

BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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Vol. 39, No. 3

"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

Sept. 21, 2019

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Dobbins Dominates

J.K. Dobbins Helps Ohio State Run Past Indiana In Big Ten Opener

By ANDREW LIND
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Back in the same stadium in which he made his college debut two seasons ago, Ohio State junior running back J.K. Dobbins rushed for 193 yards and one touchdown and added another score through the air in a 51-10 win over Indiana on Sept. 14.

Dobbins burst onto the scene as a true freshman by rushing for 181 yards on 29 carries in the Buckeyes' 2017 season-opening win over the Hoosiers and nearly bested that effort in the first half of this game.

The highlight of Dobbins' day was his 26-yard touchdown run in the second quarter, as he ran around the left side of the offensive line, turned upfield, weaved his way through several defenders, stiff-armed another and barreled his way into the end zone.

"I think it's just a play that shows what I can really do," Dobbins said after the game. "I think a lot of people forgot what I can do, so I just want to keep showing that, keep getting better."

In total, Ohio State rushed for 306 yards and three touchdowns on 42 attempts, which averages out to 7.3 yards per carry. That's the most rushing yards the Buckeyes have had in a single game since last year's season opener against Oregon State (375 yards), as well as the best average since a blowout win over Michigan State in 2017 (8.0 yards per carry).

"I think that we're going to see some things on film with J.K. that were really good," said head coach Ryan Day. "He's proven he can be the bell cow. Coming off of last year, kind of splitting carries with Mike (Weber), he wanted to prove he can be that bell cow."

Dobbins – who also added 14 yards and the touchdown on two receptions – finished the day just 10 yards shy of his career-high 203 yards, set in the



ANDREW LIND

BELL COW BACK – Running back J.K. Dobbins rushed for 193 yards, which included a 26-yard touchdown in the second quarter of Ohio State's win at Indiana. He finished the day just 11 yards shy of setting a new career high.

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Buckeye Leaves

The Buckeyes got it done for the third straight week, handily beating Indiana 51-10. The second straight victory of 40 points or more again came with solid play in all aspects of the game, with a blocked punt, 306 rushing yards and five team sacks being some of the major highlights.

Following the game, these are the players who stood out to the members of the BSB staff as well as to readers on the BuckeyeSports.com Forum.

Wyatt Crosher, BSB: J.K. Dobbins will get all the headlines, and rightfully so, but redshirt freshman running back Master Teague completely established himself as the No. 2 back in the Indiana win.

Teague rushed only 10 times but managed to pull together 106 yards, including once for 40 yards into the end zone. The second-year back used his typical power style to push through the gaps and gain plenty of extra yards on each of his rushes but also showed loads of speed to be able to break free in the open field.

For Teague, who has shown flashes in the small glimpses that have been seen from him, this could be the type of performance that sticks him firmly behind Dobbins in the depth chart and ahead of other names like Demario McCall, Marcus Crowley and Steele Chambers.

Joe Dempsey, BSB: It's tough to not give the best player on the field my Buckeye Leaf every week because Chase Young certainly deserves it, but I'm going with Damon Arnette. A player who has possibly heard more

criticism than anyone on the team, the three-year starter excelled against Indiana.

With the Hoosiers facing third-and-goal from the Ohio State 4-yard line, Arnette jumped in front of a Peyton Ramsey pass, made a spinning catch and weaved through would-be tacklers for a 96-yard touchdown. The fifth-year senior corner also posted two solo tackles and two pass breakups in his impressive performance.

Andrew Lind, BSB: Chris Olave continues to show why Ohio State recruited him over Purdue's dynamic wide receiver Rondale Moore late in the 2018 recruiting cycle.

Olave continues to be quarterback Justin Fields' go-to wide receiver, hauling in three receptions for 70 yards and a 37-yard score. He also blocked a punt that rolled out of the back of the end zone for a safety.

Olave's excellent route-running on offense and knack for finding the ball on special teams make him one of the most well-rounded players in the country. And if he continues to make an impact in both phases of the game, I wouldn't be surprised to see him in the conversation for the Biletnikoff Award as the nation's best wide receiver at the end of the season.

Patrick Mayhorn, BSB: After a slow start to the season against Florida Atlantic, running back J.K. Dobbins has caught fire the last two games, and while he didn't land one last week, he gets a Buckeye Leaf from me this week. The junior halfback ran for 193 yards on 22 carries and added a score, though he found the end zone twice, with the second coming on a short pass reception.

To put it simply, Dobbins was flawless against the Hoosiers. He got a lot of help from his line, but he found

holes well, ran as hard as he's ever run and put up one of the most impressive runs of his career on his 26-yard touchdown run in the second quarter. It was a full day of bouncing off would-be tacklers, and while I'm not quite ready to say that Dobbins is fully back, he certainly looks a lot like his freshman form right now, and Ohio State will need that to continue.

Frank Moskowitz, BSB: I'm confident that J.K. Dobbins will be up for Buckeye Leaf honors every week. Let's give props to the unsung heroes, the guys who will help propel Dobbins to the NFL – the offensive line. This was a group that I worried about heading into the season. The big guys seem to be getting better each week. That bodes well for Dobbins, Justin Fields and the whole offensive crew, which bodes well for the Buckeyes!

BSB Subscribers

J.K. Dobbins. 193 yards and two touchdowns. Enough said.

– Tiffin Buckeye

I am no expert, but in a 51-10 game (which wasn't that close) I'm inclined to hand out 22 Buckeye Leaves.

Let me mention a few guys who aren't getting enough attention from most of us fans: Malik Harrison, Binjimen Victor, Damon Arnette. They're playing at a higher level than I expected before the season began.

– Terrier Buck



From The Message Board

Following Ohio State's 51-10 win over Indiana on Sept. 14, Buckeye Sports Bulletin asked the readers on BuckeyeSports.com, as well as staff members, what kind of expectations they have for running back J.K. Dobbins this season. Here are some of the responses:

"Thirteen touchdowns and 1,500 yds, though it depends on the continued development of the offensive line."

– Terrier Buck

"I'm honestly expecting 15 touchdowns and 1,600 yards."

– Tiffin Buckeye

"I see Dobbins striving for the gold standard set by Zeke. I don't think he will reach Zeke's level but it has to be a goal for him at least in quality if not the paycheck."

– Peyote Buck

"I'm expecting Dobbins to continue, somewhat, in the form that has been seen of him in recent weeks. He is exploding through the gaps and breaking tackles much like he did in his freshman run, and I think that has a lot to do with the offensive line giving him the opportunity to make those plays. It will get tougher for him when the tougher Big Ten teams start coming into town, but I don't see any reason why Dobbins can't have a season around 1,400 yards and 15 or more touchdowns."

– Wyatt Crosher, BSB

"I never doubted Dobbins' abilities, despite what he considered to be a terrible performance last season. Aside from a funky game against Florida Atlantic, he's proven that he can be the No. 1 back for Ohio State so far this season. Eddie George's single-season school record of 1,927 yards seems unattainable – as does Pete Johnson's 25 touchdowns in one year – but there's no reason to think Dobbins can't surpass his freshman

effort in terms of rushing yards (1,403) or his sophomore campaign in rushing touchdowns (10), which would put him among the top 10 in school history in the former category for a single season. The emergence of Master Teague as his backup and as a short-yardage option, as well as quarterback Justin Fields' running ability, will likely prevent him from coming anywhere close in the touchdown category, though."

– Andrew Lind, BSB

"I think Dobbins can surpass his freshman marks of 1,403 yards and eight total touchdowns, especially since he already has five total TDs and 425 yards on the ground through three games. The junior captain could definitely break his sophomore TD total of 12 (10 rushing, two receiving), but that will depend a lot on opportunity. I think the most important thing is how much better Dobbins looks running the ball this season. He's continued to gain power while showing improved acceleration and speed once he hits the second level. Dobbins will be a big part of what Ohio State wants to accomplish, and it could be a big year for the talented tailback."

– Joe Dempsey, BSB

"I think we could see a repeat of his freshman campaign, which almost certainly means a playoff berth for the Buckeyes. He has looked tremendous the last two weeks, and I think that if he can continue to see the field as well as he has, he'll be one of the best backs in the country. It certainly helps that the offensive line has been very good the last two games, but count me as back on the Dobbins hype train at this point in the season."

– Patrick Mayhorn, BSB

Little To Complain About After Three Games



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Realizing the 2019 season is only three games old and none of the three opponents vanquished so far were considered to be formidable competition, Ohio State still looks and acts the part of a team intent upon proving it is every bit as good as any other in college football.

Offense? Defense? Special teams? Taking care of business at home? Taking care of business on the road? The Buckeyes have checked so many boxes during the first three weeks that it's difficult to envision a game plan good enough to beat them.

It wasn't supposed to be this way, of course. The team was transitioning from a coaching legend to someone who had never before run a program of his own on any level, the new quarterback had never before started a game on the college level, four-fifths of the offensive line was brand-new, and the defense was being rebuilt from the ground up after a 2018 season during which opponents racked up 5,648 yards – the highest single-season total against any Ohio State defense in program history.

Teams facing that much of a transformation don't typically break from the starting gate by outscoring their opponents by a 107-point margin after only three games. Yes, I realize Florida Atlantic, Cincinnati and Indiana are not going to be in the College Football Playoff conversation, but you also can't discount the fact that each of those teams is going to win some games this season.

Perhaps the best thing about the 51-10 victory at Indiana was that the Buckeyes faced a little adversity – albeit most of it because of their own doing – and never let up on the accelerator.

The early part of the game was marked by a pair of miscues. First, junior kicker Blake Haubeil misfired wide right on a 32-yard field-goal attempt, and then a sure touchdown pass from sophomore quarterback Justin Fields was dropped by J.K. Dobbins, probably because the OSU running back isn't used to being as wide open as he was.

After that, the Buckeyes did pretty much what they wanted when they wanted.

Fields fought some inconsistency for the first time in his brief career, but he still managed to complete 14 of 24 attempts for 199 yards and three touchdowns. The sophomore QB ran the ball only four times, but one of those was an 8-yard scramble for a first down, and another was a 3-yarder that accounted for his team's first touchdown of the afternoon.

Fields was an equal-opportunity employer in the passing game, connecting with six different receivers, three of whom caught one touchdown each. That included Dobbins, who made up for his first-quarter drop with a 4-yard scoring grab early in the third quarter.

While Fields & Co. were moving the ball fairly effortlessly through the air, the OSU ground game chewed up 306 yards, the most against a Big Ten opponent since the Buckeyes rushed for 335 during a 48-3 rout of Michigan State in 2017. Dobbins joined former teammate Mike Weber in cracking the century mark in that game, and he teamed with redshirt freshman Master Teague in breaking the 100-yard barrier against the Hoosiers.

Dobbins used equal parts thunder and lightning for his 193 yards on 22 carries, a workload that included a 56-yard bolt through the heart of the IU defense as well as a 26-yard touchdown run that included the shedding of six would-be Indiana tacklers. It marked the second straight game that Dobbins had rushed for 100 or more yards and the 11th such performance of his career. He is also

approaching rarefied air, now needing only 119 yards to become just the 11th Ohio State player with 3,000 or more career rushing yards.

Meanwhile, Teague gave the Hoosiers no respite when Dobbins was out of the lineup. The 5-11, 220-pounder notched the first 100-yard game of his career, finishing with 106 yards and a touchdown on only 10 carries.

While the offense was chewing up the

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Mark Rea

Indiana defense, the same could be said for the other side of the ball. One year after piling up 406 total yards against the Buckeyes, the Hoosiers were held to a fraction of that total. IU managed only 257 yards, while junior QB Peyton Ramsey – who torched Ohio State for 322 yards and three scores through the air in 2018 – was smothered to the tune of just 162 yards, no touchdowns and an interception that was returned 96 yards for a pick-six by OSU senior cornerback Damon Arnette. It was Arnette's first interception of the year, the fifth of his career, and his first career touchdown.

Ramsey completed only 19 of 33 attempts, partly because there was an Ohio State defender in his face most of the afternoon. More often than not, that was junior defensive end Chase Young, who had two of his team's five sacks, running his career total to 18, which ties him for the No. 10 spot on the program's all-time list.

And then there was the performance of sophomore Chris Olave, who had himself a tidy little day that included three receptions for 70 yards and a touchdown along with a blocked punt that went for a safety. If you're keeping score at home, that's two punt blocks for Olave in the last six games. He blocked one late in the third quarter against Michigan that then-true freshman Sevyn Banks returned for a touchdown, one of three third-quarter touchdowns the Buckeyes scored to turn a close game into a 62-39 blow-out of the Wolverines.

If I were going to nitpick, I'd point out the fact that, after a promising opening game, the tight end has once again become a forgotten weapon in the passing attack, and the second- and third-team offense need a lot of work, particularly in the area of ball security.

Still, if that's about the extent of what is wrong with Ohio State, I'd say the Buckeyes are in mighty good shape after the first three games of the 2019 season.

Will He Or Won't He?

Urban Meyer is no longer the head coach at Ohio State, but he and his future remain a source of great curiosity in and around Columbus.

The former coach was interviewed by Cleveland.com sportswriter Doug Lesmerises for a long-form story that was published online Sept. 12 in which Meyer opined on a number of subjects, not the least of which was whether he would coach again.

Meyer busies himself these days with a number of activities, including providing analysis on Fox Sports, serving as an assistant athletic director and co-teacher of a "Leadership and Character" course at Ohio State, and lending his name (and presumably some financial aid) to a new restaurant and brew

house that opens in suburban Columbus in late September. And there's playing the role of husband, father and grandfather.

But Meyer has been in the coaching profession for 33 of the 55 years he has been on this earth, and he admitted to Lesmerises that he often worries if he is making an impact on those around him, adding that he misses the "fight" of preparing for games and recruiting.

"The morning is the hardest time of day. You're not in a fight," Meyer said. "I've been in a fight for 33 years, and now you're not in that fight. So, how do you fulfill that fight? And I feel that every morning. Every morning.

"(It was) all about a win and a loss for 33 years. I mean, every day was. Not just you're getting ready for a game. No, no, no, no. You're recruiting every day. You're going against Alabama and Clemson every day, That Team Up North every day. Now, you're not. That's the No. 1 void. You're not in a fight."

Does that sound like a man who will never coach again? Does this?

"I'm not there at the moment," Meyer said of a possible return. "Next year, can I say that? We'll talk again next year and we'll see."

I said this when Meyer handed the coaching whistle over to Ryan Day, and I'll say it again: The man is a coach. It's what he does. It's who he is.

Meyer had to step away from the sideline, and his health dictated that situation. But taken away from the everyday stress of the job, the unbearable headaches caused by the inoperable cyst on Meyer's brain begin to subside. It's not unlike the situation that caused the coach to retire at Florida only to resurface at Ohio State 11 months later.

It's a pretty sure bet that Meyer will coach again. And why not? Who among us can say that we are among the world's best at our profession? And if we were, and all things were considered equally, why would we walk away from that?

Ara Parseghian is the only example that readily comes to mind regarding a college coach who walked away (and stayed away) from the profession at the top of his game. Dick Vermeil, Mack Brown, Steve Spurrier, Bill Snyder, Les Miles, Butch Davis, Howard Schnellenberger, Bob Davie – each of them departed the sideline for one reason or another (some for several years) before coming back for at least one more bite of the college coaching apple.

Whether it's at some SEC school, USC, Florida State or Notre Dame, Ohio State fans had better prepare themselves for the inevitability that Meyer will once again patrol a college sideline. That inevitability won't happen today or tomorrow. But it will happen.

A Little Internet Funny

In case you missed it, Ohio State has lost its attempt to trademark the word "The" – as in "The" Ohio State University.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office announced Sept. 11 that it had turned down the university's request to trademark the most commonly used word in the English language when used as part of the school's name on university merchandise. The patent office said the trademark appears to be used for "merely decorative manner" and as an "ornamental feature" that doesn't appear to function as a trademark that would differentiate the items from others.

The ruling touched off a spate of witty responses on social media, with perhaps this one as the most amusing: "The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office now has more wins against Ohio State than Jim Harbaugh."



to both major polls. The Buckeyes, despite a 51-10 win over Indiana on Sept. 14, remained behind Clemson, Alabama, Georgia, LSU and Oklahoma in both the AP and coaches polls and look to stay in that spot until one of those teams trips up.

The Sept. 15 polls are without much change at the top behind that first six, as well. The only change in the AP top 10 behind Ohio State was at 10th, where after Notre Dame, Auburn and Florida, Utah jumped over Michigan, moving the Wolverines back to 11th. In the coaches poll, there were no changes behind the Buckeyes in the top 10, with Notre Dame, Florida, Auburn and Michigan rounding out that group.

The Buckeyes are joined by four other Big Ten teams in the top 25 after Michigan State and Maryland both fell out of the rankings following losses to Arizona State (10-7) and Temple (20-15) respectively. Behind the Buckeyes and Michigan, Penn State sits at 13th in the AP, tied with Wisconsin, and 12th in the coaches. The Badgers are 14th in the coaches Poll.

The final Big Ten team in both polls is Iowa, which moved up to 18th after a tight, 18-17 win over Iowa State.

Chris Booker Sheds Black Stripe

Ohio State walk-on junior wide receiver Chris Booker is the latest Buckeye to lose his black helmet stripe, officially welcoming him to the team.

The 6-0, 185-pound St. Louis native joined the Ohio State roster in the summer of 2019 after playing for Ohio State's club program. He reeled in 14 catches for 371 yards and seven touchdowns for the club Buckeyes in 2018.

Booker was originally at Dayton, where he redshirted and served on their scout team before heading off to Dodge City Community College, enrolling at Arkansas State and eventually landing at Ohio State for his sophomore campaign in 2018.

While Booker is unlikely to see time on the field for Ohio State this season, there is a template to follow for walk-ons, thanks to the example set by C.J. Saunders. If Booker can make plays on the scout team and in practice, he could be the next walk-on turned contributor.

Buckeyes Take Eight Freshmen To Indiana

For its first road game of the season, Ohio

2019 Ohio State Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Result/Time (ET)	TV	2019 Record
Aug. 31	FLORIDA ATLANTIC	W, 45-21	FOX	1-2 (0-0 Conference USA)
Sept. 7	CINCINNATI*	W, 42-0	ABC	2-1 (0-0 American Athletic Conference)
Sept. 14	at Indiana	W, 51-10.	FOX	2-1 (0-1 Big Ten)
Sept. 21	MIAMI (OHIO)	3:30	BTN	1-2 (0-0 Mid-American)
Sept. 28	at Nebraska	TBA	TBA	2-1 (0-0 Big Ten)
Oct. 5	MICHIGAN STATE*	7:30 p.m.	ABC/ESPN	2-1 (0-0 Big Ten)
Oct. 18	at Northwestern*	8:30 p.m.	FS1	1-1 (0-0 Big Ten)
Oct. 26	WISCONSIN*	TBA	TBA	2-0 (0-0 Big Ten)
Nov. 9	MARYLAND	TBA	TBA	2-1 (0-0 Big Ten)
Nov. 16	at Rutgers	TBA	TBA	1-1 (0-1 Big Ten)
Nov. 23	PENN STATE*	TBA	TBA	3-0 (0-0 Big Ten)
Nov. 30	at Michigan*	12 p.m.	FOX	2-0 (0-0 Big Ten)
Dec. 7	Big Ten Championship**	8 p.m.	FOX	

* 2018 bowl team
** at Indianapolis (Lucas Oil Stadium)

Student Ticket Sales Down From 2018

According to a report from Andy Anders of The Lantern, Ohio State's student season ticket sales are down by more than 6,500 tickets from 2018 to 2019. Ohio State sold 28,392 student ticket packages in 2018, and that number is down to 21,716 in 2019.

Ohio State cited a change to the way ticketing is done, with the move from more paper tickets to more mobile ticketing this season, as well as the lack of a home game against Michigan this season, but the drop in ticket sales is consistent both with Ohio State's general ticket sales, and with a national decrease in sporting event attendance.

Ohio State deputy director of athletics Diana Sabau issued a statement to The Lantern on the drop in numbers:

"Students have asked us for probably a year to two years that, 'How can we not wait in line to pick up our tickets when we get back to school?' I think having a mobile ticket achieved that. I think that, for whatever reason, that combination and not having Michigan at home give us a little bit larger decline."

This is the lowest sale total for Ohio State in at least a decade, and the first time since 2011 for a total under 25,000.

Buckeyes Stagnant In Coaches, AP Poll

For the second straight week, Ohio State is the sixth-best team in the nation, according

Spielman's Debut Chronicled On Reprint Thursday

Buckeye Sports Bulletin celebrated the 35th anniversary of Buckeye great Chris Spielman's first game for Ohio State with reprints from the BSB covering that 22-14 victory over Oregon State on Sept. 8, 1984, at the electronic BuckeyeSports.com. The stories, which were posted on Sept. 12 as part of Reprint Thursdays, are archived for your information and enjoyment.

On Sept. 19, we will be reprinting stories covering Ohio State's first conference confrontation with Nebraska, played in Lincoln on Oct. 8, 2011, a game that turned on an injury to OSU quarterback Braxton Miller.

Access to BuckeyeSports.com is free to all BSB print subscribers and is a good way to keep track of the breaking news between print issues of Buckeye Sports Bulletin. Don't miss news from Ryan Day's Tuesday press conferences or practice during the week. Also enjoy Reprint Thursdays and our popular Staff Predictions the day of each game.

The BuckeyeSports.com website is available 24/7/365 with all the breaking news posted, including the latest in recruiting, and then discussed by readers and staff on the BuckeyeSports.com Forum. Subscribers can also read the entire print issue of BSB before it has even hit the post office.

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If you are a subscriber and have been unable to access any features on the site, please give us a call at (614) 486-2202 and we will help you gain access.

Readers who have been experiencing postal delivery problems, as mentioned, 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.

State traveled with eight true freshmen to Bloomington to take on Indiana. Running backs Steele Chambers and Marcus Crowley, offensive linemen Dawand Jones and Harry Miller,

wide receivers Jameson Williams and Garrett Wilson, defensive end Zach Harrison and linebacker Craig Young were all part of Ohio State's 76-man travel roster.

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From The Pages Of BSB

35 Years Ago – 1984

Ohio State head coach Earle Bruce asked a favor of linebacker Pepper Johnson back in the spring, and Johnson was more than happy to oblige.

"He told me that he was going to put everything on my shoulders and asked if I could handle it," Johnson said. "I told him, 'Yeah, I like pressure on me.' I felt that if there was anybody he wanted to put the pressure on, it should be me because the inside linebacker should be the leader."

So Bruce found his new defensive leader, and an enthusiastic one at that.

"I feel I can go back to the huddle every time and give them a sharp, crisp call to get their heads up and keep them going," Johnson said. "I add a couple of words – that little bit can get the defense going."

Johnson led by example in the Buckeyes' 44-0 shutout of Washington State. He was tops on the team in tackles with 11, in addition to having a pair of big plays, to earn Key Oldsmobile Subaru/Rent-A-Wreck Key Buck of the Week honors.

"Pepper Johnson made two outstanding plays," Bruce said following the game. "He recovered a fumble in the end zone and intercepted a ball down around the 10-yard line."

30 Years Ago – 1989

In 1985, John Cooper hired Jim Colletto as his offensive coordinator at Arizona State. The following year, the Sun Devils' offense averaged 31 points and 404 yards per game and rolled to the Pac-10 championship and a Rose Bowl victory over Michigan.

When Cooper moved on to Ohio State in 1988, Colletto moved with him as offensive coordinator and assistant head coach.

"Jim Colletto is one of the brightest offensive coaches in football," Cooper said. "I consider myself very lucky to have a person like Jim on my staff. I think Ohio State should also consider itself very lucky to have a coach like Jim around."

With the obvious backing of his head coach, Colletto had spent most of the preseason drilling the word consistency into his offensive players' heads. According to the OSU assistant, the practice time was well spent.

"Their awareness of what we're doing and what we expect of them has been tremendous," Colletto said. "The obvious reason for that is because they have been in the system for a year now and they know exactly what we expect of them."

"They understand things much better now. We don't have to take a lot of time to explain things. That saves you a lot of practice time."

25 Years Ago – 1994

Heated discussions were expected when the university announced plans to pursue an arena and city officials vowed to erect such a facility in the heart of town. The battle appeared to be on for where the arena would rest. But the debate eased after several reportedly calm negotiations, which were headed by OSU trustee George Skestos and Columbus developer Ron Pizzuti, and two arenas were agreed upon.

"I think the possibility of two arenas was really out there from the very beginning," said Herb Asher, a member of the OSU President Council, Gee's special assistant for state relations and a professor of political science at the school. "There was discussion early on of a university facility and a city facility, so I don't think it's a surprise it worked out this way. I think it's evident both sides are

happy with the outcome and are ready to move ahead."

Asher was among the university representatives who would stay closely involved with the project. He said OSU's team was eager to get going.

Ohio State athletic director Andy Geiger also was understandably pleased that the proposed arena is now under way.

"It's a thrill," Geiger told BSB. "What a wonderful project to be involved with. There's certainly a lot of work ahead, but I find it both challenging and exciting."

20 Years Ago – 1999

After the first Ohio University touchdown, junior linebacker Na'il Diggs blasted members of the Ohio State defensive line on the sideline and sat off by himself for a couple of minutes in a show of disgust.

It wasn't the norm for the usually quiet and composed Diggs, but he seemed to be the only defender arriving to the ball with a hunger and eventually popped when it was clear he was alone in his effort, save for fellow outside linebacker Courtland Bullard.

"I think a couple of young guys didn't really expect or know what we were talking about this week," Diggs said. "I think it took too many plays to get adjusted to what they were doing. We knew what we had to do to make the plays."

"For me, that went overboard. I'm not usually one to blow up on guys. I'll yell every once in a while, but I guess I was too emotional because they had driven down the field and scored, and I knew we were better than them."

The Buckeyes would go on to win the game 40-16.

15 Years Ago – 2004

When Ohio State took control of the ball on its own 45-yard line with just 25 seconds to play and the score knotted at 21 with Marshall, it quickly became apparent that the Buckeyes' second game of the season would likely rest on the right foot of Mike Nugent.

That OSU ended up on the Thundering Herd's 37-yard line with two seconds to play – meaning the game-winning kick would be a career-long 55 yarder for Nugent if he connected – hardly mattered. The Buckeye kicker had been so automatic during the 2002 and '03 seasons while hitting nearly 90 percent of his field goals, including all three attempts from beyond 50 yards, that his teammates had no doubt he would win the game for them.

"I knew it," senior defensive end Simon Fraser said after the 24-21 victory. "The whole entire stadium knew it."

10 Years Ago – 2009

Junior long snapper Jake McQuaide often had an upside-down view of his surroundings on the football field. That didn't mean he didn't have his head on straight. He knew as well as anyone the sacrifices necessary to play for the Buckeyes because he paid – and played – his way onto the team.

A product of Cincinnati Elder where he was also a tight end, McQuaide could have gone to a mid-level Division I-A school with the hopes of getting immediate playing time instead of trying to make the squad of one of the premier programs in the country.

"I had a few things I could have maybe looked into, but I didn't," McQuaide said. "Coming from a school like Elder, we had big crowds for football games. Going to a small school isn't what I felt like I wanted to do."

McQuaide's story was not unlike the 20-plus other walk-ons

on the team. However, he was different from most in that the previous season head coach Jim Tressel had rewarded him with an athletic scholarship. Although McQuaide, an astronautical engineering major, already had an academic scholarship from OSU, the news was a big relief to him.

"It was unbelievable," McQuaide said. "I called my parents, and they were ecstatic as would be expected. It's a huge weight off your shoulders. You don't have to worry about student loans anymore. It's a big deal. I got an academic scholarship that helped but not nearly as much as a football scholarship does."

Five Years Ago – 2014

One week after Ohio State fell to Virginia Tech in the Horseshoe, the Buckeyes bounced back in a big way with a 66-0 win over Kent State in front of 104,404. It was their 39th consecutive victory against an in-state opponent.

J.T. Barrett completed 23 of 30 passes for 312 yards and six TDs with one pick in an abbreviated afternoon. He played the first half and one possession in the third quarter before giving way to sophomore Cardale Jones.

Before departing, however, Barrett became the first OSU quarterback to throw for at least 300 yards since Terrelle Pryor vs. Indiana in 2010 and just the second signal caller to toss six touchdowns, joining Kenny Guiton, who had done so the previous season vs. Florida A&M. Called "The Distributor" by his teammates, Barrett lived up to that nickname by completing passes to 11 different players.

Sophomore tailback Ezekiel Elliot had perhaps his best day as a Buckeye despite playing only in the first half, rushing for a season-best 65 yards on seven carries and adding four receptions for 52 yards. Sophomore wide receiver Michael Thomas caught a pair of touchdown passes. Freshman Curtis Samuel rushed for 100 yards on 15 carries and added 40 yards on four receptions, with most of the yardage coming in the second half, which is when both touchdowns occurred.

One Year Ago – 2018

Forty-six days. One-hundred-and-sixty-nine points scored; 62 points allowed. Eleven touchdown passes for star quarterback Dwayne Haskins.

There were a lot of ways to quantify Ryan Day's time as Ohio State's acting head coach. He took charge in place of Urban Meyer on Aug. 1, leading the Buckeyes throughout fall camp. Then, on Aug. 22, Day found out that he'd be the top dog in Columbus for a few more weeks – including the first three games of Ohio State's 2018 season.

But for all the numbers associated with his time keeping Meyer's seat warm – which came to an end Sept. 15 – Day was worried about only one number after fourth-ranked Ohio State came from behind to beat No. 15 TCU, 40-28, at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas: Three.

Three games coached and three wins for Day and the Buckeyes. The offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach did his job, making sure that Meyer had an undefeated team when he returned to Ohio Stadium on Sept. 22 to lead Ohio State against Tulane.

"Our goal was to get to 3-0 so that when Coach got back, he had a team that was 3-0," Day said after Ohio State topped the Horned Frogs. "That goal is accomplished, but we have a lot ahead of us."

Of those who traveled, Crowley, Harrison, Miller, Wilson and Young participated. Harrison led the way, with two tackles and the first sack of his career, while Wilson is the only other freshman to have recorded a stat, as he put up 8 yards on two receptions.

Tommy Eichenberg, Cormontae Hamilton, Ronnie Hickman, Ryan Jacoby, Jaden McKenzie, Noah Potter, Bryson Shaw, Cade Stover, Enokk Vimahi and Alex Williams, all remained back on campus.

Along with the freshmen, Ohio State left wideout Kamryn Babb, defensive tackle Taron Vincent, safety Jahsen Wint and offensive lineman Max Wray at home. Babb is out indefinitely, as is Vincent. Wint was named out just a day prior to Ohio State's win over Indiana with an undisclosed injury. Wray has no listed injury but has yet to see playing time this season as a redshirt freshman.

Ohio State Paying \$1.8 Million To Opponents

Ohio State is set to pay out \$1.8 million to each of three upcoming Group of Five football opponents, according to a report from Eleven Warriors' Dan Hope. In 2022, Ohio State will be paying Arkansas State \$1.8 million to travel to Ohio Stadium as one of the three nonconference games.

In 2023, the going rate is the same for both San Jose State and Western Kentucky.

Ohio State 'The' Trademark Denied

Despite Ohio State's best efforts, it appears that the word "The" will not be trademarked anytime soon. Ohio State's initial request to trademark was denied on Sept. 11.

According to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Ohio State's trademark was denied for

two reasons. First, "the" already had a trademark on it, from the clothing brand Marc Jacobs. Secondly, it ruled that Ohio State "doesn't use the trademark properly."

As attorney Josh Gerben explained, Ohio State would likely need to use "The" as a hashtag or as a branding for a specific clothing line, rather than just as a word on apparel.

Buckeyes Show Out In NFL Week One

Former Buckeyes had a big week one in the NFL, led by a monster performance from rookie receiver Terry McLaurin. McLaurin snagged five receptions for 125 yards and a touchdown. That score came on a 68-yard reception from Washington quarterback Case Keenum, and while Washington wasn't able to beat Philadelphia, falling 32-27, McLaurin established himself as the right fit as the Redskins'

starting X-receiver.

Elsewhere, Malik Hooker made a big play for the Indianapolis Colts, snatching a one-handed interception out of the air in the end zone. The Colts, like Washington, weren't able to ride their Buckeye success to a win, dropping a close one, 30-24 to the Los Angeles Chargers, but Hooker kept them in the game with his interception and looks primed for a bounce-back season after a tough 2018 campaign. Hooker recorded five tackles and had a pass deflection along with the interception.

Statistically, the biggest performers of the day may have all been on the defensive line. Sam Hubbard led the way with 10 tackles, including two for a loss, and two sacks in a 21-20 loss to Seattle. He seems to be coming into his own in Cincinnati, as he led the team in tackles

Continued On Page 6



INSIDER

Continued From Page 5

Angeles Rams, 30-27. He put up 32 yards on three catches. Meanwhile Nick Vannett had 16 yards on two catches for the Seahawks, and Parris Campbell had 1 yard on one catch for the Colts. Finally Malcolm Jenkins recorded three tackles, and Cam Johnston boomed three punts for 154 total yards, both for the Philadelphia Eagles.

Buckeyes Shine On Monday Night

While most Buckeyes made their names heard on Sunday for the first week of NFL play, there was, as usual, a large contingent suiting up for the New Orleans Saints, and the Saints didn't play until Monday in a matchup with the Houston Texans. Six former Buckeyes recorded stats in the 30-28 Saints last-second victory, and a few of them played crucial roles in the tight matchup.

Leading the way was wideout Michael Thomas, now the highest-paid receiver in the NFL, who put up 123 yards on 10 receptions, though he wasn't able to find the end zone in game one. Also at wide receiver, Ted Ginn Jr. added seven receptions and 101 yards, including a 41-yard gain. Carlos Hyde wrapped up the offensive performers, adding 83 yards on 20 carries for the Texans, which led all runners for the team. He is filling in for the injured Lamar Miller, splitting time with Duke Johnson.

Defensively, Vonn Bell led all tacklers for the Saints with seven tackles, including one for a loss. Marshon Lattimore had four tackles and one TFL, and he played lockdown coverage essentially all evening. Eli Apple rounded out the group with three tackles and played some good coverage, though Deshaun Watson wasn't exactly slowed down by the Saints' defense (20 of 30, 268 yards, three scores).

Ginn and Thomas were instrumental in New Orleans' game-winning drive. Drew Brees needed only Buckeyes to get the ball into field-goal range for Will Lutz, tossing to Ginn for 15 yards, Thomas for 11 and then Ginn for the 9-yard pass that set up the game-winning, 58-yard field goal.

and appears to be taking over as the starting defensive end there.

The Bosa brothers put up good numbers as well. Joey had eight tackles, one for a loss and one sack, which serves as a return to form as one of the best defensive ends in the game. His Chargers were able to hold off the Colts. Nick put up less gaudy numbers in his debut, but his three tackles, one tackle for loss and one sack were respectable for the No. 2 overall pick, and the San Francisco 49ers took care of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, 31-17.

Cam Heyward represented the Silver Bullets well in Pittsburgh's 33-3 loss to New England, recording eight tackles as one of Pittsburgh's few good defenders on the day.

Offensively, outside of McLaurin, the best day probably came from Ezekiel Elliott, fresh off receiving his massive payday. The Dallas Cowboy back ran for 53 yards on 13 carries, adding a touchdown and 10 yards on one reception. Dallas rolled over the New York Giants, 35-17, thanks to its explosive offense, and a lot of that can be chalked up to Elliott's play.

Curtis Samuel had a decent day in a loss for the Carolina Panthers against the Los

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Kelsey Mitchell Shatters WNBA Record

It hasn't always been easy in the WNBA for Kelsey Mitchell. The former No. 2 overall pick has struggled to find playing time in her first two years with the Indiana Fever, relegated to bench minutes in her sophomore season,

largely due to some scoring inconsistency.

However, late in the WNBA season, she started to show flashes of her former outstanding play at Ohio State. Her shooting stroke has shown signs of returning to her, and on Sept. 8 against the Connecticut Sun, she broke through in a big way.

With 30 points in the first half, 38 overall and nine made three-pointers, Mitchell set the Indiana team scoring record for a regular season while also breaking the league record for made three-pointers in a single game.

Mitchell finished her second year in the league with 13.6 points per game and is looking to break through full time in 2020.

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Offensive Line Paves Way For Dobbins' Big Day

Continued From Page 1

overtime win at Maryland last season. He played very little in the second half and not at all in the fourth quarter despite being so close to setting a new mark.

"In the end, there's a bigger plan," Dobbins said. "We got a lot of big games down the road."

Redshirt freshman Master Teague received the bulk of the carries late in the game, which included a 40-yard touch-down in the third quarter. He finished the day with a career-high 106 yards and one score on 10 carries, staking his claim to the backup running back spot.

"It was really good to get Master to come on," said offensive coordinator Kevin Wilson. "Preseason, he was a little limited with some slight injuries. Now he's got a little momentum. Hopefully (he has) the momentum like J.K. to be a great practice player. He's coming on strong, and that's good to see because we need that."

Sophomore quarterback Justin Fields, meanwhile, wasn't as sharp in the passing game as he'd been in the first two games of the season, completing just 14 of 24 for 199 yards and three touchdowns in the win. But thanks to the stellar performances from Dobbins and Teague, he didn't need to be at his best.

"Having the running game just to pick me up and carry the team, that was great to see," Fields said. "It makes the whole offense flow. If we can keep it going, that



SONNY BROCKWAY

ROAD GRADERS – Ohio State's offensive line, including tight end Rashod Berry (right), opened up holes for running back J.K. Dobbins all afternoon. The Buckeyes rushed for a total of 306 yards and three touchdowns in the 51-10 win.

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will be a great thing. It definitely makes my job easier as a quarterback.”

The running backs are only one part of the equation when it comes to a big day on the ground, though, which is why Dobbins heaped plenty of praise on the offensive line for opening up holes for him all afternoon.

“They’re blocking great,” he said. “If those guys keep going, this offense is going to keep going. I just told them I was going to meet them in the end zone, and I think that gets them excited. I love those guys. I love them like they’re my own brother. I think that helps us. We have a great bond.”

Day was equally impressed with how the Buckeyes dominated the line of scrimmage.

“That’s where battles are won, and I think today was an example of that,” he

said. “When you can get that run going, you can really control the game, and I think we did that today. That’s our goal in any game.”

Though three games, Ohio State has seemingly transformed from a record-setting, pass-heavy offense to a more balanced attack – that versatility and ability to pick apart the defense on the ground and through the air.

“Last year was a little different set of dynamics,” Day said. “This year, we have multiple tight ends, we have a big, veteran offensive line and we’re creating some depth at running back. To be able to throw the play-action pass is really the idea. Where does it go from here? I don’t know. But I remember talking in the preseason: Where’s the journey going? What’s this offense going to look like? We’re starting to forge our identity.”

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Buckeyes Leaves For Ohio State's 52-10 Victory Over Indiana
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Justin Fields Has Minor Passing Struggles In Win

Although the run game found even more life than in the previous two weeks, the Indiana matchup was the first time that sophomore quarterback Justin Fields did not completely shine during his time on the field.

While Ohio State put up 306 yards of rushing offense on 42 carries, good for 7.3 yards per try, the Buckeyes totaled only 214 yards through the air.

GAME NOTEBOOK

Wyatt Crosher

Fields finished the day completing 14 of 24 passes for 199 yards and three touchdowns while also rushing four times for 11 yards and a touchdown.

The four scores are obviously positives to take away and give Fields 13 total touchdowns to start his 2019 campaign. The 13 touchdowns allow Fields to surpass the total touchdown numbers of the Heisman candidate quarterback he is following, Dwayne Haskins, over the same period last season.

In his first three games as Ohio State's starter, the now-Washington Redskins quarterback had 11 passing touchdowns and a rushing touchdown to go with his 3-0 record. Fields' scores have come from nine through the air and four on the ground.

But the sophomore quarterback did not make his throws with as much precision as he had shown in the first two games, and Fields was aware of that.

"I definitely didn't play up to my potential," Fields said. "I know I missed way too many throws out there. So I've just got to work on that and just keep getting better, and the team has to keep getting better. I think there's a lot of room to grow, but we'll just continue to keep working."

This inconsistency was seen on the



ANDREW LIND

OFF TARGET – Ohio State sophomore quarterback Justin Fields completed 14 of 24 passes for 199 yards and three touchdowns but overthrew both running back J.K. Dobbins and tight end Luke Farrell in the end zone on consecutive drives in the first quarter.

first drive, when Fields missed tight end Luke Farrell in the end zone for a would-be touchdown. On his next throw, the Georgia transfer left the pocket and had an open short-distance throw to sophomore wide receiver Chris Olave that would have been enough to convert for a first down. The throw was potentially catchable, but Fields put too much on it and overthrew his man, making the ball bounce off Olave's hand and to the ground.

Because of the lack of a third-down conversion, it set up a field-goal attempt

by kicker Blake Haubeil that was wide right.

Fields also missed on a deep ball that was just a bit out of reach of Olave that likely would have ended in the end zone for six points.

Even after a few missed targets to him, Olave said he completely trusts his quarterback and knows how good the former five-star recruit is.

"He's just an elite quarterback," Olave said. "He doesn't want to use his feet, but he can. He loves throwing the ball, so we just try to get open for him and take it off

for him."

Fields showed self-awareness when grading his performance against the Hoosiers.

"There's a lot of things I can work on," Fields admitted. "This game was definitely not a good grade."

Fields still pulled together a solid performance and managed to continue his collegiate career without throwing an interception, and he did more than enough to lead his team to a 3-0 record. He just did not have a game that measured up to what he had done in the two weeks prior.

With a bounce-back opportunity against Miami (Ohio) coming up, a team that's defense has not been strong thus far and is allowing nearly 400 yards and 30 points per game, expect the second-year quarterback's stats to jump back up in week four.

For Fields, he said that the only place to go for him, as well as the team, is up.

"We have a lot of room to improve, and I think our ceiling's very high," Fields said. "We're just trying to reach the max potential on that."

Olave Impacts Special Teams

With three fifth-year senior wide receivers gone after the 2018 season – Parris Campbell, Terry McLaurin and Johnnie Dixon, each of whom was good enough to join an NFL roster during the summer – there was an opening for underclassmen to step up and make more of an impact with Fields in 2019.

And with that has come Olave, who again made his presence known, making three catches for 70 yards and a touchdown against IU.

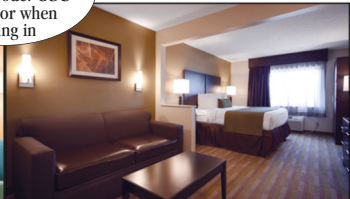
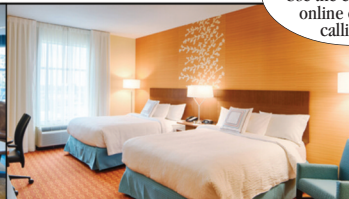
But Olave's biggest play – much like McLaurin's often were when he was with the program – came on special teams. With 10:15 remaining in the second quarter, Olave blocked a punt by Haydon Whitehead that went through the back of the end zone for a safety.

"He's worked really, really hard this offseason," head coach Ryan Day said of

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Game Analysis

What Worked Well

For the third straight week, just about everything went well for Ohio State, as the Buckeyes stomped Indiana in Memorial Stadium, 51-10. Ohio State was buoyed by a running game that stood out as the number one thing that went well, but it's hard to find fault in much of anything that the Buckeyes did on Sept. 14. The defense was swarming and held Indiana to 257 yards, the offense was electric and created big plays, and Ohio State even had a big special teams play when Chris Olave blocked a punt for a safety in the second quarter.

Ultimately, it was the line play that gets the cake for the Buckeyes. The defensive line picked up five sacks and helped pave the way for 12 tackles behind the line of scrimmage. It was another big day for Chase Young, who added two sacks to his season total. He sits at five now, well on pace for Ohio State's single-season record of 14 set by Vernon Gholston in 2007. The offensive line play was perhaps even better. Justin Fields was sacked just once, which came after he held the ball too long. The Buckeyes racked up 306 yards on 42 carries and looked unstoppable behind the terrific offensive line play.

What Didn't Work

Fields had his first down game as a Buckeye, which is saying

something, because he still completed the majority of his passes (14 of 24) for 199 yards and three touchdowns while running for 11 yards and another score. However, beyond the stats, Fields struggled a bit, as both he and Ryan Day pointed out after the game.

Most of those struggles came on throws down the field, where Fields had a couple of misses on passes to open receivers. He had a likely touchdown on a pass to Luke Farrell on the first drive of the game but just overthrew the tight end. There were a few other passes where Fields was just off the mark, but it wasn't anything significant enough to slow down Ohio State's offense.

Play Of The Game

J.K. Dobbins' second-quarter, 26-yard touchdown run wins play of the game this week. On third down, with just over four minutes to play in the first half, Dobbins broke through the line, bounced off five Indiana defenders and fought his way into the end zone for his lone rushing touchdown of the game.

It was the nail in the coffin for Ohio State, as it gave the Buckeyes a 30-3 lead, and it was a true highlight for Dobbins, who has been racking up highlights in the past two games.

– Patrick Mayhorn

Olave. "He's got good depth perception, he can time up balls down the field, (and he has) strong hands underneath."

The two points gave the Buckeyes a 16-3 lead and provided a major boost to the team that helped spark what ended up being a 41-point beatdown.

This marks the second straight week when the special teams managed to make a pivotal play early in the game.

Against Cincinnati, junior defensive end Chase Young blocked a field goal that helped to keep the Bearcats off the board in a 42-0 rout.

Day saw what McLaurin did on special teams a season ago. Now as head coach, he knows how much of a difference a player like that can make in a close game, and he said he sees that sort of difference maker in Olave.

"I think when you look back at the history of Ohio State, especially in the last 10 years or so, the best players have played on special teams," Day said. "Somebody's impact is different. You think about Terry last year, he was a gunner. You think about some of the guys who have been returners or different things.

"Chris has been these punt blocks. He's tremendous at that. He just has a knack for it."

Olave also blocked a punt against Michigan last season that resulted in a touchdown in the 62-39 win over the Wolverines.

Defense Gets Job Done Again

Ohio State's defense continues to show dramatic improvements from 2018, again stifling its opponent for the large majority of 60 minutes.

Indiana combined for 257 yards on 67 plays, good for just 3.8 yards per play. Those numbers got even worse on the

ground, with the Hoosiers' run game gaining just 42 yards on 31 carries (1.4 average). Sophomore running back Stevie Scott – a 1,000-yard rusher in his true freshman season for Indiana – rushed for only 9 yards on six carries.

A chunk of the running came from junior quarterback Peyton Ramsey, who started for the injured Michael Penix. Ramsey ran 14 times and earned only 14 yards, with the totals being hurt by four sacks.

Two of the sacks came at the hands of Young. The pair of Young sacks gives the junior defensive end five on the season.

"I think we showed dominance today," Young said. "I just feel like our defense played real good today, and for them to have to run a trick play on us to get a touchdown, I think we did pretty good."

The trick play Young was talking about came in the second quarter, when wide receiver Donovan Hale threw the ball to tight end Peyton Hendershot for a 49-yard score.

The play gave Indiana a sliver of life heading to halftime, a sliver that died quickly in the second half.

At the end of the third quarter with the game well in hand, fifth-year senior

cornerback Damon Arnette picked off Ramsey and took the interception 96 yards to the house to bring the score to 51-10. The interception return was the fourth longest in program history.

There were plenty of strong individual performances to highlight, but Young, a defensive captain, said it is the defense as a collective whole that is feeling great so far this season.

"We definitely feel real dominant," Young said. "As a unit, I think we're very confident. We're going to go into Miami and try to be confident again and dominate again."

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Buckeyes Put Hoosiers Away In Big Ten Opener

By **CRAIG MERZ**
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

When Blake Haubeil missed a 32-yard field goal on Ohio State's first possession, fans could be forgiven for thinking that another road upset like that at Purdue last season and Iowa in 2017 could be in the offing. After J.K. Dobbins dropped a sure touchdown pass, they might have thought another crazy, tight game against Indiana was at hand.

They would be wrong on both counts.

Dobbins, the junior running back, ran for 193 yards on 22 carries with a touchdown and caught another as the No. 6 Buckeyes pounded Indiana 51-10 at Memorial Stadium in Bloomington, Ind., on Sept. 14 in the Big Ten opener for each team.

Sophomore quarterback Justin Fields threw three touchdowns and ran for a score, and senior cornerback Damon Arnette had a 96-yard interception return for a touchdown late in the third quarter for the Buckeyes (3-0, 1-0).

Dobbins had 175 yards on 20 carries and a TD in the first half when OSU took a 30-10 lead before the usual large contingent of Buckeye fans among the crowd of 47,945 in the 52,656-seat facility.

Indiana (2-1, 0-1) trailed 7-3 early in the second quarter when sophomore receiver Chris Olave accounted for nine points in 71 seconds with a TD catch and a blocked punt for a safety to make it 16-3, and the rout was on.

Credit Fields, a transfer from Georgia who is three games into his OSU career, for knowing the history of the series.

"It kind of stayed with us in recent years how they play to the fourth quarter, so our main goal was to come in here and just play our game," he said. "It was a business trip, so I think we got the business done."

Hammer Down Early

The Buckeyes blew a chance for an early lead when the junior Haubeil missed a chip shot after Indiana went backward on the first drive of the game.

IU lost 4 yards in three plays, and OSU took over at the Indiana 41 after a punt and a penalty on the Hoosiers. The Buckeyes moved to a second-and-6 from the 15 on a 10-yard catch by Dobbins and his three straight runs totaling 16 yards before Fields had two incompletions to force the field-goal try.

Indiana went three-and-out with minus-3 yards thanks to a tackle by junior defensive end Chase Young on a pass.

This time, the Buckeyes rewarded the stern defense with a nine-play, 68-yard drive that ended with a Fields TD run for a 7-0 lead at 7:28. The big play was an 18-yard reception along the left sideline by Olave after a review confirmed he got his foot down before going out.

Three plays later, Fields connected with senior K.J. Hill for 14 yards to the IU 19. Dobbins ran for 7 and 9, but he dropped an open pass from Fields so the QB kept it on the

next play and scored from the 3.

IU quarterback Peyton Ramsey solved the Buckeyes when the Hoosiers marched 59 yards in nine plays in 3:43 that resulted in a 29-yard field goal by Justus Logan at 3:45. Ramsey completed four passes for 35 yards and then scrambled for 20 for a first down at the OSU 15. But Arnette broke up a pass to Donovan Hale on second-and-10. The Hoosiers gained 4 yards on a pass to Peyton Hendershot but had to settle for three points.

The Buckeyes made it 14-3 at 11:26 of the second quarter after starting at their own 37 following a punt. IU gifted OSU a first down on third down by being offside, and redshirt freshman Master Teague spelled Dobbins and – with OSU needing 3 yards to keep the drive going at the IU 44 – got 7. On the next play, Fields' play-action sprang Olave, and he was wide open in the end zone for a 37-yard scoring strike at the end of a six-play, 63-yard, 2:24 series.

Olave added two more points with the blocked punt for a safety at 10:15. Lining up at the 18 on the left side, he was unblocked to knock away the punt by Haydon Whitehead. The ball went out of the end zone. Olave had a punt block in the Michigan game last year that led to a touchdown. It was the second straight game that the special teams had come through with a key play. Young blocked a field-goal attempt by Cincinnati on Sept. 7.

Ohio State got the ball off the free kick at its 25, immediately took a delay of game infraction then stormed down the field, beginning on the next snap when Dobbins rushed 56 yards to the 24.

Fields took a 5-yard sack, then senior Binjimen Victor caught a 20-yarder to the 9. Fields missed a throw to senior wideout Austin Mack but redeemed himself with 9-yard TD to Hill to the right corner with 8:30 left before the half. The drive needed only 1:45 to go 75 yards in five plays.

Dobbins extended the lead to 30-3 with 6:00 remaining with a 26-yard battering run in which he broke six tackles and used a stiff-arm.

Earlier in the series, Olave caught a 15-yarder before a defensive pass interference call put the ball on the 30. After Dobbins carried for

4, he took off on the next play to cap off the 58-yard, five-play, 1:53 drive.

All was going well for the Buckeyes until the Hoosiers used some trickery to make it 30-10 with 1:07 left. A double pass allowed Hale to find Hendershot open for the 49-yard score.

Third-Quarter Thunder

The Buckeyes reasserted their dominance with a seven-play, 75-yard romp down the field in the first possession of the third quarter for a 37-10 advantage at 12:15.

Dobbins opened with a 10-yard run and ended it with a 4-yard TD from Fields to make it 37-10. In between, Fields found Victor (15 and 21 yards) and Mack (13).

Teague, from Murfreesboro, Tenn., was the star of a 97-yard, nine-play, 3:30 drive for a 44-10 lead at 4:58 of the third. He had five carries for 78 yards, including a 40-yard TD run. IU aided the effort with a third-down holding that kept OSU from punting from its own 6.

Arnette padded the score to 51-10 on the last play of the third with his grab and run as he weaved through the Hoosiers for the game's final score.

By The Numbers

Fields was 14 for 24 for 199 yards and ran four times for 11 yards before graduate Chris Chugunov took over with 12:58 to play. Kentucky transfer Gunnar Hoak came in to start a drive with 5:07 left.

Dobbins tallied 14 receiving yards to go with his 193 yards rushing. Teague had 106 yards on 10 rushes with a TD. Victor led the OSU receivers with four receptions for 66 yards.

The Buckeyes had 520 total yards (214 passing, 306 rushing) and amassed 30 first downs to just 15 for IU.

Young had two of the five OSU sacks. Senior safety Jordan Fuller and junior linebacker Pete Werner each had five solo tackles to lead the Buckeyes.

Ramsey completed 19 of 33 for 162 yards with the pick-six.

The Hoosiers had 257 total yards, including only 42 on the ground, and were 3 of 17 on third down. The Buckeyes were 5 of 10.



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BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 51, Indiana 10

Running back J.K. Dobbins on his high workload: "They think I can carry the load, which I think I can as well. One day it might be me, but another day it might be our receivers that are making big plays, getting the ball. We'll just see. We've got a lot of weapons."

Wide receiver Chris Olave on his punt-blocking skills: "It's just a lot of technique and fundamentals, a little bit of speed. Our coaches draw it up for us to block it, and we went out there and got it. It's a lot of fun. We work at it all week in practice, about 10 or 15 reps, so to go out there and get it is fun."



Chris Olave

Head coach Ryan Day on Olave's all-around performance: "I think Chris is a really good receiver. If you look back on our last six games – going back to the rivalry game, Big Ten Championship Game, the Rose

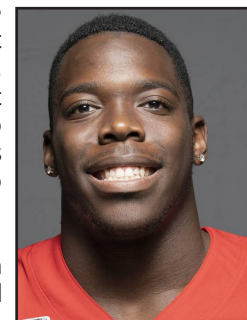
Bowl and now these three games – his production has been really good. He's blocked some punts. He's been a threat down the field. He caught some things underneath. His production has been really good."

Offensive coordinator Kevin Wilson on Day's approach to practice: "We hit them. We don't take them to the ground, we don't want a cheap ankle or knee injury. It's not the carrier, it's all the other guys. We're thumping a lot. We've worked hard."

"I think it's been one of Coach Day's mantras all year about being a tough team, a physical team, and there's a way you have to practice, and I think as a coach there's a gauge when you figure out when to turn it up, when to turn it down. I think Ryan has done a beautiful job with our offense and our defense, with trying to build the toughness you need to be a really good football team."

Defensive end Chase Young on freshmen Zach Harrison and Javontae Jean-Baptiste picking up their first career sacks in the second half: "We're proud of those dudes. I always tell them keep work-

ing, keep working, be patient, it's going to come. Today, it came for them, and I'm just really happy for them. I told them, 'You do it one game, you have to keep doing it,' and that's just what you have to do when you're great."



Zach Harrison

Quarterback Justin Fields on his missed throws: "I just have to get my feet set. I'm moving around, moving out of the pocket well, just, probably getting my feet set before I throw the ball, and that'll make me learn."

Running back Master Teague on running harder in 2019: "I feel good. There's always things to work on, so we'll go in there tomorrow, I'll see what things I could work on, but overall, I feel like I had a good day, and I thank the Lord God Almighty for making me who I am now. But I still have a long way to go."



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Baron Browning Finally Reaching His Potential

By CRAIG MERZ
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Baron Browning could have been just another player added to the list of star recruits who failed to live up to the hype.

The "A Look Back at Recruiting From the Pages of BSB" section in each issue recalls the pursuit, and usually signing, of the top prospects over the past 30 years. Some vignettes are sad reminders that not all dreams and predictions come true as the coach of Johnny XYZ proudly proclaims his star will certainly become a multi-time All-American for Ohio State.

After reading the piece, the first question might be, "Did this kid ever play for the Buckeyes, and if he did, whatever happened to him?"

Of course, there are other instances when the projections for stardom are spot-on.

Browning, a junior from Forth Worth (Texas) Kennedale, is inching closer to the latter scenario even though he still has a long way to go to match the considerable press he got when he committed to Ohio State.

The five-star recruit was the No. 1 outside linebacker nationally and the 11th player overall for the class of 2017 by the 247Sports composite. He was a finalist for the 2016 high school Butkus Award as the top linebacker and the state's Associated Press 4A defensive player of the year as a senior.

Yet he found himself playing sporadically his first two collegiate seasons and had just 37 tackles in 24 games while playing middle linebacker and in some nickel packages. What stood out even more was that other than three starts when Tuf Borland was injured last season he was unable to crack a linebacking group that had been considered a weak link among all the units.

Browning (6-3, 248) appeared headed for a permanent spot in the recruiting busts Hall of Fame, but changes on the defensive staff this year have rejuvenated him.

Through the first two games against Florida Atlantic and Cincinnati, he was tied for fourth on the team with nine tackles (six solo) and had been on the field for nearly as many snaps as Borland.

In the third game Sept. 14 at Indiana, Browning had one solo and one assisted tackle.

New head coach Ryan Day brought in Al Washington to replace linebackers coach Bill Davis. Also, Greg Mattison and Jeff Hafley were hired as co-defensive coordinators as replacements for Greg Schiano.

Washington particularly has had a major influence on Browning. In a Sept. 4 media session, the former Michigan assistant's name was brought up numerous times by his pupil.

"I just feel like the approach Coach Washington had in helping me prepare played a big role," Browning said. "Experience plays a role too, but I'd just mainly say Coach Washington for real.

"It's just different because I have a different relationship with Coach Washington. Me and him have a great relationship. I had a great relationship with my former coaches too, I'm not saying I didn't have one with them, but I don't know how to describe it. It's just different. It's just a different vibe.

"I just feel like he connects with me better. He's got an understanding."

Junior linebacker Pete Werner said there's another reason Browning has taken his game to another level.

"I can just see he's more confident," Werner said. "He's communicating a lot more. He's running to the ball, and you can see that he feels better there on the field. He's just a step quicker.

"It's his year this year. He knows his importance this year. That's transitioned into his head, I've got to go hard here. I've got to make a difference in the defense."

Browning said his added confidence allows him to relax and let his natural ability shine.

"I feel more comfortable," he said. "I told Coach Washington after the (FAU) game that that was one of my first games where I didn't feel nervous before. I just felt at ease about it, and I just think that goes into how I've been approaching every day and every moment and listening to him.

"I watched a lot of film and prepared. I feel really comfortable in the defense and just playing. I'm not thinking. Something we talk about in our program, having a clear mind, clear heart and clear soul, you're able to play faster, able

to play how you know you can play without thinking."

Hafley came to Ohio State with no preconceived notion about what the players did or didn't do in the past, which was a good thing for Browning because he was given a clean slate.

"He knows what he's doing," Hafley said of Browning. "He's playing very fast and very physical. But I think the biggest thing for him is he's confident. I think Coach Washington's done a great job in preparing him to play, and I think you're seeing that now."

Expectations are once again high for Browning after two seasons of underwhelming performances.

"My assessment of Baron is he's closer to his potential," Washington said after the Florida Atlantic game. "I absolutely love him as a kid. He's worked his tail off. I'm proud of him."

He told reporters that Browning was in his office every day in the offseason wanting to look at film.

"He's probably one of the brightest guys I've ever been around," Washington said. "He's progressing. He's playing the way he should play. He's still got to get better. I love the way his mind is right now. All he's focused on is getting better, and it's awesome to see."

Browning's progress is not a surprise to the coaches. Day said early in fall camp that he could see it coming.

"Baron Browning has shown so far that he's really made a lot of progress in a short period of time," Day said. "He's playing mostly in the

middle. He'll move around a little bit, though. He plays fast. He's very, very athletic that way. He's physical. He's big. He's strong. I think Al is doing a good job with him in terms of understanding and diagnosing plays and being in the right spot at the right time."

Of course, one-fourth of the regular season is a small sample of the "new and improved" Baron Browning, but he has the right attitude to have continued success.

"My approach is come to practice with a positive mind-set every day and treating every day like it's a game," he said. "And not just trying to get myself better but help the guys around me and coach them up, help them get better. Tell them what they're doing wrong, just like they're doing to me.

"So, it's really just a hand-in-hand thing in our room. We all want to see one another grow and do their best and reach their full potential."

Yes, the P word. So much potential, so little to show for it as a freshman and sophomore. Browning stuck with it, and he and the Buckeyes are reaping the benefits.

"I know people have expectations and stuff, but I think the best thing I've done is just block all of that out and focus on getting better and listening to Coach Washington and following his plan he has for me," he said. "That really just has been working for me, so I'm going to keep doing the same routine I've been doing and being the best player that I can be. Because I know if I do that, that will be more than enough."

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White's Role Will Change Throughout Season

By ANDREW LIND
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Brendon White was considered one of Ohio State's best defensive players in a six-game stretch late last season that included a 13-tackle performance against Nebraska and a defensive player of the game award in the Rose Bowl.

He was expected to play an even bigger role within the Buckeyes' defensive scheme once again this season, especially with the implementation of a hybrid linebacker/safety spot known as the Bullet that seemed tailor-made for a player of his stature (6-2 and 215 pounds).

That failed to materialize in Ohio State's first two games of the season, though, as White – who played at least 58 defensive snaps in each of those six wins last fall – played just 34 total snaps against Florida Atlantic and Cincinnati. But it wasn't because White isn't talented enough to be on the field, but rather a result of the opponent's offensive strategy.

"A lot of the teams we've played against have been in 12 personnel," co-defensive coordinator Greg Mattison said on Sept. 9, noting how both the Owls and Bearcats often used one running back and two tight ends. "When teams start spreading out and start getting a little looser that way, we'd like to go with the Bullet position more."

That's exactly what happened against Indiana, which runs an up-tempo spread offense the typically puts at least three receivers on the field at any given time. White saw the field for a season-high 26 plays and recorded three solo tackles, which matched his output in the win over Cincinnati on Sept. 7.

Ohio State's base defense features four defensive linemen, three linebackers, three cornerbacks and one safety, which means White splits time with outside linebacker Pete Werner. It's an interesting dynamic, as they're two very different players manning the same position.

Putting the 6-2, 215-pound White in

a position where he's going to have to cover and tackle a tight end or running back out of the backfield makes a lot less sense when you have someone like the 6-3, 239-pound Werner, who mostly played linebacker in high school. Along those same lines, it's equally unwise to put Werner on a speedy receiver such as Purdue star Rondale Moore, who torched the Buckeyes to the tune of 12 catches for 170 yards and two touchdowns in a 49-20 loss to the Boilermakers last season.

"It's going to be depending on who you're playing against," Mattison said. "In other words, is this team a team that has two tight ends in the game a lot? Is this the type of team that you need a 240-pound linebacker as compared to a 215-pound athlete?"

While meeting with the media on Sept. 9, White acknowledged the frustration that comes with spending so much time on the bench early in the season. However, he understands why the Buckeyes would rotate players based on who provides the matchup on a given play.

"I definitely think it comes with the scheme and what the offensive team is giving us," White said. "My job right now is just when I go out there and I'm finally out there is to do my job and make plays for my team."

"At the end of the day, you've got to know why you're here. You're here to win games, and whether I'm playing or I'm not playing, I'm still here to help my brothers win games and be there for them. We always talk about the brotherhood of trust. If I'm worried about not playing, then I'm being selfish and not caring about the team, putting the team first. In order for us to win, I can't be selfish. I have to put the team first and respect the brotherhood and respect my plays and snaps."

Werner was quick to echo White's sentiment, admitting that their differing skill sets can benefit the team in complementary ways.

"We're confident in both of each other's abilities that whether he's out there or I'm



ANDREW LIND

TEAM PLAYER – Although he finished last season as the most valuable defensive player in the Rose Bowl win over Washington, junior Brendon White has seen the field only situationally this fall as he splits time at the Buckeyes' new Bullet position.

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out there, we're confident in our defensive scheme that we're going to put the best person out there to do the job," Werner said. "We complement each other, and whatever Coach tells us to do, we're going to do that."

Even in limited duty, White – the son of Ohio State defensive back William White (1984-87) – has made quite the impression on Mattison, who arrived in Columbus this offseason after spending the last eight years as the co-defensive coordinator, defensive line coach and linebackers coach at Michigan.

"A lot of it is development," said Mattison, who used Jabrill Peppers and Khaleke Hudson in similar ways during his tenure with the Wolverines. "That's a new position for (White). Every rep he gets, the more he plays it, the better we are. It's been good."

With that, it's clear the Bullet position will continue to evolve throughout the course of the season, especially as White and Werner become more comfortable in their defined roles and the staff figures out how to maximize their respective potential. Just don't expect White – who began his college career at wide receiver, moved to linebacker after enrolling early, finally found a home at safety and then moved into this hybrid role – to voice his displeasure with the current setup.

He simply gets the bigger picture.

"Hopefully, if I get out there, I get out there and I play," he said. "If I don't, then I'll sit there and support."



ANDREW LIND

WORKING TOGETHER – Juniors Pete Werner (left) and Brendon White split time at Ohio State's newest position, the "Bullet," which allows the Buckeyes to put the best matchup on the field in running and passing situations.

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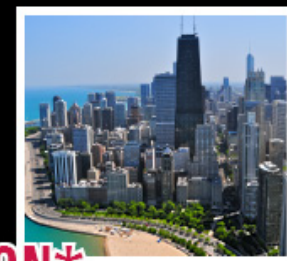
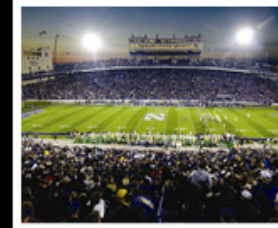
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OHIO STATE FOOTBALL

Teague Fills Backup Role

By PATRICK MAYHORN
Special To Buckeye Sports Bulletin

Throughout fall camp, second-year running back Master Teague seemed to be a bit of an afterthought for Ohio State, though it was not through any fault of his own. He missed almost all of camp with an undisclosed injury and was unable to ever establish himself in practice against Demario McCall, Marcus Crowley or Steele Chambers as the backup to junior J.K. Dobbins.

With McCall expected to see the majority of carries behind Dobbins coming out of camp, it looked as though Teague was in for a lost year, but through three games, it has been Teague, not McCall, to get the first call off the bench in relief of Dobbins. Through three games, Teague carried the ball 29 times for 215 yards, far more than McCall's 27 yards.

So what changed from the end of fall camp

to that first game against FAU? As Ryan Day put it, it has just been a matter of health.

"(Teague) didn't practice all that much this preseason," Day explained on Sept. 10. "It was hard for him to get into a rhythm. He has run hard on film the last two weeks.

"If he can continue to practice the way that he has the last couple weeks, I think he's going to only improve as he goes on. We'll feel more comfortable with him handling more snaps in the game."

With a fully healthy Teague, Ohio State has a style of threat at halfback that it really has not had since Ezekiel Elliott suited up for the Scarlet and Gray. Unlike Dobbins and his predecessor, Mike Weber, Teague is in no way a smaller halfback. He's listed as 5-11, 220 pounds on Ohio State's official roster but looks much bigger because of the way he runs. His upright, power style is a change of pace from Dobbins' shiftiness and speed.

That power seems to be Teague's number

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OHIO STATE FOOTBALL

one attribute, and it – along with his effort level – stood out as a unique talent to running backs coach Tony Alford.

“He runs really hard,” Alford said. “He does a great job. The kid is a powerful kid. He can run. He’s big and strong. He attacks defenders when he makes a decision. I think we’re becoming more and more comfortable every single day with him. He missed a lot of training camp.”

Teague showed off that hard running style in Ohio State’s 51-10 victory of Indiana, when he ran for 106 yards on 10 carries, including a 40-yard touchdown where he gashed the Hoosiers with speed and power. After the game, he spoke about his performance and how hitting 100 yards for the first time in his career felt.

“It felt great. I didn’t know how many yards I had, but I’m just proud,” he acknowledged. “I get to help my team. I thank the O-line for all that they do. I couldn’t do it without them, so I’m just looking forward to continuing this week to get better and doing what I can for the team.”

Teague carried the ball eight times in Ohio State’s season opener against Florida Atlantic, picking up 49 yards in the process, and followed that up in game two with 11 carries for 60 yards against Cincinnati. His performance against Indiana was his best yet, and that kind of showing means growth, both for Teague as a player as he continues to impress on the field and, more importantly, in the staff’s trust in him.

That kind of trust could be crucial for Ohio State as the season goes on. There’s a solid, number one halfback in Dobbins, and that is not changing, but not having a true backup can hurt any position, especially one as physical as running back. Knowing that Teague is the first one off the bench will make things easier for him and for the play-callers who have to design game plans around certain personnel.

There’s obviously still a place for the other running backs on the roster, but a number two running back like Teague – who runs hard and changes up the style drastically from Dobbins – could take stress off the offense while putting a lot of pressure on the defense to prepare for multiple styles of runner.

As he explained after the game, he’s managed to get more violent in his running style this offseason, and that has contributed greatly to his success.

“I wasn’t really like this last year,” he said. “I would still run hard, but it’s different now. I think last year, some of the things I went through just taught me how to run harder, how to become more violent, and just continue that. It’s become more of a habit now, instead of something that I have to work on.”

As Teague explains, that mean streak doesn’t come naturally. He’s quiet and good-natured off the field, but on it, he runs as hard as anyone in the country. He attributes that to the Ohio State coaching staff and actually says that his hard-running style was not naturally developed but taught over the past year. If it wasn’t quite showing before, it is now.

Everybody from fans to coaches to other players is starting to take notice. Offensive coordinator and tight ends coach Kevin Wilson singled Teague out as someone who has really taken a spot after being challenged.

“It’s really good to get Master to come on,” Wilson said. “Now he’s got a little momentum and hopefully the momentum like J.K. to be a great practice player. He’s coming on strong, and that’s good to see because we need that.”

The mental side of the game is also coming along for the young back. He’s realizing that not every play needs to be a home run, though that mind-set is still a work in progress on occasion, when he really wants to break a big run.

“Sometimes, if you (are seeking a big play) you can get frustrated, but there were some times where I feel like I could have scored, and didn’t,” Teague said. “But every play stands alone. Five-yard gains are good.”



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Ohio State Players Chase History In 2019

By WYATT CROSHER
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

A season ago, a certain quarterback by the name of Dwayne Haskins came onto the field without a career start to his name. By the end of 2018, he broke nearly every passing record that Ohio State had to offer.

In only 14 starts for the Buckeyes, Haskins finished with numbers that were good for the most passing yards in a single season in program history (4,831 yards), as well as the most passing touchdowns in a season (50 touchdowns).

As far as single-game records, Haskins threw 72 times in the loss to Purdue, and those attempts are a single-game program record. The then-redshirt sophomore quarterback also has the No. 1, No. 2, No. 4, No. 5, No. 6 and No. 7 games with the highest passing yards in the history of Ohio State football.

The very top one, a 499-yard outing against Northwestern, was a record for the Big Ten Championship Game.

All these records for Haskins aside – and there are plenty of them – it shows that Ohio State still has players who can find their way into the record books, even with more than 100 years of history preceding them.

Here is a handful of current Buckeye players who may be on the cusp of making a mark in the record books.

K.J. Hill

Heading into the season, fifth-year senior wide receiver K.J. Hill was 47 catches from tying the record of 191 catches over an Ohio State career set by David Boston between the 1996-98 seasons. When Hill was asked about the record at Big Ten Media Days, he said he will not be thinking about it much.

"It's really nothing to think about," Hill said. "I just go out there and play and have fun. The rest will take care of itself."

Hill has been known as a short-range receiver with reliable hands to rack up receptions, so this record should be very possible for the wideout in his final year at Ohio State moving forward.

Thus far in the 2019 season, Hill has 13

catches for 101 yards, making him 34 shy of Boston's record with at least nine games – and likely more – to go.

But to Hill, even as the guy most likely to break a record in 2019, the stats do not matter as much as what happens with the team in the win column from week to week.

"Everybody had catches last year, everybody had records broken," Hill said. "As long as everybody eats we're all good. As long as everybody is helping us to win, we're all good. Basically, it's all winning. Who wants a 200-yard game and we lost? It doesn't mean anything. It's just a stat. It's all about winning."

Hill also has the opportunity to break a different record if Ohio State makes the College Football Playoff. The redshirt senior entered the season with 34 straight games with a reception and now is up to 37 straight games with a catch. In order to break the record held by Gary Williams, he will need to make it 49 straight games, which is only possible through a run to the College Football Playoff championship game.

Chase Young

The record that Young will be looking to contest does not have to do with future seasons.

Instead, Young seems most likely to challenge the Ohio State single-season record for sacks in a season set by Vernon Gholston in 2007. That season, Gholston had 14 sacks, a number that, while substantial, has been proven to be in Young's grasp in seasons prior.

Just last year, in his sophomore season, Young racked up 10½ sacks, a number that would be good for a spot tied for No. 7 in program history.

For 14 sacks, Young has to average a sack per game, assuming Ohio State is in at least the Big Ten championship and a bowl game by season's end. So far, he is beating that pace, tallying five sacks through three games.

Following a 42-0 win against Cincinnati, in which Young earned 1½ sacks to get his total up to three, the junior defensive end said he thinks there is nothing that opposing offensive lines can really do to stop him.

"I feel like I am unblockable," Young said. "I'm going to try to keep displaying that every week."



ANDREW LIND

TRYING TO REWRITE THE RECORD BOOK – Junior defensive end Chase Young recorded two sacks in Ohio State's win over Indiana, bringing his season total to five sacks. The school record is 14, set by Vernon Gholston in 2007.

If that is true, then this record of 12 seasons is very much in sight for a defensive end who is likely a future first-round pick immediately following the 2019 season.

J.K. Dobbins

Dobbins is almost certainly not going to make his way to the very top of the all-time rushers for Ohio State this season, but he has a good chance to make it into the top three.

The junior running back entered this season with 2,456 rushing yards following back-to-back 1,000-yard rushing campaigns in his first two years with the program.

If Dobbins were to strictly make that three straight 1,000-yard years, that enough would make him the No. 5 rusher in program history, passing the likes of running back Chris "Beanie" Wells, quarterback-turned-H-back Braxton Miller and quarterback J.T. Barrett, who are No. 5, 6 and 7 on the all-time rushing list, respectively, at this point in time.

But if Dobbins excelled in the ways he did in his freshman season, rushing for 1,403 yards, that would be enough for the third-year back to surpass Eddie George and put Dobbins at No. 3 for most rushing yards in program history.

Dobbins needs just over 1,500 yards (1,505) to move past Ezekiel Elliott and take the No. 2 spot all time. For Dobbins to make a run at Archie Griffin at No. 1, he would need to stay for his senior season and average over 1,550 yards in both this season and the next one.

While that seems unlikely, as Dobbins

seems ready to move on to the next level in the NFL after his junior year, a top-three finish, and even moving up to second, seems more than possible for a running back who already has 425 yards through three games in 2019.

If he keeps this pace for the rest of the season and Ohio State plays at least 14 games, Dobbins will surpass Eddie George's record of 1,927 yards in a single season.

"I just feel like I'm the best running back in the nation, and I want to prove that," Dobbins said. "I didn't last year, and I have a chip on my shoulder because I know I can do better."

Ryan Day

For as long as Day lasts without a loss on his record, he will stand in the books as the only Ohio State coach who has a perfect win-loss mark. But moving forward, the longer that Day keeps his perfect streak going, the more he makes history.

Through just six games, Day already has the fourth-longest win streak to begin an Ohio State head coaching campaign.

The coaches ahead of him are Earle Bruce at 11 games, Carroll Widdoes at 12 and Urban Meyer, who won his first 24 games to start at Ohio State before losing to Michigan State in the 2013 Big Ten Championship Game.

While it would take a whole lot for Day to match Meyer's win streak, a win against Rutgers on Nov. 16 could give him the second-longest opening streak if he remains undefeated until then.



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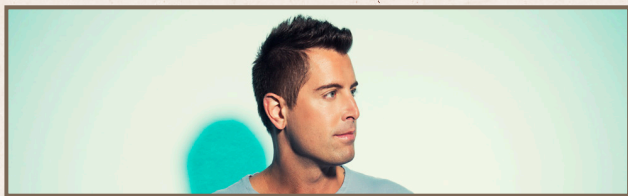
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Miami Continues Tough Early-Season Stretch

By JOE DEMPSEY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Miami (Ohio) enters its matchup with Ohio State with a 1-2 record and hoping to avoid its third loss of its brutal season-opening stretch, featuring road games at then-No. 20 Iowa, Cincinnati and now No. 6 Ohio State. The RedHawks lost their opener, 38-14, at Iowa and defeated Tennessee Tech, 48-17, at home before dropping their most recent game at Cincinnati, 35-13.

The RedHawks' roster contains talented and experienced players on both sides of the ball. Miami center Danny Godlevske (6-3, 287) made his third straight appearance on the Rimington Trophy watch list, which is presented annually to the most outstanding center in Division I, after earning third-team All-MAC honors as a sophomore.

Miami junior tight end Andrew Homer was named to the John Mackey Award watch list, which is given annually to the most outstanding collegiate tight end. The 6-6, 246-pound Cincinnati St. Xavier product hauled in 16 receptions for 231 yards and three touchdowns in 12 games (three starts) as a sophomore.

Perhaps the RedHawks' best player, defensive tackle Doug Costin found his name on the watch list for the Bednarik Award, presented to the Defensive Player of the Year. Costin (6-2, 295) posted 52 tackles (28 solo), 10½ tackles for loss, six sacks, two forced fumbles, one fumble recovery, three pass deflections and one blocked kick as a junior after recording 48 tackles (24 solo), 8½ TFL, five sacks and six pass deflections as a sophomore.

Offensively, Miami is led by true freshman

quarterback Brett Gabbert, who has completed 59.7 percent of his passes for 481 yards and two touchdowns through three games. Gabbert (6-0, 207), who is the brother of NFL quarterback Blaine Gabbert, has also carried the rock 20 times for minus-23 yards and two touchdowns on the ground.

As a high school junior at St. Louis Christian Brothers, Gabbert threw for 2,862 yards and 36 touchdowns, many of which went to Ohio State redshirt freshman wideout Kamryn Babb and sophomore cornerback Cameron Brown, who were his top two senior receivers. The trio helped lead Christian Brothers to a 6A Missouri state title, and Gabbert won again as a senior, completing 69.7 percent of his passes for 3,047 yards and 42 scores.

At Miami, Gabbert throws to a veteran group of receivers, including fifth-year seniors Luke Mayock and Maurice Thomas, fourth-year junior Jack Sorenson and third-year sophomore Jalen Walker. Homer, a fourth-year junior, also gives the young signal caller another experienced target in the passing game. The RedHawks average 162.7 passing yards per game, compared to 104.3 rushing yards. While they enjoyed more success against the lesser Tennessee Tech, Miami struggled to gain traction against tougher defenses in road trips to Iowa and Cincinnati.

Against Iowa, Miami rushed for just 59 yards on 25 attempts (2.4 yards per carry). The RedHawks gained confidence in their ground attack against Tennessee Tech with 190 yards on 40 carries (4.8) but didn't fare as well against Cincinnati (40 rushes for 64 yards, 1.6).

Through the air, Miami completed 17 of 27 passes with one interception for 186 yards against the Hawkeyes and went 11 of 18 for 159

Get To Know ... Miami (Ohio)

About Miami (Ohio)

- **2019 record:** 1-2 (0-0 MAC)
- **Team Information:** Offensive formation – Spread, Multiple; Defensive Formation – 4-2-5, Multiple.
- **Head Coach:** Chuck Martin, 23-41 in six years at Miami (Ohio). Six years at Grand Valley State: 74-7.
- **Series History:** Sixth meeting; Ohio State leads 5-0
- **School Facts:** Location – Oxford, OH; Enrollment – 19,700; Nickname – RedHawks; Colors: Red and white; Conference – Mid-American Conference (East Division); Stadium: Yager Stadium (Surface, FieldTurf; Capacity – 24,286.

Top Offensive Returners

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD
Davion Johnson	26	71	2.7	2
Tyre Shelton	24	108	4.5	1
Maurice Thomas	15	57	3.8	0

Passing	Comp.-Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT
Brett Gabbert	37-62	59.7	481	2-1

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD
Davion Johnson	8	82	10.3	0
Jack Sorenson	7	54	7.7	1
Dominique Robinson	5	106	21.2	0

Team Offensive Stats

Points Per Game	– 25.0
Rushing Yards Per Game	– 104.3
Passing Yards Per Game	– 162.7
Total Offense Avg. Per Game	– 267.0

2019 Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time/Result (ET)
Aug. 31	at Iowa	L, 38-14
Sept. 7	TENNESSEE TECH	W, 48-17
Sept. 14	at Cincinnati	L, 35-13
Sept. 21	at Ohio State	3:30 p.m.
Sept. 28	BUFFALO	TBA
Oct. 12	at Western Michigan	TBA
Oct. 19	NORTHERN ILLINOIS	2:30 p.m.
Oct. 26	at Kent State	TBA
Nov. 6	at Ohio	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 13	BOWLING GREEN	8 p.m.
Nov. 20	AKRON	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29	at Ball State	TBA
Dec. 7	MAC Championship	12 p.m.

Top Defensive Returners

Def. Leaders	Solo-Ast.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Sterling Weatherford	11-9	20	1.0-4	0
Bart Baratti	12-5	17	2.5-19	1.0-11
Myles Reid	7-9	16	0.5-3	0

Interceptions	No.	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Sterling Weatherford	1	54	54.0	0	54
Bart Baratti	1	35	35.0	1	35
Travion Banks	1	0	0.0	0	0

Team Defensive Stats

Points Per Game Allowed	– 30.0
Rushing Yards Per Game Allowed	– 173.7
Passing Yards Per Game Allowed	– 215.3
Total Offense Avg. Per Game Allowed	– 389.0

against the Golden Eagles. Gabbert connected on 10 of 18 attempts for 143 yards against the Bearcats in his third collegiate game.

Junior tailback Jaylon Bester (5-8, 184) entered the season atop the RedHawk backfield list but suffered an injury against Iowa, giving way to redshirt freshman Tyre Shelton (5-11, 191), who has run for 108 yards on 24 carries (4.5). Thomas (15 carries, 57 yards), junior Zach Kahn (eight for 49 and one touchdown) and sophomore Davion Johnson (26 for 71 and two scores) also have roles in Miami's balanced rushing attack.

In addition to Bester, the RedHawks also lost two of Gabbert's top targets, Sorenson and Homer, to injury against Iowa. It is unknown if they will return in time to take on Ohio State, but their presence could surely help Miami.

Scouting The Defense

Defensively, Miami struggled to stop the run against Iowa, surrendering 213 yards on 41 totes (5.2). On the opposite end of the spectrum, the RedHawks stifled the Golden Eagles' ground game by holding them to just 74 yards on 36 carries (2.1). Miami also had difficulty against the Bearcats, who amassed 234 yards on 48 rushes (4.9).

Miami has been solid against the pass. Hawkeye signal caller Nate Stanley threw for an efficient 252 yards, completing 21 of 30 passes. Tennessee Tech had some of the same success, hitting on 23 of 34 attempts for 208 yards, but also threw two interceptions. Cincinnati completed 14 of 30 passes for 186 yards against Miami on Sept. 14.

Sophomore safety Sterling Weatherford (6-4, 218) has been all over the field for the RedHawks, notching 20 tackles (11 solo), one TFL and one interception. Senior corner/safety Bart Baratti (6-1, 200) has elevated his game, recording 17 tackles (12 solo), 2½ TFL, one sack and one interception, which he returned for a touchdown.

Junior linebacker Ryan McWood (6-2, 223) tied Weatherford with a team-high 10 tackles (seven solo) against Iowa but suffered an injury. McWood – whom head coach Chuck Martin called the team's best linebacker – missed the RedHawks' past two games but could play against the Buckeyes.

True freshman Luke Bolden (6-2, 230) started at middle linebacker in place of McWood. The Cincinnati Colerain product has posted four tackles (two solo), including one for loss. Next to Bolden at backer, senior Myles Reid (6-1, 225) offers athleticism, having made 16 tackles (seven solo) and one-half TFL.

Another first-year freshman starting for Miami is defensive tackle Austin Ertl (6-2, 283). The Wauwatosa, Wis., product has posted two tackles through three starts.

On the outside of Costin and Ertl are fifth-year senior Dean Lemon (6-2, 250) and sophomore Kameron Butler (6-3, 252). Lemon, a Kettering (Ohio) Alter product, has 10 tackles (eight solo), 2½ TFL and one sack to his name, while Butler has added nine tackles (seven solo) and leads the team in TFL (four) and sacks (two).

In the secondary, Miami boasts an experienced group with playmaking potential. In addition to Weatherford and Baratti, junior safety Mike Brown (6-1, 210), junior corner Emmanuel Rugamba (5-11, 190) and senior corners Zedrick Raymond (6-0, 181) and Travion Banks (5-11, 183) all have significant roles in the defense. Brown recorded 13 tackles (eight solo) and one TFL through three games, while Rugamba had 14 tackles (11 solo).

Raymond, a JUCO transfer, has totaled seven tackles (six solo) with a team-high four pass breakups. Banks notched nine tackles (six solo), one TFL, two pass breakups and one quarterback hurry in the first three games.

In the return game, the RedHawks have left more to be desired, averaging just 16.8 yards per kick return. Thomas, the team's primary returner, has enjoyed more success on punt returns, posting 12.0 yards per return.

Miami senior kicker Sam Sloman has connected on all four fields goals but has not attempted a field goal beyond 41 yards this season. The Roswell, Ga., native holds a career mark of 25 of 34 on field goals with a long of 45 yards.

A bright spot on the RedHawks' roster comes from an unexpected source – punter Kyle Kramer. The 6-3, 215-pound, fifth-year senior has averaged 43.9 yards per punt, booting six punts more than 50 yards and pinning opponents inside the 20-yard line six times.

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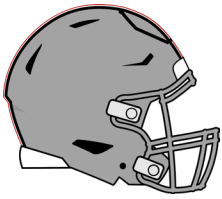
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Projected Depth Charts

How We See It

OHIO STATE RUSH OFFENSE VS. MIAMI RUSH DEFENSE

The Buckeyes accumulated an impressive 306 yards (7.3 yards per carry) in dismantling Indiana 51-10 on the road in the last game. There's no reason that won't continue against Miami. The offensive line is coming together, and junior J.K. Dobbins and second-year freshman Master Teague are a nice one-two punch. Of course Dobbins, who had a 56-yard jaunt among his 193 yards (8.8) vs. the Hoosiers, is The Man. But it's nice to know that Teague can relieve him and put up numbers such as 106 yards on 10 carries against Indiana, including a 40-yarder. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

MIAMI RUSH OFFENSE VS. OHIO STATE RUSH DEFENSE

Miami looked good in the first quarter of its game Sept. 14, gaining 49 yards on the ground for 10-0 lead on Cincinnati. Then the Bearcats adjusted, and the RedHawks had minus-13 rushing yards in the second quarter before ending the game with 64. The RedHawks will be hard-pressed to move the ball on the ground against the Buckeyes, who are playing stingy despite injured senior defensive end Jonathon Cooper missing his third straight game and sophomore DE Tyreke Smith leaving the Indiana game with an injury. Their statuses were unknown as BSB went to press, but coach Ryan Day would love to have them, particularly Cooper, get a few downs before traveling to Nebraska for the following game. The Buckeyes allowed the Hoosiers 42 rushing yards on a 1.4 average. Michael Warren, Cincinnati's standout runner, had just 15 yards on 10 carries vs. the Buckeyes on Sept. 7, but he gained 113 yards a week later in a 35-13 win over the RedHawks, including a 73-yard score. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

OHIO STATE PASS OFFENSE VS. MIAMI PASS DEFENSE

Quarterback Justin Fields keeps the machine moving even when he's not at his best. He admitted after the Indiana game that he did not set his feet right after feeling comfortable against Florida Atlantic and UC. Otherwise, he continues to develop three games into his Ohio State career. The receivers made big strides as well in adjusting on the fly when the primary target is not open and Fields needs to move out of the pocket. He was 14 for 24 for 199 yards and three touchdowns to give him nine passing TDs this season. Miami (1-2) is prone to giving up big plays. Cincinnati's Desmond Ridder threw TD passes of 27 and 51 yards. He was 14 for 30 for 186 yards, and Miami picked off one of his passes. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

MIAMI PASS OFFENSE VS. OHIO STATE PASS DEFENSE

RedHawks QB Brett Gabbert, brother of Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Blaine Gabbert, started on fire vs. UC, completing his first six passes, although he was sacked four times. He missed his first six to start the second half and was 10 for 18 for 143 yards in the game. The Buckeyes have looked strong as well as unrecognizable from the 2018 flail-and-flagged pass defense. Former head coach Urban Meyer said on Fox during the game that all in the secondary are future NFL players, and he may be right. Add in a stud D-front led by certain first-round pick Chase Young and there's a reason the Buckeyes were so miffed that Indiana scored on a razzle-dazzle double pass approaching halftime. Otherwise, they might have had their second straight game without allowing a TD (Cincinnati, 42-0). Damon Arnette made the Hoosiers pay for poking the Buckeyes with his 96-yard pick-six. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

SPECIAL TEAMS

One great play. One bad miss. That's the Buckeyes' game vs. Indiana in a nutshell. Chris Olave's blocked punt for a safety, moments after his TD catch, gave OSU a 16-3 lead in the second quarter, and that was the ballgame. The Hoosiers had life because Blake Haubeil blew a 32-yard field goal on OSU's opening drive. That will be unforgivable in a big game. Miami has a good punter in Kyle Kramer (44.3 average on seven punts vs. UC), and kick returner Maurice Thomas averaged 15.5 yards on six tries in that game. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

INTANGIBLES

Ohio State beat Cincinnati by 42 at home. The next week the Bearcats defeated the visiting RedHawks by 22. What does that mean this week? We don't know, other than Miami is not going to beat the Buckeyes and likely is not going to be in the game long. OSU has outscored opponents 86-17 in the first halves of the first three games. That trend should continue. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

STAFF PREDICTION

There are some folks who would consider this a trap game before going to Huskerville. That would have to assume that Miami has a legitimate chance to win. Nope. Day seems intent on making sure the Buckeyes do not relax and do not relent. **OHIO STATE, 52-7**

WHEN OHIO STATE HAS THE BALL...

3 MIKE BROWN, 6-1, 210, JR. 22 Cecil Singleton, 6-2, 206, R-Fr.	17 MYLES REID, 6-1, 225, SR. 38 Max Wynn, 6-2, 206, Fr.	49 BART BARATTI, 6-1, 200, SR. 27 Kobe Burse, 6-0, 224, Sr.
SS	LB	LB
5 EMMANUEL RUGAMBA, 5-11, 190, JR. 18 Cedric Boswell, 5-11, 181, Jr.	8 LUKE BOLDEN, 6-2, 230, FR. 23 Ivan Pace, 6-0, 241, Fr.	21 STERLING WEATHERFORD, 6-4, 218, SO. 6 Travion Banks, 5-11, 183, Sr.
CB	NICKEL	FS
82 KAMERON BUTLER, 6-3, 252, SO. 52 Cam Turner, 6-0, 238, Jr.	58 DOUG COSTIN, 6-2, 295, SR. 30 Josh Maize, 6-3, 267, So.	90 DEAN LEMON, 6-2, 250, 5TH-SR. 97 Will Kellison, 6-4, 247, R-Fr.
DE	DT	DT
92 AUSTIN ERTL, 6-2, 283, FR. 34 Isaac Hampton, 6-0, 294, So.	14 ZEDRICK RAYMOND, 6-0, 181, SR. 4 Allan Koikoi, 5-11, 185, 5th-Sr.	
DE	CB	
X	LT	LG
75 THAYER MUNFORD, 6-6, 310, JR. 58 Joshua Alabi, 6-5, 305, 5th-Sr.	71 JOSH MYERS, 6-5, 305, SO. 77 Harry Miller, 6-4, 305, Fr.	76 BRANDEN BOWEN, 6-7, 315, 5TH-SR. 78 Nicholas Petit-Frere, 6-5, 295, R-Fr.
RG	C	RT
10 BINJIMEN VICTOR, 6-4, 199, SR. 5 Garrett Wilson, 6-0, 188, Fr.	73 JONAH JACKSON, 6-4, 305, 5TH-SR. 54 Matthew Jones, 6-4, 305, R-Fr.	52 WYATT DAVIS, 6-4, 315, SO. 61 Gavin Cupp, 6-4, 308, Jr.
Z		
11 AUSTIN MACK, 6-2, 215 SR. 17 Chris Olave, 6-1, 185, So.		
P	QB	TE
91 DRUE CHRISMAN, 6-3, 220, JR.	1 JUSTIN FIELDS, 6-3, 223, SO. 12 Gunnar Hoak, 6-4, 206, Jr. OR 4 Chris Chugunov, 6-0, 208, 5th-Sr.	89 LUKE FARRELL, 6-6, 250, JR. 88 Jeremy Ruckert, 6-5, 250, So.
K	H	
95 BLAKE HAUBEIL, 6-3, 220, Jr.	2 J.K. DOBBINS, 5-10, 217 JR. 33 Master Teague, 5-11, 220, R-Fr.	14 K.J. HILL, 6-0, 195, 5TH-SR. 26 Jaalen Gill, 6-0, 195, R-Fr.

WHEN MIAMI (OHIO) HAS THE BALL...

25 BRENDON WHITE, 6-2, 215, JR. 23 Jahsen Wint, 5-11, 200, Jr.	39 MALIK HARRISON, 6-3, 245, SR. 7 Teradja Mitchell, 6-2, 242, So.	20 PETE WERNER, 6-3, 239, JR. 36 K'Vaughan Pope, 6-1, 231, So.	4 JORDAN FULLER, 6-2, 205, SR. 15 Josh Proctor, 6-2, 205, So.
SS	WLB	MLB	SLB
1 JEFF OKUDAH, 6-1, 200, JR. 12 Sevyn Banks, 6-1, 200, So.	53 DAVON HAMILTON, 6-4, 310, 5TH-SR. 67 Robert Landers, 6-1, 285, 5th-Sr.	54 TYLER FRIDAY, 6-3, 260, SO. 33 Zach Harrison, 6-6, 255, Fr.	24 SHAUN WADE, 6-1, 194, SO. 10 Amir Riep, 6-0, 195, Jr.
CB	DE	DT	DT
2 CHASE YOUNG, 6-5, 265, JR. 11 Tyreke Smith, 6-4, 267, So.	9 JASHON CORNELL, 6-3, 285, 5TH-SR. 92 Haskell Garrett, 6-2, 295, Jr.	3 DAMON ARNETTE, 6-0, 195, 5TH-SR. 26 Cameron Brown, 6-0, 188, So.	NICKEL
CB	DE	CB	
X	LT	LG	C
54 TOMMY DOYLE, 6-8, 318, JR. 57 Bennett Clark, 6-6, 302, R-Fr.	51 DANNY GODLEVSKE, 6-3, 287, JR. 55 Andrew Todd, 6-4, 286, R-Fr.	77 MATT SKIBINSKI, 6-5, 285, 5TH-SR. 74 Jack Schroer, 6-4, 288, 5th-Sr.	RT
RG	RG	RT	Y
8 CAM BLAKELY, 6-5, 189, R-FR. 11 Dominique Robinson, 6-4, 235, Jr.	64 DAVID REDDING, 6-4, 309, SO. 65 Peter Nank, 6-5, 319, So.	75 JARRETT LARUBBIO, 6-5, 310, 5TH SR. 52 Caleb Shaffer, 6-5, 311, Fr.	86 LUKE MAYOCK, 6-5, 229, 5TH-SR. 83 Jalen Walker, 5-7, 176, So.
P	QB	H	TE
9 KYLE KRAMER, 6-3, 215, 5TH-SR.	5 BRETT GABBERT, 6-0, 207, FR. 2 Jackson Williamson, 6-2, 201, So.	80 QUENTIN HARDY, 6-5, 237, SR. 87 Adam Mehelic, 6-3, 260, R-So.	
K	RB		
79 SAM SLOMAN, 5-8, 205, SR.	20 TYRE SHELTON, 5-11, 191, R-FR. 23 Davion Johnson, 5-10, 217, So.	19 JAMES MAYE, 5-9, 162, FR. 31 Maurice Thomas, 5-11, 179, 5th-Sr.	

- Depth charts compiled by Andrew Lind and Joe Dempsey

Ohio State On 98-Year In-State Win Streak

By WYATT CROSER
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Ohio State has been the dominant football school in its home state for many years at this point. Just how long, exactly?

The Buckeyes have not been defeated by an in-state opponent since 1921, when Ohio State fell at its home stadium in a 7-6 defeat to Oberlin. Ohio State has also won every single matchup since a 7-7 tie to Wooster in 1924.

Over the program's history, the Buckeyes have matched up against 27 in-state opponents, many of which do not even have a Division-I football team at this point in time.

This includes a 32-0 victory on Oct. 6, 1894, against Antioch, a college that now has an enrollment of 135 students. Or how about a 42-4 win on Nov. 12, 1892, against the Dayton YMCA, which now offers flag football camps as the closest alternative.

But some of these teams also got the better of the Buckeyes in the early years. The Columbus Barracks played Ohio State three times, losing twice but finding a victory against the Buckeyes on Oct. 26, 1897, by a score of 6-0.

Western Reserve College – before it was known as Case Western Reserve – had 12 matchups against Ohio State and pulled together six wins and a tie, including five victories in a row to start the series. These victories often came in blowout fashion, with Western Reserve piling up a 50-6 win to start the series on Nov. 11, 1891. Its win streak was capped off by a 49-0 victory on Nov. 5, 1898, before Ohio State pulled out a 6-0 win the following season. The series was closed out on Nov. 3, 1934, with a 76-0 Ohio State win.

Before the two merged, Case was its own school and was a rival of Western Reserve due to their physical proximity. Either way, Case also had success against the Buckeyes, winning 10 of the 23 matchups, finishing with a 10-11-2 record. Case also took advantage of Ohio State in the early years, starting the series with a 10-4-2 record before losing the final seven games by a combined score of 203-12.

There were wins to be found against Ohio State in the late 19th century and into the early 1900s, 49 of them by in-state opponents prior to

1921. Since then, there have been zero. Fifteen ties also show that teams within state borders could go toe to toe with a future powerhouse in the Buckeyes through 1924. No longer.

Ohio State has a 182-49-15 record against in-state opponents overall – counting the 2010 win against Ohio that was vacated due to NCAA violations – and its matchups against those in-state opponents since the turn of the 21st century have been a mixed bag of near upsets and absolute blowouts.

The Buckeyes are 23-0 since 2000, again including the vacated victory against the Bobcats, and more recently dominated the matchups against Ohio opponents under Urban Meyer and Ryan Day. So far, those two are only a combined 5-0, but they average 58.2 points per game against a combination of Miami (Ohio), Kent State, Cincinnati and Bowling Green while allowing only 9.6 points per game in the contests.

Those two numbers would easily be the No. 1 offenses and defenses in the country in 2018, with Oklahoma finishing atop the nation with 48.4 points per game and Clemson holding the country's top defense, allowing only 13.1 points a game.

Meyer seemingly made it his mission to put up big points when he had the chance, and it is too early to tell if Day will do the same, as a 42 spot against a good Cincinnati team isn't quite running up the score.

On the other end of things, Jim Tressel had more close calls to breaking the near-century-long winning streak. That includes a 23-19 scare against Cincinnati on Sept. 21, 2002, that could have ended what turned out to be a national championship run in the early part of the season.

While only one other game ended within one possession – a 24-17 win against Bowling Green on Sept. 20, 2003 – from 2000-2011, when three games from John Cooper and Luke Fickell are also added to the equation, Ohio State was not winning these contests as handily as some may have thought.

In those 18 games this century before Meyer took over in 2012, Ohio State averaged 33.9 points per game against in-state opponents while still allowing points in the single digits at 9.5 points per game.

These are still mostly blowout wins, helped

by Tressel allowing double-digit points to an Ohio opponent only once in his final nine games against them, but the early 2000s seemed like a turning point for other Ohio schools to get in on the fun. The 2010s showed that, indeed, it was not.

Miami Comes In Zero For Five

Although not all of Miami's matchups against Ohio State have come since that 1924 game against Wooster, the RedHawks have never been able to find success against the Buckeyes in five attempts.

The first matchup between the two schools came on Oct. 1, 1904. The game was Miami's first of the season, while Ohio State was coming off a 34-0 victory against a different Ohio school, Otterbein. What followed was an old-fashioned beatdown, with the Buckeyes relentlessly putting up 80 points in an 80-0 shutout win over Miami.

Miami would recover, defeating Hamilton AC the following week by a score of 12-6. The team then proceeded to lose the rest of its games without scoring another point en route to a 1-5 record. In the five losses during that 1904 season, Miami was outscored 277-0.

Seven years later, on Oct. 7, 1911, these two teams played again. This time, it was a much closer contest, and again Ohio State was coming off a victory against Otterbein, this time by a more modest 6-0 score. That contest was head coach Harry Vaughn's first win, and a week later he would find his second, again in a close game, narrowly defeating Miami 3-0.

Miami would move forward into a 2-4-2 record, while Ohio State went 5-3-2. But this is true of both teams in the 1911 season: When either Miami or Ohio State scored any points in a game, it won that respective game. Every single loss by these teams came through a shutout.

After those two Ohio State wins, these teams did not play again for 89 years. That ended on Sept. 16, 2000, when the 2-0 Buckeyes faced off against the 2-0 RedHawks. Quarterback Mike Bath put up quite an effort for Miami, registering 236 yards and two touchdowns through the air and another 105 yards on the ground. But he also threw three interceptions, which was enough for Ohio State to jump on.

OHIO STATE'S RECORD VS. IN-STATE TEAMS

Date	W-L-T
Antioch	1-0-0
Bowling Green	5-0-0
Camp Sherman	1-0-0
Case	11-10-2
Cincinnati	14-2-0
Columbus Barracks	2-1-0
Dayton YMCA	1-0-0
Denison	14-1-2
Heidelberg	3-0-0
Kent State	3-0-0
Kenyon	17-6-0
Marietta	6-2-0
Miami (Ohio)	5-0-0
Mount Union	1-0-0
Muskingum	7-0-0
Oberlin	13-10-3
Ohio Medical	5-2-1
Ohio	7-0-0
Ohio Wesleyan	26-2-1
Otterbein	13-2-3
Toledo	3-0-0
Western Reserve	5-6-1
Wilmington	1-0-0
Wittenberg	12-3-0
Wooster	4-2-2
Youngstown State	2-0-0

Running backs Derek Combs (142 yards) and Jonathan Wells (113 yards, two touchdowns) each surpassed the 100-yard barrier, and it was enough for the Buckeyes to come out with a 27-16 win in coach John Cooper's final season.

The two would next meet in a season opener on Sept. 3, 2005. Miami would go on to have solid season in 2005, ending it with a 7-4 record. That didn't matter. Ohio State rode a well-balanced offensive attack to a 34-0 lead before the RedHawks padded the stats with a pair of touchdowns in the fourth quarter to make the final score 34-14.

Receivers Ted Ginn Jr. (75 yards) and Santonio Holmes (74 yards) each hauled in five catches and each also found the end zone to help open space for running back Antonio Pittman. Pittman found said space, rushing 14 times for 100 yards on the game.

On the other side, Miami quarterback Josh Betts completed 24 of 44 passes for 250 yards, a touchdown and an interception.

Nine of those completions went to receiver Martin Nance for 106 yards, while one went to receiver Sean McVay for 6 yards. That would be McVay's only catch of his freshman season. Maybe he was more worried about his future as an NFL head coach, where he would make a Super Bowl in just his second season at the helm of the Los Angeles Rams.

The most recent matchup leading up to the one on Sept. 21 was a game on Sept. 1, 2012. This was Urban Meyer's only shot at the RedHawks, and he did not let that slip away.

In a season when bowl eligibility was stripped away, Ohio State got to open its season against Miami, and the RedHawks actually did strike first on a 22-yard field goal by kicker Kaleb Patterson in the 56-10 Buckeye victory. RedHawks quarterback Zac Dysert had a productive day, finishing with 303 yards and a touchdown, albeit on 53 pass attempts and while throwing two interceptions. And Miami wide receiver Nick Harwell had a terrific day, hauling in eight grabs for 120 yards and a score.

But this was, above all else, the Braxton Miller show. After trailing 3-0 in the first quarter, the Buckeyes scored the next 35 points, includ-

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ing two Miller touchdown passes and a 65-yard Miller touchdown run. There were other stand-out players, with cornerback Bradley Roby finishing the game with six tackles, two pass deflections and a fumble recovery returned for a touchdown. Cornerback Travis Howard didn't record a tackle but was the cause for both Dysert interceptions.

Miller was the key piece to the blowout win, though, with his 14-of-24 passing for 207 yards and two touchdowns through the air and 17 rushes for 161 yards and a score on the ground to help start an eventual 12-0 season.

Overall, Ohio State has scored 200 points in the five games against Miami, while the RedHawks have scored 40. That adds up to an average score of 40-8 in each game.

Miami Coaching History Runs Deep

The RedHawks may have not had the esteemed history of other football programs and may not have a national champion or Heisman winner, but Miami does have a history of having a wide variety of coaches who got their starts, sometimes as a player, in Oxford before branching out to successful coaching

careers elsewhere. Some examples include the previously mentioned McVay, who has turned the Los Angeles Rams into one of the best teams in the NFL, and also current Baltimore Ravens head coach John Harbaugh – brother of Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh.

Some of Ohio State's biggest coaching names having ties to Miami as well.

Paul Brown – Brown was the quarterback at Miami from 1926-28 after failing to pass a tryout to make it on Ohio State's football team. While with Miami, Brown amassed a 14-3 record and was named to the All-Ohio small-college second team by The Associated Press in 1928.

Thirteen years later, Brown was the coach at Ohio State. He had great success in his first two seasons, going 15-2-1 including leading Ohio State to its first national championship in 1942. But in a difficult 1943 season, which saw Ohio State's roster severely diminished due to World War II, Brown suffered a 3-6 record. He then left to join the Great Lakes Naval Training Station.

Brown's major highlights would come later, winning three NFL championships as head coach and owner of the Cleveland Browns.

Woody Hayes – Hayes' coaching career

started at Denison, his alma mater, before he moved to become head coach of Miami for two seasons, the second of which ended in a bowl win against Arizona State. That success earned Hayes the head job for the Buckeyes in 1951, a job he would hold for 28 seasons.

His time at Miami was brief, but the accolades earned there were enough to help Hayes get the job that would make him one of the most successful coaches in college football history.

Hayes finished his tenure at Ohio State with a 205-61-10 record and three national championships to his name.

Bo Schembechler – Like Brown, Schembechler's roots with Miami began as a player for three seasons as a tackle.

After two separate stints at Ohio State as an assistant to Hayes (his former Miami head coach), Schembechler would return to become the head coach of his alma mater from 1963-68.

Schembechler was an assistant on the Buckeyes for some very good teams, but it is where he went after Miami for which most Ohio State fans remember him. Schembechler took over as head coach at Michigan, a position he would hold for 21 seasons until 1989.

Schembechler had a 194-48-5 record and won

13 conference titles with the Wolverines but could not find a way to win a national title.

Jim Tressel – From 1979-80, Tressel was the quarterbacks and wide receivers coach at Miami before moving on to Syracuse and then Ohio State for three seasons as an assistant.

Of course, after 15 seasons coaching Youngstown State, Tressel made his way back to Columbus and coached the team for 10 seasons, winning six straight Big Ten titles to end his tenure and also earning a national title and making it to two more championship games along the way.

Kevin Wilson – Wilson is the only assistant on the Buckeyes to currently have ties to Oxford. Before stints at Oklahoma, Northwestern and Indiana, Wilson went from a high school head coach to the offensive line coach at Miami in 1990. Wilson was eventually promoted to offensive coordinator in 1992, a position he would hold for seven seasons before heading to Evanston, Ill., to join the Wildcats as their offensive coordinator.

Eighteen years later, Wilson made it to Columbus to become Ohio State's offensive coordinator and tight ends coach, a position he still holds to this day.

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Kalen Etzler Will Bring Versatility To Ohio State

By JOE DEMPSEY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

When Kalen Etzler committed to Ohio State, he held offers from only Miami (Ohio), Bowling Green and Duquesne. The prestige of being a Buckeye may have seemed like enough to entice the 2021 forward to commit early, but there was more to his decision.

As a 6-8 standout sophomore, Etzler surely had more offers coming his way after helping lead Convoy Crestview to a Division-IV state title 2019 and continuing to enhance his game.

Etzler visited Columbus when Ohio State football hosted Indiana on Oct. 6, 2018, along with fellow 2021 commit Meechie Johnson, and was blown away by his experience.

"I went on the first visit, and they treated me so nice down there," Etzler told Buckeye Sports Bulletin. "Being an Ohio State fan growing up – being an Ohio State fan is so real to me – it just felt like home compared to any other visit."

Besides feeling at home, the talented four-star recruit wanted to find a school that matched his play style. After he was able to take in an Ohio State basketball game in person, Etzler became even more interested in becoming a Buckeye.

"When I went to watch the game, they kind of run the little drive and kick, and I love that," Etzler said. "We used to do that in high school. There are a lot of opportunities for open threes that I can take or work out, tire out the defense, run a little bit off the clock

and get a good layup or something like that."

The atmosphere and game plan checked two big boxes for Etzler, but often the biggest question mark when committing to a school is the coaching staff. It didn't take long for Ohio State head coach Chris Holtmann, assistant coach Ryan Pedon and staff to impress the Crestview forward.

"He's a really genuine guy," Etzler said of Holtmann. "The track record he has with his players and the teams he's coached, I could just tell that Coach Holtmann and Coach Pedon are going to do what they can to help me get what I need to get done. I just know how genuine they are."

Etzler said he really liked how Holtmann "shoots it straight," not just praising him as a coveted prospect but telling him what he needs to work on.

"They can tell I have a good frame. Obviously I'm not doing a good job of putting on weight right now, or ever in my life, so that's tough," Etzler said when asked what OSU sees in him. "It's tough to get a kid who's 6-8 with a nice frame. My shoulders are pretty broad, my arms are pretty long. In my opinion, I'm pretty athletic and I can shoot the three for how big I am."

"They like all that about me, but what they're trying to get me to improve on – I'm rebounding pretty well at the D-IV level and AAU, so I'm going to have to continue to get rebounds for my team since I'm not going to have to do most of the dribbling in college."

With the ability to shoot three-pointers as a forward, Etzler is an excellent fit for Holtmann's system, which emphasizes ball

and player movement to get open looks. At his height, Etzler's ability to shoot can potentially make him a mismatch nightmare for undersized or slow defenders.

"I've worked so hard that it makes it harder for me to guard because if I get hot, I'm hot, and it's hard to block a 6-8 person," Etzler said. "And in terms of the inside game, if a smaller person is on me, I'm working on how to power through a little guy or draw fouls inside or just use my body to get to the rim."

While Etzler is quite lean for a forward at 172 pounds, he is only a junior in high school and has made a personal goal of gaining 15 pounds before his season.

Etzler said he and his trainer are constantly working on different ball-handling drills and fine-tuning his skills. This fall he's been working a lot on his footwork, trying to become shifter and making sharper moves in order to get to the basket more.

Although he towers over many players, he was not always relegated to center by his youth coaches. Because his teammates struggled bringing the ball up in junior high, the long and lean Etzler was called on to run the point, and he thinks it helps him to this day.

"It just helps me pressure-wise, trying to get the ball up the floor, trying to get open," Etzler said. "Because when you're playing point guard and you pass it off, you need to try to find a way to get that ball back. And that's how I feel this high school season is going to go. If somebody is running a box-in-one or a double-team on me, I'm going to have to find ways to get open. It's helped me in that aspect."

As he alluded to, Etzler will likely see an abundance of double- and triple-teams as an Ohio State commit playing high school basketball at the D-IV level. However, this wasn't the case through much of his first two years on a talented Crestview team. The talented underclassman had to play within the team, which featured his brother, Javin, who will be a sophomore at Miami (Ohio), and seven other seniors.

"It was a little frustrating in the beginning because I wanted to go in there and – everyone wants to go in there and try to look cool

and score a bunch of points," he said "But Coach (Jeremy) Best was really good within the team setting. Scoring a lot of points was cool, but at the end of the day, it was better going home sitting on the bus, talking with your team about how well you guys all played and the plays that you made together. It's better that way, and that's how I'd like college to be and how I believe it could be with all that talent."

Putting the team first paid off for Etzler and Crestview, which won the state title with a 27-1 record. Taking somewhat of a back seat as a sophomore just set up more things to come from Etzler in the future.

"I can sacrifice this year, and let's go get this ring," Etzler said. "And then the next two years, I'll have my time to do what I want to do and work on my stuff."

Best stepped down as Crestview's coach, and the school brought in a familiar face – Kalen's uncle, Doug Etzler, who averaged 16.3 points and 3.9 assists at Ohio State in 1994-95.

"It's a little weird since it's my uncle," Etzler said. "I had a talk with him at the end of the summer. We started off pretty good, but we don't really have anything built right now since he's new. We're just trying to put it all together. I sat down and was like, 'What do you need from me? What can I do to improve?'"

Etzler said he and his uncle discussed goals for him, regarding scoring, rebounding and free throws, but the biggest takeaway was what he could do for his teammates.

"The No. 1 thing I want to try to do is just be a leader and guide my team to be the best they can," Kalen Etzler said. "That sit-down talk with him really helped."

Hungry for another state title and excited about his future as a Buckeye, Etzler is preparing for his junior season at Crestview. The exciting and versatile forward can electrify a crowd with a run of three-pointers or a powerful dunk. BSB asked him which he preferred.

"For sure, a dunk," Kalen said, "especially if someone's in the way. Everyone on the other team is just like, 'Oh my God, that really just happened.'"



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Sept 7 - Cincinnati Bearcats
Sept 14 - at Indiana Hoosiers
Sept 21 - Miami, OH RedHawks
Sept 28 - at Nebraska Cornhuskers
Oct 5 - Michigan State Spartans
Oct 12 - First Bye Week
Oct 18 - at Northwestern Wildcats
Oct 26 - Wisconsin Badgers
Nov 2 - Second Bye Week
Nov 9 - Maryland Terrapins
Nov 16 - at Rutgers Scarlet Knights
Nov 23 - Penn State Nittany Lions
Nov 30 - at TTUN
Dec 7 - Big 10 Championship
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In-State Linebacker Reid Carrico Commits

Ohio State landed a commitment in the early-morning hours of Sept. 10 from one of the state's top-ranked players when Ironton, Ohio, four-star linebacker Reid Carrico pledged his services to the Buckeyes.

The 6-3, 225-pound Carrico was considered the third-best inside linebacker and No. 126 prospect overall in the 2021 recruiting class at the time of his commitment. He recorded 17 tackles in his first two games for the Fighting Tigers this season. He'd also racked up 266 all-purpose yards and four touchdowns as the team's primary running back.

Carrico picked Ohio State over more than 30 other offers from schools such as Alabama, Arkansas, Clemson, Florida, Florida State, LSU, Michigan, Michigan State, Notre Dame, Oklahoma, Ole Miss, Penn State, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia Tech and Wisconsin, among

what appeared to be certain commitments from Tucson (Ariz.) Salpointe Catholic five-star Bijan Robinson and Deerfield Beach, Fla., four-star Jaylan Knighton this summer.

However, he remains confident that the Buckeyes will receive a letter of intent from one of the nation's top-rated players at the position during the early signing period.

"I'm going to say, again, that we'll be fine," Alford said during his media availability on Sept. 10. "I don't like to lose. Does it bother me? Hell yeah it bothers me. But at the same time, you pick up and you go again. You identify where you could have been better, you make the necessary changes and you go do what you have got to do."

Alford cannot speak about a prospect or delve into the specifics of a recruiting situation because of NCAA regulations. But he continues to be asked about his recruiting efforts nonetheless.

There are only three months until the Early Signing Period, and with most of the staff's top targets already committed elsewhere, Alford has been tasked with building new relationships against a ticking clock.

"As far as how I approach it, I don't think I approach it any differently," Alford said. "You go after and you recruit the guys who you feel fit your program. And guys who you feel fit your room. And then you go after them with all you've got. So, that hasn't changed. There's a group of guys that we're after – that I'm going after – and we'll see how it goes."

Ohio State has had success in flipping prospects late in the process in recent years. Antonio Williams switched from Wisconsin in October 2015 and Marcus Crowley flipped from Miami (Fla.) in November 2018.

Knighton still remains a possibility in that aspect, as does Georgia Tech three-star commit Jahmyr Gibbs. It's much more likely, though, that the Buckeyes put the full-court press on some combination of Dallas Jesuit four-star E.J. Smith – the son of NFL Hall of Fame running back Emmitt Smith; Dublin (Ohio) Coffman four-star Michael Drennen; and Lancaster, Texas, four-star Kevontre Bradford.

Alford also noted the Buckeyes have quite a bit of depth at the running back position, so bringing in two running backs this cycle is no



ANDREW LIND

BUILDING A WALL – Ironton, Ohio, four-star linebacker Reid Carrico on Sept. 10 became the fourth in-state prospect from the 2021 recruiting class to commit to Ohio State.

RECRUITING OUTLOOK Andrew Lind

others. He has visited campus numerous times since landing an offer from the Buckeyes in April, which included participating in a one-day camp in mid-June and attending the 42-0 win over Cincinnati on Sept. 7.

Carrico became the fifth member of Ohio State's 2021 recruiting class, which moved the Buckeyes into third place in the 247Sports team recruiting rankings. He joins Pickerington (Ohio) North five-star defensive end Jack Sawyer, Philadelphia St. Joseph's four-star quarterback Kyle McCord, Richfield (Ohio) Revere four-star offensive tackle Ben Christman and Massillon (Ohio) Washington four-star wide receiver Jayden Ballard.

Assistant Tony Alford Still Confident In RB Recruiting

Ohio State running backs coach Tony Alford can certainly feel the pressure on the recruiting trail after the Buckeyes missed out on

longer a priority unless there are multiple departures this offseason.

Starter J.K. Dobbins is eligible for the NFL draft after this year, and few people expect him to return to school for his senior season. Junior Demario McCall should be back next season, as will redshirt freshman Master Teague and true freshmen Crowley and Steele Chambers.

Buckeyes Continue Pursuit Of RB Jaylan Knighton

Florida State is off to a rough start thus far, with a home loss to Boise State, a one-point overtime win over Louisiana-Monroe and a 31-24 road defeat at Virginia in the first three

weeks of the season.

It should come as no surprise, then, that Alford has maintained contact with the aforementioned Knighton, who could very well start to reconsider his decision if the Seminoles' struggles continue. The Buckeyes have benefited from other teams' ineptitude in the past, and it's clear Alford isn't ready to give up on the talented all-purpose back just yet.

It's worth noting Knighton took his official visit to Ohio State back in June, which means he'd have to pay his own way to Columbus if he wants to take another visit this fall. It is more likely he'll flip to Miami (Fla.) – the team that was originally considered to be the biggest

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A Look Back At Recruiting From The Pages Of BSB

30 Years Ago – 1989

Cleveland St. Ignatius quarterback Joe Pickens may have been the best-known Ohio high school player at his position, but there were several other excellent quarterbacks finishing their prep careers in 1989 that Ohio State would undoubtedly attempt to lure to Columbus.

The Buckeyes had signed no quarterbacks in the previous recruiting season. The two players regarded as Ohio's top quarterbacks that year – Franklin's Lance Harp and Newark Catholic's Doug Wollenberg – were not heavily recruited by Ohio State. Harp went to South Carolina, while Wollenberg eventually ended up at OSU on a baseball scholarship.

This time, there were even more quarterback prospects, and the Buckeyes were hoping to sign at least two signal callers that recruiting cycle.

25 Years Ago – 1994

Some followers of the Ohio State football team were already getting a little edgy about the Buckeyes' recruiting efforts so far.

Wisconsin already had more than a half-dozen verbal commitments while Michigan had several as well. In fact, just about every Big Ten school had at least one verbal commitment with one notable exception: Ohio State.

Larry Petroff gave a little chuckle when he heard that because he knew the 1995 recruiting season had barely begun.

"No, we don't have any commitments yet, but that's OK," said the former recruiting coordinator who now carried the title of assistant to the athletic director for football operations. "Some of the ones who make decisions this early end up changing their minds later on. It happened last year and the year before. It happens every year."

Petroff, OSU head coach John Cooper and the rest of the Buckeyes' coaching staff had already compiled a "wish list" of about 50 to 75 prospects they wanted to keep tabs on in the fall. But they didn't want to start whittling that number down until November.

"The one thing that really helped us last year was the fact that we waited a little bit," Petroff said. "We waited because we wanted to fully evaluate film from the players' senior seasons."

"If you base your evaluation on the kid's junior year and then he goes out and has a poor senior year, you could be in trouble. We believe you're better off targeting the players after their junior year, but then waiting to make the final evaluation until after their senior year."

20 Years Ago – 1999

Westerville (Ohio) South running back Branden Joe became OSU's 12th commitment for the class of 2000 when he committed on Sept. 16.

Joe (6-2, 230, 4.54) was off to a big start for his senior year, rushing for 840 yards (8.1 average) and scoring eight touch-

downs in helping his team to a 4-0 start. Joe celebrated his announcement a day later by rushing for 237 yards and two touchdowns in a 28-20 win over Gahanna.

He picked Ohio State over Michigan, Purdue, Notre Dame and Penn State.

"I had been weighing my options," Joe told BSB. "I sat down with my family, and we had a nice long talk. I just decided this was the best decision for me."

"I just don't think I can find any better atmosphere in the country. This is what I want to be a part of."

Joe made the decision within days of attending OSU's win over UCLA on Sept. 11.

"That was an unbelievable experience," he said. "I had never been to a night game there before. It was pretty amazing."

15 Years Ago – 2004

Chagrin Falls, Ohio, wide receiver Brian Robiskie had narrowed his choice of colleges down to three, and Ohio State made the final cut.

"I'm definitely starting to narrow my list a little bit," Robiskie told BuckeyeSports.com recruiting analyst Bill Kurelic on Sept. 12. "I have an offer from Miami of Florida, and I like Ohio State and USC. Those are probably my three right now."

Robiskie, the son of Cleveland Browns offensive coordinator Terry Robiskie, also had offers from Penn State, Minnesota, Illinois and Indiana and said he was beginning the process of scheduling his official visits.

"It could be more beneficial to take some during the season and see a game," he said. "But it could be better after the season when coaches have more time to talk to you."

The 6-3, 190-pounder caught 50 passes and scored 13 touchdowns as a junior. Through the first two games of the 2004 season, he had 12 catches and three TDs.

10 Years Ago – 2009

Despite living and going to high school in Florida, Lamarcus Joyner was no stranger to the Columbus area. The 5-8½, 165-pound defensive back was on hand in April for OSU's spring game and made a return in fall when his team played Upper Arlington, Ohio, in Ohio Stadium. Joyner came away impressed with the gameday environment.

"My Ohio State visit was great, and it was everything people said it would be," Joyner said. "It was so loud that it gave me a headache, but I still loved being there for that game with USC. I feel pretty familiar with the players and the coaching staff. The game was unbelievable because of the atmosphere and all the hype, and I loved being there for it."

As a junior, Joyner recorded 112 tackles, four sacks and an interception and also had 17 catches for 482 yards and seven touchdowns. Scout rated him the No. 8 prospect overall in the country regardless of position.

"It feels like home being up there now and I'm real comfortable talking with all the coaches," Joyner said. "Coach (Jim) Tressel and I sat for over a half-hour in his office (the day after the USC game) and just talked about everything – not just football. He told me what Ohio State can do for me and how it can impact my future. He also told me how much he appreciated me and how highly he thinks of me as a person."

Five Years Ago – 2014

Because of his ability to deliver the ball efficiently and accurately on a repeated basis, Liam McCullough was one of two long snappers selected to participate in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl, which was to be held in San Antonio on Jan. 3, 2015.

While many of the nation's top prospects would announce their college destination at that game, McCullough would have no such ceremony. While participating in a camp at Ohio State on June 10, he verbally committed to join the Buckeyes. He chose Ohio State over Kentucky, Michigan State and Wisconsin, all of which gave him scholarship offers.

For the 6-3, 230-pound prospect, the caliber of schools that he was choosing from served as validation for those who claimed that scholarships shouldn't be used on players who routinely see the field for about 10 plays per game.

"There are definitely people that say that long snappers aren't deserving of scholarships," McCullough said. "But when the top schools in the nation are offering snappers out of high school, schools such as Ohio State, Michigan State, Wisconsin and Alabama, these big-time head coaches are saying that these players deserve scholarships as well and are an important part of the team. I think that speaks for itself coming from the best head coach in the country in (OSU head coach Urban) Meyer."

One Year Ago – 2018

When Dublin (Ohio) Coffman's Michael Drennen emerged from the locker room Sept. 7, he knew what he had to do. Drennen and his team trailed crosstown rival Dublin Jerome 14-10 as both squads returned to their respective sidelines for the third quarter.

Dublin Jerome's crowd chanted one word – overrated – at him all night long. Drennen let his play do the talking as he bulldozed into the end zone three times, helping his team score 35 unanswered points and catapulting the Shamrocks to a 45-14 rout of the Celtics. Drennen delivered the dagger on a 25-yard run late in the game.

Drennen's third and final plunge into the end zone unfolded right in front of Ohio State running backs coach Tony Alford. Known for his shiftiness and speed, Drennen kicked into another gear on the emphatic score when he raced Alford's way.

"I had to put the game away," Drennen said. "Sometimes, the game is on the line. I had Alford in the back. I had to show him something. Hopefully, I'm his No. 1 (target) now. I hope, I hope."

threat to Ohio State – if things continue to go awry at Florida State this fall.

LB Cody Simon, OL Josh Fryar Earn All-American Bowl Bids

Ohio State will once again be well-represented at the All-American Bowl after Jersey City (N.J.) St. Peter's Prep four-star linebacker Cody Simon and Beech Grove, Ind., three-star offensive tackle Josh Fryar on Sept. 10 announced their intentions to play in the nation's premier high school all-star game.

They'll join Cincinnati Princeton five-star offensive tackle Paris Johnson and Montvale (N.J.) St. Joseph Regional four-star center Luke Wypler on the East squad, while La Habra, Calif., four-star cornerback Clark Phillips; Rockwall, Texas, four-star wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba; Sammamish (Wash.) Eastside Catholic four-star wide receiver Gee Scott; and Tucson (Ariz.) Salpointe Catholic four-star safety Lathan Ransom will represent the Buckeyes on the West team.

The All-American Bowl – previously known as the U.S. Army All-American Bowl – will take place in San Antonio on Jan. 4, 2020.

RB Kevontre Bradford Sets Official Visit

According to multiple reports, the previ-

ously-mentioned Bradford is set to take his official visit to Ohio State on the weekend of the Michigan State game, Oct. 4-6. That is a significant development for Alford and the Buckeyes.

The 5-11, 195-pound Bradford – who is considered the 18th-best running back and No. 231 prospect overall in the 2020 recruiting class – was once considered a heavy Wisconsin lean. But his decision to schedule an official visit with Ohio State would indicate there is mutual interest despite his private nature and reserved recruiting approach.

If the Buckeyes were to make it clear that weekend that Bradford is their primary target, he could make a decision shortly thereafter.

OL Quinton Burke Accepts Walk-On Offer

Ohio State already holds commitments from six offensive linemen in the current recruiting cycle but added some more depth in the trenches on Sept. 11 when Lancaster, Ohio, offensive guard Quinton Burke announced that he had accepted a preferred walk-on offer from the Buckeyes.

The 6-4, 295-pound Burke has been on Ohio State's radar since he attended a one-day linemen camp in June, during which he completely

Continued On Page 30

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Top-Rated Cornerback Remains Interested In OSU

Continued From Page 29

tore his ACL, partially tore his meniscus and sprained his MCL.

Although Burke will miss his entire senior season as a result, Ohio State special teams coordinator/assistant secondary coach Matt Barnes and assistant director of player personnel Justin Perez invited him to attend the Sept. 7 win over Cincinnati. They were reportedly impressed by his progress in rehab thus far and offered him the preferred walk-on opportunity.

Burke – who carries a 4.3 grade-point average – chose the Buckeyes over full-ride scholarship offers from Akron, Lafayette and Youngstown State.

Ohio State Allowed To Contact Junior Prospects

Ohio State's coaching staff was not permitted to contact prospects from the 2021 recruiting class until Sept. 8 – one week after the rest of the country could reach out to the nation's top-ranked juniors – after self-reporting two minor recruiting infractions last month.

Those violations, which involved on-campus photo shoots and the use of prospects' names in a visit itinerary, were chronicled in the Sept. 14 edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin.

As soon as the clock hit 12:01 a.m., though, the Buckeyes' coaching staff did its best to make up ground on the recruiting trail. Monroeville (Pa.) Gateway four-star safety Derrick Davis, Oradell (N.J.) Bergen Catholic four-star defensive tackle Tywone Malone

and Bellaire (Texas) Episcopal four-star offensive tackle Donovan Jackson were among the handful of prospects to hear from Ohio State that evening.

There are still a number of top targets whom the Buckeyes are not allowed to contact until Sept. 15, but those prospects were unclear as BSB went to press. The reason for the delay had also not been reported.

CB Tony Grimes Names Top Schools

Virginia Beach (Va.) Princess Anne five-star cornerback Tony Grimes included Ohio State in his top 13 on Sept. 9 alongside Alabama, Clemson, LSU, Maryland, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Penn State, South Carolina, Texas, Texas A&M, Virginia and Virginia Tech.

The 6-0, 180-pound Grimes – who is considered the top-rated cornerback and No. 10 prospect overall in the class of 2021 – visited Columbus for the first and only time in June. He and his father spent time that weekend with head coach Ryan Day, co-defensive coordinator/secondary coach Jeff Hafley and linebackers coach/area recruiter Al Washington.

Grimes received a campus tour from sophomore linebacker Teradja Mitchell, who also hails from the Tidewater area of Virginia.

The Aggies are considered the favorite in Grimes' recruitment at this point in time following a pair of unofficial visits this summer, but the Buckeyes hope to get him back on campus again this fall to make a move of their own.

Grimes plans to take all five official visits

OSU Football Verbal Commitments

Players in the class of 2020 who have issued verbal commitments to play football at Ohio State. (Star ratings are from the 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Paris Johnson	OT	6-8	295	★★★★★	Cincinnati Princeton
Jack Miller	QB	6-4	210	★★★★	Scottsdale (Ariz.) Chaparral
Luke Wypler	OC	6-4	285	★★★★	Montvale (N.J.) St. Joseph Regional
Jaxon Smith-Njigba	WR	6-1	188	★★★★	Rockwall, Texas
Gee Scott Jr.	WR	6-3	207	★★★★	Sammamish (Wa.) Eastside Catholic
Jakob James	OG	6-5	275	★★★	Cincinnati Elder
Trey Leroux	OT	6-8	355	★★★	Norwalk, Ohio
Lejond Cavazos	CB	6-1	190	★★★★	Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy
Julian Fleming	WR	6-2	199	★★★★★	Catawissa (Pa.) Southern Columbia
Jake Seibert	K	6-1	190	★★★	Cincinnati La Salle
Grant Toutant	OT	6-7	320	★★★	Warren (Mich.) De La Salle
Ty Hamilton	DE	6-3	250	★★★	Pickerington (Ohio) Central
Clark Phillips	CB	5-11	178	★★★★	La Habra, Calif.
Cody Simon	OLB	6-1	218	★★★★	Jersey City (N.J.) St. Peter's Prep
Darrion Henry	DT	6-5	279	★★★★	Cincinnati Princeton
Joe Royer	TE	6-5	225	★★★	Cincinnati Elder
Mitchell Melton	OLB	6-3	235	★★★	Olney (Md.) Good Counsel
Cameron Martinez	ATH	6-0	183	★★★	Muskegon, Mich.
Josh Fryar	OL	6-6	305	★★★	Beech Grove, Ind.
Mookie Cooper	WR	5-9	193	★★★★	St. Louis Trinity Catholic
Lathan Ransom	S	6-1	193	★★★★	Tucson (Ariz.) Salpointe Catholic
Kourt Williams	ATH	6-1	216	★★★★	Bellflower (Calif.) St. John Bosco

Players in the class of 2021 who have issued a verbal commitment to play football at Ohio State.

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Jack Sawyer	DE	6-6	220	★★★★★	Pickerington (Ohio) North
Kyle McCord	QB	6-3	204	★★★★	Philadelphia St. Joseph's
Jayden Ballard	WR	6-2	175	★★★★	Massillon (Ohio) Washington
Ben Christman	OT	6-6	299	★★★★	Richfield (Ohio) Revere
Reid Carrico	LB	6-3	225	★★★★	Irontown (Ohio)

before he makes a decision. And given Ohio State's knack for sending defensive backs to the NFL, the Buckeyes should find themselves in the thick of things until that time.



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ASK AN ANALYST

With Lettermen Row's Jeremy Birmingham

Ohio State landed a commitment on Sept. 10 from 2021 Ironton, Ohio, four-star linebacker Reid Carrico, just a few days after he took an unofficial visit for the shutout win over Cincinnati. How does the timing of his decision impact the Buckeyes' recruiting efforts, and what kind of impact do you think he will have on the field?

"Carrico is the type of prospect that does make a difference for the Buckeyes now and later, as in when he actually arrives in Columbus. The fact is that Ohio State is working very hard to lock up the state's top prospects as early as possible in order to avoid the sort of dramatics that occurred in the recruitments of Jackson Carman and Zach Harrison and right now – with four of the top five 2021 prospects already committed – they're off to an incredible start.

"On the field, Carrico is an early-impact type of player, especially on special teams as a freshman, but beyond that, with a linebacking unit that is set to turn over in the next two years, there's a major chance to get on the field for meaningful snaps at Ohio State early in his career."

As you mentioned, Carrico's commitment gives Ohio State five commitments in the 2021 recruiting class, including four prospects from within the state's borders.

Do you see Ryan Day making a very calculated effort to recruit in-state prospects earlier in the process, or is this more so a result of those players just being really good – as in the

Buckeyes would have recruited them regardless of their proximity? Furthermore, are there any other players in Ohio we should keep our eyes on as potential commitments down the line?

"There's absolutely a concerted effort to win the state's best players early.

"With Carrico in the mix, the big-time group of four – including Pickerington North five-star defensive end Jack Sawyer, Richfield Revere four-star offensive tackle Ben Christman, Massillon Washington four-star wide receiver Jayden Ballard – are in a position to turn their energies to fellow Buckeye State stars like Pickerington Central four-star wide receiver Lorenzo Styles and Cincinnati Roger Bacon four-star running back Corey Kiner, who are each being recruited heavily by Midwest powers like Michigan and Notre Dame, among others."

One of the more intriguing prospects to visit Ohio State this month was 2020 Columbus Walnut Ridge three-star athlete Qian Magwood, who attended the win over Cincinnati. Magwood is a three-sport star (basketball and track) who excels at both wide receiver and defensive back in high school, and the Buckeyes have been in contact for quite some time. What does he have to do to earn an offer from the staff, or is there simply not enough room in the class to take a chance on another three-star prospect late in the process?

"Magwood is a dynamic athlete, but he's not a player that pops out on tape like current Ohio State

linebacker Malik Harrison did, for example. His biggest failing may be that he's a 2020 prospect because the wide receiver haul is so good for the Buckeyes that there was no chance for a 'project' like Qian to get into the class on offense, which is what he prefers to play.

"To find an offer, Magwood will need to continue to put good stuff on film – his senior season is being watched closely – and he'll need to demonstrate that he can play defensive back at the next level. If national names like LSU five-star commit Elias Ricks, Oklahoma four-star pledge Ryan Watts and others don't pan out, he is then a guy to keep an eye out for.

"The good news? He seems to be in no hurry to make a decision and is giving himself plenty of time to wait out the Buckeyes."

Ohio State is set to receive an official visit from 2020 Lancaster, Texas, four-star running back Kevontre Bradford in early October. How does his looming visit impact the Buckeyes' pursuit of a topflight running back this cycle, and who is the biggest threat to their chances of landing his commitment?

"There's no doubt in my mind that right now Bradford is the top 2020 running back on the Buckeyes' big board after losing out on the earlier targets. His official visit, especially the timing of it, helps bring that to the forefront because he's going to have a chance to commit to Ohio State well before any other running back still being pursued does. What Bradford decides to do with his recruitment will dictate where the Buckeyes go from there."

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Purdue Linebacker Markus Bailey Done For Season

Purdue standout linebacker Markus Bailey suffered a season-ending knee injury during practice Sept. 11.

"When I decided to come to Purdue, these lights didn't exist," Bailey posted on Twitter. "A lot didn't exist. I came here to help rebuild a broken program. It's been rebuilt. If there's one thing being a Boilermaker has taught me, it's how to deal with adversity. Tough times don't last, tough people do."

BIG TEN NOTES

Joe Dempsey

Accompanying Bailey's words was a photo of him with his back to the camera, looking up to the press box side of Ross-Ade Stadium from the field at the lights installed prior to the 2017 season. He was right – those lights were probably not even being planned yet when he arrived in West Lafayette, Ind., out of Columbus-area Hilliard Davidson in 2015.

Bailey's collegiate career is likely over, but he will go down as one of the best Boilermaker linebackers ever. As a redshirt freshman, Bailey accumulated 97 tackles (61 solo), six tackles for loss, six pass breakups and four interceptions in 2015. Then the Purdue 'backer posted 89 tackles (67 solo), 11 TFL, seven sacks, one forced fumble, one recovery, three passes defended and one pick as a third-year sophomore.

In 2018, Bailey totaled a team-high 115 tackles (82 solo), nine TFL, 5½ sacks, one forced fumble, three pass deflections and one interception.

The Columbus native got some revenge on Ohio State for not offering him a scholarship when the Buckeyes traveled to Purdue in 2018. Bailey earned Big Ten Defensive Player of the Week with 15 tackles (eight solo), one-half TFL and a 41-yard interception for a touchdown in the Boilermakers' 49-20 victory.

Purdue head coach Jeff Brohm expressed optimism in the linebackers who will have to fill the void left by Bailey's injury – junior Cornel Jones and fifth-year senior Ben Holt.

"You're obviously going to miss your best player on the defensive side of the ball at that position, but I do feel like we have capable linebackers and guys who have experience," Brohm said. "Now you step in Cornel Jones on a full-time basis with Ben Holt and the others to spell (him). I think they'll do a good job."

Regardless of Brohm's optimism, the loss of Bailey is brutal for the Boilermakers, who suffered a 34-13 loss to TCU on Sept. 14.

Jones and Holt made a lot of plays for the Boilermakers in the 21-point loss, however. Jones notched 10 tackles (six solo), one TFL and one pass deflection, while Holt added 17 tackles (10 solo), giving him a team-high 35 stops on the season.

Purdue QB Elijah Sindelar Out

In addition to Bailey, Purdue fifth-year quarterback Elijah Sindelar also suffered an injury – a concussion at the end of the win against Vanderbilt on Sept. 7 – which caused him to miss the Boilermakers' game against TCU.

When Sindelar went down, he led the nation in passing yards (932) and touch-

downs (nine) through just two games.

Jack Plummer, a redshirt freshman, filled in for Sindelar against TCU, and his teammates and coaches voiced their confidence in the young quarterback throughout the week.

"He's a gunslinger. He's a beast. I have no doubt in my mind if Elijah can't go Saturday that Plummer will be ready to go," center Viktor Beach said. "I talked to him (Monday) and said, 'You better be ready.' He said, 'Oh, I'm ready.' He's not backing down from it, he's not shying away. He's excited for the opportunity."

"I can't envision him having any jitters or anything. He's going to get in there, get the play call and he's ready to rock and roll."

During training camp, the 6-5 signal caller gained valuable experience running with the first team, and Brohm said the entire playbook is open to him.

"I think he can run it all," Brohm said. "That's one of his strengths He's very smart, very cerebral. If anything, he's got some David Blough (last year's PU quarterback) in him. He overthinks things a little bit, but that's not a bad quality and he works hard at it. I think he has a very bright future here."

Plummer's future may still be bright, but he struggled against TCU. He completed 13 of 29 attempts (44.8 percent) for 181 yards and one touchdown while also tossing two picks in the Boilermakers' 34-13 defeat.

Eagles Down 3 B1G Teams In 3 Years

Eastern Michigan coach Chris Creighton had a lot to be happy about fol-

lowing his team's last-second 34-31 win at Illinois on Sept. 14.

"I love this team," Creighton said. "I mean, wow. What a great bunch of guys."

Eastern Michigan kicker Chad Ryland booted a 24-yard field goal as time expired to give the Eagles their third win against a Big Ten opponent in as many years, following victories against Rutgers in 2017 and Purdue in 2018.

Eagles quarterback Mike Glass completed 23 of 36 attempts for 316 yards and three touchdowns to lead EMU (2-1).

"Awesome, awesome day for our program," Creighton said. "Our defense played well. We knew we weren't going to shut them out, because they are really good, but we did what we needed to. Our guys just executed."

Illinois quarterback Brandon Peters, a transfer from Michigan, was 22 of 37 for 297 yards passing with two touchdowns and an interception for Illinois (2-1).

"A lot of people need to do a better job, including me," said Illinois head coach Lovie Smith. "We didn't play our best today, but we have a lot to build on. We're a 2-1 football team, so we've done some good things."

"Next week (against conference foe Nebraska) will be a better indicator of where we are."

2019 Big Ten/ACC Challenge Times And Networks

Times and networks for the 2019 Big Ten/ACC Challenge were announced Sept. 12. The event will take place over three days beginning Monday, Dec. 2, with four games on ESPN, six on ESPN2 and four games on ESPNU.

Two of the matchups are rematches from the 2019 NCAA Tournament Elite Eight. Michigan State will host Duke on Dec. 3 at 9:30 p.m. ET on ESPN, and defending national champion Virginia travels to Purdue on Dec. 4 at either 7:15 or 7:30 on ESPN or ESPN2. The Blue Devils and Spartans have met four prior times in the Challenge, most recently in 2016. The Cavaliers and Boilermakers last met in the Challenge in 2006.

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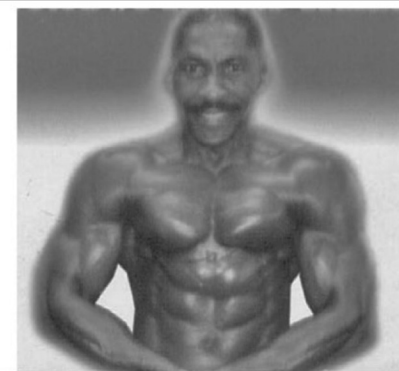
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Holtmann Learning To Get Most From Young Team

The players on the Ohio State men's basketball team aren't the only ones furthering their education. Coach Chris Holtmann is constantly learning about himself and his coaching methods, as he explained to the media on several occasions recently.

COURT REPORT Craig Merz

The topic of how to handle this season's young team that includes four freshmen led him to talk about the challenges he faced last season when he had five freshmen plus three sophomores.

"The thing that I have learned this summer was that last year in a lot of ways was a learning experience for me coaching a young group and we've got a younger group this year," he said. "It was good for us as a coaching staff to have the number of young guys we had. We've obviously added to that in terms of our overall youth vs. experience this year. Hopefully we can take some of those lessons as a coaching staff."

What were some of those teaching moments?

"In terms of a learning process for me and our coaching staff, you're just reminded when you have a young group that no assumptions can be made as to what they may or may not know in terms of anything," Holtmann said.

That's why he emphasizes to his coaches that

repetition is critical. Running a play one or two times and thinking it's ready for use won't cut it.

"It really needs to be spoken over and over consistently when you have the number of freshmen we've had the last couple of years," Holtmann said. "We've got really good kids, but I think how we want to do things, our expectations just can't be said enough."

"We're going to manage it day by day. It's going to require some patience, and if you ask my wife, it's not one of my strengths. We'll figure out a way to deal with the bumps in the road."

Freshmen D.J. Carton, Ibrahima Diallo, Alonzo Gaffney and E.J. Liddell join sophomores Justin Ahrens, Harrison Hookfin, Luther Muhammad and Duane Washington Jr. to constitute more than half of the 15-man roster.

The incoming frosh have been working out with the rest of the team over the summer in preparation for the start of the official practices at the end of September.

"The summer is so important with that because you're trying to set the tone with your group, your young guys," Holtmann said. "With a young group you're trying to reinforce how you want to do things."

There are certainly positives gained from the summer conditioning program, but at some point it becomes a mental test for the newcomers.

"This process has been hard for all our young guys," Holtmann said. "The grind that is in high school is you have a little bit of a pre-season, but you don't have a month-and-a-half before you start to actually get to full practices. That's been a transition for them understanding how hard you have to work before you even step foot into an official practice."

OSU Men's Basketball Verbal Commits

Players in the class of 2021 who have issued verbal commitments to play basketball at Ohio State. (Star ratings are from the 247Sports composite rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Kalen Etzler	PF	6-8	195	★★★★	Convoy (Ohio) Crestview
Meechie Johnson	CG	5-11	160	★★★★	Cleveland Garfield Heights

"They're good players. We're going to try to normalize their path, which will include some struggle, as much as possible. That needs to be an expectation that there's going to be some bumps in the road for them."

OSU went through growing pains last season, although a surprising 12-1 start masked much of them. The Buckeyes were riding high until getting into the meat of the Big Ten schedule, which included a five-game losing streak, the program's longest in 21 years.

Then there was the three-game suspension to then-sophomore post player Kaleb Wesson to end the regular season. The Buckeyes won their first conference tournament game to essentially seal a second NCAA Tournament at-large bid in as many years under the guidance of Holtmann. A second-round loss in the NCAAs to Houston ended OSU's season at 20-15.

"Given some of the frustrations we had last year, our returning guys understand how hard it is to win," Holtmann said. "Our new kids don't yet because they haven't been through it, but our schedule early, we'll learn a lot. If you don't approach the game the right way, it humbles us all pretty quickly."

Ailing Ahrens

Ahrens has been dealing with a bad back in the offseason that limited his workouts, and Holtmann said Sept. 7 that the recovery has been slow.

"Justin Ahrens is still not cleared for full contact," he said. "He's the only one not cleared for full contact yet. I'm not sure what that timeline is yet. I expect him to be ready for practice, but we'll see how his recovery continues. He's been out a while. He's finally putting some weight back on."

Recruiting Roundup

• Burlington (N.J.) Camden four-star power forward Lance Ware (6-9, 215), who had visited Ohio State the last weekend of August, committed to Kentucky on Sept. 12. Other finalists were Miami (Fla.), Michigan and Providence.

Ware is rated the No. 32 prospect and No. 5 power forward in the 247Sports Composite, which averages the ratings of the top three recruiting services.

• Zach Loveday (7-0, 200) from Huntington (W.Va.) Prep and a native of Gallipolis, Ohio, is a 2020 prospect expected to visit Ohio State the weekend of Sept. 20.

He is rated 118th overall, 16th at center and third in Ohio. He visited Louisville on Sept. 6-7 and Baylor the following weekend.

With Wesson possibly leaving early for the

NBA after the season, the Buckeyes may have a need. They currently have one scholarship available, but obviously a Wesson departure would double that.

Holtmann expects to fill one spot during the early signing period in November.

• Shooting guard Chris Livingston (6-5, 170) from Akron Buchtel, ranked No. 3 nationally in the class of 2022 by 247Sports, has an offer from Ohio State. Akron and UAB are the other schools to extend offers, but Kentucky and Louisville have also shown interest.

• The Sept. 7 Cincinnati-Ohio State football game had guard Bowen Hardman from Cincinnati Princeton, Canton Glen Oak forward Josiah Harris and Cleveland Garfield Heights guard Sonny Johnson attend on unofficial visits.

For official visits, Holtmann said there are standard procedures and guidelines when recruits are brought to campus. The staff then crafts the trips to the needs and interests of the prospects and their families.

"There is a traditional template so to speak on what each visit looks like," he said. "Academics is incorporated, obviously time with the team, an opportunity to see a bit of a team workout on Saturday, taking in activities on campus, in particular a football game."

Holtmann said using a football game as an enticement is usually an advantage.

"Some kids love it," Holtmann said. "Most kids love it. Some are a little bit indifferent to it, which surprises even me, but most kids love it. They eat it up. The environment is unbelievable. Buckeye Nation is unbelievable, and it's the reason why we get them here as early as we can get them here."

Earning Their Pay

Assistants Ryan Pedon, Terry Johnson and newcomer Jake Diebler signed two-year contracts at a combined base salary of \$1.075 million per year according to several reports.

The total was slightly above the \$1.02 million for Pedon, Johnson and Mike Schrage last year. Schrage was named head coach at Elon in April and replaced by Diebler, who will earn \$250,000.

Pedon, a native of Bexley in suburban Columbus, saw his salary increase to \$600,000 per year from \$395,000. Johnson was bumped up \$25,000 per year to \$325,000. Both joined the staff in the summer of 2017 when Holtmann was hired.

All three assistants will also be eligible for bonuses if the Buckeyes are Big Ten champions or co-champions (8.5 percent raise); reach the Final Four (8.5 percent) or win the national championship (15 percent).

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Jacy Sheldon Channels Aaron Craft's Effort

Jacy Sheldon knew she wanted to stay close to home.

The five-star prospect who was ranked the No. 10 guard in the country and No. 42 prospect overall likely could have gone to various schools across the United States, but the Dublin (Ohio) Coffman superstar who broke a variety of school records decided to travel just a few miles south to a team with more unknowns than knowns.

DOUBLE DRIBBLE Wyatt Crosher

That decision came down to a variety of factors, but one of the biggest was staying close to home. Although playing for teams such as West Virginia, Dayton and Michigan – some of the various offers that came her way – might have been nice, Sheldon prioritized remaining near her sister, Emmy.

"My little sister has Down syndrome, which is a big part of why I want to stay close to home," Sheldon said. "Me and her have a really close relationship, so it had a lot to do with it."

Sheldon said that was one of many reasons she ultimately became a Buckeye during the first half of her sophomore year in high school, also stating her lifelong, devout fandom to Ohio State as well as her love of the campus and immediate connection with the coaches and players.

The early commitment in November of 2017 was one of the key focal points for coach Kevin McGuff to do what he did with his 2018 group: sign a bevy of fifth-year players to fill in a gap season before a strong freshman group came in the next year.

"She committed pretty early, which was awesome and it really allowed us to start in this great class that we brought in, allowed us to kind of cut some people and focus on the kids we ended up getting," McGuff said. "She's very close with her family, and she liked our program and how she fit into it, so I thought it was, I don't want to say an easy decision, but it made a lot of sense for her, and she was able to do that early."

But before becoming one of the top guards in the country out of high school, Sheldon was just a little girl going to practices with her dad. When she was really young – too young to remember a specific age – Sheldon would go to the basketball practices coached by her dad, Duane Sheldon.

Duane's coaching résumé includes stints at Berea-Midpark High School in Ohio, Heidelberg and Baldwin Wallace.

"I grew up in the gym, and I'd always go with my dad to basketball practices," Sheldon said. "Whenever I was old enough for him to bring

me is kind of when I got into the gym."

Jacy's mom, Laura, was also a coach but never coached her throughout her basketball career, only in volleyball. Duane coached his daughter's travel team in sixth grade, but aside from that he was simply a help to her on the side.

"It definitely helped shape me as a player, both my parents," Sheldon said. "More my dad, definitely, because he would come and work with me, and he knew my strengths, knew my weaknesses, so he definitely helped me elevate my game that way."

Sheldon decided to pick basketball as her main priority over volleyball in her freshman year of high school. Even so, she earned all-state honors in volleyball during her senior year of high school. But that recognition doesn't hold much weight compared to what she managed to do on the basketball court. In her four years at Dublin Coffman, Sheldon broke the school records for points (2,347), assists (637), steals (505), field goals made (894), three-pointers made (211) and free throws made (348).

She broke single-game records with a 52-point outing and an 11-steal outing during her senior year.

Sheldon averaged 28.2 points, 7.1 rebounds and 6.6 assists per game for the season while also adding 5.3 steals per game on the defensive end. All of those numbers amounted to a selection as the state's Player of the Year by the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association, being named a three-time first-team All-Ohio member and two-time runner-up for Miss Ohio Basketball.

Did any of those records stand out in particular to Sheldon?

"No, not really," she said. "I never really got into all that, all the records."

Being an Ohio State fan all of her life, one of Sheldon's favorite players is fan favorite and former Buckeye Aaron Craft. In his four years at Ohio State, Craft never averaged more than 10 points per game, but he was well-liked for his effort on both sides of the floor.

Sheldon said he is at least some of the reason she was so tenacious on defense.

"I always admired how hard he worked on defense, and I always wanted to play that hard," she said. "That's kind of what got me into defense and how important it really is."

"Aaron Craft has always been my favorite player, just because – and it's not because of his skill or anything – but just his grit, his competitiveness. I've always wanted to be that competitive, like when you'd watch him he'd dive on the floor for anything, so I admired how hard he played."

McGuff saw the same things when he recruited Sheldon and had the advantage of seeing her play at a younger age with the Dublin Coffman star being a local talent.

"One of the things that stood out very early on is her speed and quickness, and we play in a very up-tempo style of play here, so right away I

thought she'd be a great fit," McGuff said. "She really gets her hands on a lot of balls, and she's a really tough defender as well, and so I think she's going to really be impactful on both ends of the floor for us."

Sheldon was the runner-up in Miss Ohio Basketball to Kierstan Bell, who won the award three times in a row. Bell, once an opponent at Canton (Ohio) McKinley, is now Sheldon's teammate as another freshman at Ohio State.

The two dueled not only for the title of best basketball player in Ohio but also on the court in their senior year. Bell came out on top, scoring 22 points with 10 rebounds in a 68-65 victory. Sheldon scored 25 points in the loss.

Sheldon laughingly said she's still mad about losing Miss Ohio to Bell, but she knows the 6-1 guard deserved to three-peat.

"It's a lot better being her teammate, but we competed," Sheldon said. "It was a really good game. It was really fun playing against her because obviously she's a really good player, but it's definitely been more fun playing with her now."

McGuff said that the matchup between the pair of five-stars allowed the two to have an appreciation for each other coming into

this season.

With about two months left until the season begins, Sheldon said the team is beginning to build relationships and that she personally is getting used to playing increased talent on a daily basis.

As one of seven new freshmen on the team, Sheldon said it has been helpful to have a handful of other teammates going through the same things she is in her first year.

For Sheldon – a player who put family first in her decision, doesn't look at her multitude of records and looks to one of the most selfless players in Ohio State's history as inspiration – she is just looking to improve on the whole in her freshman year.

"I just want to get better, be a better player all around and get stronger," she said. "I think we want to continue to build that chemistry that we've been building."

"I think we have a lot of talent so I definitely think we want to execute it, see how that goes, and we're excited."

The Fresh Seven is a seven-part series about the seven freshman players entering their first season for Ohio State women's basketball.

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OSU Hall Of Famer Natalie Spooner Gives Back

By JOE DEMPSEY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Natalie Spooner is one of the most decorated student-athletes in the history of Ohio State athletics. She was inducted into the Ohio State Athletics Hall of Fame on Sept. 6, but her story is far from over.

A native of Scarborough, Ontario in Canada, Spooner came to Ohio State as a wide-eyed freshman hockey player in the fall of 2008. She likened the school to one only seen in the movies, as the universities in her native country do not compare.

Spooner went on to become the top goal scorer in program history with 100 career goals, while also adding 63 assists to give her 163 points, ranking No. 2 all-time at Ohio State to Laura McIntosh, who played the same four years as Spooner from 2009-12.

Although she enjoyed many individual accomplishments, including All-American honors as a senior, she takes the most pride in how her team put Ohio State women's hockey on the map.

"The moment that really stands out was – it was my sophomore year and we played against Wisconsin in the playoffs and beat them," Spooner said. "They were such a great team that year, too. And then going into the Final Faceoff and we lost to Minnesota in triple overtime, but that was a moment that definitely stands out because we got a taste of what it felt like to get a lot farther than we had been getting."

Even as one of the younger Buckeyes, Spooner's ability was obvious. She played with speed and an insatiable desire to score goals.

She holds the Ohio State record with 16

game-winning goals scored during her Scarlet and Gray tenure. Humbly, Spooner deflected when asked why she was able to score so many big goals to clinch victories.

"Obviously, I had amazing teammates that I got to play alongside, and I think I was lucky that I had coaches that believed in me and put me on the ice in those moments that gave me those opportunities," Spooner said. "I do love scoring and I love those big games, so I think it was just exciting that they wanted me to be the one out there and to try to score. It happened enough times that they just kept doing it, maybe."

Following her standout Ohio State career, Spooner went on to play professionally in the Canadian Women's Hockey League. After being selected in the second round of the 2012 CWHL draft by Toronto, Spooner broke the team's rookie goal record with 15.

Just two years later, Spooner earned the opportunity of a lifetime – to represent Canada in the Winter Olympics. She became the first OSU women's hockey player to play for the Canadian National Women's Team, the National Women's Under-22 Team and its Under-18 Team.

"When I was little, I dreamed of playing in the Olympics, and I never really thought it would come true," Spooner told BSB. "But going into the 2014 Olympics I was so nervous but just trying to take it all in, and I remember walking into the opening ceremonies and that's probably my second-favorite moment, other than winning. Because you're really part of a team that's much bigger than just your hockey team. You're now part of Canada and there's just a sea of red and you're walking in and you don't know where to look, you're waving everywhere, so that was a really cool moment."

"Obviously, the games and the way that that (2014 gold medal) game ended, coming back from that 2-0 deficit to tie it up and then to win 3-2 in overtime. We had a tough year that year, and it would have almost felt wrong if we won any other way because we had gone through so much as a team and really overcome so much adversity."

"I remember that game, it was crazy. It stopped Canada in its footsteps, I'm sure it stopped the U.S., too, because the game was so close. I remember a lot about the journey and winning with my teammates – it was an amazing feeling."

Following Canada's tremendous comeback victory against the United States, Spooner was not done winning. She led the Toronto Furries to the 2014 Clarkson Cup playoffs, where she was the team's leading scorer.

Spooner scored the game-winning goal to eliminate Montreal and assisted on the Cup-clinching goal, crowning the Furries as champions against Boston. She became the first hockey player to win the gold medal in the Olympic Winter Games and the Clarkson Cup in the same year.

Having been able to accomplish so much through hockey, it is important to Spooner that other young women be afforded the same opportunities she had. Although she's still playing for Toronto, Spooner started a High Performance Hockey Academy for girls in Canada.

"It was really important for me to find some way to give back," Spooner said. "And when I was little, I remember going to a hockey school and I met Jennifer Botterill, who played on the Olympic team. She came in with her gold medal, and I got to see that gold medal and that was really the turning point for me and what sparked

my dream of wanting to go to the Olympics.

"I think that it's really important for these girls to be able to see role models and realize that women do play hockey and that we're real people – we're not just people on TV. I think that with this hockey school starting, it's about having fun but it's also about these girls realizing that they can have that dream and that I was one of them one day."

"And I worked really hard and I got to where I am, so as much as they're improving over the course of the week and learning new hockey skills and having fun and meeting new friends, hopefully it's a longer journey for them and it's making them want to stick with sports and keep going."

Spooner's efforts to give back do not stop at providing young women with a week of hockey training, empowerment and friendship building. She continues to have a positive impact, despite her busy schedule.

"I've been working with WaterAid Canada to bring clean water to places that don't have it," Spooner said. "This past summer, I was able to travel to India with WaterAid to just visit some of the slums that don't have access to clean water vs. slums that do have access. It's a problem that affects women because women are really relied upon to go fetch the water."

"When these women do have access to the clean water, and to a tap, they have so much more time to actually – maybe they started a little business on the side, or they're selling something they made. They can do other things other than just fetching water constantly."

The Ohio State Hall of Famer and decorated Olympian has gone out of her way to make a difference in the world beyond hockey and Canada.



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Ohio State's Rushing Attack Hammers Hoosiers

The Indiana Hoosiers would have had to play a nearly flawless game to beat the Buckeyes on Sept. 14. Even though the Indiana program has shown signs of improvement under head coach Tom Allen, it is still the team that hasn't beaten the Buckeyes in over 30 years.

COACH'S CORNER Bill Conley

The pesky Hoosiers have put a few scares in the Buckeyes more than once over the years, but they still haven't had a winning record in the Big Ten Conference since 1993 when Bill Mallory was the head coach.

It was a bright and sunny day in Bloomington when both teams took the field, but the second-quarter blocked punt by Chris Olave all but turned out the lights on any chance of an Indiana upset.

Ohio State ended up dominating the Hoosiers offensively, defensively and on special teams. By halftime it was evident the Buckeyes would continue their winning streak over Indiana, and only the final score was yet to be determined. Despite the lopsided loss to the Buckeyes, Indiana does have enough talent on both sides of the football to become bowl-eligible by the end of the season as long as the Hoosiers stay healthy and mentally recover from this early-season defeat.

Triple Threat

The Buckeye running attack, which at times was nearly nonexistent in 2018, has shown steady improvement each week of the season. The offensive coaching staff has shown so much confidence in the running game that they have called over 50 more runs than passes the first three weeks.

When it comes to average yards per game, it's nearly split between yards on the ground vs. yards in the air. This type of balanced offensive production makes

it extremely difficult on opposing teams. Competitors have to defend the entire field when you try to stop the Buckeyes.

Unlike last season, the 2019 squad has three true threats running the football. J.K. Dobbins has made Bloomington his home away from home. For the second time at Indiana, Dobbins has dazzled the Hoosiers with his ability to accelerate through the line of scrimmage, make sharp cuts in the open field, and run through and, at times, over defenders. His vision and natural instincts are more evident than ever for the talented junior.

Master Teague has been one of the biggest surprises offensively for the Buckeyes. He is a hybrid halfback-fullback in terms of his running style. He demonstrates the power to bull his way forward for positive yards while also showing enough speed to pull away from defenders. His 100-plus yards against Indiana included a 40-yard breakaway as he averaged over 10 yards per carry for the game. Along with Dobbins and Teague, add the abilities of Demario McCall, Marcus Crowley and Steele Chambers to make the running back position one of strength in terms of depth.

Justin Fields is the third element of the three-headed monster that opponents face in terms of trying to stop the Buckeye running game. For the third game in a row, Fields has found pay dirt with his feet. Fields is not expected to put up big rushing numbers by the coaching staff, but the timing of his runs in crucial situations, along with his scrambling talents, makes him a dangerous weapon who has to be accounted for by each and every defense we face.

Much – and I am sure if you ask the running backs, most – of the credit to the resurgence of the Ohio State running attack goes to the offensive line. The men up front have not only opened huge holes but also sustain blocks as well as get to the second level to finish plays. The size, agility and quickness of the offensive line has allowed the Buckeyes to own the line of scrimmage each week.

The Art of Punt Blocking

The blocked Hoosier punt by Chris Olave

may very well have been the biggest single play of the game, but it was not due to the efforts of a single player. Each week, the special teams coaches design very specific types of punt-block schemes designed to be effective against each opposing punt unit.

Coaches look for things such as weaknesses in protection, snapping speed and accuracy of the opposing long snapper, and the time it takes the punter to actually kick the ball. It's crucial to know the launch point of the punt, in other words, the exact number of yards from the line of scrimmage where the football will leave the punter's foot. By watching hours of film, a coaching staff can determine the precise point that the punt blocker must get to in order to block the punt. At the same time the punt blocker must take such an angle as to not run into the punter if he doesn't make the block. Punt blockers are taught to swat the ball off the punter's foot, not to run into the punter's leg.

Haydon Whitehead, the Indiana punter, is left-footed, so the block conjured up by the Buckeye coaches came from OSU's defensive right side. In other words, the closest side to punter's left foot. The defenders just to the inside of Olave took out the punter's personal protectors, freeing up Olave to take the needed angle to get to the block point. Multitalented Olave was quick off the ball and showed the necessary speed to make the play. Defenders rushing to the other side of the punter were assigned to scoop up the football and score if the punt got blocked. The only thing that kept it from being a touchdown instead of a safety was the field

position. If Indiana had been 5 yards farther from its own end zone, the Buckeyes would have had six points instead of two.

The punt block was well designed by the coaching staff and perfectly executed by the punt-block unit. I think it's safe to bet it will not be the only punt that is blocked by the Buckeyes this season.

Sweet Pick-Six

Damon Arnette's 96-yard interception return was the fourth longest in Buckeye history. It was also the first true defensive score of the season. Big play, yes. Surprise, no.

It was just a matter of time before the defense was going to intercept a pass or scoop up a fumble and take it to the house. The tenacious Buckeye defense has shut down the running attack of its opponents to the point they have to throw the ball in order to try to score, making these offenses one-dimensional. Pressure put on opposing quarterbacks by Chase Young and company has resulted in 14 sacks in just three games. Also, many times this pressure has forced opposing quarterbacks to deliver the football when they're off balance, throw early or "eat" the football.

As with the punt block, look for more interceptions or forced fumbles resulting in Silver Bullet scores.

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.



Reynolds Travel "On the Road Again" for 2019 Ohio State Football Away Games

OSU vs. Nebraska: Sept. 25-30 – 5-night motorcoach trip with 1 overnight in each direction: 1 night at Juner's Castle Casino in Rock Island, Ill.; 3 nights at the Embassy Suites in Omaha, Neb., with breakfast daily, city tour of Lincoln, game tickets and transportation; and 1 night on return at the Marriott Pere Marquette in Peoria, Ill. \$1,199 pp based on two to a room. **Also offering air trip Sept. 26-29** with roundtrip air from Columbus to Omaha and 3 nights at the Embassy Suites in Omaha with breakfast daily, game tickets and transportation, and city tour of Lincoln. \$1,449 pp. Land only package available for Omaha portion.

OSU vs. Northwestern: Oct. 17-20 – 3 nights motorcoach trip to Chicago with game on Friday nights permitting extra free time in Chicago with 3 nights in downtown Westin Magnificent Mile Hotel in the center of downtown Chicago with breakfast daily, game tickets and transportation and Mafia themed tour of Chicago. \$979 pp based on two to a room. **Also offering air trip Oct. 17-20** with 3 nights in Chicago at the Westin Magnificent Mile Hotel in the center of downtown Chicago with breakfast daily, game tickets in Ohio State section with transportation, roundtrip airport transportation and Mafia themed tour of Chicago.

\$1,289 pp based on two to a room. Land only package is available.

OSU vs. Rutgers: Nov. 14-17 – 3 night motorcoach trip to New York with 3 nights accommodations in the heart of Manhattan at the Sheraton Times Square with breakfast daily, Tour of Hudson River Valley, game tickets with transportation. \$1,149 pp based on two to a room. **Also offering air trip from Nov. 14-17** with 3 nights at the Sheraton Times Square with breakfast daily, airport transportation roundtrip, tour of the Hudson River Valley, game ticket and transportation. \$1,589 pp based on two to a room. Land only package is available.

OSU vs. Michigan, "Big Game in the Big House": Nov. 29-30 – 1 night motorcoach trip with accommodations for Friday night at the MGM Resort and Casino in Detroit including breakfast on Saturday and game ticket with return to Columbus after the game. \$609 pp based on two to a room.

Bengals vs Steelers in Cincinnati: Nov. 24 – same day to Cincinnati via motorcoach with game tickets in Club Level Section. \$205-299 per person.

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Ohio State On A Roll But Has Room To Improve

It's funny how perception works.

To my eye, the Ohio State offense appears much more efficient than it was in 2018, at least through three games. Let me be clear – I didn't say better, I said more efficient.

THE FACTS MAN Mike Wachsman

After a 51-10 beatdown of Indiana that wasn't even that close, the Buckeyes are in the top 30 in most important offensive categories. OSU is 17th in yards per carry (6.0) and scoring (46.0), 27th in yards per play (6.9) and 40th in yards per pass attempt (8.3). All solid, though not necessarily world-beating.

Through three games in 2018, OSU averaged 5.7 ypc, 56.3 ppg, 7.6 ypp and 10.0 ypa. You can decide if the difference was major.

Last year OSU got into a ton of shootouts – often out of necessity thanks to a porous defense – and there were many edge-of-your-seat moments, times when the outcome was truly up in the air. You figured that if Dwayne Haskins couldn't work his magic, the Buckeyes were cooked.

You get the sense this season, however, that the Buckeyes could really turn it on if they needed to, and a lot of that is because of the scheme intelligence of Ryan Day. There is much more versatility with the offense, including a good amount of having Justin Fields under center. The Buckeyes operated almost exclusively out of the shotgun last season, but this year they are employing more two tight ends in an effort to get the downhill run game going. The offensive line is veteran and big, and with more "traditional" sets it's easier to set things up with play-action.

I said it many times last year, for as fun as the Buckeyes were to watch on offense, they were easy to defend. There was almost zero threat of Haskins running the football, and that allowed defenses to play a more standard seven in the box. When J.T. Barrett was under center, teams had to account for his running ability and

would bring eight into the box. That allowed for some over-the-top and middle-seam passing, and a more difficult scheme to defend.

Interesting fact – the number of rush attempts this year through three games is the same as last season (135), but the Buckeyes are much more effective in the run game this year.

"We've gone from a passing attack last year to now we're starting to run the ball," Day said. "When you get that run going, you can control the game."

Indeed.

Ohio State is No. 1 nationally in Game Control, an ESPN metric that shows how often teams struggle with their competition. The description of the metric says, "Reflects chance that an average top-25 team would control games from start to end the way this team did, given the schedule."

Getting out to huge leads and having games decided before halftime goes a long way in controlling things, and having the luxury of a rejuvenated J.K. Dobbins in the backfield has played a giant role. Dobbins has looked much more like he did as a freshman, when he averaged nearly eight yards per carry – with a running threat at quarterback. He is running to and through contact, and no fewer than five defenders were tossed aside on his dynamic 26-yard touchdown run against the Hoosiers.

"That play just shows what I can really do," Dobbins said. "I think a lot of people forgot what I could do, so I just want to keep showing out and getting better."

The scary part is that OSU has left yardage and points on the field.

Fields wasn't quite as accurate as in earlier games, some of which he attributed to not getting his feet set. He tends to sail the ball, and that comes from not finishing throws and bad footwork.

"Today I struggled with setting my feet," he said. "I'm glad it happened. It's a learning opportunity."

The good news is that this is a kid with just three collegiate starts under his belt, working with one of the best quarterback mentors in America in Day. There is room to improve, and when you possess arm talent like Fields does and have the ability to keep plays alive with your feet, the potential seems limitless.

If Fields hits that potential, the Buckeyes won't be just more efficient than last season. They'll be better.

Defense Looks Scary

I'll say this in a whisper, so the rest of the league doesn't hear it – Ohio State's defense is goooood. All of that skepticism about the new coach hirings and scheme changes can be put to rest, because it's working. Some were questioning the personnel, but it's become apparent that the defense was put into bad positions last season, doing far too much thinking instead of simply playing football.

"I guess you could say the schemes we're running now (are the difference)," said defensive end Chase Young, "because it's the same players on the field."

OSU is 10th in the nation in scoring D, allowing 10.3 points per contest, and has allowed only one touchdown in the first half – on a double pass by Indiana. The Buckeyes have been beating teams into submission by shutting down the run (1.7 ypc, fourth nationally), getting to the quarterback (4.7 sacks per contest, second nationally) and blowing up plays before they can get going (10.3 TFL per game, tied for fourth nationally). Ohio State is also tied for third in opponent red-zone touchdown percentage (20.0, only two TDs in 10 trips to the red zone by opponents) and eighth in opponent third-down conversion percentage (22.9).

Young is a huge part of that, impacting yet another game in a major fashion against Indiana. He was credited with three tackles, 2½ TFL and a pair of sacks, but he impacted countless other plays by forcing IU quarterback Peyton Ramsey to step up – often into the waiting arms of other OSU defenders – or release the ball early. The Hoosiers averaged just 3.8 yards per play and outside of a few minutes in the first quarter were never really in the game.

While the Buckeyes defensive line has created havoc, the secondary has really stepped up.

Jeff Okudah gets a lot of the pub – deservedly so – but Damon Arnette had maybe his best game as a Buckeye, netting two pass breakups and returning an errant Ramsey throw 96 yards to pay dirt to close out the scoring. It was the fourth-longest interception return in school history, outdone only by the 100-yard returns of Will Allen in 2003 (San Diego State), Marlon Kerner in 1993 (Purdue) and David Brown in 1986 (Purdue). Arnette could have declared early for the draft last season but wanted to come back and show that 2018 was not him, was not the way the Buckeyes play pass defense.

He and Okudah have welcomed the challenge of shutting down opposing wideouts and have left foes scratching their heads about how they can attack the Ohio State defense.

They can't run the ball and can't really hit many plays downfield in the passing game. Opponents will need to get creative if they are going to bully the Buckeyes, because the defense appears to be nasty and agitated and athletic and ready to show that 2018 was an aberration.

Do-It-All Olave

Show of hands from people who didn't think Chris Olave would be much more than a role player at Ohio State. Yes, I have my hand up, and I am sure many others do as well.

Olave was a three-star recruit, ranked 68th among receivers in the class of 2018, and looked to be only a speed merchant. Listed at 6-1, 170, he didn't have the frame that yelled "star," but what many didn't know was how tirelessly he worked.

Olave let the coaches know early last year that he would do anything he could to earn play-

ing time, including playing on special teams. He was the edge guy on the punt block team and came close a few times before finally breaking through against Michigan – and threw in three touchdown catches for good measure.

Now seen as a receiver first, Olave still had an impact on the Indiana game on special teams. He ran unblocked to the foot of Hoosiers punter Haydon Whitehead, deflected the football and watched it roll into the end zone, eventually ending up as a safety.

Olave's stat line for the last seven games is nothing short of eye-popping: 20 catches, 376 yards, five TDs, two punt blocks, a punt downed at the 1 and a kickoff return tackle inside the 20.

That he made a couple of dazzling catches and ended the day with three catches for 70 yards and a score seemed secondary to the punt block.

"It's a momentum-changer," Olave said. "It gets everybody hyped. It gives a little spark of energy to the team and gets us rolling."

Day is impressed with Olave's maturity, which belies his sophomore status.

"That takes complete buy-in," Day said, "because you don't come to Ohio State to play special teams. That goes to show you how much he appreciates his brothers and teammates."

The chemistry developing between Olave and Fields is fun to watch, and Fields said that it isn't hard to figure out why the California product has become such a staple in the Buckeyes' passing attack.

"What is there not to like about him?" Fields said. "He's fast. He has great ball skills. He runs great routes. He's smart. Not all receivers have that smart, quick decision-making, so he finds the zone and plays with his brain. And he also has that great athletic ability."

Whither The Big Ten?

Despite Ohio State's easy time with Indiana, it was not a great day for the conference.

Michigan State is once again content to waste an awesome defense with a prehistoric offense, which resulted in Sparty falling at home 10-7 to Arizona State. Mark Dantonio blathered on afterward about officiating, which is funny considering his team had too many men on the field on a field-goal try that would have sent the game to overtime. How about worrying about your team, Coach, instead of the officials?

Illinois had, by all accounts, its most talented team in ages thanks to solid recruiting and several transfers. That apparently wasn't good enough as Lovie Smith's troops fell at home to Eastern Michigan 34-31. If you're wondering how Smith still has a job, join the club.

Maryland lost to Temple, the first good team it played, Northwestern had to really work to get past a putrid UNLV squad, Minnesota needed a late touchdown to fend off Georgia Southern, and Penn State – which had looked downright scary in its first two games – was brought back down to earth against a real opponent, edging Pittsburgh 17-10 in Happy Valley.

Purdue's loss to TCU can be excused a bit because A) the Boilers just aren't that good, and B) it was without quarterback Elijah Sindelar, who was leading the nation in passing yards (466.0 per game) through two weeks.

What these results show me is that outside of OSU, Wisconsin, Iowa and maybe Michigan and Minnesota, the Big Ten is not very good. It's hard to see a scenario where the Buckeyes don't represent the East in the Big Ten Championship Game, though it is a long season.

As long as OSU keeps taking care of business, what the rest of the league does will be of no concern.



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Ohio State Showing Championship Potential

THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

OK. So, I was wrong about the Cincinnati game. But I absolutely saw the Indiana game coming.

I felt strongly that the Bearcats would give Ohio State a battle. I figured they would eventually lose, but I figured Luke Fickell's team would battle the Buckeyes tooth and nail, at least for a half. Wrong. They hung in there for a quarter before being what I am sure even Fickell would admit was humiliated in a 42-0 butt-whupping.

A couple of days later I see that the Buckeyes are just 14-point favorites over the Hoosiers. I know I always give the guys in Vegas credit for knowing what they are doing, but I just didn't see that tight a game. Was the competitive line because they were impressed with Indiana's 52-0 pasting of EIU? I actually had to look and make sure EIU stood for Eastern Illinois University, that team is so obscure.

Was it because the Hoosiers have given the Buckeyes problems in recent meetings? Despite any scares, most prominently 52-49 in 2012, Indiana had beaten that 14-point spread five times in 16 meetings since the turn of this century, and this year's defense, in my mind, seemed too good to let the Hoosiers serve up a scare this time.

I'm just going to take a guess that the oddsmakers thought the game with IU was going to be this year's Iowa or Purdue. The Buckeyes score an emotional victory over Cincinnati – and I think the game was more emotional for Fickell and the Bearcats than for the Buckeyes – and then let up and are challenged (or thrashed) by a conference foe on the road in stunning fashion. The only flaw I saw with that logic was that Iowa in 2017 and Purdue in 2018 were better teams than this year's Hoosiers.

No, I didn't put any money down on the Buckeyes, but Ohio State looked strong in all three facets of the game – offense, defense and special teams – and was an easy 51-10 victor over IU, easily covering that 14-point spread. Like the Bearcats, the Hoosiers were really in the game for only the first quarter.

The Buckeyes used a special teams play – a blocked punt for a safety by Chris Olave – and a balanced offense that had its moments passing and running to score 23 points in the second quarter and put Indiana on the ropes by halftime. Only a bit of trickery by IU, a flea-flicker pass right before the break (poorly defended by the Buckeyes, I might add) allowed the Hoosiers to even be within 20.

The breakdown on the trick play, a missed field goal by Blake Haubeil and a late fumble by Jaelen Gill were about the only gaffes for the Buckeyes the entire afternoon. Quarterback Justin Fields missed a few open receivers and J.K. Dobbins dropped a sure-fire TD pass, but there really wasn't much to complain about.

How can you complain about an offense that racks up 520 yards, more than double its opponent's 257 yards? Take away Peyton Hendershot's 49-yard score on the trick play and Indiana barely cracked the 200-yard mark.

While Fields may not have looked as sharp as he did in Ohio State's first two games, he managed the offense well and ended up with a functional line of 14-of-24 passing for 199 yards and three scores. Most importantly he did not pitch an interception, and he was sacked only once.

The afternoon really belonged to Dobbins, with Master Teague in a co-starring role.

Dobbins burst onto the college scene as a freshman in the very same Memorial Stadium venue with 181 yards on 29 carries in the 2017

season opener. After a pedestrian sophomore campaign in '18, he made it clear that he is back with 193 yards on 22 carries against IU this time around, for an 8.8-yard average, along with a score and a long run of 56. He also scored on a 4-yard pass from Fields.

Teague seemed to cement his hold on the backup position by adding 106 yards on 10 carries, including a 40-yard touchdown run.

The Ohio State defense, so maligned last season and rightfully so, continued to impress. They filled the stat sheet with their disruptive play. The Buckeyes had 12 tackles for loss including five sacks, forced a fumble, had eight pass breakups and added a 96-yard interception return for a touchdown by Damon Arnette.

I thought Arnette, who has been a bit of a disappointment to some Buckeye fans, had a particularly good game. In addition to the score, he had two tackles and broke up two passes.

Another Buckeye defender who has taken his lumps from Buckeye fans is Pete Werner. Playing in his home state, the Indianapolis Cathedral product tied for the team lead with five stops, all of the solo variety, and had two tackles for loss.

Hoosier quarterback Peyton Ramsey, playing after freshman IU quarterback Michael Penix was a late scratch, was not much of a factor in the game, passing for 162 yards with 19 completions on 33 attempts after racking up 322 yards passing and three touchdowns in a 49-26 loss to the Buckeyes last season.

In the season's first two games, I think fans were simply impressed that the Buckeye defenders were better than they were last season – not a difficult feat because the defense was awful in 2018. After turning in another strong defensive performance against Indiana in game three, I think fans and observers are coming around to the notion that, with much of the same personnel as last season, this might be a championship-caliber defense.

That's Big Ten championship-caliber defense right now, but you have to win the conference before you can challenge for other honors, and I see nothing to make me think that the defense won't get better and better, even though the competition is certain to get better and better.

Did anyone besides me see the irony of Buckeye defender Shaun Wade breaking up a Ramsey pass when it hit him in the back as he was looking away from the quarterback just before Olave's punt block? Last season, Ohio State defensive backs were reportedly taught to not look back for the pass. As one of the posters on our BuckeyeSports.com Forum said, the pass breakup was "just like (former secondary coach) Taver Johnson would have drawn it up."

When you are playing good defense, things like that happen.

There's a lot of football left to be played and better teams dot the upcoming schedule, but with a quarter of the regular season in the books, it's hard for Buckeye fans not to be excited about the team's prospects.

Six-Game Stretches

Olave continues to emerge as one of the better and more exciting players on the team. Head coach Ryan Day made note of Olave's continued improvement after the win over Indiana.

"If you look back on our last six games

– going back to the rivalry game, Big Ten Championship Game, the Rose Bowl and now these three games – his production has been really good," Day said of the 6-1, 185-pound sophomore.

For the record, in those six games Olave had 17 catches for 325 yards, good for a stellar 19.1-yard average. He had a catch of 24 yards or more in five of those six games with a high of 39 against Cincinnati, followed by a 37-yarder against the Hoosiers. The only game where he did not have a long reception was the Rose Bowl, where he was shut out.

The thing that struck me most about his stat line in those six games was his five TD receptions, including two on only two receptions against Michigan. When you couple that with his two punt blocks, which resulted in a touchdown against the Wolverines and a safety against Indiana, the guy is a point-generating machine.

As good as Olave has been over that stretch and clearly getting better, I wanted to bring up a six-game stretch of my own.

Starting with the first game after Ohio State's stunning loss to the Boilermakers in 2018 and running through the Rose Bowl win over Washington, consider the six-game production of then-safety Brendon White.

White took the field for the porous Ohio State defense in the Nebraska game after Jordan Fuller was ejected for targeting, and all he did was record 13 tackles, including two for loss in just over a half of action. He would go on to average 6.8 tackles over the last six games, including 4.2 solos, culminating with a defensive MVP performance in Pasadena when he turned in eight tackles, all solos, against the Huskies along with two TFLs and a pass breakup. Along the way he added an interception with a 49-yard return against rival Michigan.

You know why I am bringing this up, because I have brought White up before. As the Bullet in the revamped Ohio State defense, White is not seeing as much action. He has had nine tackles, eight solo, through the Buckeyes' first three games with two tackles for loss, a sack and a pass breakup – decent stats but nothing like that stretch to end last season.

"When teams start spreading out and start getting a little looser that way, we'd like to go with the Bullet position more," co-defensive coordinator Greg Mattison said.

For his part, White has been saying the right things, though I'm sure he wants to play and probably feels he's earned that time.

"At the end of the day, you've got to know why you're here," White said. "You're here to win games, and whether I'm playing or I'm not playing, I'm still here to help my brothers win games and be there for them. We always talk about the brotherhood of trust. If I'm worried about not playing, then I'm being selfish and not caring about the team, putting the team first. In order for us to win, I can't be selfish. I have to put the team first and respect the brotherhood and respect my plays and snaps."

It's hard to criticize anything about the defense right now, especially when compared to last season, but I have always believed in putting the best 11 on the field.

With as good as the defense has been playing, maybe the coaches don't count him among that 11 anymore.

Odds And Ends

In addition to poor play on defense, one of the troubling aspects of Ohio State's play last season was the number of penalties which they committed. Ohio State averaged 8.3 penalties for 75.4 yards a game last year.

After a relatively clean game against Cincinnati, where they were flagged just twice for 25 yards, the Buckeyes were caught five times for 45 yards against Indiana. Still, their averages for the first three games of the season were 4.7 penalties for 44.0 yards, just over half of their marks from 2018 – another good sign for this year's team.

- Among the many Buckeyes who have stood out to me so far this season is senior receiver Binjimen Victor. In the past it always seemed that Victor would take one step – or big play – forward and then one step back. Playing behind a host of veterans last year, he finished seventh on the team with just 21 receptions for 354 yards and four touchdowns, though his average per catch of 16.9 was second only to Terry McLaurin's 20.0.

So far this season his play has appeared much more consistent, and he is second on the club with 11 catches for 200 yards and a score and an 18.2-yard average, second only to Olave's 19.8.

Housekeeping

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We also wanted to remind you that, with the heart of the Big Ten football season coming soon, now is a great time to send a friend, relative or colleague a four-issue free trial to Buckeye Sports Bulletin. If you have someone who is always reading your copy, this may offer a chance to get them to subscribe themselves. Each trial subscriber will receive their four free issues with no obligation, and they will be offered an introductory special at the end of their trial. Perhaps this is how you found out about Buckeye Sports Bulletin.

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