped back into his process with an offer Sept. 26. Michigan extended an offer Oct. 3.

Part of the reason the 6-3, 225-pound 'backer popped back onto Big Ten radars was his strong senior season. He finished the 2018 campaign with 126 tackles (23 for loss), eight sacks, five pass breakups, seven quarterback hurries, five forced fumbles and an interception.

"He has great vision, he reads the play really well and then attacks," St. Ignatius defensive coordinator/linebackers coach Ryan Franzinger said of Eichenberg. "He has a great ability to disengage blocks. He uses his hands really well. College coaches love that. He has longer arms – he's just a taller linebacker than we typically have. God blessed him with that size and those skills, and he embraced it and developed those even further."

Since OSU and Michigan offered, Eichenberg unofficially visited each campus. He took in Ann Arbor, Mich., for the then-No. 5 Wolverines' 42-7 rout of then-No. 14 Penn State on Nov. 3. Three weeks later, his trip to Columbus the weekend of Nov. 24 resulted in the then-No. 10 Buckeyes' 62-39 romp over then-No. 4 U-M. He decommitted from BC on Nov. 19, five days before The Game.

Eichenberg marks Ohio State's first commit since Rockwall, Texas, four-star wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba pledged Nov. 4 to the Buckeyes' 2020 class. OSU's most recent commitment for the 2019 class also came Nov. 4 in Jacksonville (Fla.) Trinity Christian Academy three-star running back Marcus Crowley.

Eichenberg joins Lexington, Ohio, four-star outside linebacker Cade Stover as the Buckeyes' second player at the position while Fort Wayne (Ind.) Wayne three-star athlete Craig Young might end up there as well. Eichenberg is the 247Sports composite's No. 324 overall prospect, No. 20 inside linebacker and No. 8 player in Ohio.

Eichenberg is OSU's first pledge since Day was announced as the 25th head football coach. Despite the change, Ohio State has continuity on the staff, and the familiarity with strength coach Mickey Marotti, football operations director Brian Voltolini, player personnel director Mark Pantoni and player development director Ryan Stamper is key in recruiting. In Eichenberg's recruitment, Pantoni was among OSU's key cogs.

Harrison To Announce On Early Signing Day

On Dec. 19, the Zach Harrison saga is expected to end. The five-star defensive end from Lewis Center (Ohio) Olentangy

ASK AN ANALYST

With Lettermen Row's Jeremy Birmingham

Ohio State has always been a powerhouse program, but how much has Urban Meyer's tenure as head coach elevated recruiting to the next level?

"His reputation around the country was so grandiose with the two national championships at Florida and winning the way he did – not just winning championships, but putting together super teams. That 2008 Florida team is one of the best teams of all time. That sort of history and reputation followed him to Columbus immediately. He walked in on Nov. 27 and Ohio State had nothing working in recruiting, and he finished with the fifth-ranked class in the country in a two-month stretch.

"So his legacy and reputation played into it, but also the strength of his systems and having (director of player personnel) Mark Pantoni and those guys – that was a game-changer. It definitely changed Ohio State and how they were viewed nationally, as opposed to a team that was recruiting in Ohio and then finds one or two guys around the country that are willing to make a move. Now you had everyone in the country willing to be a part of it. Obviously, that even went further in a positive direction for Ohio State after the uptick in NFL production started to happen. It's transcended normalcy."

On that note, Meyer hands off the program to second-year offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach Ryan Day. What stands out about Day as a recruiter? How does his hire help the Buckeyes as they try to keep their classes of 2019 and 2020 intact?

"There's two things that really work in Ryan's favor. No. 1, he's familiar with Urban's program, so he works from the best parts of that. He's not changing much of the infrastructure, which is really important. No. 2, he may not have the national championships and the long history of being a head coach, but he's an extremely personable guy. He's extremely real. He's a player's coach. He's a guy that almost never talks to kids about football. I know for some people that sounds a little counterintuitive, but he has a very unique ability to flip a switch – to go from being a football coach to being a regular guy.

"He's 39 years old. He's a husband, three young kids. He gets people and that's definitely going to be a strength, but beyond that, he can go into a living room and tell people he worked with Urban Meyer, Chip Kelly and in the NFL. All of this stuff, by the time you're 39 years old – his résumé is not unimpressive.

"It stabilizes the 2019 class, almost immediately. You've seen nobody from that class decommitment at this point. Sure, there's a few people that are maybe looking in other directions and might take some visits elsewhere, but nobody's immediately reacted and said, 'Oh, that's off the board for me now.' The real challenge is going to be how that works into January. I think it's interesting. Right now, of the Ohio State commitments, I think I have 12 of them are still planning on signing on Dec. 19 and that's incredible, absolutely incredible, because most of those kids have no idea who their position coach will be. For the kids that are holding off on making that decision and for the ones that are unsure if they're going to sign, that's the only holdup.

"Nobody is really looking at Ryan Day and saying, 'I don't want to play for him.' But for kids and their families who have gotten close to Urban Meyer and gotten close to position coaches, and now those are gone or potentially gone, you can understand a little bit of reluctance. But the 2020 class – no ill will meant towards the guys that decommitted, but there's so much time before those kids can sign that they can be replaced, most of them. So Ohio State, while they certainly don't want to see any attrition from that class or any other class, they aren't really worried about the 2020 class – with the exception of one or two guys."

Staff changes are natural in coaching transitions, but Day reportedly plans to keep four of Meyer's cabinet together. Pantoni, who has been at Ohio State since 2012, is among them. How critical is Pantoni's return? Elsewhere, what about the potential continuity on the staff?

"Obviously, that's important. But what I think Urban Meyer has shown, through his entire career, is that nobody's ever committed to a program that Urban Meyer is running because of the assistant coaches. It's just never happened. You commit because of Urban Meyer. You commit because of the program. You commit because of (head strength and conditioning coach) Mick Marotti, (director of player development) Ryan Stamper and Mark Pantoni. All those support staff guys are going to be there. The new question is how do you get kids to commit to Ryan Day? Because he's the one that's going to be there. And how do you get Ryan Day to tell a kid, 'Trust me, I'm going to hire somebody. If we don't keep your position coach, I'm going to hire someone that's better.' That's the challenge. It's about getting that trust.

"Most of these kids in the 2019 class already know Ryan Day, so they don't feel that uncertainty, but they want to know what they're walking into and you can't blame them for that. But ultimately, Ohio State replaced three assistant coaches last year. Nobody left the class, so it's obviously a little different when you're replacing Urban Meyer and potentially three assistants. So I wouldn't be surprised if the Buckeyes need to refresh five or six coaches on the staff, but the ones that are going to stay are the best, and the ones that aren't are going to be a part of how Urban Meyer and Ryan Day built the system. They're going to be the best of them."

OSU Football Verbal Commitments

Players in the class of 2019 who have issued verbal commitments to play football at Ohio State. (Star ratings reflect 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Jordan Battle	S	6-1	187	★★★★	Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas
Steele Chambers	ATH	6-2	215	★★★★	Roswell (Ga.) Blessed Trinity Catholic
Marcus Crowley	RB	6-1	200	★★★	Jacksonville (Fla.) Trinity Christian
Tommy Eichenberg	ILB	6-3	225	★★★★	Cleveland St. Ignatius
Cormontae Hamilton	TE	6-2	263	★★★	Memphis (Tenn.) Whitehaven
Ronnie Hickman	S	6-1	200	★★★★	Wayne (N.J.) DePaul Catholic
Ryan Jacoby	OT	6-5	270	★★★★	Mentor, Ohio
Dwan Mathis	QB	6-4	197	★★★★	Oak Park, Mich.
Harry Miller	C	6-4	310	★★★★★	Buford, Ga.
Doug Nester	OG	6-5½	295	★★★★	Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley
Noah Potter	DE	6-5	250	★★★★	Mentor, Ohio
Bryson Shaw	S	6-2	175	★★★	Potomac (Md.) Bullis School
Cade Stover	OLB	6-5	235	★★★★	Lexington, Ohio
Jameson Williams	WR	6-1½	169	★★★★	St. Louis Cardinal Ritter
Garrett Wilson	WR	6-0½	181	★★★★★	Austin (Texas) Lake Travis
Craig Young	ATH	6-4	200	★★★	Fort Wayne (Ind.) Wayne

Players in the class of 2020 who has issued verbal commitments to play football at Ohio State. (Star ratings reflect 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Darvon Hubbard	RB	6-0	200	★★★★	Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral
Paris Johnson	OT	6-7	285	★★★★★	Cincinnati St. Xavier
Jack Miller	QB	6-4	210	★★★★	Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral
Jaxon Smith-Njigba	WR	6-1	188	★★★★	Rockwall, Texas
Luke Wypler	C	6-3½	285	★★★★	Montvale (N.J.) St. Joseph Regional

Orange is slated to make a decision at the start of the early signing period, issuing his letter of intent to one of three finalists without holding a ceremony. Those include Ohio State, Michigan and Penn State.

Harrison is the 247Sports composite's No. 4 overall prospect, No. 1 strongside defensive end and No. 1 player in Ohio for 2019. He has been at the top of the Buckeyes' board in this class for years, drawing out his recruitment after an initial announcement was scheduled to be made Aug. 14, Harrison's birthday.

Between the month-long investigation at OSU involving Meyer and Harrison's overall indecisiveness, he pushed his decision back until after Olentangy Orange's season finished. On Aug. 24, BSB spoke exclusively with Harrison after Orange's 27-26 win over Columbus Worthington Kilbourne. Harrison, at the time, said he was torn between his three finalists.

During the fall, Harrison took three unofficial visits. He started at Penn State for the Nittany Lions' 27-26 loss to the Buckeyes on Sept. 29, heading to Michigan for his second trip for the Wolverines' 38-13 rout of Wisconsin on Oct. 13 and then taking in OSU's 36-31 victory against Nebraska on Nov. 3. Harrison, who rarely does interviews, has not spoken in detail about those trips publicly – he addressed reporters during his All-American jersey presentation at Olentangy Orange on Oct. 31 but was brief in answering questions.

Zach Harrison

BSB will not go to press again until January. In the meantime, however, stick with BuckeyeSports.com – a free service for print subscribers – for updates as available. The BSB Forum will have a live thread for early signing day on Dec. 19, following the faxed letters of intent as Ohio State receives them and keeping tabs on Harrison's recruitment as it reaches its conclusion.

Coaching Staff Racks Up Miles For 2019 Class

With Day in place, Ohio State's assistant coaches and support staffers kept the ball rolling after Meyer's retirement went public. The Buckeyes started in 2019, heading all across America to check on commitments and targets as time winds down in the current cycle.

Those included visits between Wayne (N.J.) DePaul Catholic four-star safety commit Ronnie Hickman (6-1, 200) and defensive coordinator Greg Schiano on Dec. 3; St. Louis Cardinal Ritter College Prep four-star wide receiver commit Jameson Williams (6-1½, 169) with wide receivers coach Brian Hartline on Dec. 3; Mentor, Ohio, four-star offensive tackle commit Ryan Jacoby (6-5, 270) with Day and offensive line coach Greg Studrawa on Dec. 4; Mentor four-star defensive end commit Noah Potter (6-5½, 250) with defensive line coach Larry Johnson on Dec. 4; and Austin (Texas) Lake Travis five-star wide receiver commit Garrett Wilson (6-0½, 181) with Day and Hartline on Dec. 6.

Committed since March 1 and April 16, respectively, Jacoby and Potter are cornerstones of OSU's class. Despite the sudden change ahead of officially visiting Ohio State the weekend of Dec. 7-9 with other priority pledges and top targets, the pair of top-350 recruits remained on board with the Buckeyes.

"They were a little taken aback, but I don't think anything changes," Mentor coach Steve Trivisonno told BSB. "They both have their visit this weekend (Dec. 7-9) – they both have their official visit – and that will be the opportunity for Coach Day to show everybody what he is and show those recruits. So I don't anticipate anything changing.

"Obviously, you can't say a million percent or anything. But this will be a big weekend for them and a big weekend for Coach Day. I think he's got a lot of his top recruits coming in this weekend, and that becomes a big one for him."

Jacoby and Potter emerged from the in-home visits with positive messages on Twitter, each sharing their excitement for

Continued On Page 40

4-Star OL Nester Waiting Until February To Sign

Continued From Page 39

early enrollment in Columbus as they head to campus in January.

Hours after OSU AD Gene Smith and Meyer introduced Day, Day and Studrawa spent the night in Springfield, Ill., for Sacred Heart Griffin three-star offensive tackle target Nick Broeker. Day and Studrawa watched Broeker, who has been committed to Ole Miss since June 14, courtside as Sacred Heart Griffin's basketball team beat Springfield, 79-68.

The 6-6, 288-pounder took an official visit to Oxford, Miss., from Dec. 7-9 but began an official visit to Ohio State on Dec. 10. Broeker is the 247Sports composite's No. 709 overall prospect, No. 55 offensive tackle and No. 11 player in Illinois for 2019.

Along with Wilson on Dec. 6, the Buckeyes checked on Buford, Ga., five-star center commit Harry Miller as Day visited in-home. The 6-4, 300-pounder still plans to sign early on Dec. 19.

Also in Georgia, OSU was slated to see Roswell (Ga.) Blessed Trinity Catholic four-star athlete commit Steele Chambers (6-2, 215) who remains on track for inking a letter of intent during the early signing period. Day and running backs coach Tony Alford were reportedly set to make that Dec. 13 in-home visit – 11 days after Alford checked in Dec. 2.

Day and Alford swung south to Florida on Dec. 6 to Jacksonville for Crowley (6-1, 200). Crowley and Wilson were among the pledges to publicly reaffirm their statuses Dec. 4 when they were made aware of Meyer's retirement.

According to reports, linebackers coach Billy Davis saw Clayton (Ohio) Northmont four-star outside linebacker target and Iowa commit Jestin Jacobs (6-3, 210) on Dec. 3.

Schiano, cornerbacks coach Taver Johnson and co-defensive coordinator Alex Grinch visited Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) St. Thomas Aquinas four-star safety commit Jordan Battle (6-1, 187); Johnson visited Owings Mills (Md.) McDonogh School four-star defensive tackle target D'Von Ellies (6-2, 280); and offensive coordinator/tight ends coach Kevin Wilson visited Fort Wayne (Ind.) Wayne three-star athlete commit Craig Young (6-4, 200) and Memphis (Tenn.) Whitehaven three-star tight end commit Cormontae Hamilton (6-2, 263) on Dec. 4.

Ohio State checked on Potomac (Md.) Bullis three-star safety commit Bryson Shaw (6-2, 175) with Grinch on Dec. 6. Dennis saw Oak Park, Mich., four-star quarterback commit Dwan Mathis (6-6, 205) on Dec. 7. Stover (6-5, 235) spent the night of Dec. 9 meeting with Day and Davis.

A Look Back At Recruiting From The Pages Of BSB

30 Years Ago – 1988

As a three-year starter for Middletown, Ohio, defensive back Carlos Brooks (6-1, 185) stood out to Ohio State and others in the 1989 class.

"He is very quick and an extremely intense football player," national recruiting expert Tom Lemming said. "There are some great ones in the state this year, and you would have to say that Carlos is among the best of them."

Along with the Buckeyes, Brooks was looking closely at Georgia Tech, Michigan State, Syracuse and Tennessee.

25 Years Ago – 1993

From the same school as Robert Smith in Euclid, Ohio, Pepe Pearson was on Ohio State's radar as perhaps the next best running back to come out of the in-state program and become a Buckeye.

Smith, who was nearing the completion of his rookie season in the NFL with the Minnesota Vikings, had been in contact with Pearson (5-10½, 175) as he went through the recruiting process with OSU.

"He's given me a lot of advice about what to look for and be aware of during recruiting," Pearson said of Smith. "I really appreciate everything Robert has done for me."

20 Years Ago – 1998

Paterson, N.J., product and safety commitment Ziyier Walker (6-1, 195) remained on track for enrollment at Ohio State – although his arrival originally had been delayed. He attended at Fork Union (Va.) Military Academy, but appeared ready for Columbus as early as the spring of 1999.

"He's done OK," said Fork Union head coach John Shuman. "The problem we had on the defensive side of the ball was we had nine safeties. We rotated them in and out. With that many, you can't go with a starter and let eight sit around. When he got in there, he played pretty well."

Walker registered four interceptions and two sacks. According to Shuman, Walker built a reputation as a big hitter and aggressive defender ahead of joining the Buckeyes.

15 Years Ago – 2003

A pair of Ohio State 2004 targets and a 2005 commitment attended The Game as guests of Michigan when Cleveland Glenville defensive back Ted Ginn (6-1, 170) and Toledo Rogers wide receiver Fred Davis (6-4, 210) joined Cleveland Glenville athlete Jamario O'Neal (6-1, 190) in Ann Arbor, Mich., at Michigan Stadium on Nov. 22.

Ginn and Davis recapped the visit with BSB, updating their recruitments as they entered the home stretch two months from National Signing Day in February.

Ginn's slate included trips to Pittsburgh (Nov. 29), Ohio State (Dec. 5), Southern California (Dec. 12) and Miami (Fla.) (Dec. 19) before he approached his Jan. 3 announcement at the U.S. Army All-American Bowl.

"As I look at it, my visits are my favorites," Ginn said. "Nothing is going to change. I'm just going to go and see how I like it, then come home and sit down and talk about it."

Davis had taken two of his five official visits to Oklahoma (Sept. 19) and USC (Oct. 31) with Ohio State (Dec. 5) and Miami (Fla.) (Dec. 19) with Ginn on deck.

"I don't know really," Davis said of favorites. "I liked USC, but I haven't been everywhere. I'm really open right now."

10 Years Ago – 2008

Ohio State did not wait long to let Cincinnati St. Xavier 2010 offensive tackle Matt James (6-7, 260) know its coaching staff thought he was a top-tier talent, offering the massive lineman on Sept. 1 and keeping contact throughout his season.

"I was honored," James told BSB. "I also know I have to keep working hard, but I was honored."

He held offers from Cincinnati, Duke, Michigan, Notre Dame, Stanford and Tennessee at the end of his junior campaign. After tightening his bonds with offensive coordinator/offensive line coach Jim Bollman and recruiting coordinator/tight ends coach John Peterson, James considered the Buckeyes a favorite among the growing list of options.

Five Years Ago – 2013

Two months prior to February's National Signing Day, Paramus (N.J.) Catholic five-star cornerback Jabrill Peppers (6-0, 205) remained a Michigan commitment but admitted that he was considering official visits elsewhere with Ohio State among his potential options.

"I am still 100 percent committed to the University of Michigan, and that is the place where I want to go to college," Peppers said in a statement released through Paramus Catholic head coach Chris Partridge. "With the rumors about (Wolverines head coach Brady) Hoke possibly not being there, I need to make sure that I have seen other places in case the University of Michigan decides to go in a different direction."

As the No. 4 overall player in the 2014 recruiting class, Peppers was U-M's top-rated pledge. Prior to his Michigan commitment in May, he considered Alabama, LSU, Notre Dame, Ohio State, Penn State and Stanford. Peppers took an unofficial visit to see the Buckeyes in April.

One Year Ago – 2017

On the field and on the trail, No. 5 Ohio State entered its Dec. 29 matchup against No. 8 Southern California with momentum. To go with the Buckeyes' four straight wins, capped by a 27-21 win over then-No. 4 Wisconsin in the Big Ten Championship Game, they rolled into their postseason game vs. the Trojans after securing four commitments for the 2019 recruiting class.

OSU picked up pledges from Jacksonville (Fla.) Trinity Christian Academy four-star safety Tyreke Johnson (6-1, 191); Austin (Texas) Lake Travis three-star quarterback Matthew Baldwin (6-2½, 195); St. Louis Christian Brothers College four-star wide receiver Kamryn Babb (6-1, 189); and Pocatello (Idaho) Highland four-star defensive tackle Tommy Togiai (6-3, 290) from Dec. 5-12. The surge bolstered OSU's group to 21 members.

Longtime 2019 Commit Delays Signing Date

While a majority – if not all – of Ohio State's 2019 class reaffirmed its commitment, Huntington (W.Va.) Spring Valley four-star offensive guard Doug Nester was an exception. At his high school Dec. 5 for an All-American Bowl jersey presentation, Nester told reporters he was "committed right now" but planned to take official visits elsewhere in January and enroll in June. For the past year, Nester – the Buckeyes' longest-tenured pledge since Aug. 5, 2017 – had been on track to enroll at OSU in January.

"That's very important," Nester said of weighing all options. "I just feel like with all this happening, I really have to go back and check all the boxes off. I'm going to take my officials to different places and see what's out there."

The 6-6½, 314-pounder took multiple unofficial visits to Columbus – the most recent coming Nov. 24 for The Game – but becomes the only commit in the current cycle whose future is publicly uncertain. Nester took his official visit to campus the weekend of Dec. 7-9 with the majority

Recruiting Updates

Those Buckeye Sports Bulletin readers who follow football recruiting closely should not only monitor the regular stories on our BuckeyeSports.com website daily but also check out the site's Forum, where recruiting tidbits are frequently found.

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of the 2019 class and told Bill Kurelic of 247Sports that he enjoyed it while his parents loved it.

Nester plans to officially visit Georgia, Penn State and Virginia Tech in January. As of now, those dates remain unsettled.

"He's got a lot of big decisions to make for a kid that's 18 years old," said Spring Valley coach Brad Dingess. "The great thing about it is that he's put himself in a situation to where he doesn't have to make something in a hurry. He's going to ride this thing out and enjoy the process. He's a smart kid and he's got great parents, so he'll make the best decision for him."

Nester is the 247Sports composite's No. 92 overall prospect, No. 5 offensive guard and No. 2 player in West Virginia. While his senior season ended Dec. 1 with a 31-7 loss to Martinsburg, W.Va., in the AAA state final, he heads to the All-American Bowl on Jan. 5 at the Alamodome in San Antonio.

2020 Class Suffers Pair Of Decommitments

Ohio State worked well to keep the 2019 class together. However, the Buckeyes' lacked the same luck in the 2020 class, where two commits dropped out within a day of each other.

The first hit came when Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy four-star cornerback Lejond Cavazos (6-0, 186) took to Twitter the night of Dec. 4 – hours after the news became official of Day's promotion and Meyer's retirement.

"First off, I would like to start by thanking Coach Urban Meyer and the rest of his staff for believing in me and giving me an opportunity to play the sport I love at the next level," Cavazos' tweet read. "Playing for Coach Meyer has always been a dream of mine that I always wanted to fulfill. I wish him nothing but the best and everlasting success. I would also like to thank Buckeye Nation for supporting me throughout my junior season.

"This has been put into consideration a couple of times and most definitely wasn't an easy decision to make. But with God, my family, and friends, I would like to announce that I am de-committing from The Ohio State University. tOSU will remain a top school of mine, but I feel like I need to explore my options and take a closer look at other Universities. Please respect my decision as this was not an easy choice for me to make."

Marietta, Ga., four-star offensive tackle Jake Wray (6-5, 290) followed Cavazos less than 24 hours later. He also announced a decommitment, but like Cavazos, kept the Buckeyes among his top choices in round two of going through the recruiting process. Wray's older brother, Max, is a freshman offensive tackle in Columbus this season.

"I want to wish Coach Meyer the best on his retirement," Jake Wray's tweet read. "Being recruited by him has been an honor. Building a relationship with Coach Meyer, Coach Stud and the staff at OSU has meant so much to me. My family & I are thankful for their time and investment in me as a player and student. This has been a challenging decision, especially with my brother being on the team, but committing early had only one big loop hole for me – no major coaching changes. As the programs adjusts, I need to de-commit and re-evaluate my recruitment. Ohio State is still one of my top schools. Buckeye Nation you are the best and I want to thank you for your support. This has not been easy and I ask you please respect my decision. No interviews at this time."

With the departures, OSU's star-studded class of 2020 falls to five members. Those include Cincinnati St. Xavier five-star offensive tackle Paris Johnson (6-7, 285), Montvale (N.J.) St. Joseph Regional four-star center Luke Wypler (6-3½, 285) and Rockwall, Texas, four-star wide receiver Smith-Njigba (6-1, 188). Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral's four-star duo of quarterback Jack Miller (6-4, 210) and running back Darvon Hubbard (6-0, 200) are also aboard.

CJ Cavazos, the father of Lejond, told BSB the night of Dec. 4 that the family "continues to love" Ohio State. CJ Cavazos added that Day contacted them shortly after Meyer's retirement became official, noting that Day's "energy and love" for the program left them with a positive impression of what OSU's new head coach will do.

According to reports, Schiano stopped in Bradenton on Dec. 5 to see Cavazos. Cavazos is the 247Sports composite's No. 183 overall prospect, No. 16 cornerback and No. 30 player in Florida for 2020.

Wray, on the other hand, has kept quiet since he announced his decommitment. He was the Buckeyes' first pledge for 2020 after he announced his original decision April 23.

Wray is the 247Sports composite's No. 123 overall prospect, No. 16 offensive tackle and No. 13 player in Georgia for 2020. He and Cavazos were most recently in Columbus on Nov. 24, unofficially visiting Ohio State for The Game and seeing the Buckeyes beat the Wolverines.

Elsewhere in 2020, according to reports, OSU checked on several other commitments. Dennis dropped by Chaparral, where Miller and Hubbard go, while Taver Johnson stopped by Paris Johnson's high school Dec. 6.

Paris Johnson also had an on-campus sit-down with Meyer and Day on Dec. 8. Johnson remains committed, but he and his family have not commented on Meyer's retirement since Dec. 4.

"Paris and I want to thank Coach Meyer and his wife Shelley for their kindness and generosity during the recruitment process and beyond," Paris Johnson's mother, Monica, said in a statement published by Adam Clements of WKRC in Cincinnati. "They have made us truly feel like family. While we are disappointed in this morning's announcement, we are continuing to process the news. We have no further comment at this time. Thank you."

For the latest in Ohio State football recruiting, be sure to check out BuckeyeSports.com, free to all BSB print subscribers, daily. For simple sign-up information, see page 5.

Matta Honored By Buckeyes In Value City Return

Ohio State's 72-62 loss to Syracuse on Nov. 28 was anything but positive for the Buckeyes, as Chris Holtmann's team suffered its first setback of the 2018-19 campaign. However, the loss to the Orange was hardly the story of the night.

COURT REPORT
James Grega

During halftime, Ohio State honored former head coach Thad Matta, the first time he had been publicly acknowledged at Value City Arena since his departure in June of 2017.

Matta was welcomed back to center court with a rousing standing ovation from the crowd in attendance and gave a speech that was filled with jokes, thank-yous and tears as Matta soaked in the moment with his wife and children at his side.

After his speech, a banner bearing Matta's name was unveiled in the corner of the arena, next to his former player Evan Turner's Player of the Year memorial. The banner acknowledges Matta's Big Ten championships (5), Big Ten tournament championships (4) and Final Four appearances (2) as well as the No. 337, his number of wins as Ohio State's head coach, the most in program history.

KEVIN DYE

BUCKEYE LEGEND – Former Ohio State head coach Thad Matta (right) was joined by his wife and two daughters at Value City Arena on Nov. 28 as the Buckeyes honored Matta for his achievements in Columbus.

"I am a little bit in awe," Matta said. "Any gym or arena I have ever been in, I would always study who was up in the rafters. To have that honor tonight, I am really at a loss for words. I thought they would give me a rocking chair or golf balls. To me, I think that tonight is probably the greatest honor I have ever received."

Matta is just the second coach in school history to have a banner in the rafters, joining Hall of Famer Fred Taylor, who led the Buckeyes from 1958-76, guiding Ohio State to its lone national title in 1960.

The timing of the honor surprised some because Matta is less than two years removed from being fired by the university. Three of his former players, including senior guards C.J. Jackson and Joey Lane and junior forward Andre Wesson, are still playing for the Buckeyes.

However, it was noted that Holtmann and his family were the ones who advocated for Matta's return, and Matta said he was extremely grateful for the moment.

"I'll be honest with you, the one thing I said to myself was, they usually do this when a guy is dead," Matta said with a smile. "At least I get to see it. So I was excited from that standpoint. The transition has been so smooth. Chris is doing, not only the coaching, but running a program and (doing) the things we tried to do when we were here from bringing back former players, and what he has done in that regard is second to none. Everything he is doing here, I could not be happier."

Since his departure from Ohio State, Matta has not returned to coaching. He spent the week prior to his return to Columbus in the Bahamas and has spent time with his family. Now living in Indianapolis, Matta said he routinely makes trips to Pacers games when his former players are in town.

Matta, who is just 51 years old, still won't give a definitive answer on whether he will return to coaching. He did add, however,

2018-19 Ohio State Men's Basketball Statistics

8-1 Overall (2-0 Big Ten)
Statistics through Dec. 5

Player	G-GS	Min.-Avg.	FG-FGA	Pct.	3P-3PA	Pct.	FT-FTA	Pct.	Rebounds O-D	Rebounds T-Avg.	PF-FO	A	TO	BS	ST	Pts.-Avg.
Kaleb Wesson	9-8	208-23.1	40-77	.519	5-17	.294	44-61	.721	18-38	56-6.2	26-0	9	18	5	10	129-14.3
C.J. Jackson	9-9	256-28.4	33-86	.384	17-45	.378	31-39	.795	2-31	33-3.7	16-0	28	22	2	6	114-12.7
Duane Washington	9-1	166-18.4	28-65	.431	16-39	.410	7-10	.700	1-21	22-2.4	15-0	12	12	0	3	79-8.8
Luther Muhammad	8-7	230-28.8	25-54	.463	7-18	.389	11-19	.579	7-17	24-3.0	20-0	20	10	1	8	68-8.5
Keyshawn Woods	9-2	239-26.6	27-61	.443	8-23	.348	12-13	.923	5-25	30-3.3	20-0	26	10	2	6	74-8.2
Kyle Young	9-8	204-22.7	26-37	.703	1-3	.333	16-25	.640	18-28	46-5.1	20-0	11	6	3	6	69-7.7
Andre Wesson	9-8	237-26.3	24-49	.490	8-22	.364	13-17	.765	2-30	32-3.6	24-0	14	16	3	1	69-7.7
Jaedon LeDee	8-1	65-8.1	10-15	.667	0-0	.000	24-29	.828	7-14	21-2.6	10-0	2	6	5	1	44-5.5
Musa Jallow	9-1	129-14.3	12-24	.500	3-7	.429	13-16	.813	12-19	31-3.4	15-1	4	7	4	3	40-4.4
Justin Ahrens	4-0	30-7.5	3-8	.375	2-6	.333	0-0	.000	0-2	2-0.5	3-0	1	3	1	1	8-2.0
Joey Lane	5-0	21-4.2	3-4	.750	2-3	.667	0-0	.000	0-5	5-1.0	2-0	6	2	0	2	8-1.6
Danny Hummer	4-0	13-3.3	1-2	.500	0-0	.000	0-2	.000	0-1	1-0.3	3-0	1	3	0	2	2-0.5
TEAM									13-17	30-3.3			2			
Ohio State	**9**	**1,798**	**232-482**	**.481**	**69-183**	**.377**	**171-231**	**.740**	**85-248**	**333-37.0**	**174-1**	**134**	**117**	**26**	**49**	**704-78.2**
Opponents	**9**	**1,794**	**188-512**	**.367**	**51-189**	**.270**	**121-162**	**.747**	**95-196**	**291-32.3**	**202-9**	**79**	**125**	**25**	**37**	**548-60.9**

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Ohio State Falls To Syracuse For 1st Loss

Ohio State suffered its first loss of the 2018-19 season on Nov. 28 as Syracuse extended the Buckeyes' losing streak in the Big Ten/ACC Challenge to five. The Orange knocked off the Buckeyes, 72-62, in front of 16,962 at Value City Arena with Jim Boeheim's squad shooting 48.9 (22 of 45) percent from the floor while limiting Ohio State to just 32.6 percent (15 of 46) while battling the vaunted Syracuse zone defense.

Ohio State (6-1) led 31-29 at halftime, but the Buckeyes were outscored by 12 in the second half. Syracuse (4-2) entered the game against the Scarlet and Gray shooting just 23.3 percent from beyond the three-point arc. In front of a season-high crowd at Value City Arena, Boeheim's squad shot 11 of 24 (45.8 percent) from long range, far and away its best performance on the year.

"It had to get better, and maybe it got better than we thought," Boeheim said. "It was a tough place to play and a really tough team. We hadn't defended and we hadn't shot well, and after that bad start, we played pretty good."

The start Boeheim referenced was Ohio State's 9-2 run to open the game, during which the Buckeyes made their first four shots from the field. The Buckeyes carried a 16-9 lead into the second media timeout, but by halftime, Ohio State's lead was down to two.

Syracuse stormed out of the gates early in the second half, taking a 41-36 lead within the first five minutes before a Keyshawn Woods three-pointer and Kyle Young layup knotted the score at 41 with 14 minutes to play. From there, the Orange rattled off a 14-4 run and Ohio State went more than eight minutes without a made field goal, scoring only on free throws during that span.

The Syracuse lead swelled to as many as 12 twice before a late Ohio State run cut the gap to just six, 64-58, on a pair of C.J. Jackson free throws with under three minutes to play. Still trailing by that same margin less than a minute later, Young went up for a layup, which appeared to have already hit the glass before it was blocked by 7-2 center Paschal Chukwu.

"Goal tend. Goal tend. You mean the fact that it was a goal tend and wasn't called?" Ohio State coach Chris Holtmann said in response to a question about the play. "It was significant. A four-point game with two minutes to go? I am not saying we would have won or lost the game, but the ball did hit the glass first. We were making a little bit of a run there, but you have to be tough enough to respond to that."

While Holtmann was clearly frustrated with the non-call, he admitted that his team didn't give enough effort on the defensive end to win the game, as Syracuse put together its best shooting performance of the season.

"The most disappointing thing tonight was our defensive effort," Holtmann said. "I just think in general, top to bottom, we just weren't as active as we needed to be. I take responsibility for that. We have to be way more active than we were. Give Syracuse credit, but we need to make it harder on them than we did."

The Orange were led by guard Tyus Battle, who scored 20 points on 6-of-10 shooting from the floor. Jackson paced the Buckeyes with 19 points on 4-of-14 shooting while going 9 of 12 from the stripe. Three players for Syracuse – Marek Dolezaj, Frank Howard and Bourama Sidibe –fouled out. Their fouls helped Ohio State go 26 of 35 (74.3 percent) from the line while Syracuse was a sharp 17 of 19 (89.5 percent).

– James Grega

Syracuse 72, Ohio State 62

Nov. 28, 2018
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio

	1	2		F
Syracuse (4-2)	**29**	**43**	**–**	**72**
Ohio State (6-1)	**31**	**31**	**–**	**62**

Syracuse	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
Brissett	25	4-7	4-4	1-3	3	3	14
Hughes	40	6-14	2-3	1-2	3	3	18
Chukwu	18	0-1	0-0	2-5	0	4	0
Howard	24	3-8	0-0	0-1	1	5	8
Battle	40	6-10	7-8	0-3	2	3	20
Carey	15	0-1	4-4	0-1	3	0	4
Dolezaj	26	3-4	0-0	0-3	1	5	8
Sidibe	12	0-0	0-0	0-3	0	5	0
Totals	**200**	**22-45**	**17-19**	**5-24**	**13**	**28**	**72**

Percentages: FG: 48.9%. **FT:** 89.5%. **3-point goals:** 11-24 (Brissett 2-4, Hughes 4-9, Howard 2-6, Battle 1-2, Carey 0-1, Dolezaj 2-2). **Team rebounds:** 4. **Blocked shots:** 3 (Brissett, Hughes, Chukwu). **Turnovers:** 13 (Brissett 3, Hughes 3, Battle 3, Chukwu, Carey, Dolezaj, TEAM). **Steals:** 1 (Battle).

Ohio State	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
A. Wesson	36	2-7	0-0	0-4	2	4	4
Young	35	3-6	6-9	2-2	0	2	12
K. Wesson	24	1-8	11-14	5-3	0	4	13
Muhammad	29	2-3	0-0	1-3	6	3	5
Jackson	36	4-14	9-12	0-4	2	1	19
Jallow	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Washington	10	1-4	0-0	0-1	0	0	3
LeDee	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Woods	26	2-4	0-0	0-3	2	3	6
Totals	**200**	**15-46**	**26-35**	**11-20**	**12**	**17**	**62**

Percentages: FG: 32.6%. **FT:** 74.3%. **3-point goals:** 6-22 (A. Wesson 0-3, K. Wesson 0-1, Muhammad 1-2, Jackson 2-8, Washington 1-4, Woods 2-4). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 1 (A. Wesson). **Turnovers:** 11 (Muhammad 4, A. Wesson 3, Jackson 2, Washington, TEAM). **Steals:** 5 (Young 2, K. Wesson, Jackson, Woods).
Officials: Eppley, Simpson, Boroski. **A:** 16,962.

Buckeyes Win Big Ten Opener Vs. Gophers

Ohio State got back in the win column Dec. 2 and collected its first conference win less than a week after takings its first loss of the year.

The Buckeyes defeated Minnesota, 79-59, at home after dropping a 72-62 contest to Syracuse on Nov. 28. Ohio State moved to 7-1 (1-0 Big Ten) while the Golden Gophers dropped to 6-2 (0-1) on the year.

Six different Buckeyes scored in double figures against the Gophers, including junior forward Andre Wesson, who posted a team- and career-high of 16 points in the victory.

"A lot of the shots that we got were our teammates setting us up and putting us in the right positions," Wesson said. "Coach put us in the right places, so we were just ready."

Wesson led the team in scoring while his younger brother, Kaleb, chipped in 15 points in 17 minutes of action. Kaleb Wesson's minutes decreased significantly after he picked up two quick fouls in the first half. However he started the second half by scoring nine of Ohio State's first 11 points in under five minutes of action.

The first half had Ohio State leading by as many as 19, 26-7, thanks to a 21-2 run sparked by an unlikely source.

Sophomore Musa Jallow, who entered the game averaging just 3.0 points per game this season, scored all 11 of his points against the Gophers in the first half including nine in the run. He connected on all four of his shot attempts from the floor and added a pair of technical free throws after Minnesota's Michael Hurt was whistled for a flagrant foul.

Jallow, who earned extended minutes due to an injury to freshman Luther Muhammad, credited his teammates for his offensive performance.

"I was just ready to play," he said. "Guys set me up to be successful and I just took it from there. You hate to see a player go down, but it is next man up."

Graduate transfer Keyshawn Woods started in place of the injured Muhammad but was held scoreless in 29 minutes of action.

Ohio State carried a 39-28 lead into halftime after Minnesota went on a 9-0 run just before the half. The spurt was halted when Andre Wesson completed an old-fashioned three-point play to put the Buckeyes back up 11 less than 30 seconds before the break.

His brother took over from there with his early second-half spurt, as Ohio State led by as many as 23 in the second half and never let the Gophers get any closer than nine in the final 20 minutes, that coming on the first bucket of the half.

In addition to the Wessons and Jallow, senior C.J. Jackson (11), sophomore Kyle Young (10) and freshman Duane Washington (10) all scored in double figures.

Ohio State's perimeter defense also played a role in the victory. Minnesota failed to convert on any of its three-point attempts, going 0 for 13 from behind the arc.

"It's something that we emphasized the whole week, especially with the amount of threes (11 of 24) that Syracuse hit and the amount of shots that got them rolling," Andre Wesson said. "We went into the (Minnesota) game knowing that they had some shooters that were capable of doing that, so that was the emphasis all week."

The Buckeyes were 7 of 17 from long range and also held a 42-33 edge on the boards, led by Young's eight rebounds.

The Gophers were led by guard Amir Coffey, who scored a game-high 19 points. Dupree McBrayer chipped in 13.

– James Grega

Ohio State 79, Minnesota 59

Dec. 2, 2018
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio

	1	2		F
Minnesota (6-2, 0-1 B1G)	**28**	**31**	**–**	**59**
Ohio State (7-1, 1-0 B1G)	**39**	**40**	**–**	**79**

Minnesota	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
Murphy	24	2-6	3-6	2-5	1	4	7
Oturu	25	3-4	3-7	2-5	0	3	9
McBrayer	27	5-9	3-4	0-2	2	3	13
Coffey	32	7-16	5-7	1-2	1	2	19
Kalscheur	22	0-3	0-0	0-1	0	4	0
Washington	23	0-6	1-2	1-2	3	1	1
Omersa	15	1-1	1-2	1-0	0	1	3
Stull	8	0-0	0-0	0-2	0	0	0
Stockman	15	2-5	0-0	1-2	0	1	4
Hurt	9	0-1	3-4	0-1	0	1	3
Totals	**200**	**20-51**	**19-32**	**11-22**	**7**	**20**	**59**

Percentages: FG: 39.2%. **FT:** 59.4%. **3-point goals:** 0-13 (Murphy 0-1, McBrayer 0-3, Coffey 0-3, Kalscheur 0-1, Washington 0-4, Hurt 0-1). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 4 (Oturu 3, Stockman). **Turnovers:** 12 (McBrayer 4, Coffey 2, Omersa 2, Murphy, Oturu, Washington, Stull). **Steals:** 2 (McBrayer, Kalscheur).

Ohio State	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
A. Wesson	34	6-10	2-2	0-4	2	2	16
Young	23	4-5	2-2	4-4	3	4	10
K. Wesson	17	5-10	5-8	2-4	1	4	15
Jackson	33	3-8	3-4	1-4	4	3	11
Woods	29	0-5	0-0	1-4	2	3	0
Jallow	19	4-4	2-2	2-2	0	5	11
Washington	22	4-11	0-0	1-2	3	3	10
Ahrens	6	0-2	0-0	0-1	0	1	0
Lane	3	0-1	0-0	0-2	0	0	0
LeDee	13	1-3	2-2	0-0	1	1	4
Hummer	1	1-1	0-0	0-1	0	0	2
Totals	**200**	**28-60**	**16-20**	**13-29**	**16**	**26**	**79**

Percentages: FG: 46.7%. **FT:** 80.0%. **3-point goals:** 7-17 (A. Wesson 2-5, K. Wesson 0-1, Jackson 2-3, Jallow 1-1, Washington 2-5, Ahrens 0-1, Lane 0-1). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** 1 (Young). **Turnovers:** 11 (Woods 3, K. Wesson 2, Jackson 2, A. Wesson, Young, Washington, TEAM). **Steals:** 5 (Young 2, K. Wesson, Jackson, Woods).
Officials: Pfeifer, Scirotto, Szelc. **A:** 11,668.

OSU Men's Basketball Signees

Players in the class of 2019 who have signed national letters of intent to play basketball at Ohio State. (Star ratings reflect 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
DJ Carton	PG	6-1	189	★★★★★	Bettendorf, Iowa
Alonzo Gaffney	SF	6-9	190	★★★★	Wolfeboro (N.H.) Brewster Academy
EJ Liddell	PF	6-7	220	★★★★	Belleville (Ill.) West

that he is enjoying his time away from the court.

"I am still unwinding from the 17 years or whatever it was that I was a head coach," he said. "I am completely at peace. I found myself rooting so hard last Saturday for Ohio State in the Michigan game. We don't miss games. Basketball is a little different. I didn't see those guys as much as I wanted to last year, but we had a great run here."

Even though Matta has been gone less than two years from the Ohio State sideline, that has still given him time to reflect on everything he accomplished in Columbus, something he said he didn't quite grasp until his time with the Buckeyes was over.

"When you're coaching, you remember the losses. When you're not coaching, you remember the wins," he said. "When you're coaching, you don't ever have time to stop and smell the roses. It is always on to the next thing."

As for what is next, Matta doesn't appear to be in a hurry to return to the bench. He was reportedly offered a job at Georgia in the offseason but turned it down, saying it wasn't the right fit. He also said that physically, he is feeling better than he has in years.

"I am seeing a little bit of a different side," Matta said. "You see so much more now. I wake up every morning and I say, 'Something has to go wrong because I feel too good.' I am not going to apologize to people for being happy. I feel really good."

Bucks Jump To No. 15 In AP Poll

Ohio State's loss to Syracuse, combined with a 20-point win over Minnesota on Dec. 2 resulted in the Buckeyes dropping from No. 16 in the Associated Press poll to No. 19.

The Buckeyes played just once the following week and defeated Illinois in Chicago at the United Center, 77-67. The win, combined with losses in front of them, resulted in the Buckeyes jumping up to No. 15 in the nation on Dec. 10, their highest ranking of the year.

Holtmann's team was one of five Big Ten teams to appear in the latest AP top-25 poll. Iowa checked in at No. 22, Wisconsin at No. 16, Michigan State at No. 9 and undefeated Michigan at No. 5.

At the time BSB went to press, Ohio State

Continued On Page 44

OSU Schedules Cleveland Bout With Mountaineers

Continued From Page 43

was in the middle of a 10-day layoff before taking on Bucknell at home Dec. 15. Games against the Bison, Youngstown State, UCLA and High Point are set to close out the 2018 calendar year before OSU hosts Michigan State at home on Jan. 5.

OSU-WVU Matchup Set For December 2019

Holtmann hasn't shied away from scheduling a grueling nonconference slate since arriving in Columbus, and that trend appears to be continuing.

According to a report from CBS Sports basketball reporter Jon Rothstein, the Buckeyes are set to take on West Virginia on Dec. 29, 2019, at Quicken Loans Arena in Cleveland, a venue that is home to the Cleveland Cavaliers of the NBA.

Ohio State last played at Quicken Loans Arena in the 2011 NCAA Tournament, defeating UT-San Antonio 75-46 in the first round before knocking off George Mason 98-66 in the second round.

The Buckeyes are already scheduled to host Cincinnati in the 2019 home opener as well as play Kentucky on Dec. 21, 2019, in Las Vegas as part of the CBS Sports Classic.

Ohio State last played West Virginia on the hardwood Jan. 23, 2010, a 71-62 road loss to the Mountaineers.

Frosh Briefly Sidelined With Shoulder Injury

Ohio State freshman guard Luther Muhammad suffered a dislocated shoulder in the Buckeyes' loss to Syracuse and sat out the win over Minnesota.

Despite his absence on the court, Muhammad was active from the bench, calling out defensive switches and being vocal throughout the game, much to the delight of his head coach.

"He's a beautiful kid," Holtmann. "I didn't see it. Us coaches, we are oblivious to everything. I didn't notice it, but that's Luther. He is a beautiful kid."

Muhammad didn't miss much time, returning to the floor against Illinois and starting in his first game back. He scored six points in 35 minutes of action while also wearing a brace on his right shoulder. Because Ohio State's medical staff didn't clear Muhammad until the Buckeyes arrived in Chicago, his usual No. 1 jersey didn't make the trip from Columbus to the Windy City.

Instead Muhammad wore a No. 12 jersey with no name. He finished 1 of 5 shooting and pulled down four rebounds in the win.

Ex-Buckeye Potter Chooses Badgers

It didn't take long for Micah Potter to return to the Big Ten.

Just more than two months after leaving the Ohio State basketball program, it was announced Potter would transfer to Wisconsin and enroll in classes in January.

Potter, who left the Buckeye basketball team just two days before the season opener, has two years of eligibility remaining.

"I have no bad blood with Coach Holtmann or Ohio State or anything like that," Potter said in the official statement on the Wisconsin website. "I just wasn't maximizing my potential. I wasn't maximizing my potential because I wasn't fitting, and I wasn't playing well. I was performing only in flashes. The style of play was not what fits my skill set."

A member of the 2016 recruiting class, Potter played his freshman year under Matta. He was relegated to a bench role last season under Holtmann after the emergence of then-freshman forward Kaleb Wesson.

Potter started 16 games in two seasons at Ohio State, averaging 4.1 points and 2.8 rebounds as a Buckeye. Ohio State announced his transfer from Columbus on Nov. 5. The announcement came after Potter scored a team-high 13 points in an exhibition win over UNC-Pembroke on Nov. 1.

Ohio State is set to play Wisconsin just once this season in the regular-season finale in Columbus on March 10. It is unlikely Potter would make the trip as ineligible players do not usually travel with the team for road games. Potter is expected to be eligible for the 2019-20 season.

Buckeyes Overcome Turnovers In Road Win

Playing its first game on the road in nearly a month, Ohio State relied on its most veteran player to help get a victory.

The Buckeyes (8-1, 2-0 Big Ten) got 18 points off the bench from graduate transfer Keyshawn Woods and survived a test from Illinois (2-7, 0-2), 77-67, in front of 5,285 at the United Center in Chicago on Dec. 5.

Chris Holtmann got 40 points from his bench as Musa Jallow tallied 11 points and nine rebounds, while Duane Washington added nine points and Jaedon LeDee added the other two from the reserves.

Ohio State overcame a season-high 19 turnovers, with Woods playing the entire second half while C.J. Jackson, who finished with eight points, played just five minutes in the second frame.

Woods' performance marked the second time this year he led the team in scoring. Both of those showings have come in a bench role on the road. He also scored a team-high 19 points in a Nov. 15 win over Creighton.

"He was great," Holtmann said of Woods in his postgame interview on 97.1 The Fan. "He steadies us so much in these types of situations. He makes good decisions and makes the right play at the right time, most of the time."

That Woods played the entire second half was likely due to the way the Buckeyes ended the first.

After taking a 30-22 lead with 7:48 to play in the opening frame on a jumper by Woods, Ohio State went scoreless for 5:19 of game time, during which the Illini rattled off a 9-0 run. Holtmann picked up a technical foul during that stretch after arguing that LeDee was fouled on a drive to the basket. LeDee, who has played sparingly in bigger games this season, was in for Kaleb Wesson, who picked up his second foul with 4:20 in the first 20 minutes and did not return until the start of the second half.

The Buckeyes trailed by as many as six at the end of the first half before the Illini took a 38-34 lead into the locker room.

"The last five minutes (of the first half) we just did not play very smart, including my technical," Holtmann said. "We just have to do things better and play smarter. We had some live ball turnovers. They play one of the more unique styles of college basketball, and you have to throw your offensive playbook out."

Ohio State settled down in the second half, going to Wesson on its first few possessions as the big man scored the Buckeyes' first four points out of the locker room. He finished with 13 points and seven boards in 22 minutes of action.

The Buckeyes ended up outscoring Illinois, 43-29, with Woods leading the way in the second half for the double-digit victory.

Freshman Luther Muhammad, who had missed Ohio State's win over Minnesota with a dislocated shoulder, returned to the starting lineup against the Illini but wore a different jersey number. Team doctors did not clear Muhammad to play until the team arrived in Chicago, and because Ohio State did not expect him to play, Muhammad's No. 1 jersey was not packed. He wore No. 12 against Illinois with no name on the back and finished with six points in 35 minutes of action.

Kipper Nichols and Trent Frazier paced Illinois with 18 points. The Illini shot just 32.8 percent from the floor (19 of 58), while the Buckeyes were warmer at 47.1 percent (24 of 51), including 57.1 percent in the second half (12 of 21).

– James Grega

Ohio State 77, Illinois 67

Dec. 5, 2018
United Center • Chicago

	1	2		F
Ohio State (8-1, 2-0 B1G)	**34**	**43**	**–**	**77**
Illinois (2-7, 0-2 B1G)	**38**	**29**	**–**	**67**

Ohio State	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
A. Wesson	22	0-2	4-4	1-2	1	4	4
Young	28	3-4	0-2	1-4	3	4	6
K. Wesson	22	5-8	3-5	2-5	1	3	13
Jackson	19	2-7	2-2	0-1	5	1	8
Muhammad	35	1-5	3-6	2-2	1	4	6
Jallow	24	3-6	4-6	2-7	0	1	11
Washington	14	4-8	0-0	0-3	1	1	9
Lane	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
LeDee	2	0-1	2-2	0-0	0	1	2
Woods	32	6-10	5-5	1-3	2	3	18
Totals	**200**	**24-51**	**23-32**	**10-28**	**14**	**22**	**77**

Percentages: FG: 47.1%. **FT:** 71.9%. **3-point goals:** 6-17 (A. Wesson 0-1, K. Wesson 0-1, Jackson 2-3, Muhammad 1-2, Jallow 1-2, Washington 1-5, Woods 1-3). **Team rebounds:** 2. **Blocked shots:** 4 (Young, K. Wesson, Jackson, Woods). **Turnovers:** 19 (Jackson 4, Young 3, Jallow 3, Woods 3, Muhammad 2, Washington 2, A. Wesson, K. Wesson). **Steals:** 8 (Muhammad 2, Washington 2, A. Wesson, Young, Jackson, Jallow).

Illinois	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
Nichols	29	6-11	4-5	1-4	1	4	18
Bezhanishvili	19	1-3	3-4	2-3	0	5	5
Frazier	25	6-16	4-4	2-3	3	5	18
Dosunmu	31	1-9	3-4	0-1	4	3	5
Jordan	34	1-3	3-4	1-3	2	1	6
Griffin	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Feliz	24	1-6	2-2	2-1	0	1	4
De La Rosa	6	1-2	2-2	0-1	0	3	4
Williams	28	2-8	2-2	0-6	0	4	7
Kane	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Totals	**200**	**19-58**	**23-27**	**10-24**	**10**	**26**	**67**

Percentages: FG: 32.8%. **FT:** 85.2%. **3-point goals:** 6-19 (Nichols 2-3, Bezhanishvili 0-1, Frazier 2-6, Dosunmu 0-3, Jordan 1-1, Feliz 0-1, Williams 1-4). **Team rebounds:** 4. **Blocked shots:** 2 (Bezhanishvili 2). **Turnovers:** 14 (Bezhanishvili 4, Nichols 3, Frazier 3, Jordan, Feliz, Kane, TEAM). **Steals:** 12 (Jordan 4, Nichols 2, Frazier 2, Dosunmu 2, Feliz 2).
Officials: Carstensen, Boroski, Wymer. **A:** 5,285.

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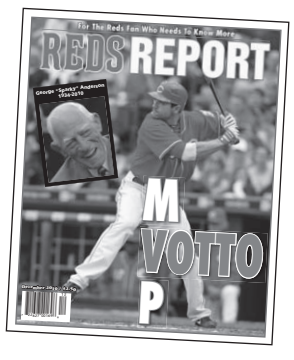

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McGuff: 2019 Class Can Make Instant Impact

After the Ohio State women's basketball team whiffed on its 2017 class, head coach Kevin McGuff and the Buckeyes recalibrated their recruiting efforts as they went into pivotal stretches for 2018 and 2019.

DOUBLE DRIBBLE
Garrett Stepien

As the latter group developed a deeper pool of talent, McGuff's coaching staff mapped out its plan accordingly. With five seniors departing at the end of the 2017-18 season, OSU signed three targets for 2018 – forward Aaliyah Patty, guard Janai Crooms and forward Dorka Juhasz – who are now playing key roles for the Buckeyes.

Those additions were key, but the 2019 class might have been even more important. When the early signing period came and went Nov. 14-21, the Buckeyes had inked all five of their commitments as they eventually took the cycle's No. 4 class as ranked by ESPN.

Canton (Ohio) McKinley guard Kierstan Bell (No. 6), Indianapolis North Central point guard Rikki Harris (No. 24), Middle Village (N.Y.) Christ the King wing Kaelynn Satterfield (No. 39) and Dublin (Ohio) Coffman guard Jacy Sheldon (No. 41) give OSU four of ESPN's top-50 prospects. Barcelona, Spain, forward Aixa Wone is Ohio State's only overseas addition and thus was not ranked by ESPN.

With signatures from all five throughout that week in November, McGuff could let out a sigh of relief. He talked about his prized pool of prospects – perhaps his best class yet – as he detailed how the 2019 cycle went according to plan.

"We kind of had aimed toward this year, 2019, because the class – locally, Midwest, nationally – was one of the best that we've seen in a long time, so we wanted to make sure that we had sufficient number of scholarships and opportunities for these kids to come in and impact us next year," McGuff told BSB. "I'm really happy. We signed some great players. I really like the kids, too, from a character standpoint. So I think we're adding the right type of people.

"I think that will allow us, from a talent standpoint, to have people look at us and think, 'Hey, that's a team that can compete for championships,' and that's what we're about here. I think we'll have the right kids with this class coming in to do that."

Sheldon (5-7) started the roll Nov. 19, 2017, giving McGuff a cornerstone to OSU's 2019 class. She then became one of the Buckeyes' biggest recruiters as they rallied their group together.

"She's a great, great kid," McGuff said of Sheldon. "A really high-character young woman. Plays incredibly hard. One of the things that I love about her is that every time we got involved with a really quote-unquote high-ranked player or talented player, she was always texting and calling, 'Anything I can do to get her here?' She wants to play with other great people.

"Some kids get nervous about that. She's excited about that because she wants Ohio State to be great and she wants to be a part of it. She got off to a great start. In her first game this year, she had 35 points vs. Reynoldsburg (a 71-64 win for Dublin Coffman on Nov. 23). That's a great team.

"She's got the speed, quickness and athleticism to be really good in our system. She

2018-19 Ohio State Women's Basketball Statistics

3-3 Overall (3-1 Home, 0-2 Away)
Statistics through Dec. 5

Player	G-GS	Min.-Avg.	FG-FGA	Pct.	3P-3PA	Pct.	FT-FTA	Pct.	Rebounds O-D	Rebounds T-Avg.	PF-FO	A	TO	BS	ST	Pts.-Avg.
Dorka Juhasz	6-6	163-27.2	30-71	.423	1-16	.063	15-24	.625	15-43	58-9.7	12-0	3	7	3	7	76-12.7
Carly Santoro	6-6	177-29.5	21-50	.420	5-23	.217	14-27	.519	12-20	32-5.3	10-0	12	16	1	5	61-10.2
Makayla Waterman	6-6	189-31.5	14-42	.333	1-7	.143	14-19	.737	18-24	42-7.0	18-1	12	21	5	5	43-7.2
Aaliyah Patty	6-0	117-19.5	20-38	.526	0-5	.000	0-3	.000	2-12	14-2.3	14-0	1	8	6	8	40-6.7
Carmen Grande	6-6	189-31.5	12-48	.250	6-16	.375	9-11	.818	4-14	18-3.0	17-0	28	22	0	9	39-6.5
Adreana Miller	6-6	115-19.2	10-34	.294	7-18	.389	7-9	.778	6-8	14-2.3	13-0	2	9	0	1	34-5.7
Najah Queenland	6-0	107-17.8	12-17	.706	0-2	.000	4-6	.667	5-14	19-3.2	13-0	7	8	0	9	28-4.7
Jensen Caretti	4-0	46-11.5	6-17	.353	3-9	.333	1-4	.250	2-5	7-1.8	1-0	2	3	2	0	16-4.0
Janai Crooms	6-0	98-16.3	8-28	.286	2-5	.400	4-12	.333	2-9	11-1.8	16-1	6	16	4	5	22-3.7
Ohio State	**6**	**1,201**	**133-345**	**.386**	**25-101**	**.248**	**68-115**	**.591**	**74-158**	**232-38.7**	**114-1**	**73**	**110**	**21**	**49**	**359-59.8**
Opponents	**6**	**1,200**	**136-337**	**.404**	**34-127**	**.268**	**85-112**	**.759**	**56-157**	**213-35.5**	**113-1**	**70**	**104**	**14**	**42**	**391-65.2**

OSU Women's Basketball Commitments & Signees

Players in the class of 2019 who have signed letters of intent to play basketball at Ohio State. (Star ratings reflect ESPN.com rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Stars	High School/Hometown
Kierstan Bell	G	6-1	★★★★★	Canton (Ohio) McKinley
Rikki Harris	G	5-11	★★★★★	Indianapolis North Central
Kaelynn Satterfield	W	6-0	★★★★★	Middle Village (N.Y.) Christ The King
Jacy Sheldon	G	5-7	★★★★★	Dublin (Ohio) Coffman
Aixa Wone	F	6-2	★★★	Pamplona, Spain

Players in the class of 2020 who have issued verbal commitments to play basketball at Ohio State. (Star ratings reflect ESPN.com rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Stars	High School
Gabby Hutcherson	F	6-2	★★★	Westerville (Ohio) South
Anyssa Jones	G	5-9	★★★	Westerville (Ohio) South

Plank's Cafe

Dorka Juhasz
Freshman Forward
Pecs, Hungary

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Ohio State Edges North Carolina, 76-69

Ohio State's 18-day layoff initially showed before 4,997 on Nov. 29 at Value City Arena. The Buckeyes went down double digits the first few minutes before clawing back to beat North Carolina, 76-69, in the ACC/Big Ten Challenge.

Graduate guard Carmen Grande gave OSU (2-2) a game-high 23 points on 7-of-15 shooting (3 of 6 from deep), grabbing eight rebounds and dishing six assists. Freshman forward Dorka Juhasz added a double-double, her third in four games, pitching in 18 points and bringing down a game-high 16 boards.

"We were hungry for a game," Juhasz said. "That's why I think this win came from that. We were ready. We just wanted to play."

The Tar Heels (5-3) jumped out to a 7-0 lead in the first 1:53 before senior forward Makayla Waterman's free throws at the 7:48 mark put the Buckeyes on the board.

By the 6:24 mark in the first, however, North Carolina had Ohio State in a 16-2 hole before Grande helped the Buckeyes to roar back on a 16-5 run to end the first quarter, starting on her three-pointer at the 5:52 point and culminating on freshman forward Aaliyah Patty's layup with 36 seconds left to trim the Tar Heels' lead to 21-18 at the break.

A Grande three-pointer tied the game 18 seconds into the second frame – the first of three ties in the quarter – but the Buckeyes didn't take a lead in the opening half.

Patty converted a layup to tie it for the last time of the half at 27-27 with 4:12 remaining. Then the Tar Heels took off on 6-2 spurt in the final 3:36 of the period as the Buckeyes trailed 33-29 at halftime.

When action resumed, OSU caught fire and took its first lead of the game. Graduate guard Carly Santoro got Ohio State started, scoring the Buckeyes' first five points on a layup and a foul shot before adding a put-back bucket on the ensuing possession to give OSU its 34-33 edge at the 7:51 point. Ohio State eventually ended the period on a 14-7 run in the final 4:21 to put the Buckeyes ahead of the Tar Heels by a bucket, 53-51, going into the fourth quarter.

Juhasz went down for a moment with left leg cramps after her layup with 1:46 left in the game gave Ohio State a 68-63 lead, but she returned moments later. North Carolina knocked down triples from Stephanie Watts and Paris Kea to close to 72-69 with 28 seconds remaining, but the Buckeyes salted away the win over the Tar Heels after a pair of free throws each from Grande and graduate guard Adreana Miller in the final 18 seconds.

Santoro rounded out her team's double-digit scorers with 11 points on 5-of-12 shooting, pulling down nine rebounds. North Carolina had five players in double figures, led by Watts with 15.

– Garrett Stepien

Ohio St. 76, North Carolina 69

Nov. 29, 2018
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio

	1	2	3	4	F
N. Carolina (5-3)	**21**	**12**	**18**	**18**	**69**
Ohio State (2-2)	**18**	**11**	**24**	**23**	**76**

North Carolina	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
Bailey	38	4-14	3-4	2-7	1	4	11
Bennett	36	4-12	1-1	2-1	2	1	10
Koenen	37	4-5	4-4	0-5	1	5	14
Watts	34	6-12	0-0	1-5	4	4	15
Kea	36	5-12	2-2	0-1	6	3	14
Jones	4	0-0	0-0	0-1	1	1	0
Murray	5	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Church	10	1-4	2-2	0-1	0	3	5
Totals	**200**	**24-59**	**12-13**	**6-22**	**15**	**21**	**69**

Percentages: FG: 40.7%. **FT:** 92.3%. **3-point goals:** 9-28 (Bailey 0-1, Bennett 1-5, Koenen 2-3, Watts 3-8, Kea 2-7, Church 1-4). **Team rebounds:** 2. **Blocked shots:** 3 (Bennett, Koenen, Watts). **Turnovers:** 17 (Bailey 4, Bennett 4, Koenen 3, Watts 3, Kea 2, Jones). **Steals:** 9 (Kea 6, Bennett, Koenen, Watts).

Ohio State	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
Juhasz	31	7-12	4-5	6-10	1	1	18
Waterman	33	3-11	2-2	4-4	1	5	8
Grande	37	7-15	6-7	2-6	6	3	23
Santoro	30	5-12	1-1	5-4	0	1	11
Miller	20	0-5	2-2	2-1	0	1	2
Crooms	17	2-7	0-0	0-2	1	0	5
Queenland	20	2-4	1-2	1-3	1	1	5
Patty	10	2-4	0-0	1-0	1	2	4
Totals	**200**	**28-70**	**16-19**	**21-30**	**11**	**14**	**76**

Percentages: FG: 40.0%. **FT:** 84.2%. **3-point goals:** 4-16 (Waterman 0-2, Grande 3-6, Santoro 0-4, Miller 0-2, Crooms 1-2). **Team rebounds:** None. **Blocked shots:** 2 (Juhasz, Waterman). **Turnovers:** 19 (Waterman 5, Grande 4, Santoro 4, Crooms 3, Juhasz, Queenland, Patty). **Steals:** 7 (Santoro 2, Queenland 2, Waterman, Crooms, Patty).
Officials: Napier, Zentz, Thompson. **A:** 4,997.

Buckeyes Beat In-State Bearcats, 69-56

After Ohio State downed North Carolina on Nov. 29, the Buckeyes picked up where they left off Dec. 1 with their 69-56 win over Cincinnati (5-4) before 4,825 at Value City Arena.

For the fourth time in five games, freshman forward Dorka Juhasz, who paced the Buckeyes (3-2) with 17 points and 13 rebounds, posted a double-double. Adreana Miller added 11 points on 4-of-7 shooting with a 3-for-4 clip from long range.

"We're showing that the progress is there," said fifth-year senior forward Makayla Waterman, who added nine rebounds and a career-high six assists to go with five points.

Graduate guard Carmen Grande, who pitched in a game-high eight assists, found Juhasz running baseline from the right wing for a layup 22 seconds in to put OSU on the board first.

UC's drought ended at the 8:39 mark on a layup and free throw after the foul for Sam Rodgers, who paced the visitors with 14 points, but OSU went on an 11-1 run, starting on Juhasz's layup at the 8:02 point and ending at Grande's three-pointer with 5:12 left in the first quarter. The Buckeyes eventually took a double-digit advantage, 26-15, into the first break.

UC kept pace with OSU to start the second quarter, scoring first on Iimar'i Thomas' layup 30 seconds in. Juhasz's jumper at the 8:36 mark provided Ohio State's response, but Thomas added a bucket at the 7:47 point to bring the game back into single digits at 28-19.

The Buckeyes began a 13-5 run to end the period on graduate guard Carly Santoro's 1-for-2 trip to the free-throw line at the 7:22 point, followed by Miller's triple at the 6:40 mark to make it 32-19. Waterman's layup and junior guard Jensen Caretti's free throw in the final minute gave Ohio State its largest lead of the first half at 41-24 going into halftime.

The Buckeyes started the second half where they left off, opening the third quarter on an 8-2 spurt to go up 49-26 for their largest lead all game at the 7:35 mark. UC clawed back, though, shortening the double-digit deficit to 55-42 with a 16-6 run through the period's final 7:07.

Caretti, who finished with nine points on 3-of-3 shooting and went 2 for 2 from downtown, gave OSU a jolt down the stretch with two triples in the final period. She hit the first at the 2:46 mark to make it 62-56 and another with 28 seconds left to cap the scoring.

Santoro chipped in 10 points despite 3-of-9 shooting.

Both teams struggled at the line. The Bearcats had a 57.9-percent mark (11 of 19), while the Buckeyes shot 10 for 24 (41.7).

"We kept making mental mistakes," Buckeye coach Kevin McGuff said of his team, which matched Cincinnati with 19 turnovers, including nine by Grande.

– Garrett Stepien

Ohio State 69, Cincinnati 56

Dec. 2, 2018
Value City Arena • Columbus, Ohio

	1	2	3	4	F
Cincinnati (5-4)	**15**	**9**	**18**	**14**	**56**
Ohio State (3-2)	**26**	**15**	**14**	**14**	**69**

Cincinnati	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
Rizor	28	2-5	3-8	3-2	0	2	7
Warren	11	0-0	0-0	1-2	0	3	0
Goings	29	2-10	0-0	2-1	1	3	5
Rodgers	38	5-11	3-3	0-4	3	1	14
Miller	33	3-12	4-6	2-5	3	4	10
Benham	2	0-0	0-0	0-2	0	1	0
Porter	5	1-2	0-0	0-1	0	0	3
Sifa	18	2-2	1-2	0-0	1	3	5
Puckett	14	1-3	0-0	0-1	0	2	2
Thomas	24	5-9	0-0	2-1	0	3	10
Totals	**200**	**24-54**	**11-19**	**11-21**	**8**	**22**	**56**

Percentages: FG: 38.9%. **FT:** 57.9%. **3-point goals:** 3-14 (Goings 1-6, Rodgers 1-4, Miller 0-2, Porter 1-2). **Team rebounds:** 3. **Blocked shots:** None. **Turnovers:** 19 (Miller 5, Sifa 4, Thomas 3, Rizor 2, Warren, Goings, Rodgers, Benham, Puckett). **Steals:** 8 (Rodgers 4, Sifa 2, Goings, Thomas).

Ohio State	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
Juhasz	29	7-13	3-7	1-12	0	3	17
Waterman	35	2-3	1-2	3-6	6	2	5
Grande	35	1-4	2-2	0-2	8	2	5
Santoro	29	3-9	3-8	1-0	2	1	10
Miller	22	4-7	0-1	1-0	0	1	11
Queenland	13	1-1	0-0	0-1	2	4	2
Crooms	9	0-1	0-2	0-1	0	3	0
Caretti	12	3-3	1-2	1-2	1	0	9
Patty	16	5-8	0-0	1-0	0	2	10
Totals	**200**	**26-49**	**10-24**	**9-25**	**19**	**18**	**69**

Percentages: FG: 53.1%. **FT:** 41.7%. **3-point goals:** 7-15 (Juhasz 0-3, Grande 1-2, Santoro 1-4, Miller 3-4, Caretti 2-2). **Team rebounds:** 2. **Blocked shots:** 5 (Crooms 3, Juhasz, Waterman). **Turnovers:** 19 (Grande 9, Juhasz 2, Waterman 2, Santoro 2, Miller, Queenland, Crooms, Patty). **Steals:** 9 (Juhasz 3, Grande 3, Waterman, Crooms, Patty).
Officials: Steratore, Herriman-Camarota, Maxey. **A:** 4,825.

can really shoot the ball. So I think she's got the chance to be really special here and also be a really great leader at some point."

The domino effect continued Dec. 19, 2017, with Harris (5-11), who followed suit. Between toughness and versatility, Harris provides the Buckeyes with what McGuff described as a multifaceted contributor and leader on the court.

"I think (Sheldon's commitment) helped," McGuff said. "With Jacy committing, it just kind of helped get some momentum going. Rikki's a great kid as well with high character. Rikki is really tough and really competitive. She is a really tough kid, and I love that about her. I think that's going to be an important thing that she brings to our program.

"She can play multiple positions, kind of especially on the perimeter. She drives aggressively. She finishes through contact. She's kind of still emerging as a three-point threat, and that will be the last area where she's kind of got to deliver, but man, she's going to get tough rebounds and loose balls and she's going to fight you for everything. That's something that we kind of need. She's a great teammate, a really competitive kid that just wants to win."

Wone (6-2) was originally slated to join OSU's 2018 class after she committed May 24. She was delayed due to international visa processing and missed the start of the Aug. 21 fall semester in Columbus. When she does arrive, however, McGuff compares her inside-out game to Juhasz's.

"It's a different process for kids that are overseas, but it is great to kind of have that locked in," McGuff said of Wone. "She's a really talented player. Sort of like Dorka, a post player that can play around the basket but even be a little more comfortable away from the basket. She's got a really great skill set. I think she'll just allow us to kind of continue to be a really versatile team.

"No question (Wone had immediate-impact ability). She certainly could have helped us this year, but that's OK. Maybe in the long run that helps us out the way it's supposed to. We have her for an extended period of years here where she really develops and helps us do the things that we'll hopefully do in the future."

Ohio State's class surged to the next level when Bell (6-1) committed Aug. 25. As she starred over the past three years, McGuff knew the Buckeyes had to get her in the fold for 2019.

"She's certainly one of the most talented players in this class, nationally," McGuff said of Bell. "Just a really, really talented player. She's doing great things now. She had 45 points in a (67-52 win for Canton McKinley over Bolingbrook, Ill., on Nov. 24). But she's even capable of more.

"You just don't see many kids with her size, her length and handling the ball, shooting threes. She's got a really, really high basketball IQ. For as much as she scores points, she can really make other people around her better. She likes playing with other great players. She just has a chance to have a really amazing impact on the program.

"For a couple of years now, I've been saying that we need to get her in this class. This was a must-get. She's just so good and so talented. The thing I love about her, too, is how she loves the game. She loves the game. She loves to play. I just think that she's going to be incredibly impactful for us."

Continued On Page 48

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Juhasz Standing Out Early In Collegiate Career

Continued From Page 47

Satterfield (6-0) closed out OSU's class Oct. 19, balancing out McGuff's group with another long and versatile player to plug in across various spots on the floor.

"She did kind of fly under the radar for a while, but I've been watching her," McGuff said of Satterfield. "We were one of the first major programs to offer her a scholarship. I just saw something in her.

"The thing is, for how we play, she's a really unique player. She's incredibly versatile. She's long and athletic. But she could play the four legitimately. She plays the one sometimes for her high school, and they're the No. 1 high school team in the country.

"So that's just the thing that's so unique about her. She can play multiple positions, but she has an amazing IQ. She can pass it, she can score, she's really good in different spots, and so I just think her versatility and being able to put her in multiple positions is going to be really great for us."

Ohio State saw several one-time top targets – Columbus Africentric guard Jordan Horston (6-2, No. 2 overall) to Tennessee, Worcester (Mass.) Academy post Aliyah Boston (6-4, No. 3 overall) to South Carolina and Toledo Rogers point guard Zia Cooke (5-9, No. 7 overall) to South Carolina – sign elsewhere.

But as they mull the idea of another addition on the graduate-transfer market between now and the 2019-20 campaign, the Buckeyes are comfortable with their group for 2019.

"We're still looking," McGuff said. "We could add some people. Now, in a perfect world, it may be more on a transfer – maybe just to create some more balance with the classes and not overload with the class that we just had. But we'll continue to monitor that. We are monitoring that closely and we'll kind of see how that shakes out, but I wouldn't necessarily say that we're done."

Freshman Forward Earns Honors

Through her first month of action, Juhasz has been as advertised. A key cog in OSU's 3-3 start, she was honored for those efforts Dec. 3 as the Big Ten's freshman of the week. The versatile 6-4 post from Pecs, Hungary, averaged 17.5 points and 14.5 rebounds in Ohio State's wins over North Carolina and Cincinnati on Nov. 29 and Dec. 1. Juhasz had 18 points and 16 rebounds against the Tar Heels, followed by 17 points and 13 rebounds against the Bearcats.

"It definitely gave me a lot of confidence," Juhasz said after the Cincinnati game in regard to her big day against the Tar Heels. "I kind of felt like it was different than my first three games. I felt like, against North Carolina, I was more relaxed and not trying to stress much. I think this game gave me lots of motivation for today. That's how I was like, 'I have to come out today, be strong and play well.' "

Juhasz was leading the Buckeyes with 12.7 points and 9.7 rebounds per game through the first six contests, recording four double-doubles. Her conference award marked OSU's first freshman of the week honor since Tori McCoy on Dec. 12, 2016.

"She's getting better every game," McGuff said of Juhasz. "I mean, it's obviously coming from Europe and her not playing last year in high school, this is all new to her. But you see it, you see progress on a daily basis and she's got a chance to be really good. She's just got to keep getting better."

Juhasz was also the Plank's Lady Buck of the Month for November after leading Ohio State in scoring (12.0 points per game) and rebounding (9.8 per game) in four November contests. She shot 41.7 percent from the field during that span while making 8 of 10 free-throw attempts and turning the ball over just five times in her first 103 minutes of collegiate action.

Junior Guard Rebounds From Suspension

Expected to play an important role in Ohio State's transitional season, Jensen Caretti started slow. A one-game suspension for an unspecified violation of team rules forced her to sit out the Buckeyes' opener Nov. 6 against then-No. 22 South Florida, where she saw the team fall 71-47 to the Bulls.

Caretti (6-1) debuted Nov. 9 in OSU's 55-41 win over Detroit Mercy, scoring five points on 2-of-8 shooting in 20 minutes. She logged six minutes Nov. 11 in Ohio State's 85-53 defeat at then-No. 2 Connecticut, going scoreless before sitting out entirely Nov. 29 for the Buckeyes' game against UNC.

Jensen Caretti

Caretti's roller-coaster start in OSU's first month came full circle Dec. 1 against UC. Coming off the bench, she gave her teammates the boost they needed down the stretch. Cincinnati's comeback fell short because Caretti made every minute of her 12 on the floor count, scoring nine points on 3-of-3 shooting – 2 for 2 from three-point range – with six of those coming in four of the final 10 minutes.

"She gave us a lot," Juhasz said of Caretti. "I'm really proud of Jensen. She was really good and we really needed her, so I think she did a really great job and I'm looking forward to seeing her help us in these next few games."

Before the season, McGuff was adamant about the roles Caretti and fifth-year senior forward Makayla Waterman needed to play as Ohio State's only returning players with experience in the team's rotation. McGuff came away encouraged by Caretti's contributions against the Bearcats.

"She did a great job," McGuff said. "I thought she played within herself, she played hard and every shot she made was a good shot. There's something to be said for that. Sometimes we can get to be taking tough shots, but she took great shots, she capitalized on them and we needed it. She was really big down the stretch."

Win Streak Snapped In 69-59 Loss At UW

The Ohio State women's basketball team fell to .500 on the season after a 69-59 loss to Washington on Dec. 5 in Seattle.

Freshman Dorka Juhasz and fifth-year senior Makayla Waterman paced Ohio State with 11 points apiece, but the Buckeyes couldn't contain Amber Melgoza, who scored 28 points for Washington in front of 1,236 at Alaska Airlines Arena. UW (6-3) won its third straight and snapped a two-game win streak for OSU (3-3).

Ohio State opened the action shooting 1 for 12 from the field and falling behind 13-3 with 2:17 left in the first quarter after a layup from Darcy Rees put Washington in front on its largest first-half lead. The Buckeyes clawed back behind an 8-2 run in the final 1:52, starting on Waterman's three free throws and ending on Juhasz's first career three-pointer with three seconds left, to trail 15-11 at the end of the opening period.

The Huskies pushed their lead back to 10 as they opened the second quarter on a 10-4 streak, leading 25-15 after Mai-Loni Henson's free throw. Consecutive layups from Najah Queenland trimmed OSU's deficit to 25-19 at the 3:21 mark before Waterman's jumper with 33 seconds left cut UW's lead to 32-26 at halftime.

After the Huskies had a 40-31 lead at the third quarter's 5:33 point, the Buckeyes answered behind Waterman's two free throws and Queenland's layup to keep the score within striking distance at 40-35 with 4:27 left in the period.

UW rattled off nine straight points, however, widening its lead to the largest all game, 49-35, with 1:41 left. OSU scored three points in the final 1:36, starting on Carly Santoro's free throw and culminating with freshman forward Aaliyah Patty's layup at the 46-second mark, to take some momentum into the fourth quarter despite trailing 49-38.

That momentum continued early in the fourth as Juhasz's old-fashioned three-point play in the opening minute before freshman guard Janai Crooms connected from long range, cutting Washington's lead back down to 49-44.

However, the five-point deficit was the closest OSU got the rest of the way despite the Buckeyes outscoring Washington, 21-20, in the final frame.

The Buckeyes and Washington committed 21 turnovers apiece, but the Huskies held a 24-17 advantage off OSU's miscues. UW recorded a 43-35 rebounding edge, led by Hannah Johnson's game-high 11 boards.

Queenland gave Ohio State eight points on 4-of-5 shooting to aid Juhasz and Waterman, who also combined for 15 rebounds.

– Garrett Stepien

Washington 69, Ohio State 59

Dec. 5, 2018
Alaska Airlines Arena • Seattle

	1	2	3	4	F
Ohio State (3-3)	**11**	**15**	**12**	**21**	**59**
Washington (6-3)	**15**	**17**	**17**	**20**	**69**

Ohio State	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
Waterman	30	2-7	7-7	2-7	1	3	11
Juhasz	30	3-10	4-7	1-5	2	1	11
Grande	34	2-6	0-0	0-1	3	4	5
Miller	15	2-3	0-0	0-1	0	2	5
Santoro	32	1-9	2-4	2-3	4	2	4
Queenland	14	4-5	0-0	0-1	1	2	8
Crooms	16	2-5	2-6	0-2	1	2	7
Patty	21	3-5	0-0	0-4	0	3	6
Caretti	8	1-5	0-2	1-3	0	0	2
Totals	**200**	**20-55**	**15-26**	**7-28**	**12**	**19**	**59**

Percentages: FG: 36.4%. **FT:** 57.7%. **3-point goals:** 4-19 (Waterman 0-1, Juhasz 1-3, Grande 1-2, Miller 1-2, Santoro 0-6, Crooms 1-2, Patty 0-1, Caretti 0-2). **Team rebounds:** 2. **Blocked shots:** 1 (Santoro). **Turnovers:** 21 (Waterman 4, Grande 4, Crooms 4, Miller 3, Santoro 3, Queeland 2, Patty). **Steals:** 11 (Queenland 4, Grande 3, Juhasz, Miller, Crooms, Patty).

Washington	Min.	Total FG M-A	FT M-A	Reb. O-D	A	PF	Pts.
Melgoza	28	8-16	8-8	3-5	1	1	28
Rees	20	3-4	1-2	1-2	0	1	7
Peterson	29	2-8	2-4	1-3	4	4	6
Henson	14	1-5	1-2	1-4	2	2	4
Moser	29	1-6	0-0	1-2	2	1	3
Van Dyke	18	3-5	0-0	1-3	0	0	7
Rooks	18	1-5	2-2	0-3	2	1	4
Watkins	8	2-3	0-0	0-0	1	3	4
Johnson	19	1-4	1-2	2-9	0	1	3
Griggsby	17	1-3	0-0	0-0	1	3	3
Totals	**200**	**23-59**	**15-20**	**10-33**	**13**	**17**	**69**

Percentages: FG: 39.0%. **FT:** 75.0%. **3-point goals:** 8-26 (Melgoza 4-7, Peterson 0-4, Henson 1-2, Moser 1-4, Van Dyke 1-2, Rooks 0-3, Watkins 0-1, Griggsby 1-3). **Team rebounds:** 2. **Blocked shots:** 3 (Rees, Van Dyke, Rooks). **Turnovers:** 21 (Melgoza 5, Peterson 5, Henson 4, Moser 3, Johnson 3, Griggsby). **Steals:** 9 (Melgoza 3, Henson 2, Rees, Van Dyke, Rooks, Watkins).
Officials: Woods, Pantoja, Turner. **A:** 1,236.

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Maryland Tabs 'Bama's Locksley As Head Coach

After a season filled with turmoil, Maryland officially turned the page by hiring Mike Locksley as its next head football coach.

BIG TEN NOTES
James Grega

Locksley spent the last three seasons as an assistant under Nick Saban at Alabama, serving as the offensive coordinator in 2018 and helping the Crimson Tide to an undefeated record with the No. 7 overall offense in the nation.

Locksley is very familiar with Maryland and its surrounding area, having grown up in Washington, D.C., before attending nearby Towson University, where he played as a defensive back from 1988-91. He already has two stints as an assistant coach with the Terrapins on his résumé, having coached running backs from 1997-2002 before returning as offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach from 2012-15. After Randy Edsall's firing midseason in 2015, Locksley was named interim head coach and the Terps stumbled to a 1-5 record under his guidance.

Locksley takes over for Matt Canada, who was the interim coach for the entire 2018 season after the suspension and ultimate firing of DJ Durkin, which stemmed from an investigation into the offseason heatstroke death of offensive lineman Jordan McNair.

"I am thrilled to be returning home and to have the opportunity to lead the Maryland Football program," Locksley said. "This has always been a special place for me and my family, and I am honored to take on this role at the state's flagship institution. Our goal is to create an atmosphere and environment focused on the total development of our student-athletes. Our focus will always be to help them become more successful in all areas of their life through their association with our program."

Locksley's only other experience as a head coach came at New Mexico State from 2009-11, where he compiled a 2-26 record before getting fired four games into the 2011 campaign.

The 48-year-old Locksley has already begun piecing together his coaching staff, according to multiple reports.

According to 247Sports, Locksley hired former Tennessee head coach Butch Jones as his tight ends coach and associate head coach Dec. 10 and followed up that hire by bringing in former North Carolina defensive coordinator John Papuchis and Rutgers cornerbacks coach Cory Robinson.

The 247Sports report suggests that Papuchis will coach linebackers and special teams for the Terps and that Robinson will remain a defensive backs coach with Maryland.

Locksley won the Broyles Award this year as the nation's top assistant coach. He is expected to remain on the Alabama staff for bowl preparation and the College Football Playoff, which begins Dec. 29 in the Orange Bowl against Oklahoma.

Brohm Stays Put At Purdue

After much speculation that Purdue head coach Jeff Brohm would return to his alma mater to fill the head coaching vacancy at Louisville, Brohm surprised the college football world with the announcement that he is staying put in West Lafayette, Ind.

"This has been a very difficult and emotional decision for me and my family," Brohm said in a statement released to Louisville media. "We are extremely happy at Purdue and thankful for the opportunity to lead this program. After

BIG TEN BOWLS

Quick Lane
Dec. 26 • 5:15 p.m.
ESPN
Minnesota (6-6) vs.
Georgia Tech (7-5)

Pinstripe
Dec. 27 • 5:15 p.m.
ESPN
Miami, Fla. (7-5) vs.
Wisconsin (7-5)

Music City
Dec. 28 • 1:30 p.m.
ESPN
Purdue (6-6) vs.
Auburn (7-5)

Peach
Dec. 29 • Noon
ESPN
No. 10 Florida (9-3) vs.
No. 7 Michigan (10-2)

Redbox
Dec. 31 • 3 p.m.
FOX
Michigan State (7-5) vs.
Oregon (8-4)

Holiday
Dec. 31 • 7 p.m.
FS1
No. 22 Northwestern (8-5) vs.
No. 17 Utah (9-4)

Outback
Jan. 1 • Noon
ESPN2
No. 18 Mississippi St. (8-4) vs.
Iowa (8-4)

Citrus
Jan. 1 • 1 p.m.
ABC
No. 14 Kentucky (9-3) vs.
No. 12 Penn State (9-3)

intense and thorough discussion, I believe it is important to finish the building process we have begun and honor the commitment I made to our football program, players, and recruits. While going home was very appealing and meaningful to me, the timing was not ideal. I believe that remaining at Purdue is the right thing to do, and I am excited for the challenges ahead.

"I want to thank the University of Louisville and (athletic director) Vince Tyra for reaching out and expressing their interest in me. As a former Cardinal player and coach, I want nothing but the best for the University of Louisville. Under the leadership of President Neeli Bendapudi and Vince Tyra, the future of the university is in great hands. I also want to thank all Cardinal fans for their support over the years."

Brohm played quarterback at Louisville from 1989-92 and emerged as a leading candidate for the head coaching job with the Cardinals after the school fired Bobby Petrino late this season. Brohm had also been an assistant coach at Louisville from 2003-08.

In two seasons as the head coach at Purdue, Brohm has compiled a 13-12 overall record and a 9-9 conference record. He has led the Boilermakers to back-to-back bowl game appearances after leading Western Kentucky to three straight bowl appearances from 2014-16. He put together a 30-10 overall record in Conference USA.

The Boilermakers are set to take on Auburn in the Music City Bowl on Dec. 28 in Nashville.

Purdue's Moore Wins Hornung Award

Purdue freshman wide receiver Rondale Moore took home plenty of hardware within the conference this season, winning both freshman of the year and receiver of the year honors in the Big Ten.

On Dec. 5, he added a national award to his trophy case as he picked up the Paul Hornung Award, which goes to the most versatile player in college football each season.

"It is an honor to win the Paul Hornung Award, and I appreciate the Louisville Sports Commission selecting me," Moore said. "Individual honors are nice, but football is a team game, and I want to thank my coaches and teammates for their support all season. I know I can get better and become a better all-around player."

Moore led all FBS players in receptions this season, hauling in 103 passes for 1,164 yards and 12 touchdowns. He also carried the ball 18 times for 203 yards and a score while handling kick and punt return duties as well.

He finished his freshman campaign fourth in the nation in all-purpose yards (2,048) and led the Big Ten in all three major receiving categories.

"We are extremely proud of Rondale and want to thank the Paul Hornung Award and the Louisville Sports Commission for this tremendous honor," Brohm said. "We knew Rondale was a special talent from the moment he first stepped on campus. Like Paul Hornung, Rondale is a threat in so many ways on the field and brings real excitement and electricity whenever he touches the ball."

Hornung, for whom the award is named, played his college football at Notre Dame and won the Heisman Trophy in 1956. He was the No. 1 overall pick in the 1957 NFL draft and went on to win the first ever Super Bowl with the Green Bay Packers.

Gary, Fant Declare For Draft, Skip Bowls

Two of the Big Ten's most talented players have already announced they will skip their team's respective bowl games in order to prepare for the 2019 NFL draft.

Iowa tight end Noah Fant, who is widely regarded as one of the top draft-eligible tight ends in the country, announced Nov. 30 that he will not return to school for his senior year and will also skip Iowa's game against Mississippi State in the Outback Bowl on Jan. 1.

"Since the very first time I put on a pair of pads as a child, it has been my dream to play in the NFL," Fant wrote on his Twitter account. "I am very excited for what the future holds and extremely humbled by the amazing opportunity in front of me. I will always bleed the black and gold and forever be a Hawkeye. Thank you Hawkeye Nation! #GoHawks."

Head coach Kirk Ferentz said he would have preferred Fant make a different decision.

"We are disappointed Noah will not be finishing the season with his teammates," Ferentz said. "He is a tremendous athlete and we wish him the best as he pursues his goal of playing in the NFL."

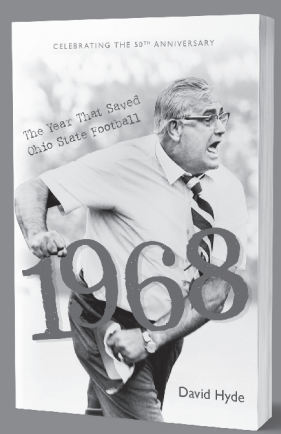
Fant finishes his Iowa career with 78 catches for 1,082 yards and 19 touchdowns. He caught 39 passes for 518 yards and seven scores in 2018 after catching 30 passes for 494 yards and 11 touchdowns in 2017.

The Iowa tight end wasn't the only player to get his announcement out of the way early. Michigan defensive lineman Rashan Gary also declared himself eligible for the draft with a YouTube video.

"I would like to thank my higher powers, my family, the University of Michigan and the students and the fans," Gary said in the video. "But I will be forgoing my senior season to make a dream come true, to declare for the draft. Thank you. Go Blue."

Gary did not say in the video that he would be skipping Michigan's appearance in the Peach Bowl against Florida, but head coach Jim Harbaugh later confirmed that the defensive lineman would not return to Michigan for the game.

Gary collected 9½ sacks and 23 tackles for loss in three years with the Wolverines. He is projected by many outlets to be a first-round pick in the upcoming draft.



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Senior Class Has Led Rise Of Buckeye Hockey

The progress made on the Ohio State men's hockey team by the senior class is measurable by two series at Minnesota to send the Buckeyes into holiday breaks.

IN THE CREASE
Craig Merz

In the first as freshmen in December 2015, the Buckeyes lost a pair of overtime games to the Golden Gophers. For a young team looking to build a winning culture there was a sense that things were headed in the right direction despite a 3-11-0 record.

"Somehow, we have to get over the top and win that close game. It's in them," OSU coach Steve Rohlik said at the time.

That lost weekend in Minneapolis was the low point. From there the Buckeyes found themselves and made rapid ascension to the higher levels of college hockey. As sophomores, OSU made its first NCAA tournament in nine seasons. Last season, those juniors were part of a team that made the Frozen Four for the first time in 20 years.

That leads to the two games this month at Minnesota.

The Buckeyes took four of six points in the Big Ten standings with a pair of 2-2 ties followed by earning the extra point in each for winning the 3-on-3 overtime bouts.

Yet Ohio State is in a spot now where it left 3M Arena at Mariucci dissatisfied.

"When we walked away from there for me and my staff, we felt we left a couple of points out there, especially Saturday," Rohlik said.

It's a notion that was unthinkable three years ago. It also shows how far the Buckeyes have risen and the Gophers have struggled.

With OSU's high expectations comes high pressure. The Buckeyes were ranked third nationally in the USCHO.com preseason poll but ascended to No. 1 for the first time since November 1983 even before their season-opening series at Arizona State.

The Buckeyes stayed there after sweeping the Sun Devils but dropped to third after splitting a home series with UMass. That was followed by an embarrassing 8-2 loss to Bowling Green in Value City Arena.

OSU is 6-2-3 since then.

"That to me shows we're an experienced team," said senior forward Brendon Kearney. "If you can show up against Bowling Green and get outworked like that then use it to better yourself and shake it off as one loss is one loss, whether it's 2-1 or 8-2, that's just the experience and the mind-set we have as a team."

Brendon Kearney

The Buckeyes (9-4-3 overall, 4-2-2-2 Big Ten) share the conference lead in points at 16 with Wisconsin, although the Badgers have played two more games. Notre Dame is a point back.

OSU's record at the break last season was 10-4-4, 5-4-1-0.

"It's been a learning curve this year," Kearney said. "It was probably the first time any of us had that much hype going into the year.

"It was a mix of dealing with that pressure, but I also think we didn't get enough credit at first at how tough our nonconference schedule was. Now that we've got our feet under us in the Big Ten, we've shown we can handle it."

The schedule has turned out be tougher than expected. UMass was unranked in the USCHO.com poll when the Minutemen played in Columbus. In the latest PairWise ranking that mimics the NCAA 16-team field, they are No. 1.

Notre Dame is sixth in the PairWise and the Buckeyes seventh. They split a series Nov. 2-3 in South Bend, Ind. Arizona State is ninth and Bowling Green 12th. OSU also split with No. 10 Penn State and took two from No. 19 Wisconsin.

Rohlik said going from a program viewed as an underdog to being among the hunted took getting used to.

"Early on as a whole we maybe didn't understand what that meant," he said. "We're getting a team's best shot, and maybe we forgot how hard it is to go out and win hockey games."

The Buckeyes rediscovered their defensive game after the Bowling Green debacle. They went on to set a team record of 231:42 without allowing a goal and had three straight shutouts with the duo of senior Sean Romeo and sophomore Tommy Nappier.

Romeo had three shutouts in a row to establish another program record, and Nappier's two shutouts helped the Buckeyes lead the nation in that category.

Their 2.00 goals-against average is seventh nationally, better than last season when the Buckeyes' 2.07 ended the season third.

OSU is not doing as well offensively. It is 39th in goals scored (2.56) after finishing 10th in the NCAA last season (3.2).

The power play is also 39th (16.2 percent), well down from the 23.9 percent last season to rank sixth. Also, the penalty kill is 37th (78.7 percent) compared to being first last season (89.4 percent).

"If you win the special teams battles, you're going to win the game most of the time," Rohlik said. "I can't say we've been good on special teams. We've been average at best right now."

November To Remember

Romeo is the Varsity Club Icer of the Month for November. The Cary, N.C., native set a program record with three consecutive shutouts.

He stopped 23 shots in a 1-0 win at Notre Dame on Nov. 2. A week later he won 3-0 at Colgate by making 19 saves and on Nov. 26 he made 32 saves in a 4-0 victory over Wisconsin.

Major Minny Fiasco

The Buckeyes felt rightly robbed of winning the second game outright at Minnesota on Dec. 1.

To recap the convoluted Big Ten rules, if a team wins in regulation or the five-minute sudden-death overtime, it gets all three conference points. When a game is still tied after 65 minutes, each team gets a point. That constitutes a tie in the eyes of the NCAA and for the PairWise, but the conference instituted new protocol this season to award an extra league point to the winner via 3-on-3 play for five more minutes and, if necessary, a shootout.

Statistics from the 3-on-3 and shootout don't count for NCAA purposes.

In the first game of the series, junior defenseman Matt Miller scored during the 3-on-3 while on the power play (which technically made it a 4-on-3 goal) and freshman Quinn Preston tallied in the second OT in the rematch. Thus, four points for the Buckeyes on the weekend.

It should have been five.

Senior Mason Jobst in the second game had a goal in the first overtime disallowed because it was ruled he hit the puck with a high stick. If allowed, it would have given the Buckeyes a victory and three points instead of a tie and two.

The ruling cost OSU a drop of two places in the PairWise.

What had Rohlik still steaming four days later was that the league admitted a mistake was made by the on-ice officials in the video review process.

From the time the goal was counted as good by a referee to it being announced as no goal took 5:30 in real time, so the play was reviewed for nearly five minutes.

"That should tell you the answer what the call should have been in my opinion," Rohlik said. "I've been told a bazillion times when a referee makes a call on the ice you have to have indisputable evidence to overturn the call.

"If they went in for two seconds and came out said it was high stick, I can live with that, but there's no way you can reverse a call if there's doubt. There was doubt and I got told there was doubt even on Sunday by the Big Ten."

Rohlik said he was told the same thing the day after the game in a phone conversation with Big Ten director of officials Steve Piotrowski.

"Anytime there's a delay that long or there's any doubt whatsoever, you've got to go with the call on the ice," Rohlik said. "That's it. It doesn't matter if it's the NHL, our league. That was the most disappointing thing because it's taught up there with all the officials.

"I applaud the Big Ten for saying that goal probably should have counted."

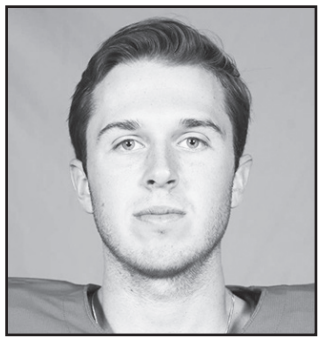
For a complete recap of Ohio State's series with Minnesota, go to BSB's BuckeyeSports.com website, free to all Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers.

B1G Men's Hockey

	Pts.	W	L	T	3/SW	GF	GA
Ohio State	**16**	**4**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**21**	**13**
Wisconsin	16	4	3	3	1	28	25
Notre Dame	15	5	3	0	0	20	21
Minnesota	12	3	2	3	0	23	20
Michigan	12	2	4	4	2	28	32
Penn State	11	3	4	1	1	38	37
Michigan State	8	2	5	1	1	16	26

Overall records – Ohio State 9-4-3, Wisconsin 8-7-3, Notre Dame 11-5-1, Minnesota 5-6-4, Michigan 6-7-4, Penn State 11-5-1, Michigan State 6-9-1.

VARSITY CLUB ICER OF THE MONTH
For November



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Senior Goalie
Cary, N.C.

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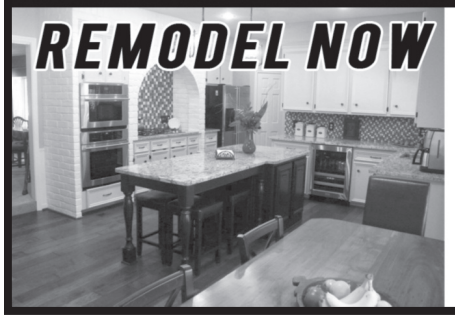

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OSU's Dunne Among Nation's Best Defenders

By JOE DEMPSEY
Special To Buckeye Sports Bulletin

About 20 minutes after a Tuesday practice for the Ohio State women's ice hockey team, most of the players and coaches had already hit the locker rooms. Jincy Dunne wasn't on that list.

Dunne, recently named the Western Collegiate Hockey Association defensive player of the week, was still on the ice – in her element – working on her game, while helping her teammates improve as well. The junior defenseman fired precision pass after pass to a handful of teammates, who were slapping one-timers at the net.

Although she's a defenseman, Dunne is very much involved in the Buckeyes' offensive attack. Her 87 shots on goal ranked fourth in the nation among defensemen during her sophomore campaign, and her 24 assists tied her for second most in the WCHA overall. Dunne was named to the All-WCHA first team and American Hockey Coaches Association All-America second team for her performance on the most successful team in OSU program history.

Head coach Nadine Muzerall, who was an All-American as a player herself, said Dunne's versatility and all-around skill give her an advantage as both a defensive and offensive player. And while her offensive statistics might earn more recognition, Muzerall says Dunne's defensive impact does not go unnoticed within the team.

"Jincy is really one of the best defensemen in the country, as she was All-American last year and she's on the cusp of trying to make the next Olympic team," Muzerall said. "She can do things with the puck that most can't, but she's not always looking to shoot first. She's always trying to make the nice play.

"And she's very smart on the power play. So she's a 200-foot player, where she can carry the puck and she's got her eyes up, her shoulders open, so she can see everybody. She's calm and composed with the puck, because a lot of defensemen, when they go, they're like north and south and not thinking. She is very smart, and so also we can use her defensively in the PK (penalty kill) and she runs our power play."

For someone as versatile as Dunne, concerns about when to be more aggressive and when to be more defensive can complicate her role on the team. The O'Fallon, Mo., native is not overwhelmed, taking a defense-first approach that led to 75 blocked shots as a sophomore, which ranked second on the team and sixth in the WCHA.

"I think for myself I just have to pick my battles of when I'm offensive and defensive," Dunne said. "And I think having good offense starts with being solid defensively, so just making sure, cleaning up things from the defensive end, and then getting offensive and being a fourth attacker and trying to get shots and help the forwards out when I can."

Dunne has been quite effective in her aspirations to help those forwards. The standout defenseman leads the nation in assists by a defensive player with 14 this season, which also represents the second most on the team, behind Emma Maltais' 18 helpers through games of Dec. 2.

It did not take long for freshman defenseman Sophie Jaques to observe Dunne's passing prowess. Jaques, who has tallied six assists herself, credits Dunne for helping her improve as a facilitator.

"Jincy's a really good playmaker, and she sees the ice really well," Jaques said. "And she makes unbelievable passes all the time, and on the breakouts it's so easy to work with her."

Muzerall concurred with everything Jaques said but added that Dunne is so adept as a playmaker that sometimes only she sees certain passing lanes opening up.

"Her hockey IQ is off the charts," Muzerall said. "She's holding onto the puck and sometimes people are expecting her to make that pass and she's just waiting for that forward or that other defense partner to move into the right space that she sees.

"So she's very creative, very forward-thinking with her hockey understanding. She also can make fantastic passes, not just the simple pass. She can make the simple ones, but also the elite ones."

Although her stunning passes and high assist totals garner more recognition, Dunne does not lack scoring ability. After helping the U.S. Women's National Team win gold at the 4 Nations Cup in 2012, Dunne competed at the international level again in the IIHF U18 Women's World Championship. She earned a silver medal in 2014 and a gold in 2015, where she scored the game-winning goal in overtime of the gold-medal game.

"I mean I just couldn't believe that I was the one that scored it," Dunne recalled. "I was just really grateful in that moment. A lot of people helped me get to that moment, and I'm super grateful that I was able to share it with them."

One person who helped her get to that moment was her sister Jessica, who played 65 games for the Buckeyes, including the previous two seasons alongside her sister. Jincy said she is grateful for having had the opportunity to compete with her older sister, and although she's sad Jessica's gone, she strives to continue to make her proud.

Dunne is one of six children, and Muzerall attributes the defenseman's openness and willingness to put others first to her upbringing.

"The girls really respect her," Muzerall said. "She has a calm demeanor, but she's very competitive and she elevates their game because she is always trying to be better. And I think she just has a great moral compass and she has a good heart and she has a team-first mentality.

"So she just has that demeanor in the locker room. She'll hold you accountable, no questions asked – she's motherly like that. So she's very motherly – she'll love you and take care of you, but she'll call you out when she needs to as well, like a mom should."

Dunne's "motherly" leadership style has struck a chord within the team, shown by the fact that Dunne was voted an alternate captain as a sophomore and a captain as a junior. As someone who is relatively new to Columbus, Jaques said the junior captain helps her adjust to Division I hockey on and off the ice.

"She's always done a great job motivating the team, and she does a great job of leading by example," Jaques said. "Jincy's really nice. She is always open and welcome to everybody and talks to everybody, so it's really nice."

Just as she is forward-thinking in her on-ice playmaking, Dunne has an eye for the future of the up-and-coming Ohio State women's hockey program.

After a program-best, 24-win season that ended in a heartbreaking Frozen Four loss in their first-ever NCAA tournament last season, the Buckeyes jumped out to a 12-6 start, including five wins against top-10 opponents. Elected as one of the team's two captains with senior defenseman Erin Langermeier, Dunne is excited to lead "a really talented team, a really fast team, a really hungry team," with high expectations for the rest of the season.

"It's a privilege that they voted me captain," Dunne said. "And it's an opportunity to lead these girls and carry on some of the culture and tradition that's been here the previous years and just to get to pass that down to freshmen, sophomores and continue to just build this program."

In order to better introduce BSB readers to Ohio State's Olympic sports teams and athletes, we have shifted to more feature-oriented coverage of the various squads. Buckeye Sports Bulletin will provide a roundup of all the games, matches and meets involving OSU's teams each Monday on our BuckeyeSports.com website, free to all print subscribers.

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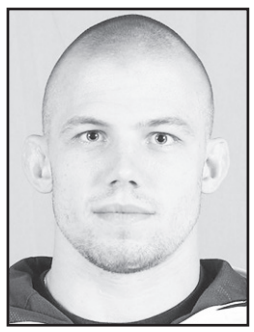
Jordan Trio Leading OSU Wrestling In 2018-19

By JOE DEMPSEY
Special To Buckeye Sports Bulletin

After winning only two Big Ten championships in the first 93 years of the program, the Ohio State wrestling team has won three of the last four conference titles.

One difference between the program's first 93 years and the past four is that for nearly a century Ohio State wrestling did not feature any of Jeff and Amy Jordan's offspring.


Bo Jordan

Head coach Tom Ryan does not think that fact is a coincidence.

The eldest Jordan brother, Bo, made the transition from competitor to coach this offseason after concluding a decorated career, which included four All-America seasons with a second-place finish and two third-place finishes at the NCAA championships.

"Coaching was a calling for Bo Jordan," Ryan said. "His dad is a legendary coach in the state, his uncle, his cousins, they're all completely embedded in the sport. So I think when you grow up in a house like Bo did, there's an automatic sense of how to lead. So I'm really excited that he's on the staff.

"He's done a great job so far. I think he's really competent. He was in a great high school program, he was in a great college program, so competence. He's warm – he's a tough dude when you wrestle, but he's a warm person, so he connects with the guys really well."

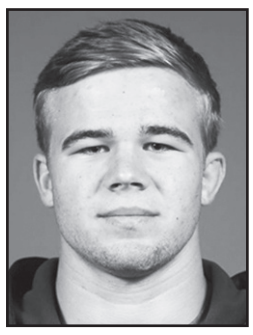
While Bo adjusts to his new coaching role, the Buckeyes gear up for another highly-anticipated season. With a plethora of proven, talented wrestlers, Ohio State has its sights on the top of the wrestling pedestal.

Although the Buckeyes will miss having Bo Jordan the wrestler, his expertise will not be wasted. Working a lot with the middle weights, Jordan said he is thrilled to be coaching the sport he loves – and helping the people he loves, too, including his younger brother Micah.

"We have more of a growing relationship in wrestling instead of like a chippy or getting back and forth like, 'You got a takedown on me,' " Bo Jordan said. "We're more 'help-each-other-out' now as we're more mature. When we were little, it was all about who is getting the takedowns, who was winning, and now it's more of a, 'How can we make each other better for the next day or the next competition?'

"Hopefully I can be coaching my brother Micah this year in the national finals. That would be something really special. We'll see what happens and he'll do his best no matter what, but it's going to be great to sit in his corner and coach him and hopefully (brother) Rocky in future years."

Micah Jordan has high hopes for his final collegiate season. The fifth-year senior is a two-time All-American and two-time Big Ten finalist. After finishing fourth at the NCAA championships as a sophomore at 149 pounds and sixth as a junior at 157, Micah is back to 149 with the No. 1 spot in mind.

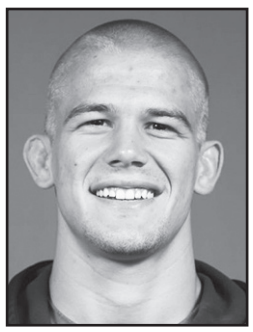

Rocky Jordan

"It's been awesome," Micah Jordan said. "Bo's always been one year ahead of me so through junior year, through high school, he's always been on the team with me. He's kind of led me. I've been following in his footsteps. He's always been a big role model for me, so with him transitioning from a competitor to a coach, it's just really been awesome.

"He can watch me wrestle a lot more in the practices and in competitions, so he just helps me a lot. And there are little things that he can pick up on that he works with me and helps me as a wrestler."

The youngest Jordan brother, Rocky, joined the team as a freshman this season, choosing to continue the family legacy in Columbus as one of the nation's top recruits. Rocky wrestles at 174 pounds, the same weight Bo wrestled at to become Big Ten champion as a senior. The freshman is well aware of the benefits of having Bo in his corner, giving him hands-on instruction.

"He's in a way always been a coach of mine pretty much, because he's five years older than me," Rocky said. "He's always been looking over me when I'm wrestling and giving me tips and techniques and all kinds of different things like that. He's helped me tremendously with lifting and a lot of technique, a lot of mind-set stuff, because he's always been my coach, but now he's just like officially my coach. He's helped me in every aspect of wrestling for sure. And not just this year, he's helped me throughout my whole life."


Micah Jordan

Unfortunately for Rocky, a foot injury and minor surgery has limited him early in his freshman campaign. Such a setback can be difficult for a young wrestler to overcome, especially one with such high expectations, but Rocky is blessed with a strong support system.

With Bo coaching on the staff and his other brother, Micah, being both Rocky's teammate and roommate, the youngest Jordan receives continual encouragement while recovering. Ryan praised Rocky's ability to remain centered while dealing with the injury.

Ryan has also taken notice of how Rocky's brothers have been helping him cope with his injury setback. The coach was very proud of Rocky for excelling in his classes because he knows how injuries can derail a wrestler's psyche. Rocky is just following in his brothers' footsteps, both having earned Academic All-Big Ten honors in addition to their athletic accolades.

Micah has always been viewed as a leader through his work ethic and compassion, but he took his leadership to the next level entering his final season. Bo said he's noticed Micah becoming more of a vocal leader and continuing to guide his teammates with his example. Ryan agreed.

"He'll help anybody anytime," Ryan said of Micah. "He's the warmest – he's just a good person. I think the thing that stands out here is that people aren't valued by how good of wrestlers they are like, 'Well he's really good, so I'll treat him differently.' There's just a sense of, 'We love the sport. You're more valued by how you treat others and the things you can control than the things you can't control.' And whether you're Micah or Heinselman or Hayes or Fitzgerald or (Alex) Felix or whoever you are, you'll be assessed by your workload, by the way you treat your teammates. And Micah, he'll help anybody at any time."

Micah grinned from ear to ear when asked about getting to wrestle with Rocky. The youngest Jordan was just an eighth-grader when Micah was a senior in high school, so this is their first season on the same team.

Rocky comes to Ohio State with high expectations, but that is nothing new to him. His father, Jeff, was a four-time state champion, as was his uncle Jim. Both of his brothers were four-time state champs, too. Rocky, however, lost in the state championship as a high school freshman but won the next three.

"I was definitely devastated at the time," Rocky said. "It took a little bit of time for it to wear off, but it doesn't really bother me much now. I do believe it's made me a better wrestler, tasting defeat in the state finals when your whole family has won four state titles before you, pretty much – that really stinks. But it has made me a better wrestler, and it has made my future self better I think. And my family they still love me the same, they don't care. They would love me whether I never placed at state or I won every time."

The unwavering, unconditional support of his family might have helped out because Rocky has not lost a match since a holiday tournament his sophomore season, finishing 30-0 as a junior and 50-0 as a senior.

The youngest Jordan took so fondly to winning that he even won three state championships in fishing while he was at it. Rocky, like any Jordan, just strives to do his best in everything he does, and he didn't have to go far to learn that lesson.

"Watching them wrestle was always just inspirational to me for sure," Rocky said of Bo and Micah. "I always just wanted to grow up and be like them. They just set great examples for me. They were the perfect role models for me to look up to, and that's what I try to do.

"I try to just fill those shoes and live up to them because they've been very successful in life and in wrestling, in school and everything like that. So I just look at them and try to mimic what they do as best I can and try to just copy them all the way through, just live up to them."

As Ryan was raving about Rocky and his family, he concluded with a simple yet telling statement.

"We just wish there were more Jordans."

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BUCKEYE SCOREBOARD

FOOTBALL
(12-1, 8-1 BIG TEN)

Sept. 1 OREGON STATE, W 77-31; **8** RUTGERS, W 52-3; **15** vs. (15) TCU at Arlington, Texas, W 40-28; **22** TULANE, W 49-6; **29** at (9) Penn State, W 27-26.

Oct. 6 INDIANA (Homecoming), W 49-26; **13** MINNESOTA, W 30-14; **20** at Purdue, L 49-20.

Nov. 3 NEBRASKA, W 36-31; **10** at (18) Michigan State, W 26-6; **17** at Maryland, W 52-51 (OT); **24** (4) MICHIGAN, W 62-39.

Dec. 1 Big Ten Championship Game vs. (21) Northwestern at Indianapolis, W 45-24.

Jan. 1 Rose Bowl vs. (9) Washington at Pasadena, Calif., 5 p.m.

MEN'S BASKETBALL
(8-1, 2-0 BIG TEN)

Nov. 1 UNC PEMBROKE (exhibition), W 81-63; **7** at Cincinnati, W 64-56; **11** PFW, W 107-61; **15** at Creighton, W 69-60; **18** SOUTH CAROLINA STATE, W 89-61; **20** SAMFORD, W 68-50; **23** CLEVELAND STATE at St. John Arena, W 89-62; **28** SYRACUSE, L 72-62.

Dec. 2 MINNESOTA, W 79-59; **5** vs. Illinois at Chicago, W 77-67; **15** BUCKNELL, Noon; **18** YOUNGSTOWN STATE, 7 p.m.; **22** vs. UCLA at Chicago, 3 p.m.; **29** HIGH POINT, TBA.

Jan. 5 MICHIGAN STATE, Noon; **9** at Rutgers, 7 p.m.; **12** at Iowa, 2:30 p.m.; **18** MARYLAND, 6:30 p.m.; **23** PURDUE, 7 p.m.; **26** at Nebraska, Noon; **29** at Michigan, 9 p.m.

Feb. 2 RUTGERS, Noon; **7** PENN STATE, 7 p.m.; **10** at Indiana, 1 p.m.; **14** ILLINOIS, 7 p.m.; **17** at Michigan State, 1 p.m.; **20** NORTHWESTERN, 8:30 p.m.; **23** at Maryland, 2 p.m.; **26** IOWA, 7 p.m.

March 2 at Purdue, 2 p.m.; **6** at Northwestern, 9 p.m.; **10** WISCONSIN, 4:30 p.m.; **13-17** Big Ten Tournament at Chicago.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
(3-3)

Oct. 28 IUP (exhibition), W 72-50.

Nov. 6 (22) USF, L 71-47; **9** DETROIT MERCY, W 55-41; **11** at (2) UConn, L 85-53; **16** at Sacramento State, canceled; **18** at Stanford, canceled; **29** NORTH CAROLINA, W 76-69.

Dec. 2 CINCINNATI, W 69-56; **5** at Washington, L 69-59; **16** FLORIDA at St. John Arena, 1 p.m.; **20** vs. Virginia Tech at West Palm Beach, Fla., 12:15 p.m.; **21** vs. Butler at West Palm Beach, Fla., 12:15 p.m.; **28** at Purdue, 4 p.m.; **31** NEBRASKA, 1 p.m.

Jan. 5 at Maryland, 4 p.m.; **10** INDIANA, 6 p.m.; **14** MICHIGAN STATE, 7 p.m.; **17** at Penn State, 7 p.m.; **20** at Michigan, 3 p.m.; **24** MARYLAND, 8 p.m.; **28** at Minnesota, 7:30 p.m.; **31** ILLINOIS, 7 p.m.

Feb. 3 at Northwestern, 4:30 p.m.; **6** PENN STATE, 7 p.m.; **10** IOWA, 4 p.m.; **14** at Rutgers, 7 p.m.; **17** WISCONSIN, 2 p.m.; **21** at Michigan State, 6 p.m.; **28** at Wisconsin, 9 p.m.

March 3 RUTGERS, TBA; **6-10** Big Ten Tournament at Indianapolis.

MEN'S ICE HOCKEY
(9-4-3, 4-2-2 BIG TEN)

Oct. 12-13 at Arizona State, W 3-2; W 3-0; **19-20** MASSACHUSETTS, L 6-3; W 3-1; **26** (15) BOWLING GREEN, L 8-2; **27** at Bowling Green, T 2-2 (OT).

Nov. 2-3 at (5) Notre Dame, W 1-0; L 2-1; **9-10** at Colgate, W 3-0; W 1-0; **16-17** WISCONSIN, W 4-0; W 3-1; **23-24** (6) PENN STATE, L 4-3; W 5-2; **30-Dec. 1** at Minnesota, T 2-2 (OSU 3x3 OT Win); T 2-2 (OSU 3x3 OT Win).

Dec. 28-29 MERCYHURST, 7 p.m.; 8 p.m..

Jan. 4-5 at Michigan State, 7 p.m.; 8 p.m.; **11-12** MICHIGAN, 7 p.m.; 7 p.m.; **18-19** at Penn State, 7 p.m.; 7 p.m.

Feb. 1-2 NOTRE DAME, 7 p.m.; 8 p.m.; **8-9** at Wisconsin, 8 p.m.; 8 p.m.; **15-16** MINNESOTA, 6 p.m.; 6 p.m.; **22-23** at Michigan, 6:30 p.m.; 6 p.m.

March 1-2 MICHIGAN STATE, 6:30 p.m.; 5 p.m.; **8-10** Big Ten Tournament First Round; **16** Big Ten Tournament Semifinals; **23** Big Ten Tournament Finals; **29-31** NCAA Regionals.

April 11/13 NCAA Frozen Four at Buffalo, N.Y.

WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY
(12-6-0, 8-4-0 WCHA)

Sept. 28-29 at Quinnipiac, W 3-2; W 3-2.

Oct. 5-6 COLGATE, W 4-3; L 5-2; **12-13** MINNESOTA STATE, W 4-0; W 2-1 (OT); **19-20** at Minnesota, L 3-0; W 3-2; **26-27** at St. Lawrence, L 3-2; W 6-1.

Nov. 2-3 ST. CLOUD STATE, W 3-2; W 3-2; **9-10** at Bemidji State, L 2-1; L 4-2; **16-17** MINNESOTA DULUTH, W 3-1; W 4-1.

Dec. 1-2 at Minnesota State, L 3-0; W 2-0; **15-16** MERCYHURST, 3:07 p.m.; 1:07 p.m.

Jan. 5-6 MINNESOTA WHITECAPS, 3:07 p.m.; 12:07 p.m.; **11-12** WISCONSIN, 6:07 p.m.; 3:07 p.m.; **18-19** at Minnesota Duluth, 8:07 p.m.; 5:07 p.m.; **25-26** at Minnesota, 6:07 p.m.; 3:07 p.m.

Feb. 1-2 at St. Cloud State, 4:07 p.m.; 4:07 p.m.; **8-9** BEMIDJI STATE, 6:07 p.m.; 3:07 p.m.; **22-23** at Wisconsin, 8:07 p.m.; 4:07 p.m.

March 1-3 WCHA Quarterfinals; **9-10** WCHA Final Faceoff at Minneapolis; **16** NCAA Quarterfinals; **22/24** NCAA Frozen Four at Hamden, Conn.

SWIMMING & DIVING

Sept. 27 ALABAMA, Men: W 156-144; Women: W 181-119.

Oct. 12/13 TEXAS A&M, Men: W 199-153; Women: L 209-142; **13** LOUISVILLE, Men: W 192-161; **27** vs. Virginia Tech at Christiansburg, Va., Men: L 182-171; Women: W 225-128; vs. Penn State at Christiansburg, Va., Men: W 250-103; Women: W 231-122.

Nov. 2 DENISON, Men: W 221-75; Women: W 224-75; AKRON, Women: W 174.5-124.5; **9** KENYON (exhibition); **10-11** ACC/Big Ten Challenge at West Lafayette, Ind., Men: Big Ten wins 179-174; Women: Big Ten wins 251-102; **15-17** OHIO STATE INVITATIONAL, Men: 1st/9; Women: 4th/11; **28-Dec. 1** Winter Nationals at Grensboro, N.C.

Jan. 4-5 at Florida; vs. Kentucky at Gainesville, Fla.; **19** at Michigan, 2 p.m.; **25-26** Shamrock Invitational at Notre Dame, Ind.

Feb. 16-17 WINTER INVITAITONAL; **20-23** Women's Big Ten Championships at Bloomington, Ind.; **27-March 2** Men's Big Ten Championships at Iowa City, Iowa.

March 3 LAST CHANCE MEET (women); **10** Last Chance Meet at TBA (men); **14-16** CSCAA National Invitational at Cleveland; NCAA Zone Diving at West Lafayette, Ind.; **20-23** Women's NCAA Championships at Austin, Texas; **27-30** Men's NCAA Championships at Austin, Texas.

WRESTLING
(4-0, 1-0 BIG TEN)

Nov. 3 vs. Navy at Owings Mills, Md., W 28-9; **11** Ohio Intercollegiate Open at Cleveland, NTS; **16** at California Baptist, W 42-0; **18** at Arizona State, W 22-17; **30-Dec. 1** Cliff Keen Las Vegas Invitational, 1st/43 (148).

Dec. 9 (19) WISCONSIN, W 23-13.

Jan. 6 N.C. STATE, 6 p.m.; **11** at Indiana, 7 p.m.; **13** MICHIGAN STATE, 2 p.m.; **25** MICHIGAN, 7 p.m.

Feb. 1 at Illinois, 9 p.m.; **3** at Northwestern, 1 p.m.; **8** PENN STATE, 8:30 p.m.; **15** at Purdue, 7 p.m.; **17** NEBRASKA, 2 p.m.; **22** at Cornell, 6:30 p.m.

March 9-10 Big Ten Championships at Minneapolis; **21-23** NCAA Championships at Pittsburgh.

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Buckeyes Enjoy Season Of Surprises And Success

It was in late May when quarterback Joe Burrow made his decision to transfer to LSU and play for head coach Ed Orgeron. He saw an opportunity to be the starting signal caller for the Tigers in hopes of getting enough recognition and having enough success to capture the attention of NFL teams.

COACH'S CORNER
With Bill Conley

It was apparent that the chance of being the No. 1 guy at his position for the Buckeyes wasn't going to work out and that the only chance of becoming the starter would be if Dwayne Haskins was ineffective or if he got injured. Burrow couldn't take that chance and decided to transfer in order to achieve his goals and live his dreams of playing at the next level.

The decision was good for Burrow, and it also took some heat off Haskins in terms of relieving some pressure if the season started off a little rocky. Buckeye fans hated to see Burrow leave but it was understandable, and it worked out best for both quarterbacks. Haskins never had a rocky start, and Burrow had early success at LSU.

Meyer's Suspension

The Burrow transfer was not a real surprise to anyone, but it was the first indication that the 2018 season was going to be all but normal.

Preseason polls had Ohio State in the top five of the college rankings, and everyone knew the Buckeyes had talent – young at some positions but rich in depth at others, like the defensive line. The coaching staff was excited to have a quarterback who could really throw the football with exceptional velocity and accuracy. No one knew for sure how much early success Haskins would have, but they knew he had special skills.

In the midst of a preseason that looked so promising, a bombshell hit the football program. Assistant coach Zach Smith had been accused of domestic violence, and head coach Urban Meyer was called on the carpet for not doing anything about it and not telling the truth at a Big Ten press conference. To this day, no one really knows the complexity of the situation or when and what Meyer knew, but the real shock came when the Buckeye head coach was not allowed to coach his team in August camp. To make matters worse, a three-game suspension followed to start the season. As the national sports media blasted Meyer, many Buckeye fans felt the suspension and the criticism of the head coach were unwarranted.

Meyer handled the situation with class, but you could tell he felt wronged by a university he had served so well. He not only brought huge success to the football program in his seven years as head coach but had done it the right way. He won Big Ten championships and even a national championship while recording high graduation rates. His players had no major issues off the field, and they represented the program proudly.

When Meyer announced his retirement after the Big Ten Championship Game with Northwestern, primarily for health reasons, Buckeye Nation was devastated. One would have to be foolish to not think his feelings of mistreatment by the university didn't also weigh into the decision. Even though he didn't come out and say it directly, he obviously felt he could no longer work for those who didn't have his back after he had given so much.

Few head coaches could have led a football team to a 12-1 regular-season record considering all the ups and downs faced by this year's squad; Meyer proved he could. I, for one, look for Meyer to roam the sidelines of a major university once more if his health allows. He is a relatively young man who has coaching in his blood, and any program would be thrilled to have him as its head coach.

1-Year Wonder

Even though the season started off on a bad note with the Meyer suspension, the early performance of Haskins seemed to ease the sting of not having the head coach for three games. Under the leadership of interim head coach Ryan Day, Haskins immediately performed like a seasoned veteran.

Haskins looked like the first real pure passer the Buckeyes had at the helm in a long time. The numbers he was putting up at the outset in terms of passing yardage, touchdowns thrown and completion percentage were unheard of for a young quarterback. Even though he wasn't a real running threat until later in the season, he was a masterful field general and true leader by example. Haskins seemed like one of those rare athletes who got better when things got tougher. His early performances at TCU and Penn State proved he was capable of bringing his team from behind in the second half to secure victory.

Haskins would continue to grow and lead an explosive Buckeye offensive unit throughout the 2018 season. As his success attracted the attention of the college football media, he seemed to perform at an even higher level.

The hard-fought victories at Michigan State and Maryland along with the destruction of Michigan's No. 1 defense in Columbus made Haskins a viable candidate for the Heisman Trophy. Even though he put up nearly 500 yards against Northwestern in the Big Ten Championship Game, he couldn't muster up enough votes to win the Heisman, finishing third instead.

That being said, Haskins was the biggest surprise of the 2018 season in college football. He rose from obscurity to exceptionalism in one short season. Haskins will probably turn his attention to the NFL after the Rose Bowl, but what he has done for the Buckeyes in times of turmoil will never be forgotten. Haskins will go down as one of Ohio State's all-time greats even though we will most likely have seen his last season as a Buckeye.

Day Time

Day proved himself to be a more than adequate interim head coach. He answered the call when Gene Smith appointed him to the position in August to guide the ship until Meyer returned from suspension. His success during that time period gained praise from the administration, fellow coaches, including Meyer, and the players. He especially was recognized by Haskins as a key to his development as starting quarterback.

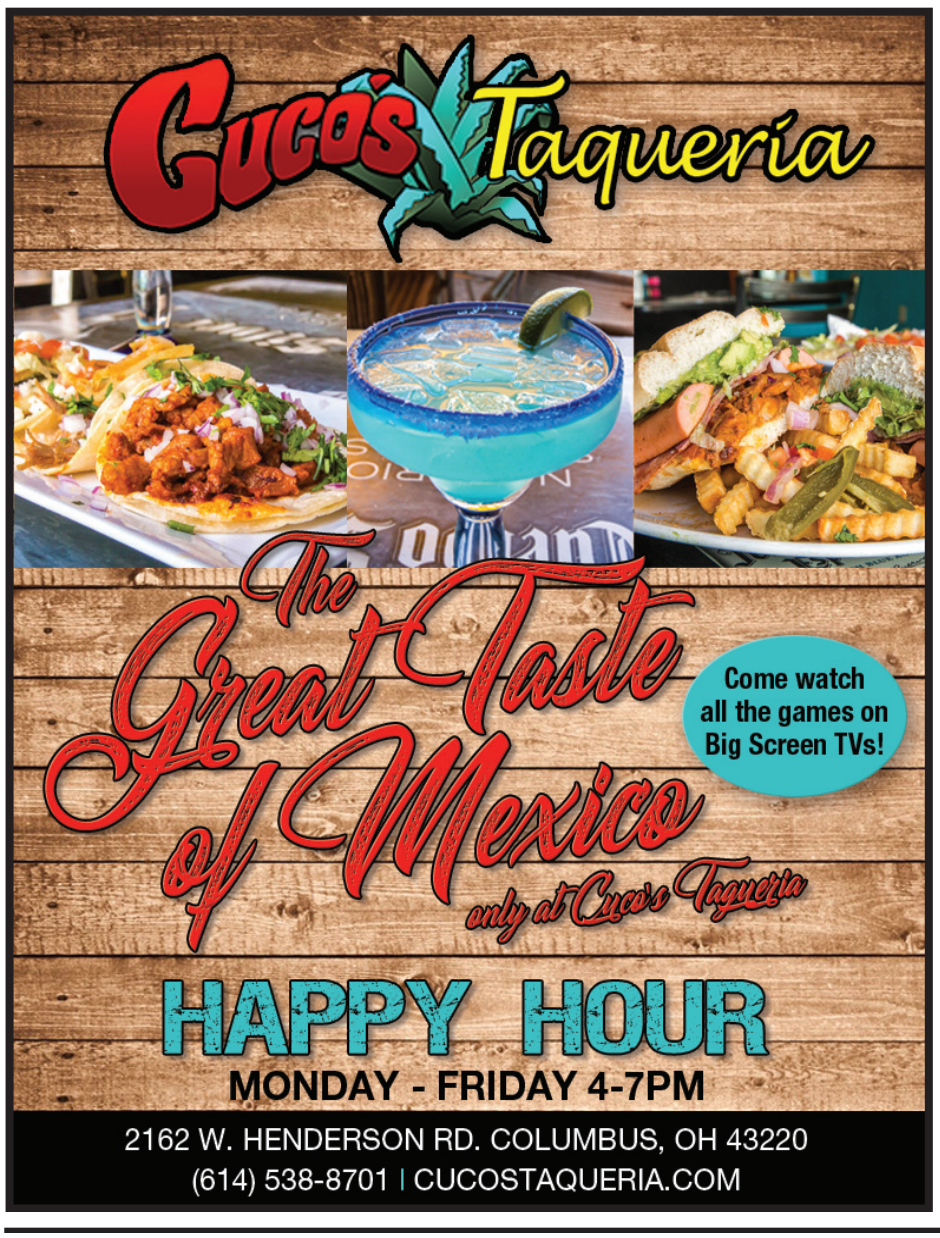
When Meyer resigned, Gene Smith named Day the next head coach, citing his success during the interim along with keeping continuity within the program as reasons for the hire.

Time will tell whether the first-time head coach was the right choice. Day will have to prove himself as the 25th head man to lead the Buckeyes and to step into the shoes of one of the very best in program history.

Day will not only have to win games but recruit at a very high level to keep the Ohio State football program one of the very best in the country. If Day could get Haskins to stay for one more season, he would immediately prove his recruiting prowess. After the Rose Bowl, Day will put together his own staff and start to formulate his own plans for success. It is a great opportunity for such a young head coach but one which comes with a ton of responsibility.

Good luck, Coach Day, we wish you well.

Known as one of the top recruiters in college football, Bill Conley is a national championship-winning coach and player at Ohio State who suited up for Woody Hayes and spent 17 years on the staffs of Earle Bruce, John Cooper and Jim Tressel.



Meyer Retirement Boosts Lackluster Bowl Season

If it weren't for the chance to see Urban Meyer coach in his last game in the Rose Bowl (and at least one more game of Dwayne Haskins), there wouldn't be much to look forward to as the season winds down.

EXNER POINT
Rich Exner

For so many reasons, the time is gone to keep clinging to the old bowl structure. The playoffs removed so much that was good about the reward of a trip to one of the big bowl games.

We will hear repeatedly in the coming weeks from those involved about how exciting it is to participate in a Rose Bowl. Yes, the Rose Bowl is still a big deal – the biggest and best of the bowl games, in fact. But it's not what it used to be.

It is no longer part of the showcase day of college football, because the biggest day no longer is Jan. 1. Gone is any possibility that the winner of the Rose Bowl, or any other New Year's Day game, will be considered for the national title.

The playoff semifinals will be played three days earlier. The championship game will come later. Sandwiched between are bowl games for the noncontenders.

College football went from a not-so-perfect system of only bowl games to a system with a small playoff bracket that is lacking.

The bowl games for the past several years have been largely on cable television. The TV audience is down from the heyday on network TV. And take a look at the empty seats at many of the games this bowl season, though the Rose Bowl will be filled. The interest just isn't there for so many of the games when there is so much focus on the playoffs involving just four schools.

Players, making economic decisions, are skipping the bowl games to remove the possibility of injury before the NFL draft. Those are understandable decisions but a reminder of how little significance the bowl games carry.

A System That Falls Short

The problem is college football has switched to a playoff system that does not work.

Some 129 teams play in the NCAA's top football division. Only 65 realistically have any chance of making the playoffs, regardless of how well they do. Ask Central Florida, which is undefeated for the second season in a row. The only real contenders are the schools from the five major conferences, plus Notre Dame. This is not the case in any other NCAA or pro sport at any level.

Just four college football teams are given a chance to prove they are the best. And it comes down to opinion in picking those teams, not results.

I watched Oklahoma and Ohio State closely in their last two games, comparing the teams every way I could. I believe Ohio State was better heading into the postseason. But that's just a belief. I can understand someone believing Oklahoma was better.

And certainly I didn't believe a two-loss Georgia team, whose best wins came against No. 10 (in the final rankings) Florida and No. 14 Kentucky, deserved to be ranked ahead of either Ohio State or Oklahoma. Don't forget, Georgia had a blowout loss as well, by 20 points to LSU.

The system is too subjective.

An eight-team playoff is needed. That's one extra game. If that's one too many, go back to an 11-game regular season for everyone.

With an eight-team playoff, I would place an emphasis on results, not opinions. Seven spots for conference champions decided on the field, one spot at-large.

Sure, this wouldn't put the eight best teams in the playoffs. But the playoffs shouldn't be about determining the eight best teams; the playoffs should be about determining the champion. If you're not good enough to win your conference, you're not good enough to win the national title.

No longer would we have to guess whether an Oklahoma is better than an Ohio State. Win your league and you're in. And no longer would we exclude an undefeated, even if untested, team we really know little about. UCF, you're in if you go undefeated.

Cut the debate. Decide it on the field.

If eight teams are too many, a compromise could be a six-team playoff – champions from the five major conferences (no subjective picking there) and then just one piece of guesswork for the sixth spot.

No. 4 would play No. 5, for the chance to play the top seed in the semifinals, with the No. 3 team playing No. 6 for the chance to play No. 2.

Do you know what that would have meant this year?

With the at-large spot going to No. 3 Notre Dame, Georgia would have been out of the mix. Then that would have set up a game between fourth-seeded Oklahoma and fifth-seeded Ohio State.

Now, that's a game worth really getting excited about.

My Top 10

Here's my top 10, and why I differ a little from the playoff committee's vote.

1. Alabama (13-0). The clear choice.

2. Clemson (13-0). Unimpressed with the résumé. The only teams Clemson beat in the committee's final rankings were No. 19 Texas A&M and No. 20 Syracuse. But the Tigers appear better than Notre Dame.

3. Notre Dame (12-0). As an undefeated team, the Irish are not that impressive. But going undefeated is impressive. The Irish deserve credit for winning every time out.

4. (sixth by the committee) Ohio State (12-1). Here is where I differ from the committee. I look more at wins than losses. OSU had more impressive wins than anyone but Alabama. There were routs of No. 7 Michigan and No. 22 Northwestern, and a close win over No. 12 Penn State.

5. (fourth by the committee) Oklahoma (12-1). The Sooners' offense is great, but the defense is awful. Oklahoma was 108th in the country for yards allowed. OSU's defense was not good, but it was at least in the middle of the pack at 67th of the 129 teams.

6. (fifth by the committee) Georgia (11-2). The nation's best two-loss team, but not deserving of being any higher.

7. (eighth by the committee) UCF (12-0). Guesswork here, but this team did not lose. Everyone else from here down lost at least twice.

8. (seventh by the committee) Michigan (10-2). So strong from games two through 11. Not so strong in games one and 12. Only losses came against my third- and fourth-ranked teams.

9. Washington (10-3). Credit for finishing strong with wins over No. 13 Washington State and No. 17 Utah.

10. (13th by the committee) Washington State (10-2). At this point in the rankings, all the teams have some blemishes. Give the Cougars the edge, in this order, over West Virginia (8-3), Penn State (9-3), LSU (9-3) and Florida (9-3).

The New Coach

We really don't know how Ryan Day will turn out as a coach.

I trust the judgment of Meyer in endorsing him for the job. I liked what Day did in winning all three of his games as a temporary coach this season.

There almost always is optimism about a new coach once the choice is made.

Earle Bruce, John Cooper and Meyer all seemed like really good hires at the time. If there were questions about one of the recent hires, it was the uncertainty surrounding Jim Tressel, since he had been a head coach only at the Division I-AA level. Tressel, of course, proved to be ultra-successful at Ohio State, just as he was at Youngstown State.

Time will tell whether Day can put together a record that comes somewhere close to that of Tressel and Meyer. But, despite the lack of a track record coming in, there's one reason I really like the hiring of Day. The choice allowed a smooth transition in the recruiting game just before signing day. That's important.

Meyer raised the program to elite status in part because of the way he recruited nationally. Picking from within increases the odds of keeping that status in place.

Advantage For Day

While Day walks into a program established as a winner at the national level, Meyer never enjoyed that chance at any of his coaching stops.

Bowling Green was 2-9 the year before Meyer arrived. He went 17-6 in two seasons. Utah was 5-6 before Meyer. He went 22-2 in two seasons. Florida was 7-5 before Meyer. He went 65-15 in six seasons. Ohio State was 6-7 before Meyer. He is 82-9 in seven seasons (this does not include the three wins during his suspension this year).

On His Terms

Meyer is the first Ohio State football coach in at least 68 years to leave the job without being fired or forced out.

Tressel during the spring of 2012 was canned, despite his 94-22 record, after committing infractions that led to NCAA probation. Cooper lost his job after the 2000 season because of his record, 111-43-4, including a 2-10-1 mark against Michigan. Bruce was axed just before the Michigan game in 1987, then went on to close out his OSU career at 81-26-1. Woody Hayes punched his way out of work in 1978, ending a 28-year career at OSU with a 205-61-10 record.

You have to go back to at least Wes Fesler in 1950 to find a coach who left on his own, though Fesler is said to have cited "excessive pressure for winning football games" as his reason for leaving. This is according to Wikipedia, which sourced Mike Bynum's 1991 book, "Woody Hayes: The Man & His Dynasty."

1st-Time Coach

Ohio State is also dipping into unfamiliar territory in hiring a coach who has never before led a program.

Meyer built up a record of 104-23 at Bowling Green, Utah and Florida before landing the OSU job. Tressel was new to Division I-A football, but he was 135-57-2 in 15 seasons at I-AA Youngstown State. Cooper was 81-41-2 in 11 seasons at Tulsa and Arizona State. Bruce was 46-34 in seven seasons at Tampa and Iowa State. Hayes was 33-11 in five seasons at Denison and Miami (Ohio). And Fesler was 10-14-1 in three seasons at Wesleyan and Pitt.

You have to go back to 1946 to find a coach, Paul Bixler, who got the OSU job without previous head coaching experience. Bixler lasted just one year at OSU, before the hiring of Fesler.

This list does not include interim coach Luke Fickell in 2011.

Closing Out The U-M Record

Meyer, in going 7-0 against Michigan, leaves as one of only three perfect coaches in the series. The other two coached in just one game each – Michigan's George Little in 1924 and Michigan's Gustave Ferbert in 1897.

The next best winning percentage belongs to Jim Tressel, 9-1 in 10 games, including one win later vacated by the NCAA.

For wins, Hayes (16-11-1) and Michigan's Fielding Yost (16-3-1) lead the way.

Michigan's Rich Rodriguez was 0-3 against Meyer, and Jim Harbaugh was 0-4. That ties Harbaugh with Ohio State's A.E. Herrnstein (0-4 from 1906-09) with the worst record in series history.

Day Looks, Sounds Ready – And He Better Be

The lure and tradition of The Game is large – it even reached a young man growing up in Manchester, N.H., and made him think that someday, someway I want to be a part of that.

THE FACTS MAN
Mike Wachsman

That young man was Ryan Day, and he is now more than just a part of it. He is the newest head coach of the Ohio State Buckeyes. It's a list that isn't very long but is very accomplished. Recent vintage has seen national championships from Jim Tressel and from Day's predecessor Urban Meyer, who decided that the Rose Bowl will be his last game as coach of the Buckeyes. After a tumultuous season, Meyer is stepping away. What he will do beginning Jan. 2 is unknown, though it sounds like he and athletic director Gene Smith are concocting a way for Meyer to stay involved with the school and athletics in one form or another.

As for Day, it would be foolish to think that he doesn't realize the magnitude of his new position.

"I remember being on my grandfather's couch and watching The Game," he told the assembled media the day the hiring was announced. "The respect I had for this place, and it was always a dream of mine."

Dream becomes reality, a reality that Day knows is filled with expectation.

"It didn't take long for me to figure out what the expectations were of Ohio State football," Day said. "Number one, win the rivalry game. And number two, win every game after that."

He sounds like a grizzled veteran already.

Meyer has had thoughts about stepping away before but always changed his mind. During the 2014 national championship season he had flare-ups of the arachnoid cyst that's on his brain but had surgery to alleviate some of the issues. He said 2015 was good and 2016 as well. Things started turning for the worse at times in 2017 and then full on this season. From the stress of the investigation into his handling of assistant Zach Smith in the wake of domestic violence allegations to missing the first three games of the season – games in which Day ably led the team to victory – to a campaign fraught with close games and a blowout loss to Purdue, Meyer just seemed anguished, pained. He was not himself, and that inability to coach the way he wanted was the final straw.

"The style of coaching that I've done for 33 years is very intense, very demanding," he said. "You can ask our former players the expectation, the way I've been and I've tried to delegate more and the product started to fail. And I had to go right back to – first I didn't feel like I was doing right by our players and by Gene. And the challenge was can I continue to coach in that style."

Meyer had an inkling that things might be heading downhill in the latter part of the 2017 campaign.

"Penn State last year, it hit really hard," Meyer said of the headaches. "And we have a great medical team that was over the top trying to help me get through it. I was on medicine and all of that.

"But we had conversations back then about longevity and about the seriousness of it. Because, as they said, it's not your foot or your elbow. We're talking about something else. And that was the – but I also had conversations, to be honest with you, in '14 when we had the whole scenario."

With a Rose Bowl victory Meyer would end his Ohio State career at an almost ridiculous 83-9, and it's fair to ask whether he is the greatest coach in Buckeyes history.

While it certainly doesn't diminish the accomplishments of Woody Hayes and Tressel, the heights Meyer has taken the Buckeyes to may never be equaled. And this is in an era when it is more difficult to dominate, when talent is spread out all over the country. Yet there are the Buckeyes, each and every season, involved at some point in national title and playoff talk. Much of that is because of Meyer and his tireless recruiting, his ability to pull in the best players year after year after year. This is the golden age of Ohio State football, so bask in it. Because what's ahead is unknown.

Day has the kind of work ethic and recruiting ability to be a rousing success and knows that players are the lifeblood of any program. He will work to make sure the product does not drop off, though that may be easier said than done.

At the end of the day, it is about the players.

"A head coach position, as I've learned over the last 17 years, is very complicated," Meyer said. "It's management of people. The one advice I give coaches all the time – and Ryan, I see it with him – you've got to have a genuine love and care for that student-athlete. And I underline genuine. It's not number 78. It can't be that guy. It's got to be his first name, last name, where he's from, his sister, his brother, and what he does after his football career is over.

"Once those players know that you have genuine love and care for them, they'll move mountains for you. And I saw that with Ryan Day."

Meyer said during the press conference that he is fairly certain he will not coach again. I've been around this profession long enough to know to never say never, but Meyer sounded sincere. It is known that his dream jobs were Ohio State and Notre Dame, so unless a position opens up in South Bend – and the Irish are in the CFP this year so Brian Kelly has bought himself a little bit of time – it is difficult to envision Meyer getting back into "the grind," as he often calls coaching. The health issues are real and cannot truly be fixed, so any stories fans see about Meyer using this as an easy out, a rest period until the next big coaching gig – USC? Auburn? – comes open can be taken with an entire shaker of salt.

"(Ohio) is where I grew up," he said. "It's not healthy, but I came to work every day with fear of letting people like Archie Griffin and our great state of Ohio and this university down, because this is home. I'm a graduate of Ohio State. And we have the best fans in the land. And I didn't want to let them down. So I dealt with – in 2014 I had that surgery. And it recurred last year. I started dealing with some issues last year. And I hired Ryan Day because I thought he was a very good coach. I knew he was because he was with me before. What I found out was that he's far past these thoughts. He's elite."

How does Meyer know that? Well, look at Ohio State's numbers this season.

Day helped mold an untested, first-year starting quarterback into a Heisman Trophy finalist, and Dwayne Haskins has his name etched into Big Ten record books in various categories after throwing for 47 touchdowns and over 4,000 yards – numbers that are a career for many Ohio State quarterbacks.

In the days leading up to the Rose Bowl, both Meyer and Day will "sprint into" recruiting and the early signing period, which begins Dec. 19. After that it's preparation for the Rose Bowl and just staying busy, with Day trying to keep busy and not be distracted by the fact the he is now the lead dog for the Ohio State football program.

It's a position for which he feels more than ready.

"Every coach who ever put a whistle around their neck strives to be the coach at the Ohio State University," he said. "I fully understand the challenges that await me. And being on the same list as Paul Brown, Woody Hayes, Earle Bruce, John Cooper, Jim Tressel and Urban Meyer – it's extremely humbling. But I'm prepared and ready for the task."

He had better be. Because the lights in Columbus shine brightly, and if you're winning everyone will know about it. And if you're losing everyone will see it. Even as far away as Manchester.

Going Out A Winner

Meyer's decision to hand the reins over to Day caught many by surprise, but now that it's a done deal it makes for a very interesting Rose Bowl.

You always assume that coaches have been everywhere – John Cooper seemed to know every other coach in the game and always had stories about road games his teams played. So to learn that Meyer has never been to the Rose Bowl, that it was a bucket list item for him, seems only fitting.

The Buckeyes have certainly saved their best for last, putting together two excellent performances in the season finale against Michigan and the Big Ten championship against Northwestern.

There was a hope – fleeting, but still hope – that Ohio State might inch its way into the College Football Playoff. It didn't happen, but the Rose Bowl is certainly not a consolation prize. It is one of the most tradition-rich, revered football games in the country, and finishing the season in Pasadena at the foot of the San Gabriel Mountains is a great conclusion. A more idyllic scene, with the sun setting in the background, cannot be found in all of college football.

And the Buckeyes and Meyer get to be a part of that.

Washington was the best team in a down Pac-12 this season, and while the Huskies can bring it defensively – and may have the best secondary Haskins will see this season – they are offensively challenged. Myles Gaskin is a force at running back, but senior quarterback Jake Browning has regressed since bursting onto the scene as a freshman. He's been more of a game-manager than game-changer, and the thought here is that if the Buckeyes score more than 21 points they will win.

It will be another audition of sorts for Day, a mirror into what he might do going forward when the clock begins ticking on his tenure as head coach moments after the final gun sounds. Meyer should be able to soak everything in, and maybe, just maybe, not be quite as anguished as he appeared to be on so many occasions this season. And when the clock reads zero and the game is over, don't be surprised if Meyer stops to take everything in one last time as a Buckeye.

He's earned that, hasn't he? And it's not like he's going away. He'll be in town, around the program in some yet to be determined capacity and likely doing something to mentor young people.

Oh yeah – he'll also be watching Day to see if he is upholding the nearly impossible standards Meyer set for the program.

"I'm sure he'll have a remote and be looking at punt protection and everything else on a weekly basis," Day said. "And he'll have his comments and he'll have things written down. So he'll always be a resource."

Most Wonderful Time

With apologies to jolly Saint Nick, the best time of the year is the football postseason. It isn't just that there is a College Football Playoff – albeit a clunky, convoluted one – but there is a smorgasbord of bowl games to satisfy every palate.

If the Camellia Bowl and Gasparilla Bowl are the fruitcakes of the bowl season, New Year's Day is that much-anticipated present you've been waiting the entire year for. It's almost the way it used to be, with the Fiesta, Rose and Sugar all being played on 2019's opening day. If only the Orange and Cotton were in the mix it would truly be nirvana.

The Big Ten is well-represented in the postseason and will have a chance to show that it belongs among the top conferences in America. Nine league teams will be bowling, and predictions follow:

Quick Lane Bowl – Minnesota 28, Georgia Tech 27

Pinstripe Bowl – Wisconsin 24, Miami (Fla.) 20

Music City Bowl – Auburn 34, Purdue 28

Peach Bowl – Michigan 23, Florida 21

Redbox Bowl – Oregon 28, Michigan State 17

Holiday Bowl – Utah 27, Northwestern 23

Outback Bowl – Mississippi State 21, Iowa 18

Citrus Bowl – Penn State 35, Kentucky 24

Rose Bowl – Ohio State 38, Washington 21

Happy holidays, enjoy the games!

Football Coaches Like Meyer Don't Step Away Lightly

THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH
Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

Where to even start.

I guess we'll start at the top – or what is the top for the next couple of weeks anyway. And that would be with Urban Meyer.

I guessed wrong on this one. While anyone who had a cousin who had a friend who knew a groundskeeper at Ohio Stadium was offering their insider information that Meyer was leaving after this season, I thought for sure he would be back.

Why was I so sure?

Because Urban Meyer is a football coach. And the really great football coaches – and even his most ardent detractors (almost exclusively out-of-state or on some radio, TV or Internet platform – or both) would agree he is a really great football coach – are football coaches 24/7/365. Coaching is what Urban Meyer lives for. What would he do if he wasn't coaching? Stay at home and drive Shelley crazy? Or have Shelley drive him crazy?

He could go to the broadcast booth, as he did between his gigs at Florida and Ohio State. But would watching the Ohio State-Michigan game from the booth give him the buzz you know he got when his Buckeyes, erratic and maligned much of the season, put 62 on Jim Harbaugh and his No. 1 defense in The Game, basically humiliating the Wolverines in what was supposed to be their year. That three or four hours are what people like Urban Meyer live for. All the other hours are just preparation for the ultimate high. I am sure he felt the same way when his Buckeyes defeated Alabama on their way to the national championship in 2014.

Broadcasting is just not the same.

On the other hand, no one other than Meyer, not even his doctors, knows the pain that the coach has endured from the cyst on his brain over the last few years. I don't know that I have ever seen someone knocked to the ground by shooting pain, such as Meyer was on the sidelines earlier this season. That's not your run-of-the mill Excedrin headache.

But while we may not be able to identify with Meyer's pain, I think we can all get a pretty good feel for what the coach's summer and early fall must have been like with the constant questions about the Zach Smith situation, the constant criticism from people who hate Meyer and Ohio State just because they hate Meyer and Ohio State, and most importantly, the forced exile from the team – his passion.

Maybe the off-field distractions exacerbated his health issues, maybe they didn't. But you throw in his team's frequently exasperating performances and it all added up to a situation that couldn't have helped his physical condition.

Now a father with a son playing college baseball, and a grandfather to boot, maybe it really is time for Meyer to stop and smell the roses, and I don't mean the roses that he will smell in his swan song on Jan. 1.

I am sure his retirement will be hard at first. He probably won't know what to do with all that time on his hands. But he'll adjust.

I was struck – but not surprised – by the words of former Buckeye basketball coach Thad Matta when he was recently honored at an Ohio State basketball game. Matta is somebody who, like Meyer, was able to achieve a high level of coaching success while battling physical ailments.

"I wake up every morning and I say, 'Something has to go wrong because I feel too good.' I am not going to apologize to people for being happy," Matta said. "I feel really good."

Maybe Meyer will end up feeling the same way. Don't forget, however, that Matta's ailments eventually caught up with him and certainly contributed to what most perceived as a decline in his program at Ohio State. As I have said over and over, good coaches don't suddenly become bad coaches, so there was something more to Matta's descent.

By his own admission, Meyer knows only one way to coach, and that style is what lifted him to the top of his profession.

"The style of coaching that I've done for 33 years is very intense, very demanding," he said upon announcing his retirement. "You can ask our former players the expectations, the way I've been. And I've tried to delegate more and be CEO-ish more, and the product started to fail."

And the one thing coaches like Meyer detest is failure.

So maybe this is the right time for him to step aside and not be forced out like Matta.

In fact one of the refreshing things about his retirement announcement was that he is one of the only major coaches at Ohio State to leave on his own terms in many years. In the 38 years of Buckeye Sports Bulletin, I believe he is the only one save basketball coach Gary Williams, who left for his alma mater Maryland after just two years in Columbus, and legendary women's hoops coach Tara VanDerveer, who sought greener pastures at Stanford after five seasons.

One thing we know is that in just seven seasons at Ohio State Meyer proved himself to be among the greatest coaches in Buckeye history, and that's a storied football coaching history. His successes in Columbus have been well chronicled elsewhere in this issue of BSB so I needn't repeat them. Most of you know them anyway, right down to the 7-0 record against Michigan.

More than just wins and losses, I will always remember the never-say-die attitude his teams brought to the field. The Buckeyes' wins over Penn State this year and last quickly come to mind. That type of come-from-behind victories starts at the top with the head coach and his staff, who instill that attitude in their players.

As an aside, however, I remain puzzled by the baffling losses such as at Iowa last season and Purdue this. I am sure Meyer remains puzzled as well.

Meyer's legacy goes beyond just Ohio State. Here he took a program that had always been solid and was already taken to the next level by Jim Tressel and simply improved on that. Where his impact was really felt was in the Big Ten.

"What Urban has brought to Buckeye Nation by far exceeded expectations," athletic director Gene Smith said. "Not only has he elevated the quality and status of our program, but his presence has elevated Big Ten football. To compete with Urban-coached teams, the Big Ten colleagues have had to elevate their programs."

They elevated their programs, especially on the recruiting trail, but for the most part the others in the Big Ten have not been able to reach the level of the Buckeyes, as witnessed by the back-to-back Big Ten championships upon which he will leave.

"Urban has a very, very special gift," Smith said. "He's an elite coach. His Ohio State teams excel both on and off the field. And I emphasize off the field. He was a brilliant leader of men. His command of football strategy is second to none. He's a tireless recruiter and an innovator in creating programs for student-athletes beyond the field."

By the way, one other legacy Meyer leaves at Ohio State is one of his favorite words – "elite." The word is tossed around repeatedly. If you don't believe me, see Smith's quote above or just listen.

Do I think Meyer will ever return to coaching?

Well, I guessed wrong on him coming back for next season, so I am probably not the right person to ask. But as I said earlier, he's first and foremost a football coach.

So we will see.

The New Day At OSU

Both Smith and Meyer seem comfortable with seamlessly moving Ryan Day into the head job at Ohio State, even though the Buckeye offensive coordinator has no permanent head coaching experience. The operative word here is "seamlessly."

"Our program does not need disruption," Smith said. "It does not need to blow up and have people come in and try and adapt to our standards of operation and try and change the infrastructure that we've put in place for the student-athlete."

Many Buckeye fans don't seem so sure, wondering why Ohio State didn't at least go through the process of a national search before settling on Day.

On the one hand, I believe that running a program year-round is lot different than being the interim coach for six or seven weeks. There is no guarantee that Day's success, both on and off the field during his audition in place of Meyer, will carry over to his tenure as head coach. Then again, there is no guarantee that anyone who had been selected for the job would have led the team to success, certainly to the level of success of Meyer.

In thinking about Smith's continuity theory, though, I see the logic.

Usually, when there is a coaching change, a program is in some sort of disarray. If it weren't, there wouldn't have been a coaching change. That is not the case at Ohio State in 2018.

Meyer leaves a Big Ten dynasty in place, with the previously mentioned back-to-back conference championships and many other successes as well. Do you blow things up and run the risk of a setback for a couple of years or more, or do you try to carry on the winning formula? Right away they would have run the risk of doing major damage to the 2019 and 2020 recruiting classes if they had gone outside.

By elevating Day and retaining the backbones of the operation in strength coach Mickey Marotti, director of operations Brian Voltolini, director of player personnel Mark Pantoni and director of player development Ryan Stamper, Smith is banking on retaining the winning formula and retaining the majority of the pledged recruits.

There are other coaches on the staff with more experience who could have tried to maintain Meyer's program. Former head coaches Greg Schiano and Kevin Wilson were obvious choices. But Smith and Meyer have obviously had their eyes on Day. I first noticed this when they raised his salary to $1 million in an effort to keep him at Ohio State, a figure out of line with what others in his position had been making in Columbus previously and higher than some more experienced coaches on the current staff.

This was a guy Ohio State obviously wanted. Now he is their man.

The precedent for a move like this was set when Oklahoma elevated the 35-year-old Lincoln Riley to replace the highly successful Bob Stoops and didn't miss a beat. Riley has had his Sooners in the College Football Playoff in both of his first two seasons in Norman.

Only time will tell if Day and the Buckeyes have similar success. I think everyone would agree that there appeared to be a lot to like about the new coach during his 3-0 audition and how he gracefully transitioned back to one of Meyer's top lieutenants.

One thing is certain though. If Day does not uphold the standards set by Meyer and Tressel before him, especially vs. That Team Up North, Buckeye fans will turn on him in a hurry.

Of course if that does happen, by then Meyer might be rested and ready to resume his rightful place on the Buckeye sidelines.

No Print Until 2019

Pardon me if I got a little cranky with some of our readers who called in after the Big Ten Championship Game looking for their BSB covering that game with Northwestern. As was stated in several places in the Dec. 1 issue of BSB, including this space, coverage of the title tilt in Indianapolis was provided, extensively I might add, on our electronic BuckeyeSports.com website.

Buckeye Sports Bulletin has 24 print issues to allot over the course of any given year. When we map out the print schedule for each publishing year, it does not pay to designate a paper for the week after the Michigan game because the Buckeyes might not be playing then, especially with BuckeyeSports.com to more than adequately cover the team if it does play for the championship.

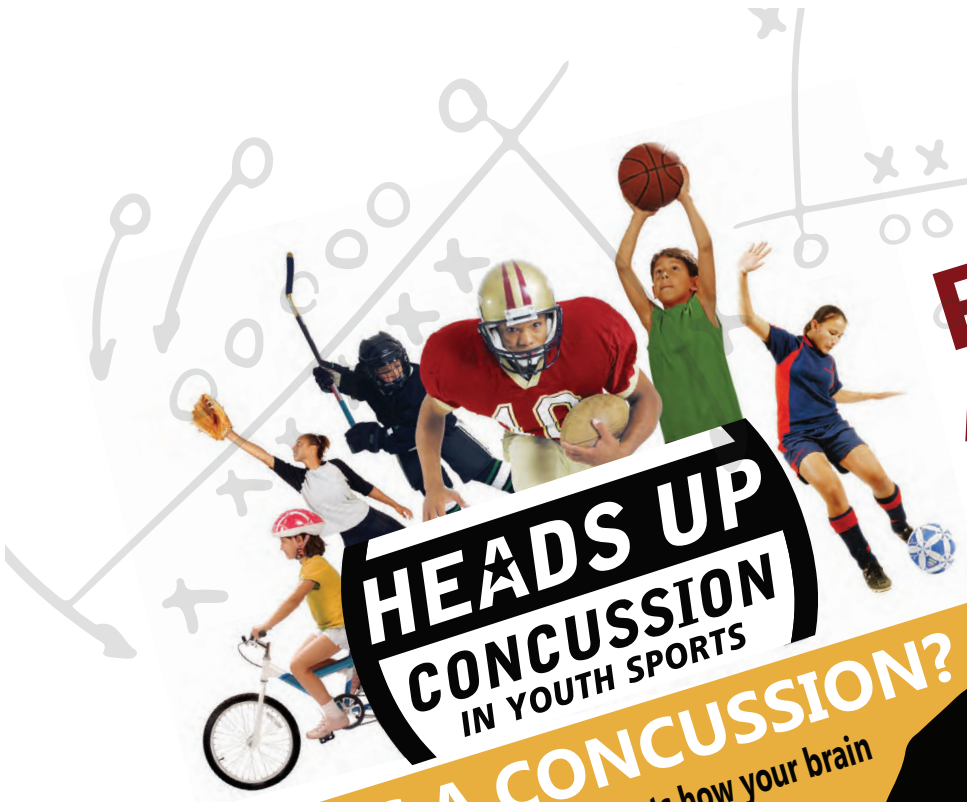
I wasn't cranky, however, because people were calling looking for their BSB. On the contrary, we consider it a compliment when people are looking for their paper. When they *stop* looking for their issue is when we will become concerned.

Why I was cranky was because several readers insisted that they were too old to read anything online. I am as much a Luddite (look it up, Terry from Cleveland) as anybody, but even I have come into the 20th (I'm not saying 21st) century. My parents, the incomparable Jack and Faye Moskowitz, aged 91 and old enough (I'll protect you on this one, Faye), respectively, have been enjoying the Internet much longer than I. In fact my father, who has been a bit under the weather recently, will probably have thousands of emails when he finally gets up the strength to check them.

BuckeyeSports.com is included with your subscription to Buckeye Sports Bulletin. The staff at BSB does an outstanding job of posting daily stories that you won't see in the print BSB, and they are always providing interesting and entertaining discourse with the readers on the popular Forum. Not taking advantage of BuckeyeSports.com is like ordering a three-course meal and eating your main course but passing on your appetizer and dessert.

The next print edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin will be mailed on Jan. 15, 2019. Don't miss our coverage of the early football recruiting signing period starting Dec. 19 or our reports from Pasadena leading up to the Rose Bowl with Washington on Jan. 1.

Instructions on how to access BuckeyeSports.com can be found on page 5 of this issue. If you still need help, give us a call at (614) 486-2202 and we will be glad to help get you started.



HEADS UP CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS

FOR ATHLETES

• CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS •

Headache • Nausea • Vomiting • Balance problems • Dizziness • Double or Blurred vision • Sensitivity to light or noise • Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy • Memory problems • Confusion • Just not "feeling right" or "feeling down"

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that affects how your brain works. It can happen when your brain gets bounced around in your skull after a fall or hit to the head.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?

REPORT IT. Tell your coach, parent, and athletic trainer if you think you or one of your teammates may have a concussion. It's up to you to report your symptoms. Your coach and team are relying on you. Plus, you won't play your best if you are not feeling well.

GET CHECKED OUT. If you think you have a concussion, do not return to play on the day of the injury. Only a health care provider can tell if you have a concussion and when it is OK to return to school and play. The sooner you get checked out, the sooner you may be able to safely return to play.

GIVE YOUR BRAIN TIME TO HEAL. A concussion can make everyday activities, such as going to school, harder. You may need extra help getting back to your normal activities. Be sure to update your parents and doctor about how you are feeling.

WHY SHOULD I TELL MY COACH & PARENTS ABOUT MY SYMPTOMS?

Playing or practicing with a concussion is dangerous and can lead to a longer recovery.

While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have another concussion. This can put you at risk for a more serious injury to your brain and can even be fatal.

GOOD TEAMMATES KNOW: IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON

http://www.healthy.ohio.gov/concussion

Ohio Department of Health

OHIO INJURY PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP
Injury Prevention Policy and Advocacy Action Group

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention