

Day, Buckeyes Stick To Their Guns; Use Explosive Second Half To Win Opener

By **MARK REA**

BSB Managing Editor Emeritus

One thing Ryan Day has proved during his relatively short tenure as Ohio State head coach is a fierce, almost stubborn tenacity when it comes to his offensive attack.

That mentality was on full display once again Sept. 2 when Day's Buckeyes were faced with a young quarterback struggling in his first collegiate start against an inspired Minnesota team, a 14-point underdog with nothing to lose and everything to prove.

The upstart Gophers dispensed with an early 10-point deficit to take a 14-10 lead at halftime, using a solid running attack spearheaded by senior Mohamed Ibrahim, the reigning Big Ten Running Back of the Year.

Meanwhile, redshirt freshman quarterback C.J. Stroud, starting his first game under center for the Buckeyes, began the game steady enough but quickly hit a rough patch. After completing five of his first seven attempts, Stroud suddenly went cold. As a steady rain began to fall at Huntington Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, the youngster overthrew several targets and so badly missed receiver Chris Olave on a crossing route over the middle that the pass was intercepted, leading to Minnesota's second touchdown.

Still, Day refused to play it safe. The third-year head coach's ace in the hole was a strong running game of his own, one that produced fireworks on Ohio State's fifth offensive play of the night when starting tailback Miyan Williams turned a simple counter play into a 71-yard touchdown romp.

But while the conservative play might have been to protect Stroud and rely more on Williams and fellow running backs Master Teague and TreVeyon Henderson, Day chose instead to keep his foot planted squarely on the gas pedal. Despite the rain picking up in intensity and the fact that he entered the game with zero passes thrown in his college career, Stroud settled in for a solid second-half performance that included touchdown passes of 38, 56, 70 and 61 yards, and the fourth-ranked Buckeyes wound up running away with a 45-31 victory.

"C.J. and I had a conversation early on," Day told reporters after the game. "He and I decided that we were going to keep swinging, no matter what happened. We were not going to play it close to the vest because that's not the way we do it here. And he responded."

Stroud finished the night 13



SONNY BROCKWAY

BIG SECOND HALF - Redshirt freshman quarterback C.J. Stroud (7) shook off a slow start Sept. 2 at Minnesota to throw for four second-half touchdowns and the Buckeyes scored a 45-31 victory to open the 2021 season. After throwing for only 58 yards in the first, Stroud threw for scores of 38, 56, 70 and 61 yards after halftime.

of 22 for 294 yards, four touchdowns and one interception. Most of that production came in the second half when Stroud completed 5 of 8 passes for 236 yards and all four scores. His passing efficiency went from 75.66 in the first half to an off-the-charts 475.30 after the break.

"It took a little while, I think, for us to get the rhythm on offense with C.J., but that was his first game," Day said. "That was his first pass on the first play of the game. There's a lot going on there, and when you go into situations like that, you know that it may be a little bit murky early on, and that's what happened."

One man's murky could just as easily have been another's disaster waiting to happen.

Stroud got off to an efficient start, completing passes on the Buckeyes' first two offensive plays from scrimmage. But on the

third play, he overthrew junior receiver Garrett Wilson, who had come open down the field. It was a harbinger of things to come as Stroud began to struggle with his accuracy, especially when asked to throw on the run.

Later, the redshirt freshman admitted he had suffered some opening-night jitters.

"In the first half, my mind wasn't right," Stroud said. "I was kind of all over the place a little bit. I talked to my teammates, prayed a lot, and tried to block that out. I don't feel like I did terribly, but I definitely didn't do as much as I could."

Despite Stroud's uneven performance, the Buckeyes raced out to a 10-0 lead in the first half, an advantage that could have been even larger.

Williams tallied the first points of the game on his long

**Your Mailing Label Goes Here
Call (614) 486-2202
Today To Subscribe**

Continued On Page 10

FAN FORUM

Buckeye Leaves

Ohio State and quarterback C.J. Stroud struggled in the first half against Minnesota, but the Buckeye offense erupted in the second half and the Buckeyes coasted to a 45-31 victory. Here are some choices from Buckeye Sports Bulletin staff members and readers from the BuckeyeSports.com Forum for players who were worthy of winning Buckeye Leaves.

Wyatt Crosher, BSB: Ohio State had four running backs see action in its opener against Minnesota, but two of them really stood out among the rest.

The first of those was Miyan Williams, who immediately showed what he can do with a 71-yard rushing touchdown on the Buckeyes' first drive of the season. On the night, he only ran nine times, but finished with 125 yards and consistently found extra yards out of nowhere.

The other back was true freshman TreVeyon Henderson. As a five-star recruit, Henderson came in with big expectations, and he proved what all of the talk was about in his first collegiate game.

Henderson only ran twice for 15 yards, but he took a dump-off pass by C.J. Stroud and outran the entire Minnesota defense for an explosive 70-yard touchdown that was the highlight moment of the game.

Ohio State came into the game with no clear answer as to what the running game would look like. After week one, it seems clear that two backs should get the bulk of the carries.

Patrick Mayhorn, BSB: It's hard to give the big boys too much love based only on live action, given just how much is happening on any given play, but senior left tackle-turned-guard Thayer Munford was fantastic in his first showing at his new role for the Buckeyes. After making the move from left tackle to left guard in the offseason to make room in the starting offensive line for Dawand Jones, Munford looked like a seasoned pro, moving with ease out of the much more horizontally oriented spot, crushing previously unblocked ends on several occasions as a pulling guard on counter looks.

That's not easy to do for experienced guards. It's not easy to do for the pros even. Looking so strong this early on in

his transition inside, after seemingly making the move just a month ago, is almost unheard of, and a serious testament to Munford's ability as both a blocker and as a leader for this team. He cleared the way for more than one of Ohio State's big gains up front and helped to set the tone for an offensive line that allowed just one tackle for loss and didn't surrender a sack – especially impressive with a surprise starter in Luke Wypler, who had to fill in at center for Harry Miller.

The entire offensive line should get plaudits for its showing against a legitimately solid Minnesota defensive line, but Munford was the most impressive of the bunch, just as he was so often last season. Not too shabby for the super senior donning the “Block O” patch for the Buckeyes – and making that decision look good in the process.

Chase Brown, BSB: I considered offering my Buckeye leaf to Garrett Wilson, but Chris Olave's second touchdown convinced me to honor the senior wideout with the award.

Throughout his career, Olave has been a security blanket for Ohio State quarterbacks. He didn't have much time to be that for Dwayne Haskins, although he did have an impressive game against Michigan in 2018, when he scored two touchdowns and had a blocked punt. Olave then built a solid connection with Justin Fields during the last two seasons – one that led both players to become first-round talents in the minds of NFL scouts.

When Olave decided to return to Columbus for another season, many people scratched their heads. There are plenty of reasons he could have returned, but I am sure one of those decisions was to continue to develop with C.J. Stroud at quarterback. He must have seen something in Stroud that made him feel comfortable to delay millions of dollars and come back for a senior season.

Olave's decision seems to have paid off – at least through the first game of the season. He collected four receptions for 117 yards and two touchdowns, scoring both times with a significant number of yards after the catch. Olave receives my Buckeye leaf and looks like a strong candidate for more in the future.

Mark Rea, BSB: One leaf each to Zach Harrison and Haskell Garrett for the defensive play of the game.

I would also give a collective leaf to the offensive line for blowing open some huge holes for the running game as well as protecting a jittery first-time quarterback, who was not

sacked the entire evening.

Finally, one for Ryan Day, who stuck to his guns and never went conservative in the second half when nearly everything that had transpired to that point told him he should.

BSB Subscribers

Burke at CB. I thought he played really well ... especially first start as a true freshman.

– gold_pants

Miyan Williams. I was a little disappointed when I saw he was starting, but man did he justify that decision from the coaching staff. He consistently hit the holes that were there and showed some breakaway speed on that long TD run.

– bstu9

It's funny, I remember watching at one point early on thinking that Olave was having a quiet game, and then ... boom ... he's got two touchdowns, each of which required a pretty spectacular run after the catch. He is just ... smooth! It's only one game, but Williams and Henderson looked like stars, and suddenly, I am way less worried about the running back room.

I don't disagree with a single BSB staff pick.

Not leaf-worthy (and there were a couple of errant snaps), but I was impressed that Wypler could come in and start at center and blend in as well as he did. Nothing like having depth on the offensive line!

– Michael Bauer

Chris Olave for another spectacular game-winning performance, Zach Harrison for the game-changing strip sack, Haskell for another defensive TD, Ronnie Hickman for a solid start with so many tackles at the bullet spot, Ryan Watts and Bryson Shaw for so many open-field tackles, some of them saving TDs.

The whole OL (are they the best ever at Ohio State?), the kicker Noah Ruggles for a quietly efficient outing, Miyan Williams for an excellent outing, TreVeyon Henderson for showing Zeke-like vision and speed so early and freshman Denzel Burke for being on an island all game and playing efficiently with so much energy.

– AnthonyBuckeye



From The Message Board

Ohio State opened its season with a 45-31 road victory against Minnesota in a game that saw the Buckeyes trail at points during the second half. We asked readers on the BuckeyeSports.com Fan Forum what were the greatest points of concern from what they saw heading into Ohio State's upcoming game against Oregon. Here are some of the responses:

"The defense still looks awful. Kerry Coombs has made no adjustments. Continually getting gashed over the middle between the zones."

– Tiffin Buckeye

"Lack of pressure from the defensive line is concerning to me. I keep waiting for Zach Harrison to live up to his five-star hype, but it doesn't seem to be happening. Perhaps Jack Sawyer and J.T. Tuimoloau can provide that pressure with a little more game experience."

– bstu9

"There's plenty to be concerned about, especially on defensive side of the ball, but given the youth and inexperience everywhere, fans probably shouldn't be too concerned. I think by season's end we'll say they were just two TDs better than everyone. There may be some 35-21 wins along the way."

– Terrier Buck

"Obviously I'm concerned about the entire defense. But I thought the pass rush would help hide Ohio State's deficiencies in the back end. Take away the pivotal Harrison and Haskell Garrett play, and pressure seemed almost nonexistent."

– Poster That Harley Built

"I would like to point out that this was the first game of the season, away, at night, a Big Ten game and this was the first large, hostile crowd any of these players have experienced in almost two years. Clearly the defense needs to improve, which it can, but we did see some brief moments of brilliance by these inexperienced players. The defense forced some turnovers which they were short of in last year's 2020 Buckeyes. Mistakes were made and the youngsters will learn. However, the process of getting the 'situational skill set group' in between plays looks like it needs work. Put it another way, the defense needs to call its plays quicker or we are going to see dumb penalties in future games."

– BuckeyeScott

"Oregon's offense is stocked with stud backs and receivers that will stretch the field, potentially embarrassing a Buckeye defense that gave up 31 points to the Gophers. C.J. Stroud must improve his accuracy outside of the pocket. The Ducks' Kayvon Thibodeaux, the projected No. 1 NFL draft pick, will test our offensive line and bring pressure on Stroud."

– Bucks89

"The offense was fine, a few bumps, but I think the offense will be good. The defense was not good, but we were missing both corners. Something needs to change; several Gopher receivers were WIDE OPEN. Goodbye Coombs?"

– Carl F Dietz

"Like everyone else, the defense worries me. Too many missed tackles to count early on, although that did improve as the game went on. If there is a stud pash rusher, he has yet to emerge. Linebackers were kind of quiet, and the defensive backs were lucky that Minnesota doesn't have Chris Olave-level receivers. They are going to have to improve by leaps and bounds before the Oregon game."

– Michael Bauer

"I was concerned that they couldn't put a lid on Mohamed Ibrahim. Coombs might be looking through the help wanted ads soon."

– PeyoteBuck

"Yes, defense is the concern. Tackling, simply tackling, wrapping and bringing the ball-carrier to the ground. Several times the runner would break free when it seemed he was stopped. Also, the defensive line seemed outflanked on many sets making for an easy block and relying on secondary to fill which was not happening as it should."

– John Lanning

Buckeye Sports Bulletin (USPS 705-690, ISSN 0883-6833.) is published 24 times a year (weekly September through November, biweekly mid-March through May and January through early March and monthly June through August and December) by:

Columbus Sports Publications
 1350 W. Fifth Ave., Suite 30
 P.O. Box 12453
 Columbus, Ohio 43212
 (614) 486-2202
 bsb@buckeyesports.com

Periodical class postage paid at Columbus, Ohio, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Buckeye Sports Bulletin, P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio 43212. Subscription rates: \$99.95/year.

PUBLISHER
 Frank Moskowitz

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER
 Becky Roberts

MANAGING EDITOR EMERITUS
 Mark Rea

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
 Wyatt Crosher Patrick Mayhorn

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER EMERITUS
 Karen Wachsman 1944-1999

PHOTOGRAPHY
 Sonny Brockway Terry Gilliam
 Kevin Dye Josh Winslow

CONTRIBUTORS
 Chase Brown Craig Merz
 David Breithaupt Bob Roehm
 Bill Conley Mark Schmetzer
 Joe Dempsey Steve Siegfried
 Rich Exner Jeff Svoboda
 Mike Wachsman

ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES
 Jan Jager Ron Friedman

2021-22 PUBLICATION SCHEDULE (VOL. 41)

No. 1	Sept. 11	No. 13	Dec. 18
No. 2	Sept. 18	No. 14	Jan. 15
No. 3	Sept. 25	No. 15	Jan. 29
No. 4	Oct. 2	No. 16	Feb. 12
No. 5	Oct. 9	No. 17	March 5
No. 6	Oct. 23	No. 18	March 19
No. 7	Oct. 30	No. 19	April 2
No. 8	Nov. 6	No. 20	April 16
No. 9	Nov. 13	No. 21	May
No. 10	Nov. 20	No. 22	June
No. 11	Nov. 37	No. 23	July
No. 12	Dec. 4	No. 24	August

The next issue (Sept. 18 cover date) will be mailed on Sept. 14)

Buckeye Sports Bulletin is a privately owned newspaper and is not affiliated directly or indirectly with The Ohio State University.

Wachsman Elite Donor:



QB Bar Set Extremely High For Stroud

Late in the second quarter of what would eventually become a 45-31 season-opening victory for Ohio State at Minnesota, a friend texted me regarding the performance of redshirt freshman quarterback C.J. Stroud.

At the time, Stroud was suffering through a cold streak during which he had attempted six passes and completed only two of them for just 7 yards. The tail end of that streak was a poorly thrown ball over the middle – the kind Stroud normally could complete in his sleep – that resulted in his first career interception.

Minnesota cashed in on that turnover, scoring eight plays later to take a 14-10 lead in a game the Gophers entered as 14-point underdogs. While television cameras scanned the Ohio State sidelines and focused in on Stroud, who wore a decidedly deer-in-the-headlights look on his face, my friend texted this message: “Good God, we’ve been spoiled these last few years.”

It’s a pretty safe bet that similar texts were flying through the ether from one Buckeye fan to another, wondering what in the name of Chic Harley was Ryan Day thinking when he named Stroud the starting quarterback. Where is Kyle McCord? Whatever happened to Jack Miller? Where’s the new million-dollar kid Quinn Ewers?

Stroud, of course, shook off his self-described first-game jitters and proceeded to throw for 236 yards and four touchdowns in the second half to help lead the Buckeyes to victory, but the point made about just how spoiled Ohio State fans have become with regard to their quarterbacks is a salient one.

Day, perhaps as aware of what is happening outside his program as any coach in the college ranks, addressed the burdensome expectations for any young man who aspires to be the starting quarterback for the team Fox Sports play-by-play man Gus Johnson has taken to calling “the world-famous Ohio State Buckeyes.”

“I told (C.J.) early on, there are no expectations going in,” Day told reporters after the game. “You might throw four interceptions, you might throw four touchdowns. I don’t know what’s going to happen. I know everyone thinks you just walk out there, and you’re going to throw for 300 yards and a bunch of touchdowns, but it doesn’t just work that way.”

Day should probably look in the mirror to see who’s at least partially to blame for that mentality. After all, he was the quarterbacks coach when Dwayne Haskins spoiled OSU fans during his record-shattering 2018 season. In fact, Day was the acting head coach when Haskins threw for 313 yards and five touchdowns in his first collegiate start, a 77-31 rout of Oregon State in the season opener three years ago.

Haskins broke so many OSU passing records during that 2018 season that it was hard to keep track of all of them. But he did throw for 300 or more yards in nine of 14 games that year, and his 313 total in the season opener established a new program high for a quarterback in the first start of his career.

Want to know who’s second on that list? It’s Stroud. His 294 yards against Minnesota marked only the eighth time an Ohio State QB has thrown for at least 200 yards in his first start. The others are Cardale Jones (257 vs. Wisconsin in the 2014 Big Ten Championship Game), Steve Bellisari (243 vs. Ohio in 1999), Justin Fields (234 vs. Florida Atlantic in 2019), J.T. Barrett (226 vs. Navy in 2014), Todd Boeckman (225 vs. Youngstown State in 2007) and Justin Zwick (213 vs. Cincinnati in 2004).

Stroud’s four touchdown passes also tied Fields for second most in an OSU quarterback’s first start. Haskins had five in that 2018 opener. Unlike some of the TD tosses by Haskins and Fields in their debut games, however, Stroud’s scoring passes were almost as much a product of the talent and speed of his supporting cast as the strong, accurate arm hanging from the young quarterback’s right shoulder.

Only his second scoring pass, the 56-yarder to Garrett Wilson in the third quarter, could be considered anything resembling a deep ball. Stroud took advantage of a clean pocket and stepped into the throw to deliver a strike to Wilson, who made the catch in midstride. Stroud was standing on his own 38 when he delivered the ball, and Wilson cradled it about the Minnesota 15, meaning the pass traveled an on-target 47 yards in the air.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Mark Rea

Stroud’s first touchdown came early in the third quarter when he found Chris Olave for a 38-yard score. The QB felt some pressure in the pocket and threw off his back foot but still managed to find a wide-open Olave on a deep crossing route near the left sideline. Olave snagged the pass and then added 20 yards after the catch for the touchdown.

Freshman running back TreVeyon Henderson kicked off his college career with a bang – and padded Stroud’s stats in the process – early in the fourth quarter. Minnesota veteran defensive end Boye Mafe got suckered into rushing Stroud rather than covering Henderson swinging out of the backfield, and the result was a 70-yard touchdown run, something for the guys over at ESPN to put on their highlight reel. Stroud’s toss over the hard-charging Mafe’s head traveled only about 5 yards in the air before Henderson and his world-class speed blew through the Gophers like they were cardboard cutouts left over from last season.

The final scoring play involved a play fake and some misdirection from Stroud as he moved to his right to find Olave open again on another sideline route. This pass – probably the most accurate one Stroud threw while on the move during the entire game – traveled about 29 yards in the air before Olave gathered it in and danced down the sideline to complete a 61-yard scoring play.

Stroud’s four touchdown passes, worth a total of 225 yards, involved some 149 yards after the catch. Then again, experts around college football don’t claim for nothing that Ohio State’s receiving corps is the best in the nation. And they barely scratched the surface of what they are capable of. While Wilson and Olave combined for nine catches, 197 yards and three scores, Jaxon Smith-Njigba was targeted only twice – and caught both balls for a total of 12 yards – while the likes of Julian Fleming as well as such highly rated true freshman as Marvin Harrison Jr., Emeika Egbuka and Jayden Ballard stand ready, waiting in the wings to see if they can make as big an initial splash as Henderson.

Minnesota provided a difficult test for Stroud in nearly every way possible – everything from different looks to a hostile, nighttime sellout crowd. And even though he will make his Ohio Stadium debut against Oregon, there is little doubt the Ducks will do everything in their power to rattle Stroud as best they can. But while he undoubtedly has the talent to exceed at this level, it seems the 19-year-old has the mental fortitude to match – not to mention a stable of receivers who would make any quarterback’s job just that much easier.

Defense Better? Maybe

Full disclosure. I was extremely pessimistic about the defense – most notably the back seven – coming into the season, and I am only slightly less so after the Minnesota game.

Haskell Garrett’s 32-yard touchdown return of a fumble created by a Zach Harrison strip sack

papered over a performance by the OSU defensive line that could be generously described as average. Yes, Minnesota’s veteran offensive line holds a lot, and it is pretty clever at concealing it. But the Buckeyes are going to face similar situations all season, and they will have to figure out how to overcome that.

The Gophers rushed for 203 yards, most of that from the hard-nosed Mohamed Ibrahim, who obviously won Big Ten Running Back of the Year honors last season on considerable merit. There were times when the OSU line stuffed Ibrahim, such as the multitude of times Minnesota switched to the Wildcat formation. P.J. Fleck is regarded as one of the college game’s best coaches, but the Wildcat? Seriously? That is a formation that should go the way of the single-wing. When is the last time a running back took a direct snap and did anything but run with the ball?

While the Buckeyes successfully defended Ibrahim when he took a direct snap – only 8 yards to show for six attempts – they were decidedly less effective when the Minnesota running back had room to operate. That was especially true when several OSU defenders were out of position on a fourth-and-1 play – coming out of a timeout, no less – that led to a Ibrahim ripping off a run worth 56 yards.

Redshirt freshman cornerback Lejond Cavazos had a particularly tough series during that stretch of the game. Not only did he watch as Ibrahim motored by him at the point of attack on the 56-yard run, two plays later Cavazos let Minnesota receiver Dylan Wright get the better of him in the end zone for a 13-yard touchdown.

It wasn’t that Cavazos had particularly bad coverage on the play, but like many other Ohio State defensive backs of recent vintage, the redshirt freshman never got his head turned around to locate the ball, making the catch just that much easier for Wright.

Fellow redshirt freshman Ryan Watts and true freshman Denzel Burke also had rough initiations to college football. Burke committed a third-down pass-interference penalty in the end zone, a play that led directly to Minnesota’s second touchdown. And Watts was beaten so badly downfield on a third-quarter play that he had no choice but to mug Gophers receiver Daniel Jackson to prevent an easy touchdown.

And don’t get me started on Dallas Gant going to the head of Minnesota QB Tanner Morgan early in the third quarter, a roughing-the-passer penalty that wiped out Josh Proctor’s interception return of about 60 yards. That was a potential 14-point swing after the Gophers scored a touchdown two plays later. On any level of football these days, whether you’re in the peewee leagues or a senior linebacker at Ohio State, you should realize any hit in the vicinity of the opposing quarterback’s head is going to draw a flag. In a word, that was unacceptable.

I know the Buckeyes played a lot of young and inexperienced players, and like all young and inexperienced players, they did some good things and they did some bad things. There was some sloppy tackling, but there were also some textbook stops, especially from Burke and Watts. There was too much grabbing downfield, and those are all going to be PIs at some point in the season if Ohio State DBs don’t become a little more aware as to the location of the football.

The linebacker play still has a ways to go and that was on full display with a rotation that seemed to border on chaos. Still, it was a little better than in the past (how could it not be?) and I hope that is a sign of good things to come. Cody Simon had an important sack near the end of the first half, stopping Minnesota as it seemed poised to add to its 14-10 lead at the time.

All in all, I wasn’t impressed with the Ohio State defensive effort, but I wasn’t overly disappointed with it, either. Check back with me in a week to see if I feel the same way.

OHIO STATE[®]

INSIDER

Day's Beard Becomes Casualty Of Season

Ohio State fans saw a familiar face roaming the sidelines during the Buckeyes' season opener Sept. 2 against Minnesota as head coach Ryan Day entered his third season at the helm of the team.

And for the third year in a row, Day emerged something of a new man from the long offseason, shaving his illustrious beard out of an abundance of caution, hoping not to disrupt any traditions of the past.

"I'm not going to coach with the beard," Day said three days before the opener. "I'm just too superstitious. I'd like to (keep it). I've thought long and hard about it. My wife and I had a conversation about it. (But) I'm not taking that chance, especially starting with a conference game. The beard has to go."

Day has coached with a beard just once in his career, back in 2016 as a quarterbacks coach for the San Fran-

cisco 49ers. The team went 2-14 that season, and Day hasn't looked back since, despite the grizzlier look serving as a popular one among many, including his players, Buckeye fans and his wife, Nina.

"I think he should keep it," said OSU defensive end Zach Harrison, who admitted the coach's beard was much better than his own. "I think it's cool. I just think he needs to line it up a little bit, and it'll be all right."

Gaoteote Still Not Cleared To Play

It's been a difficult offseason for linebacker Palaie Gaoteote. The former blue-chip recruit – who signed with USC out of Las Vegas Bishop Gorman and contributed there for three seasons before an injury derailed his tenure – has been waiting for a ruling from the NCAA regarding his eligibility for more than two months after transferring to Ohio State in early July.

And as the Buckeyes approached the beginning of their 2021 season, Gaoteote and his new team were still without any answers.

"No, unfortunately, we don't (have an update)," Day said Aug. 30 when asked about Gaoteote. "The NCAA asked for some additional information. I guess they are still working it over. But unfortunately, we don't have any more information even as we're headed into (the opener against Minnesota). It's a difficult spot for him and us. We're waiting to hear the



SONNY BROCKWAY

A NEW MAN – Ohio State head coach Ryan Day shaved his beard prior to the Buckeyes' season opener, as he has done every year but one during his coaching career.

decision, but we're still optimistic that we get good news."

Gaoteote is in a uniquely difficult spot, being asked to pay his own way as a student at Ohio State while the team awaits an NCAA decision on his eligibility – with the circumstances regarding any potential eligibility issues remaining largely a mystery since practically every other first-time transfer has been granted immediate eligibility, per a new NCAA rule.

If approved, Gaoteote, who has been working out with the Buckeyes, would presumably become an immediate member of the OSU linebacker rotation. If not, though, the class of 2018 standout would be without an obvious path forward.

"We're patiently waiting because that affects a lot," Day said. "If he is eligible, then he has an opportunity to be on scholarship. If he isn't, then he has to figure out what the next step for him is."

With or without the USC transfer, Day remains comfortable with Ohio State's options at linebacker, even if the hard-hitting senior would provide some much-needed stability to a position without any starting experience on the board entering game one.

"I feel good about Tommy Eichenberg, I feel good about Teradja (Mitchell), Dallas (Gant), Cody Simon, Steele Chambers is gonna get in there, K'Vaughan Pope will be in some different spots," Day said. "We have some depth there. But those guys have to go in there and play and produce because they have some big shoes to fill."

Eichenberg, Mitchell, Gant and Simon combined for 30 tackles, including two for loss, against Minnesota in the opener, a 45-31 win for the Buckeyes. Mitchell led the group with 10 stops in what was his first collegiate start.

Miller, Brown, Cage Led Unavailable Buckeyes

Ohio State's projected starting center, junior Harry Miller, and a projected starting cornerback, junior Cameron Brown, were two of the 11 Ohio State players who were listed as unavailable in the status report released prior to the season-opening win at Minnesota.

Miller started the first six games of the 2020 season for the Buckeyes, five of which were at guard before he moved to center against Michigan State with the absence of Josh Myers. Miller was then out of the College Football Playoff semifinal against Clemson due to COVID-19, and he saw time against Alabama in the national title game but was replaced by Matthew Jones in the starting lineup.

With Miller's absence vs. Minnesota, redshirt freshman Luke Wypler took over as the starting center.

Brown played in just two games last season, both of which were starts, before he suffered an Achilles injury against Penn State which took him out for the rest of the year. He was replaced in this year's opener by a rotation of Ryan Watts, Lejond Cavazos and Demario McCall.

Beyond Miller and Brown, another notable name on the unavailable list was defensive tackle Jerron Cage, who was in a battle with Antwan Jackson for a starting spot on the line.

Other names on the unavailable list include wide receiver Kamryn Babb, safety Jantzen Dunn, defensive tackle Tyler Friday, offensive lineman Jakob James, bullet Jaylen Johnson, linebacker Mitchell Melton, tight end Joe Royer and offensive lineman Toby Wilson. Ohio State does not typically specify why players are unavailable – only that they are out for the current game.

Cornerback Sevn Banks was not included on the unavailable list although

When it's time to rest, make it Columbus' best.
When you come to a game or visit
The Ohio State University...

...you can stay at one of our award winning hotels in the heart of downtown Columbus or nearest to your game destination.
 For reservations, call your preferred hotel.
Make your reservations today!



The Arena District Hampton Inn & Suites

501 N. High St. Downtown Columbus
 (614) 559-2000
www.columbusdowntownsuites.hamptoninn.com

Canopy by Hilton Columbus Short North

77 E Nationwide Blvd - Columbus Downtown
 614-223-1400
www.columbusdowntownshortnorth.canopybyhilton.com

Airport-Easton Area Hilton Garden Inn

4265 Sawyer Rd. (614) 231-2869
www.columbusairport.stayhgi.com

Airport-Easton Area Hampton Inn

4280 International Gateway (614) 235-0717
www.columbusairport.hamptoninn.com

The Ohio State University Hilton Garden Inn

3232 Olentangy River Rd.
 (614) 263-7200
www.columbusuniversityarea.stayhgi.com

The Ohio State University Aloft University District

1295 Olentangy River Rd. (614) 294-7500
www.aloftcolumbus.com

The Ohio State University Hampton Inn & Suites

3160 Olentangy River Rd. (614) 268-8700
www.columbusuniversityareasuites.hamptoninn.com

Hampton Inn and Suites Hilliard

3950 Lyman Dr 614-334-1800
www.columbushilliardsuites.hamptoninn.com



2021 Ohio State Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Result/Time (ET)	TV	Record, Last Result
Sept. 2	at Minnesota	W, 45-31	Fox	0-1, 45-31 loss to Ohio State
Sept. 11	OREGON*	Noon	Fox	1-0, 34-21 win over Fresno State
Sept. 18	TULSA*	3:30 p.m.	FS1	0-1, 31-24 loss to UC Davis
Sept. 25	AKRON	TBA	TBA	0-1, 60-10 loss to Auburn
Oct. 2	at Rutgers	TBA	TBA	1-0, 61-14 win over Temple
Oct. 9	MARYLAND	Noon	TBA	1-0, 30-24 win over West Va.
Oct. 23	at Indiana*	TBA	TBA	0-1, 34-6 loss to Iowa
Oct. 30	PENN STATE	TBA	TBA	1-0, 16-10 win over Wisconsin
Nov. 6	at Nebraska	TBA	TBA	1-1, 52-7 win over Fordham
Nov. 13	PURDUE	TBA	TBA	1-0, 30-21 win over Oregon St.
Nov. 20	MICHIGAN STATE	TBA	TBA	1-0, 38-21 win over Northwestern
Nov. 27	at Michigan	Noon	Fox	1-0, 47-14 win over Western Mich.
Dec. 4	Big Ten Championship**	8 p.m.	Fox	

* - 2020 bowl team ** - at Indianapolis (Lucas Oil Stadium)

he, too, was sidelined and did not take the field for the Buckeyes on Sept. 2. Banks was reportedly dealing with hamstring tightness.

Eight Freshmen Earn Snaps In Season Opener

Each season, Ohio State sits near the top of the national recruiting rankings, which means the Buckeyes are never short of talent, especially young talent. The coaching staff chose eight first-year players to debut in its 2021 opener against Minnesota.

Denzel Burke led all cornerbacks with 63 snaps and set a school record for the most snaps by a true freshman in a season opener. J.T. Tuimoloau logged the second-most snaps for a true freshman, collecting 13 reps as Ohio State's fourth defensive end. Tuimoloau's counterpart, Jack Sawyer, saw the field four times.

Running back TreVeyon Henderson tied wide receiver Marvin Harrison Jr. for the most offensive snaps with seven. While each saw equal playing time, Henderson made a more substantial impact for the Ohio State offense, contributing a 70-yard touchdown catch at the beginning of the fourth quarter.

Australian-born punter and holder Jesse Mirco collected seven snaps on special teams. He punted two times for an average of 43.0 yards with a long of 49.

Donovan Jackson received one snap as Ohio State's sixth offensive lineman. He wore No. 41 to designate him as an eligible receiver but did not run a route.

QB Ewers Nabs \$1.4 Million Deal

Name, image and likeness rights have already been very kind to Ohio State freshman quarterback Quinn Ewers.

The Texas native, who enrolled a year early at Ohio State to cash in on NIL deals, announced a sponsorship with a Texas kombucha company in early August and was given a truck in a deal with Ricart Automotive, an auto dealership in suburban Columbus. Now, Ewers has inked his biggest deal yet, signing on with GT Sports Marketing for an autographs deal.

The deal is worth a reported \$1.4 million over three years, which will presumably span Ewers' entire time at Ohio State.

Ewers isn't expected to contribute significantly during 2021, his first season with the Buckeyes as he works to learn the system. Day has not mentioned him

as a significant contender to back up starting quarterback C.J. Stroud, and it's unclear if the five-star Southlake Carroll product will take the field at all this season. In the meantime, he is attempting to acclimate himself to the major-college football ranks under OSU strength and conditioning director Mickey Marotti.

Four Buckeyes Make Preseason All-America

Wide receivers Chris Olave and Garrett Wilson, defensive lineman Haskell Garrett and offensive lineman Thayer Munford are household names in Columbus, but another preseason honor is helping build their reputations on the national landscape.

The Associated Press named the four Buckeyes to its preseason All-American list on Aug. 23. Olave and Garrett earned first-team honors, while Wilson and Munford made the second team.

Ohio State is one of eight schools with at least two first-team preseason AP All-Americans. Iowa State and Notre Dame each have three, while Alabama, Clemson, LSU, Oklahoma, Texas A&M and OSU have two apiece.

Olave joined Clemson junior Justyn Ross as first-team receivers. Olave surprised many with his decision to stay in Columbus since he was projected as a first-round pick in the 2021 NFL draft. Olave returns this season as one of the best wide receivers in the country, looking to continue developing his game and polishing his craft.

Garrett joined Clemson sophomore defensive tackle Bryan Bresee on the first-team defensive line. The OSU fifth-year senior established himself last season as one of the premier run stoppers alongside current Cleveland Browns defensive tackle Tommy Togiai. Garrett did not receive many postseason awards for his efforts, but it seems the national media recognized his strong résumé throughout his four years at Ohio State.

Wilson joined Alabama junior John Metchie III as second-team receivers. In two seasons, Wilson has established himself as one of the country's most physically talented receivers. He and Olave could be college football's best wide receiver duo and are sure to be C.J. Stroud's most consistent targets this season.

Munford earned second-team offensive tackle honors along with Kentucky senior Darian Kinnard. Although Munford made the All-America team at tackle, he has since moved to guard and



FILE PHOTO

MOVING UP - Former Buckeye Joey Bosa moved up two spots in the NFL top-100 list for No. 32 after tallying 39 tackles, 7½ sacks and a fumble recovery for the Los Angeles Chargers last year.

started at the right guard spot against Minnesota.

Six Former Buckeyes On NFL Top 100 List

Each year, NFL players are asked to cast their votes to identify the best of the best in the league. The votes are tabulated and then released as a top-100 list, a roster that contains six former Ohio State players.

The highest-ranked former Buckeye is Los Angeles Chargers defensive end Joey Bosa, who moved up two spots from last year to No. 32. Bosa played in 12 games last season, yet he still finished with 39 tackles, 7½ sacks and a fumble recovery. In his first year of a \$135 million extension, Bosa proved it worthwhile.

For the fifth time in his career, Pittsburgh Steelers defensive lineman Cam-

eron Heyward found his way onto the list, moving up 27 spots this year to No. 57. At age 31, the veteran is still making an impact, tallying 54 tackles (including 30 solo), four sacks and three forced fumbles in 2020.

Following Heyward was Los Angeles Chargers center Corey Linsley, who debuted at No. 60. Linsley spent his first seven seasons in the league with the Green Bay Packers and was named a first-team All-Pro for the first time in 2020. He signed a five-year, \$62.5 million contract with the Chargers this past offseason, making him the highest paid center in the league.

After just one season, Washington Football Team defensive end Chase Young entered the top 100 at No. 61.

Continued On Page 6



ROOTS

- EST. 1930 -

*Look for our products
in a store near you.*

www.RootsPoultry.com

1-800-499-2536

3721 West State Street

Fremont, OH 43420

Serving Our Community Since 1930!

OHIO STATE INSIDER

Continued From Page 5

Young was dominant as a rookie, finishing with 44 tackles, 7½ sacks, four forced fumbles and three fumble recoveries, one of which he took back for a touchdown. He was named the NFL's Defensive Rookie of the Year for his efforts.

Next up was New Orleans wide receiver Michael Thomas at No. 72. Thomas dropped a whopping 67 spots after missing most of last season due to injury. Still, in seven games, Thomas finished with 40 catches for 438 yards and a score. That came a season after hauling

in an NFL-record 149 catches for 1,725 yards and nine touchdowns.

Saints cornerback Marshon Lattimore rounded out the former Buckeyes, coming in at No. 86. He dropped 10 spots from last season after finishing with 62 tackles (52 solos), 11 passes defended and two interceptions.

Bosa almost certainly would have been joined by his brother, Nick, who plays for the San Francisco 49ers, but he was ineligible after missing the 2020 season with a knee injury.

The only other former Ohio State player to fall off the list was Dallas Cowboys running back Ezekiel Elliott, who struggled in 2020, his fifth season in the league. He carried 244 times for a career-low 979 yards and six touchdowns and also caught 52 passes for 338 yards and two scores.

Alabama led the NFL's top-100 list with seven players. The Buckeyes tied with LSU for second most with their six.

Oldest Buckeye Souders Dies At 100

Former Ohio State offensive and defensive end Cecil "Cy" Souders, a member of Ohio State's 1942 national cham-



FILE PHOTO

OUT ON PAROLE - Former Ohio State quarterback Art Schlichter (10) was released from prison in mid-June after serving a little more than eight years of an 11-year sentence for a massive ticket scam that bilked millions of dollars from his victims.

Brutus Level VIPs To Be Recognized

If you have wanted to show your support for Buckeye Sports Bulletin through the VIP program but are unable to participate at the Scarlet or Elite level, now is the time to sign up at the Brutus level for just \$50. Brutus level VIPs are recognized in BSB twice a year, and we will be running the complete list of Brutus VIPs in the next several weeks. VIP donors help Buckeye Sports Bulletin stay alive and vibrant.

"We want to thank the many BSB readers who have stepped up and shown their support for Buckeye Sports Bulletin through the VIP program," BSB publisher Frank Moskowitz said. "It is a true vote of confidence in what we are doing now, what we have done the previous 40 years and what we plan to do in the future.

A VIP upgrade can easily pay for itself each year with special VIP discounts and perks.

VIP subscribers enjoy a 20 percent discount at Conrads College Gifts at Easton. VIP subscribers also enjoy a 5 percent discount on any Ohio State football trip booked through Reynolds Travel. And VIP subscribers receive a certificate good for \$10 off at Roosters restaurants, the "Fun, Casual Joint," as well as a card good for \$10 off your next food purchase at Rusty Bucket, the popular neighborhood hangout.

As mentioned, with the \$50 Brutus VIP upgrade, Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers will have their names and cities listed in two different issues annually as supporters of BSB.

Those who add \$100 to their subscriptions will have their names and cities listed in all 24 issues each year as BSB Scarlet patrons. Those who donate \$125 or more will be designated as Elite patrons in each issue.

To upgrade your existing subscription to VIP status, with all the benefits that come with that designation, go to buckeyesports.com/vip-memberships to pay by credit card, or call us at (614) 486-2202 during regular business hours. If readers have questions on this program, they can call the same number.

The following are our Elite Wachsman, Elite and Scarlet VIP subscribers. Brutus level VIPs will have their names listed at a later date.

Elite Wachsman Donor (in honor of late BSB assistant publisher Karen Wachsman): Roosters Restaurants Foundation.

Elite Donors: Marshall Beck, Sarasota, Fla.; B2, Reston, Va.; Phillip Blue, Prior Lake, Minn.; Fredrick Bradshaw, Columbus; In memory of Norwin Brovitz, Oakmont, Pa.; Brian Bucher, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.; Richard Dunkelberger, Groveport, Ohio; Thomas E. Farish, Port St. Lucie, Fla.; Fred Fingerhut, Phoenix; Sander Flaum, New York; Chalk Fry DDS, Sarasota, Fla.; Laura Granich, Columbus; Paul E. Hackett, The Villages, Fla.; James Hamilton, Murrysville, Pa.; Curtis High, Beaver Creek, Ohio; Freddie & Joe Huber, Walpole, Mass.; Carl R. Jeffery DDS, Van Wert, Ohio; Bill Judy, Dublin, Ohio; Frank Klaus, Pepper Pike, Ohio; Fred Krisch, Cleveland; Paul Lappert, Columbus; Larry Larson, Ladera Ranch, Calif.; Dan Laville, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Alan Lord, Reynoldsburg, Ohio; Dr. Jonathan Lucas, Portsmouth, Ohio; Col. George R. Nelson, New Albany, Ohio; OSU65B-ob, Mishawaka, Ind.; Jim Reichler, Crestone, Colo.; The Russell Group United, Columbus; Charlie Shaffer, Edison, Ohio; Bill Short, Sparta, Ohio; Mark Skinner, Columbus; James Thomas, The Villages, Fla.; Chuck Underwood, Miamisburg, Ohio; Dan van Blaricom, Dublin, Ohio; Beth Wachsman, Columbus; Elliott S. Wettstein, Waverly, Ohio; David J. Young, Supply, N.C.; Anonymous, Council Bluffs, Iowa; Anonymous, Girard, Ohio; Anonymous, Lancaster, Ohio; Anonymous, Lewisburg, W.Va.

Scarlet VIPs: Anthony Ananthanarayanan, Rochester, Mich.; Greg Brooks, Gahanna, Ohio; Marty Brumbaugh, Troy, Ohio; Dennis Dahm, Sandusky, Ohio; Tom Goila, Cincinnati; Doug Harris, Lima, Ohio; Ed Helal, Ashland, Ohio; Phil Helal, Strongsville, Ohio; Joseph Huber, Walpole, Mass.; Alan Lord, Reynoldsburg, Ohio; Lawrence Romanoff, Powell, Ohio; Jim Shaw, Lake Forest, Calif.; William Torok, Girard, Ohio; J.D. Wientjes, Peoria, Ill.; Anonymous, Dallas; Anonymous, Norwalk, Ohio.

pionship team, died Aug. 30. He was 100.

Souders was a native of Bucyrus, Ohio, and played for four different coaches during his career with the Buckeyes, which spanned from 1939 to 1946. He was recruited out of high school by Francis A. Schmidt and spent his freshman year on Ohio State's taxi squad before leaving school after getting married. He returned in 1942 and played for Paul Brown on that season's national championship team, the first in OSU program history.

After three seasons, the last of which he played for head coach Carroll Widoes, Souders left school again to serve in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He returned to Ohio State in 1946 and played that season for Paul Bixler, winning first-

team All-America honors and earning team MVP honors in the process.

The Washington Redskins selected Souders in the 25th round of the 1945 NFL draft, but he wound up playing three seasons for the Detroit Lions. When he retired from the game, he managed the Detroit terminal for a freight company and began a 38-year business career that ended as executive vice president of the company.

Souders was inducted into the Ohio State Athletics Hall of Fame in 2002.

At the time of his death, he was Ohio State's oldest living football player. That distinction now belongs to Chuck Csuri, who also played on the 1942 title team. Csuri turned 99 on July 4.

Tickets To Events Anywhere

Concerts • Theatre • Sporting Events



"Your Ticket Solution"



(614) 488-9957 • 888-842-5877

www.ticketsohio.com

1350 W. Fifth Ave., Ste. 24

We Buy OSU Football Tickets!

OSU Football & Basketball
Cleveland Browns
Blue Jackets
Nationwide Arena
Schottenstein Arena
NFL • NBA • NHL

Additionally, Souders was the oldest-living NFL alum at the time of his passing. That torch now passes to Ken Casanega, who played quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers in the 1940s. Casanega turned 100 on Feb. 18.

Ex-QB Schlichter Released From Prison

Former Ohio State, NFL and Arena League quarterback Art Schlichter is a free man again.

Schlichter, 61, was paroled from the Trumbull Correctional Institution in Leavittsburg, Ohio, on June 14 after serving time for federal fraud charges related to a massive ticket scheme that bilked millions of dollars from his victims.

Schlichter will be under Adult Parole Authority supervision for the next five years, according to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. That means he will be supervised by the APA in Ohio, responsible for adult felony offenders returning to the community.

As part of his parole, Schlichter was required to sign a contract agreeing to a number of rules, including prohibition of owning a gun or using illegal drugs, and he cannot leave the state without notifying his parole officer. There was nothing in the contract stating that Schlichter cannot gamble.

Schlichter pleaded guilty in September 2011 to the ticket scheme. In that scheme, he promised college and NFL game tickets to buyers but never delivered the tickets despite being paid for them. He was sentenced and released on bond.

Four months later, in January 2012, Schlichter's bond was revoked due to drug use. According to court records, he was charged with violating the terms of his house arrest, testing positive for cocaine twice and then refusing to give urine samples.

In May 2012, Schlichter was sentenced to nearly 11 years in the Federal Correctional Institute in Florence, Colo., and 10 years in an Ohio State Penitentiary. The two sentences were to be served concurrently, and with good behavior, Schlichter was to be released Aug. 18, 2020.

But from inside the walls of prison, just months before his scheduled release last year, Schlichter was allegedly having women outside the prison place bets for him.

"My advice to anyone coming upon Mr. Schlichter is that they not engage in any business transactions or any purchases or any other transactions that would involve giving him any money," Ron O'Brien, former Franklin County (Ohio) prosecutor who fought to keep Schlichter in prison, told the Indianapolis Star.

"(He) is a career criminal engaged in fraud as a career. He just cannot help himself. He will do this the rest of his life."

O'Brien said Schlichter was also betting with other inmates. Prison officials found out through emails and phone calls that the former quarterback was indeed gambling from inside prison walls. He was subsequently banned from using email for 90 days due to his gambling, ac-

cording to prison records.

As he was set to finish serving his 11 year-sentence in federal prison in August 2020 (which was reduced to just more than eight years), his attorneys filed a motion that Schlichter's remaining state time – about nine months – should be waived partly because Schlichter suffers from a number of ailments including diabetes, dementia and Parkinson's disease.

Schlichter was a four-year starting quarterback at Ohio State from 1978-81, and the Baltimore Colts made him the fourth overall pick in the 1982 NFL

Continued On Page 8

Podcast Breaks Down Minnesota Win, Previews Oregon

With Ohio State into its 2021 season, the Buckeye Sports Bulletin podcast is back to its twice-weekly football season publishing schedule, posting preview and recap shows each week of the regular season.

The BSB podcast, hosted by associate editors Wyatt Crosher and Patrick Mayhorn covers each game from every angle, releasing a full game preview on the Friday morning before the game and an in-depth recap on each Monday morning.

The show is free for everyone. To find it, go to your favorite podcast app or website and type in "Buckeye Sports Bulletin Podcast," and click the subscribe button. You can listen on Amazon Music, Apple Podcasts, Audible, Google Podcasts, iHeartRadio, Podbean, Spotify, Stitcher and anywhere else that podcasts are found. For those of you that are new to the podcast world, the show is also posted at 10 a.m. every Friday and Monday on BuckeyeSports.com, as well as in the BSB Fan Forum.

We are committed to your health and safety





FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES COLUMBUS/DUBLIN
7150 Sawmill Road, Columbus, Ohio 43235 • 614-389-3036





TOWNEPLACE SUITES
BY MARRIOTT

TOWNEPLACE SUITES COLUMBUS/HILLIARD
4079 Lyman Drive, Hilliard Ohio 43026 • 614-541-9309





BEST WESTERN HILLIARD INN & SUITES
3831 Park Mill Run Drive, Hilliard, Ohio 43026 • 614-529-8118

OHIO STATE INSIDER

Continued From Page 7

draft. His career with the Colts lasted only 13 games over three seasons before his gambling addiction came to light. He managed to make a comeback in the Arena Football League, leading the Detroit Drive to the league championship in 1990 and winning league MVP honors that season.

But the gambling continued and Schlichter first went to prison in 1995 and served the next decade behind bars. He was released in 2006 before returning in 2012 due to the ticket scam.

Former Buckeye Dobbins Out For '21

Former Ohio State running back J.K. Dobbins, coming off a strong rookie season with the Baltimore Ravens, is done for the 2021 season after tearing his ACL.

Dobbins was not only one of the best

rookie running backs in 2020, he was one of the most efficient backs overall. He rushed 134 times for 805 yards and nine touchdowns, with his 6.0 yards per carry being the best among all NFL running backs and third overall, behind only his teammate, quarterback Lamar Jackson, and Arizona Cardinals quarterback Kyler Murray.

This year, Dobbins was expected to see an uptick in opportunities with Mark Ingram moving to the Houston Texans. Instead, he suffered the knee injury in Baltimore's final preseason game against the Washington Football Team.

Dobbins is one of the most prolific runners in Ohio State history, finishing his career with 4,459 rushing yards and 38 rushing touchdowns. The yardage total is second in Ohio State program history only to two-time Heisman Trophy winner Archie Griffin's 5,589 yards.

In his final year with the Buckeyes, Dobbins broke the program's single-season rushing yard, finishing with 2,003 yards on the ground. His total surpassed the record of 1,927 yards set in 1995 by Heisman Trophy winner Eddie George.

Chase Brown, Wyatt Crosher, Patrick Mayhorn and Mark Rea contributed to this report. For up-to-the-minute Ohio State coverage, be sure to check out BSB online at BuckeyeSports.com and on Twitter @Buckeye_Sports.

Mayhorn Hits Mark With Prediction

The Minnesota game marked the return of the popular Staff Predictions on our BuckeyeSports.com website. In the first outing of the season, Patrick Mayhorn pulled the rare feat of predicting the exact 45-31 outcome. Wyatt Crosher was close at 42-31. Chase Brown and Mark Rea had a good handle on the Buckeye score but were a little too optimistic about the Ohio State defense. Chase saw it 45-24, while Mark predicted a 42-21 final.

Watch for the staff predictions before each game and don't forget the immediate coverage of each game posted at BuckeyeSports.com, as well as discussion of the game at our Forum, including the "Official Game Thread," with real-time comments from BSB staff members and readers throughout the game.

Please note that recent developments with the mail service have us concerned about delivery time for BSB this football season. We remind you the complete print edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin is posted at BuckeyeSports.com at the time the issue is mailed and is available to subscribers free of charge, as is all the other content provided at the site.

The BSB staff provides daily posts on any and all Ohio State sports news, including the latest in football recruiting, as well as presenting reprints from the Buckeye Sports Bulletin archives as part of our popular Reprint Thursdays. Additionally, staff members man the BuckeyeSports.com Forum, interacting with subscribers on the hot topics of the day.

If you are not already taking advantage of BuckeyeSports.com, BSB's 24/7 website, simply email your name, address and preferred email address to subscriptions@buckeyesports.com, and we will send back easy instructions on how to access the site. Don't forget, subscriptions@buckeyesports.com is our email address, not the website. We will send you directions on how to access the site.

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

As mentioned, readers who have been experiencing postal delivery problems can also read the complete edition of each issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin online at BuckeyeSports.com immediately upon completion. Your copy of the paper will still arrive in your mailbox at the usual time.

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



THANK YOU TO ALL OF
OUR LOCAL HEROES
AND LOCAL GUESTS
FOR YOUR SUPPORT!
WE ARE SO PROUD
TO BE A PART OF
THIS WONDERFUL
COMMUNITY!



GIVING BACK OVER
\$1 MILLION
CHARITIES AND
ORGANIZATIONS



@ROOSTERS #ROOSTERSWINGS
WWW.ROOSTERSWINGS.COM
WINGS, SALADS, SANDWICHES, PIZZA, SUBS & LOTS OF FUN

Who Is The Greatest Quarterback In Ohio State History?

Options:

J.T. Barrett ____
 Justin Fields ____
 Joe Germaine ____
 Cornelius Greene ____
 Dwayne Haskins ____
 Bobby Hoying ____
 Rex Kern ____
 Craig Krenzel ____
 Braxton Miller ____
 Terrelle Pryor ____
 Art Schlichter ____
 Troy Smith ____

Instructions:

Number your picks 1-10 (feel free to write in any players we left off the list) and mail this ballot to Buckeye Sports Bulletin, P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, OH 43212. Lists can also be emailed to bsb@buckeyesports.com or subscribers can vote on the forum at BuckeyeSports.com. Please provide your name, age and any additional comments regarding your ballot. Copies of the ballot are accepted and voters are welcome to attach additional paper if more space for comments is needed.

Comments:



**SIP, STROLL
& SEE
HISTORIC
GROVE CITY
DORA**

*Designated Outdoor
Refreshment Area*

Plank's
 ON BROADWAY
*Grove City's
Original Tavern*
**4022 Broadway
614-875-7800**

From The Pages Of BSB

40 Years Ago – 1981

After bouncing between kicking and quarterbacking early in his career at Ohio State, Bob Atha, the subject of Buckeye Sports Bulletin's first cover story, was ready to return to the place-kicking role full time as a senior.

Once a walk-on from Worthington, Ohio, Atha opened his Ohio State career as a contributing freshman, hitting six of his nine field-goal attempts. However, as a sophomore and junior, Atha's scope began to shift. He stepped in for one pass when Ohio State needed an emergency quarterback as a sophomore, completing his single attempt for 15 yards while gaining 29 yards on five carries.

During his junior year, with depth lacking at quarterback, Atha stepped away from everything but kickoffs to serve as Art Schlichter's primary backup, hitting on 15 of his 28 passes for 190 yards while rushing 31 times for 179 net yards – including a 63-yard scoring dash against Michigan State. As a senior, though, with more QBs in the program and kicking ace Vlade Janakievski graduated, Atha was ready to move back into the role that he had always planned for.

"When I first came here, I had no idea whether I could play quarterback," Atha said. "I knew I was awful small, and I wasn't quite sure I could handle the physicalness and all the pressure of the big crowd.

"But I knew I could kick here, and now I'm finally going to get a chance to do what I've always wanted to do. Being a quarterback was always a bonus for me. I never expected it."

35 Years Ago – 1986

Linebacker Chris Spielman wasn't particularly interested in being named the most valuable player of Ohio State's game against Alabama in the annual Kickoff Classic, given that the Buckeyes lost the season opener, 16-10. Despite his 16 tackles, two for a loss and an interception, Spielman didn't think his individual success did much to blunt the pain of the loss.

"The MVP award really doesn't mean too much now," Spielman said. "Maybe when I'm 90 years old and I'm watching the game on TV, I'll say, 'Hey, Chris Jr., I won that MVP award a long time ago.' But it's irrelevant now. We got beat, and that's the only thing that matters in college football – winning or losing. Unfortunately, we didn't win. What are you going to do? Come back and beat (Washington)."

30 Years Ago – 1991

Sophomore tailback Robert Smith quit the Ohio State football team Aug. 23 amid allegations that members of the coaching staff cared little about academics and that players were being unnecessarily injured.

Smith claimed head coach John Cooper and assistant coach Elliot Uzelac were at the root of the problem, saying he would not consider returning to the team if the two coaches remained in their positions.

However, by Aug. 27, Smith's stance had softened slightly. He had a meeting with athletic director Jim Jones on Aug. 26 and another with Cooper at 6:30 a.m. the following day. Those meetings fueled speculation that Smith, named national freshman of the year by United Press International in 1990 after gaining 1,126 yards, could be back with the Buckeyes before their opening game with Arizona on Sept. 7.

Smith refused to comment beyond that, saying that he "would love to come back" to Ohio State, and he did not elaborate when reached for comment by BSB.

25 Years Ago – 1996

Former Ohio State quarterback Kirk Herbstreit was learning what gameday preparation as a broadcaster was all about after being introduced as a full-fledged member of the ESPN network.

"It's incredible," he said. "It's been nonstop as far as research. I've got to know a lot more than Ohio State and the Big Ten. The feeling and opportunity involved with this is just overwhelming."

Herbstreit was set to team with host Chris Fowler and former Indiana head coach Lee Corso on the popular ESPN studio show "GameDay," taking the place of the departed Craig James. His stock as an analyst rose quickly after landing his own radio show, "Sportsline," in 1994 on WBNS-AM in Columbus. He had also recently boned up on television work as a co-host of "Wall to Wall Sports," a Sunday evening sports highlight show on WBNS 10-TV.

Still, his appointment to one of the most prestigious gigs in the sport came as a surprise to everyone, Herbstreit included.

"Considering I was a long shot in the first place, it's hard to believe," said Herbstreit, who was said to have beaten out several TV veterans including former Northwestern star Mike Adamle.

"This is my ultimate goal. The fact that I got it this quickly makes me want to work harder."

20 Years Ago – 2001

Jim Tressel was going all-out to revive a number of Ohio State traditions within the football program, and it seemed he was also working to start a few new ones in his first year.

For starters, workers were installing a canopy to cover the new ramp from the locker room to the field. On game day, fans would be able to see the team leave the locker room and come down the tunnel on the video board.

Tressel planned to uphold the traditional trek through the Skull Session as well and had one more new trick up his sleeve.

After each home game, the team was supposed to congregate near the band's new perch in the south bleachers to sing the alma mater, "Carmen Ohio."

"When you get out here and smell the grass and look around Ohio Stadium, there is no place like it in the world," Tressel said. "It just reminds you that you better get to work because there is a lot expected in this place.

"It is a special privilege we have to come out in this uniform and play on this field in front of these fans and this band. I hope it transfers into them working hard and being the best they can be."

15 Years Ago – 2006

Even while tagging Ohio State with the preseason No. 1 ranking, most observers expected the Buckeyes' potent offense to have to overcome some lapses from an inexperienced defense that featured nine new starters.

The 2006 opener against Northern Illinois couldn't have stayed more to the script.

Scoring touchdowns the first four times it touched the ball,

OSU rolled to a 35-12 victory Sept. 2 against the Huskies before a sellout crowd of 103,896 in Ohio Stadium.

But while the Buckeyes were piling up 488 total yards, the defense was surrendering 343 total yards to its Mid-American Conference opponent. Nevertheless, Ohio State did almost exactly what it wanted to do in the opener, getting a lot of game experience for many youngsters – especially on defense – and coasting to a victory that was never really in doubt.

10 Years Ago – 2011

Ohio State kicked off its 122nd season on the gridiron Sept. 3 with a 42-0 victory against visiting Akron, a squad that played in a way that did not make anyone forget it had won only one game the year prior. Not that any of the players, coaches and 105,001 fans were hoping for anything else after one of the most difficult offseasons in program history.

The Buckeyes played efficient offense and smothering defense in head coach Luke Fickell's debut game, and during the three hours of play – give or take a few minutes – things felt normal for them after a decidedly abnormal stretch that saw 10 starters depart and Tressel resign.

Still, Fickell said after the game that he was more relieved to have his opening game behind him rather than excited to claim a victory that was never in question.

Five Years Ago – 2016

Torrance Gibson, a frequent topic throughout his recruitment and as a young player for the Buckeyes, found himself in hot water prior to the 2016 campaign, when he was preparing to make the move from quarterback to wide receiver.

On Aug. 29, it was announced that Gibson had been suspended by the university for the fall semester and would miss the entire season. A team spokesman confirmed the suspension and said that Gibson was suspended for a "violation of the university's student code of conduct."

Head coach Urban Meyer refused to comment on the nature of the suspension but did say that he disagreed with the school's decision.

"It was not athletic department or football (related), and I disagree with it," Meyer said.

One Year Ago – 2020

Ohio State senior defensive tackle Haskell Garrett was recovering after suffering a gunshot wound to his face Aug. 30. He was found by police around 1:30 a.m. on the 400 block of Chittenden Avenue in Columbus. The Las Vegas native was taken to the Wexner Medical Center in stable condition shortly after sustaining injuries to both of his cheeks.

According to the police report, Garrett was shot in the face after breaking up a fight. The report indicated that Garrett was walking when he witnessed a male and a female that he didn't know "arguing and being aggressive." Garrett told police he told the male to stop arguing with the female before the male pulled out a handgun and fired it at Garrett.

Garrett then stated that he ran south on Grant Avenue toward a friend's apartment.

OSU 'Keeps Swinging' For Second-Half Surge

Continued From Page 1

touchdown run, and then OSU moved to the Minnesota 18-yard line early in the second quarter based in part upon a trio of Stroud completions that totaled 29 yards. But when the Buckeyes got into the red zone, Stroud's accuracy again deserted him. He misfired on first and second downs, and his third-down, bubble-screen pass to sophomore Jaxon Smith-Njigba netted a gain of only 1 yard, resulting in a 35-yard field goal from North Carolina graduate transfer kicker Noah Ruggles.

Holding the Buckeyes to a field goal at that point recharged the Gophers, who took the ensuing possession 80 yards in six plays for their first touchdown of the night. The big play of the drive was a 56-yard run by Ibrahim on a fourth-and-1 gamble from his own 29-yard line.

Minnesota head coach P.J. Fleck didn't necessarily agree with postgame assessments that the fourth-down call was a gamble.

"We didn't come here to lay up," said Fleck, who began his coaching career in 2006 as a graduate assistant on Jim Tressel's staff at Ohio State. "We're going to be aggressive. We knew we were going to have to play pretty perfect to win that football game. And we were going to have to make sure they didn't play perfect."

Stroud's play was far from perfect on his team's next possession. He completed a first-down pass to Wilson worth 6 yards, but two plays later, he hurried a pass to Olave along the right sideline and overthrew his target. Then on the next play, with Olave moving to his left on a simple crossing pattern, Stroud threw a high-and-outside fastball behind his intended receiver. The best Olave could do was get one hand on the ball, but that just tipped the throw to Minnesota defender Terrell Smith, who returned the interception to the OSU 37.

Eight plays later – thanks in part to a pass-interference call in the end zone against Ohio State freshman cornerback Denzel Burke – Ibrahim plunged over the goal line from the 1 to give his team a 14-10 lead with 3:32 remaining until halftime.

Ohio State's final possession of the open-

ing half fizzled when a holding penalty put the Buckeyes behind the chains, and when Stroud couldn't find an open receiver on third-and-9, the QB was forced to scramble out of bounds.

The ugly first half not only had OSU behind on the scoreboard, but trailing in terms of first downs (10-8), offensive plays (35-26) and time of possession (18:19 to 11:41). And while Stroud had completed 8 of 14 attempts, the completions had averaged only 7.3 yards, and there were no touchdowns against the one interception.

Still, there was no sense of panic for the Buckeyes.

"Right when I came in the locker room, everybody was encouraging me, telling me that I can do it, that they all believe in me," Stroud said. "You know, it's all about what we're going to do when we get punched in the mouth. Mistakes happen. You can't stick on it. You have to keep going. The past is the past. You can't do anything about it. If you sit there and sulk, it's going to get worse."

"We knew that with the structure of their defense, we were going to be able to take some shots, and I think that's a very strong suit of my game. I think I can put a ball down the field really well."

That turned out to be the understatement of the night.

Productive Second Half

Day said he decided long before adversity hit that he knew he had the right guy at quarterback. Asked at halftime if he would contemplate making a change in the second half, Day dismissed the question with a simple shake of his head.

"I told (C.J.) early on, there are no expectations going in," the OSU head coach said after the game. "You might throw four interceptions, you might throw four touchdowns. I don't know what's going to happen. I know everyone thinks you just walk out there, and you're going to throw for 300 yards and a bunch of touchdowns, but it just doesn't work that way. There are a lot of things for a young quarterback who has never played

to process.

"I wish last year that we had those seven games that we didn't play and that he had played 150 to 200 snaps and thrown the ball. But he didn't have any of that. Not once. Not one pass. Just a couple of plays here and there. This is a very unique situation for somebody who has really zero experience to go into a conference game on the road like this against a good team. This is a team who was top-10 in the country before the last year or so. But we just decided we'd keep swinging, and I'm very, very impressed with the way he did just that."

Fortunately for Day, Stroud and the Buckeyes, it didn't take that many swings. As mentioned, the quarterback completed just five passes in the second half, but four went for touchdowns, each in excess of 38 yards.

Olave got the onslaught started by gathering in a pass on a deep crossing pattern and turning it into a 38-yard touchdown. Then, in the third quarter, Wilson beat Minnesota veteran DB Calvin Swenson on a 56-yard scoring play.

It was more of the same in the fourth quarter, although the Buckeyes struck in different ways.

First, Stroud floated a short toss over several hard-charging Gophers and Henderson did the rest, turning the screen pass into a 70-yard touchdown that appeared to happen in the blink of an eye. Then Olave finished the scoring when he caught Stroud's final completion of the night, picked up downfield blocks from tight end Jeremy Ruckert and Wilson, and glided into the end zone for a 61-yard score.

"That's one of the best offenses I've ever coached against," Fleck said. "They make you cover the entire field. They're all first-round draft picks."

It was a good thing the Buckeyes were firing on all cylinders in the second half, too, because the Gophers simply would not go away. Part of that was due to Ibrahim, who by the end of the third quarter had already carried 30 times for 163 yards and two touchdowns.

But on that 30th carry, the Minnesota star appeared to twist his ankle and was forced to hobble off the field. He later posted on his Twitter page that he had suffered a rupture of his right Achilles tendon, meaning his 2021 season was over almost as soon as it had begun.

Almost every time Stroud and his teammates would land a haymaker, the Gophers responded with a touchdown of their own. And it really wasn't until Olave's final touchdown at the 4:39 mark of the fourth quarter that the Buckeyes could finally take a breath.

"That's a really good team that's going to win a lot of games," Day said. "P.J. and his staff do a really good job."

Defensive Game-Changer

Along with the second-half offensive fireworks, Ohio State enjoyed a defensive game-changer at the 2:18 mark of the third quarter.

The Buckeyes were protecting a 24-21 lead when junior defensive end Zach Harrison bull-rushed Minnesota QB Tanner Morgan and swatted the ball out of Morgan's grasp. The fumble then bounced into the hands of nose guard Haskell Garrett, who rumbled 32 yards for a touchdown that gave Ohio State some breathing room.

"It just shows that big dudes can run," Garrett said with a big smile. "We've got nimble feet nowadays. Back in the day, we just used to be big and plug up space, but I think there's an evolution of linemen that are athletic."

That evolution might be a discussion for another day. The importance of the play was not.

"That was probably the difference in the game," Day said. "Anytime you get a defensive score, whether it's a blocked punt or something like that, it flips the scoreboard and is a huge game-changer."

Minnesota linebacker Mariano Sorin-Marin agreed.

"There was a very small margin for error against that team," he said. "Any slip-up, they



EL VAQUERO
MEXICAN RESTAURANT

3230 Olentangy River Road
Columbus, Ohio, 43202
(614) 261-0900
www.ElVaqueroRestaurants.com

**EVERYDAY
HAPPY HOUR**
4 pm-8 pm

Now offering Margaritas to go!



\$5.00 OFF
your total bill of \$25 or more

Coupon valid only Sunday – Thursday. Excludes tax and alcohol. Dine-in and carry-out. One coupon per table. Not valid with any other offers. Valid at all locations with coupon. Expires 10/1/21

\$6.00 OFF
your total bill of \$30 or more

Coupon valid only Sunday – Thursday. Excludes tax and alcohol. Dine-in and carry-out. One coupon per table. Not valid with any other offers. Valid at all locations with coupon. Expires 10/1/21

2021 Buckeye Road Trips

**OSU at Rutgers with New York City Tour
September 30-October 3**

**OSU at Indiana plus Beautiful Brown County
October 23-24**

Looking for other travel opportunities?



- Iconic National Parks
- Ireland/Scotland 2022
- Italy Amalfi Coast 2022
- Rock and Roll Liverpool & London
- France River Cruise 2022
- Hawaiian Island Land or Cruise 2022

www.GoPrimeTours.com
614-766-5553
*Doing Buckeye road trips
since 1996!*

take advantage of.”

Considering the Buckeyes were down a couple of starters due to lingering injuries and the fact that new starters were all over the starting lineup, the defensive effort was perhaps not as bad as the final statistics might indicate.

The Gophers piled up 408 total yards, but a sizable chunk of that was provided by Ibrahim. After his exit, Minnesota managed only 26 rushing yards on 10 attempts.

Morgan was effectively neutralized as well. The fourth-year starter who was the second-team All-Big Ten quarterback in 2019 when he threw for 3,253 yards and 30 TDs, completed 14 of 25 attempts for 205 yards and a touchdown. He was also sacked twice, including the game-changing strip sack by Harrison.

As Good As Advertised

Two carries for 15 yards isn't exactly the stuff legendary debuts are made on for most running backs. Then again, most running backs don't throw in a 70-yard touchdown run off a simple screen pass for their first career reception, either.

When the Buckeyes signed Henderson out of Hopewell, Va., there were many who believed the five-star prospect would be the team's starting running back from day one. And although that distinction went to Williams, the running back rotation provided brief opportunities for Henderson to showcase the talent that made him the nation's No.1-rated high school running back.

Day gave a series each to Williams and Teague to start the game before Henderson entered early in the second quarter. The freshman celebrated his first career carry with a 10-yard gain, although the possession ended two plays later when Stroud was intercepted.

Henderson returned the second-half kickoff 19 yards and then didn't see the field again until early in the fourth quarter when he ran up the middle for 5 yards on first down. But two plays later, on a third-and-5 play at the OSU 30, Stroud faded back and threw a short toss over the heads of a couple



TreVeyon Henderson

of Minnesota rushers. Henderson cradled the ball in his arms just behind the line of scrimmage and took off as if shot out of a cannon. He quickly split two defenders, made one clean cut and then turned off the afterburners, leaving the

rest of the Gophers in the dust of a 70-yard touchdown romp.

“That was a great play,” Stroud said after the game. “He made a great cutback. He's going to be a hell of a player.”

The reception was the longest by an Ohio State player since Parris Campbell caught a 78-yard touchdown from Dwayne Haskins against Michigan in 2018, and it was the longest catch by an OSU running back since Carlos Snow caught a short pass from Tom Tupa and turned it into a 70-yard touchdown during the 1987 Michigan game.

No Stranger To Thursday

Playing on a Thursday might seem unusual for the Ohio State football team, but there was a time when the Buckeyes made a regular habit of Thursday games.

Beginning with a Thanksgiving Day contest during its 1890 inaugural season, OSU played 23 Thursday games over the subsequent 23 seasons. The first six of those Thanksgiving affairs were rivalry games against Kenyon College to close the season. The Buckeyes split those six games with the Lords.

After a 35-20 win loss to Michigan State on Thanksgiving Day in 1912, it was five years before Ohio State played again on Thursday when the team finished the 1917 season with a 28-0 victory against Camp Sherman.

It would be another 80 years before the Buckeyes played again on Thursday, this time hosting Wyoming and sending the Cowboys home 24-10 losers in the 1997 season opener. Another gap of 13 years passed before Ohio

State hosted another Thursday night affair. It kicked off the 2010 season with a 45-7 win against Marshall.

Two more Thursday night season openers (this time on the road) would follow – a 49-21 win at Indiana in 2017 and this year's 45-31 victory at Minnesota.

All-time, Ohio State is now 18-9-1 on Thursday.

The Buckeyes have played on every day of the week, including two Sunday night contests in the old Kickoff Classic series. OSU rolled to a 38-6 win against Boston College in 1995 at the Florida Citrus Bowl in Orlando but then lost a 23-12 decision to Miami (Fla.) in 1999 at the old Meadowlands in East Rutherford, N.J. That represents the last time the Buckeyes lost a season-opening contest.

Ohio State has played at least three times on every other day of the week except Tuesday. The program's only Tuesday game in history resulted in a 6-0 loss to Columbus Barracks on Oct. 26, 1897.

PANEL TOWN & FLOORS

Established in 1967

FLOORS FOR THE WAY YOU LIVE

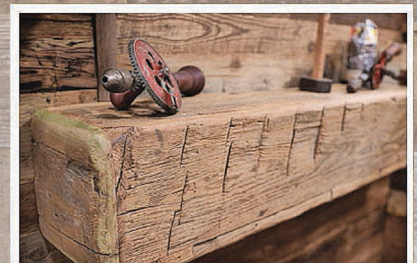


Free Cleaning System with Purchase of a Floor

1063 Dublin Rd., Columbus, OH 43215 • 614-488-0334

Extended Summer Sale! 20% OFF • 24 Month Financing

THE RECLAIMED BARN



1080 Ridge St. Columbus, OH 43215

614-524-5934 • www.reclaimedbarn.com

SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. LIMIT ONE DISCOUNT PER CUSTOMER. PURCHASE MUST BE MADE BY 09/30/2021

Help BSB Grow

Loyal Buckeye Sports Bulletin readers frequently ask us what they can do to help keep BSB vibrant in this increasingly electronic age. One of the things readers can do is introduce BSB to new readers who might find our Ohio State sports content interesting.

In order to help you do that, we are offering an opportunity to send four free trial issues to potential subscribers. We will then offer your potential subscriber a very special offer to get them to join the fold of loyal Buckeye Sports Bulletin readers.

We are also offering a special \$19.95 subscription rate for gifts for our service men and women. It's nice to send a little bit of home to those all over the world who are protecting us. Don't forget to include an APO address when applicable and remember, any subscription includes electronic access to BSB, so our Buckeyes in uniform will be able to enjoy their BSB immediately, wherever they are.

This four free trial issue offer is not good for current subscribers. This offer is to introduce readers to BSB. You can conveniently email your names and addresses to subscriptions@buckeyesports.com or mail them to P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio, 43212.

Young Buckeye Defense Bends, Doesn't Break

Ohio State's defense has to be getting pretty tired of entering games down multiple starters. After seeing much of its lineup decimated during the back half of the 2020 season, the Buckeyes were again shorthanded to open the 2021 campaign, though the pandemic had seemingly very little to do with it in the case of the latter.

Defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs was without starting cornerbacks Sevn Banks and Cameron Brown as well as starting defensive tackle Jerron Cage to open his second season at the helm of the Ohio State defense. Banks was available only in an emergency situation as he deals with hamstring tightness, while Brown and Cage were ruled out

GAME NOTEBOOK Patrick Mayhorn

entirely before the game.

In their places, Ohio State tried just about every potential combination, mixing and matching personnel at nearly every position on the field in the first half before locking in on a more compact contributor list after entering the locker room trailing by a 14-10 deficit.

Freshman Denzel Burke and redshirt

freshman Ryan Watts earned the start at the top two cornerback spots, joined in the backfield by slot specialist Lathan Ransom, bullet Ronnie Hickman and safety Josh Proctor, the only OSU defensive back with a previous start to his name.

"(We were all in the same boat) because this was my first start, so there's a little anxiousness, a little nervousness, but we're nervous because we care so much," Ransom said after the game. "I think they handled themselves well, especially with it being their first start, especially Denzel. A true freshman out there, and he really did his thing. Ryan Watts had the big play, that huge tackle on that third down (fourth-quarter tackle on

Cam Wiley). I think they both played really well and handled themselves really well."

Even in positions without large swaths of the depth chart unavailable, Ohio State's defense was without a defined pecking order throughout the game.

Linebackers coach Al Washington drew the unenviable task of replacing four starters this offseason and doesn't seem to be committed beyond senior captain Teradja Mitchell, doling out primary playing time to Tommy Eichenberg, Dallas Gant and Cody Simon but getting former running back Steele Chambers into the rotation late in the game.

Mitchell and Gant were the most productive of the bunch, but no one looked truly cemented in his spot. Minnesota running back Mohamed Ibrahim burst into the secondary a few too many times for comfort for the Buckeyes, thanks in large part to some shaky run fits from those green linebackers. The new cornerbacks and safeties certainly did their part in taking the talented Gophers RB down, but 163 yards and two scores on 30 carries is quite a bit more than Ohio State wanted to see from its rush defense to open the season.

The result of a constantly shifting and overwhelmingly young Buckeye defense was as one might expect – disjointed with signs of both the immense talent that defines Ohio State's roster on paper and the inconsistent, untidy play that defined the unit last season.

"(Minnesota) ran the ball really well and controlled the game a little bit, so we'll look at it," OSU head coach Ryan Day said after the game. "But a lot of guys played a lot of football, so we have an opportunity now (to use that). We've recruited a lot of young players. We lost those four linebackers, and because of that you can see that we matched the personnel a little bit differently this game."

"Now we're going to have to go back and assess and really get a feel for those guys because when you're going in scrimmages and practice, you get a good feel for things but you don't really know until you get into a game. I think it's going to sort itself out a little bit, but we do like playing depth, and guys who deserve to play are going to."

What was new for the Silver Bullets, however, beyond the nameplates and numbers, was a base formation that looked dynamic and able to adjust to its opponent's personnel. Coombs spent the offseason talking up the freedom that such versatile players as Hickman, Ransom and Craig Young afford him in his personnel and formation decisions, and Ohio State flexed that early and often against Minnesota.

When faced with a short-yardage situation on third down during Minnesota's second drive, Ohio State acknowledged and responded to a heavy Wildcat look, matching two tight ends, a fullback and a halfback taking the snap with three linebackers and a bullet in the box. It was rewarded in turn, stuffing Ibrahim for no gain and forcing a punt to cut short a promising drive. On the play just before, a second-and-9, OSU turned to its passing personnel, fielding just two linebackers and flexing that bullet out of the box.

The ever-shifting defense didn't always pay off, putting players in unfamiliar and uncomfortable positions in a few instances – including on Ibrahim's 56-yard, fourth-down

Game Day. Beach Day.

PROUD SPONSOR OF OHIO STATE SPORTS NETWORK

Corona Extra

LA CERVEZA MAS FINA

BEER

12 FL. OZ.

Brewed and Bottled by CERVECERIA MODELO MEXICO

REG. U.S.A. NO. 7417 "E"

IMPORTED BEER FROM MEXICO

21+ Relax Responsibly®

Relax responsibly®, Corona Extra® Beer, Imported by Crown Imports, Chicago, IL

Game Analysis

What Worked Well

Ohio State's rushing attack suffered through no early growing pains to open the season Sept. 2 with Miyan Williams picking up right where Trey Sermon left off as a perfect fit into Ohio State's zone-heavy run game.

Despite new starters at center, right guard and right tackle in Luke Wypler, Paris Johnson Jr. and Dawand Jones, respectively, and new starting positions at left tackle and guard for Nicholas Petit-Frere and Thayer Munford, Ohio State was able to grind out yards against Minnesota early and often, carrying 26 times for 201 yards and a score, good for 7.7 yards per carry.

That was certainly helped by a 71-yard touchdown run from Williams to open the scoring, but the Buckeyes still averaged 5.2 yards per carry after that, with Williams earning 6.8 yards per carry on his eight other carries. Holding the ball for just 21:19 hurt Ohio State's total yardage numbers, but the ground game was aces from the start with Williams taking the lead.

The C.J. Stroud-led passing attack was a bit slower to hit its stride, taking a half for the redshirt freshman to get a feel for the speed of the college game. But Stroud was electric in the final 30 minutes, connecting with Chris Olave twice as well as TreVeyon Henderson and Garrett Wilson for big touchdown passes, good for 225 of his 294 passing yards. The receiver duo of Olave and Garrett looked just as untouchable as ever, teaming up for nine of Stroud's 13 completions and totaling 197 receiving yards.

What Didn't Work

Stroud didn't look completely comfortable in the first half despite solid blocking, sailing a few passes to open receivers and missing on several reads, including on one pass behind Olave that ended up in Minnesota defensive back Terell Smith's hands. His struggles didn't last, but Ohio State's offense slowed to a crawl when it was unable to stretch the defense vertically. That was especially true when Minnesota loaded the box to defend the run.

The Buckeye defense was a far bigger concern, though. It flexed its formational versatility early in the game but found difficulty in execution. The new-look linebackers were often out of place in defending

running plays, filling gaps too aggressively only to be washed away by down-blocking linemen or tight ends.

Without bigger bodies to fill those lanes, such secondary players as Ronnie Hickman and Ryan Watts were forced into difficult one-on-one situations with halfback Mohamed Ibrahim. Those players were able to prevent huge plays for the most part, but it was undisciplined play in the box that led directly to Ibrahim's 56-yard scamper in the second quarter on fourth-and-1.

Ohio State adjusted in the second half by moving its linebackers farther in and adding more size in the box, which worked decently in blunting the rushing attack but created open passing lanes in the intermediate game for quarterback Tanner Morgan, who had open slants to throw to for the entire second half.

A defensive touchdown and the explosiveness of the offense was enough to overcome the defensive issues, but the Silver Bullets again looked more like blanks in week one after an offseason of talk of a bounce-back season.

Play Of The Game

Henderson's 70-yard burst through the Minnesota defense on a swing pass in the fourth quarter to put the game out of reach might have been more impressive (and quite a bit faster), but the play of the game for the Buckeyes was Zach Harrison's sack and strip of Morgan and Haskell Garrett's scoop and 32-yard dash to the end zone.

The play itself is not without its charm, as Garrett again flashed his ability as a playmaker, scoring his second career touchdown, but it also couldn't have come at a better time for the Buckeyes. Leading 24-21 after a 56-yard touchdown pass to Wilson on the drive prior, Ohio State's defense had found itself unable to consistently get off the field without help from some Minnesota penalties.

As the Gophers began another series, they looked to catch the Buckeyes sleeping downfield with play action and actually had a receiver running wide open, but Harrison arrived just in time and turned what could have been a big Minnesota gain into a two-score lead for the Buckeyes from which they wouldn't look back.

— Patrick Mayhorn

scamper in the second quarter that led directly to Minnesota's first touchdown of the game. The Buckeyes again loaded the box, but Young and backup safety Bryson Shaw found themselves closer to the line of scrimmage than expected and took angles too tight to impede Ibrahim's momentum before he was well down the field.

That's to be expected with new defensive looks, whether a team is breaking in so many young players or not. But the more garden-variety struggles – missed tackles, sloppy run fits, a constant opening beyond the linebackers in the middle of the field – looked to be a direct result of an unsettled starting lineup. Day said that the Buckeyes are close to finding a depth chart they're comfortable with, but with Oregon on the way to Columbus for week two, time is of the essence for every defensive decision-maker.

"It's close (to being settled)," Day said. "We have a lot of depth, so we're playing a lot of depth right now. Maybe it sorts out a little bit differently as we watch the film and guys solidify some spots, but until then, it's really close at a lot of positions. We'll have to look at it and see if maybe we need to have a little more continuity in certain positions, but if it was that close, guys deserve to play and we're going to play depth.

"I think that's going to serve us well, certainly down the road," Day added. "When you start with maybe a nonconference game and you can get some guys in the game in the second half, it's a little different. We started in the conference. We knew that coming in. The whole goal here was to go 1-0, and now the next goal is to go 2-0. Then we come up for air and figure out what's next because it's a one-game season here. We didn't care what the score was, and it's going to be the same thing next week."

Williams, Henderson Excel Behind Big Front

The Ohio State defense wasn't alone in leaning heavily on its young contributors in the 45-31 victory Minnesota. Quarterback C.J. Stroud is front-page news (look no further than the cover of this issue of BSB), but the redshirt freshman tasked with pacing Day's offense was far from the only underclassman to lead the offense, even if it wasn't quite able to match the sheer volume of youth that the defense rolled out.

Stroud's battery mate, redshirt freshman Luke Wypler, earned the start at center in Harry Miller's place to open his second season in Columbus and held his own in Day's eyes, serving as a capable member of a line that didn't surrender a sack and led the way for 201 rushing yards on just 26 carries.

"I thought (Luke) did an excellent job, stepping in to start in a big way," Day said. "He's another young guy that has very, very little experience. He handled the weather, handled the calls, handled the environment, the fans. We'll see how he grades out, but I thought he handled everything really, really well."

However, he was upstaged in his first career start by classmate Miyan Williams and true freshman TreVeyon Henderson in the backfield, with the former earning the start and the latter notching the most eye-popping play of the game.

The play in question saw the Virginia Beach, Va., native flare out into the flat on a swing route, snare a Stroud lob and slice through the Minnesota secondary like a hot

knife through butter, emerging from a crowd of defenders with enough speed to immediately justify his lofty recruiting ranking.

"That was a great call by Coach for me," Stroud said. "On third downs, they had some funky looks. They run around all over. My read wasn't simple, but it wasn't too hard. I just had to get the ball over the defensive end, and Tre made a great play."

Henderson finished the game with just two carries for 15 yards, one kickoff return for 19 yards and the 70-yard touchdown reception in what could be the last time that he earns just four touches in a game during his Buckeye career.

Williams took the lion's share of carries for Ohio State, toting the ball nine times for 125 yards and a score, but like Henderson, he made his presence known with just a few touches, nearly breaking loose on his first carry of the game but stumbling after 8 yards. But he followed that with OSU's longest run since 2019, breaking free for 71 yards to put the Buckeyes on the board.

Perhaps more impressive, even, is that Williams' game-opening scamper came on a mistake from the redshirt freshman halfback. The third-and-2 play called for a standard inside zone split, with tight end Jeremy Ruckert slicing against the flow of the line to block the backside defensive end. Meanwhile, Williams was supposed to follow his blockers to the left on the zone staple.

"To be honest, it was actually the wrong play," Williams said. "It was the wrong play, but it was just crazy. I was supposed to go the

other way. I was supposed to go to the left, but I ended up just going to the opposite side and there wasn't anybody over there."

It looked as though Minnesota's linebackers and safeties knew the play better than Williams did, collapsing into the originally designated gap. Williams opted instead to move to his right, following Ruckert to the edge and then into nothing but open space, with three receivers to the back side of the play pulling all of Minnesota's defensive backfield away.

Despite his early success, Ohio State seemed apprehensive about committing fully to Williams as its primary ball-carrier, especially in the first half. The Buckeyes turned to veteran Master Teague on the second drive of the game and didn't go back to Williams consistently until the second half. Day chalked it up partially to Ohio State's lack of possession time – the Buckeyes were nearly doubled up in time of possession, 39:00 to 21:00 – and the desire to lean into its depth, but the offense didn't kick fully into gear until it settled into a routine with Williams as the primary rusher.

As it did, punishing the Gophers defense on the ground and forcing it to constrict, the passing game finally opened up for Stroud, and the young signal-caller was able to hit on five passing plays of at least 15 yards, four of which came in the second half (each resulting in six points). With Minnesota unable to account for receivers Garrett Wilson and Chris Olave down the field as it dedicated more defenders to the box, Ohio State's of-

fense looked as it was designed to and did to the Gophers exactly what head coach P.J. Fleck feared it would – leading to a conservative approach that worked wonders in the first half but faltered as fatigue set in.

"It's way more complicated because you're looking at how we can get beaten," Fleck said. "We're sitting here saying, 'OK, if we get beaten this way, how can we counter that?' If we would have brought a lot of pressure, that would expose us in a lot of areas and made (the scores) even quicker at times. We knew we had to come in with a certain game plan of how we were going to do things, and we knew we had to keep things in front of us. We did that in the first half besides (Williams') big play. We didn't do that in the second half. You can see how fast that happened."

The Minnesota head coach pointed out that two of Ohio State's big plays came against blitzes.

"They're really good," Fleck said. "We saw them up front. They spread you all over the place, and it's not like they're lining up in 12 personnel (one back and two tight ends) and just running it down your throat. They're doing it from a spread, making you cover the entire field, hash to hash, sideline to sideline. I would like to be able to limit those explosive plays in the future, period. But if you sit in Cover-2 all day, they're going to run for 9,000 yards.

"They're a really good football team," he added. "Really well-coached, really good players, and everybody got to see that tonight."

Stroud Makes Strides In Win Over Gophers

By **CRAIG MERZ**

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The untested quarterback became tested as redshirt freshman C.J. Stroud overcame early jitters in his first career start to lead No. 4 Ohio State to a 45-31 win against Minnesota at Huntington Bank Stadium in Minneapolis on Sept. 2 in the season opener for both teams.

Stroud, who entered the game never having thrown a pass in college, threw for 294 yards and four second-half touchdowns while the defense made a key play in the comeback win. He finished 13 of 22 with one interception after going 8 of 14 for 58 yards in the first half.

The Buckeyes led 10-0 early but trailed 14-10 at the half and 21-17 early in the third quarter before scoring 14 straight points – a 56-yard TD pass from Stroud to Garrett Wilson and a fumble recovery and 32-yard touchdown rumble by Haskell Garrett.

“That was probably the difference in the game,” Ohio State coach Ryan Day said of the defensive score. “That and some of the explosive plays on offense.”

Miyan Williams led the OSU rushers with 125 yards on nine carries, including a 71-yard TD run to open the scoring.

It got tougher from there, but the Buckeyes showed resiliency on a 67-degree rainy night before a sellout crowd of 50,805.

Gray Start For Buckeyes

Minnesota started the opening drive from its own 25 and made three first downs before the drive stalled at the OSU 41, prompting a

33-yard punt and fair catch by Wilson.

It took only five plays and 1:42 to reach pay dirt on the electrifying long touchdown run by Williams for the 7-0 lead at the 7:22 mark after North Carolina transfer Noah Ruggles added the PAT.

Stroud's initial first down came on a second-and-8 completion of 11 yards to Jaxon Smith-Njigba to the OSU 21. After an incomplete toss to Wilson, Williams had an 8-yard gain before bouncing out to his right and racing down the sideline on the next play.

Ruggles made it 10-0 at the 12:50 mark of the second quarter with a 35-yard field goal on the Buckeyes' second possession that began at the OSU 9.

Master Teague replaced Williams and reeled off a 10-yard gain early in the drive to move the chains to the 36. A pass-interference penalty on a deep throw to Chris Olave – who finished the game with four catches, a game-high 117 yards and two TDs – put the ball at the Minnesota 46. Later, a 15-yard dump-off to tight end Jeremy Ruckert resulted in a first down at the 18, but two incompletions and a 1-yard pass to Smith-Njigba set up the field goal.

Minnesota head coach P.J. Fleck took a big gamble early on the following possession, and it paid off. On fourth-and-1 from their own 29, the Gophers came out of an OSU timeout and Mohamed Ibrahim, the 2020 Big Ten Running Back of the Year, broke through the left side of the line and sped 56 yards to the OSU 15.

After Trey Potts ran for 2 yards, QB Tanner Morgan found Dylan Wright for a 13-yard TD



SONNY BROCKWAY

DEFENSIVE HIGHLIGHT - Junior defensive end Zach Harrison (9) reaches out to knock the ball away from Minnesota QB Tanner Morgan during a crucial third-down play. Harrison's strip sack led to a 32-yard fumble return for a touchdown by teammate Haskell Garrett and gave the Buckeyes a 31-21 lead at the time.

to cap the 80-yard, six-play series to bring Minnesota within three at 10-7 with 9:11 remaining until halftime.

Stroud's indoctrination continued when the Buckeyes got the ball back, and he overthrew Olave at midfield. The Ohio State receiver was able only to get a hand on the ball, tipping it to Terrell Smith, who made the interception and returned to the OSU 37.

Potts rushed for 8, Ibrahim gained 6 more on the ground, and tight end Brevyn Spann-Ford was wide open for 16 to the 7. The Buckeyes stiffened, but on third-and-goal from the 5, freshman cornerback Denzel Burke was flagged for pass interference and Minnesota gained a fresh set of downs at the 2. Three plays later, Ibrahim scored from the 1 to give Minnesota a 14-10 lead with 3:32 left before the half.

The Gophers got one more crack at scoring in the first half after an Ohio State punt, but with 42 seconds left and facing a third-and-6 from the OSU 41, Morgan was sacked by Cody Simon for an 11-yard loss on the final play.

Ibrahim, in the first half, had 114 yards on 19 carries, and the Gophers held the ball for 18:19 while limiting OSU to four drives totaling only 26 plays.

Ibrahim finished the game with 163 yards on 30 carries with two scores but exited the game after a short gain in the third quarter. He later posted on Twitter that he had suffered a full tear of his right Achilles tendon and would be sidelined for the remainder of the 2021 season.

Big Plays, Big Win

The Buckeyes got the ball to start the second half, and Stroud quickly led them 81 yards, using seven plays and just 2:13 to regain the lead at 17-14.

Freshman TreVeyon Henderson returned the second half kickoff to the 19. From there, Stroud picked up 5, Williams went for 6, Olave had a catch for 11, and after an incomplete pass, Williams rambled for 15 to the Minnesota 44. He followed with a rush for 6 before Stroud found Olave cutting across the middle at the 20 and the OSU receiver turned on the burners and headed to the left pylon for 38-yard score.

The Buckeyes threatened another quick score when Josh Proctor seemingly ended the Gophers' first drive of the second half with an interception that he returned 60 yards to the Minnesota 20. But a roughing-the-passer penalty on Dallas Gant nullified the play and returned the ball to Minnesota at the OSU 27. Potts picked up 8, and Ibrahim followed with a 19-yard touchdown to put the Gophers back in the lead at 21-17 with 10:03 remaining in the third period.

But then it was Minnesota's turn for mis-cues. On their next possession, the Gophers committed two penalties which led to a punt of only 38 yards and a 1-yard return by Wilson to the OSU 44.

Stroud wasted no time and launched a 56-yard TD strike to Wilson on the first play of the possession to push the Buckeyes back ahead at 24-21 with 5:12 to go in the third quarter.

Wilson put the moves on his defender and

Let our family help your family.

GEICO®

LOCAL OFFICE



614-934-3131
105 N. Hamilton Road
Kyle Haskins
Gahanna Office



614-689-8140
1730 Stringtown Road
Joshua Haskins
Grove City Office

Some discounts, coverages, payment plans and features are not available in all states, in all GEICO companies, or in all situations. GEICO is a registered service mark of Government Employees Insurance Company, Washington, D.C. 20076; a Berkshire Hathaway Inc. subsidiary. 2018 GEICO



TAILGATING'S FINEST

Upgrade your snacks!

BBQ Sauces • Mustards • Salsas
Pie Fillings • Fruit Spreads

Find us in select Kroger, Halls, Weiland's and other grocery/specialty stores across the region.
Can't find us? Ask your store to order us.

Crafted with pride in Athens, Ohio

BrownwoodFarms.com • (866) 589-6456

OHIO STATE VS. MINNESOTA

caught the pass at the 20.

That's when the much-maligned OSU defense created the play of the game when defensive end Zach Harrison had a strip sack of Morgan.

"Sacks are good, but strip sacks change the game," Harrison said. "We take that to heart. Swipe at the ball, swipe at the ball."

The loose ball bounced off a Gophers lineman and right into Garrett's hands, and the OSU nose tackle thundered 32 yards for a touchdown at the 2:18 mark of the third quarter to make it 31-21.

"It was the right place, right time," Garrett said later.

Minnesota pulled to within seven at 31-24 at 10:39 of the fourth quarter on a 46-yard field goal by Matthew Trickett. Among the 12 plays in the drive were completions of 12 yards to Potts and Wright and 15 to Daniel Jackson.

With the crowd buzzing, Henderson shocked and silenced them with a 70-yard TD off a simple screen pass on a third-and-5 from the OSU 30. The freshman gathered in the floating toss from Stroud about 4 yards behind the line of scrimmage and then turned on the jets to push Ohio State's lead back to two touchdowns at 38-24 with 9:43 remaining.

Minnesota would not quit, and Morgan engineered a nine-play, 75-yard drive culminating in a rush up the middle of 2 yards by Bryce Williams to make it 38-31 with 5:31 to play. Morgan hit Jackson for 21 yards and later for 22 to the Buckeye 2 to set up the score.

But back came the Buckeyes in just two plays to extend the lead to back to 14. Williams rushed for 14. Then Stroud threw to Olave at the Minnesota 41, and the receiver turned the play into a 61-yard TD that gave OSU a 45-31

lead with 4:39 to go.

Minnesota later was driving again, but Lathan Ransom forced a fumble after a catch by Mike Brown-Stephens, and Tommy Eichenberg recovered it at the OSU 41 with 3:59 left.

The play was reviewed to determine if Ransom targeted the receiver and if the fumble was caused by contact with the ground, but the ruling absolved Ransom and granted the turnover to the Buckeyes.

From there, backup running back Marcus Crowley carried six times for 19 yards to finish the game at the Minnesota 35.

Numbers

Wilson led OSU with five catches that totaled 80 yards. He was also targeted by Stroud 11 times, six more than Olave. ... Teague rushed for 29 yards on six carries. ... OSU's Ronnie Hickman had a game-high 11 tackles (five solo), and teammate Teradja Mitchell had 10 (four solo), including a tackle for a loss of 3 yards. ... Morgan was 14 of 25 for 205 yards and a TD.

Ohio State had 495 total yards (294 passing, 201 rushing) and 17 first downs. Minnesota gained 408 yards (205/203) with 24 first downs and held the ball for 38:41.

The Buckeyes have beaten Minnesota 12 straight times, marking the Gophers' longest active losing streak against any opponent. ... Minnesota is 4-23 at home vs. the Buckeyes and has lost 14 straight in Minneapolis to them since a 35-31 win in 1981. ... Ohio State has now won 22 consecutive season openers. ... The Buckeyes haven't lost a season opener since a 23-12 defeat against Miami (Fla.) in the 1999 Kickoff Classic.

OHIO STATE FOOTBALL TICKETS!

We have your seats to the season's hottest action!



For Your Ticket Connection Call:

DREAM SEATS
YOUR TOTAL TICKET SOURCE
1611 W. FIFTH AVE. COLUMBUS, OH 43212
(614) 340-8989
www.dreamseats.com

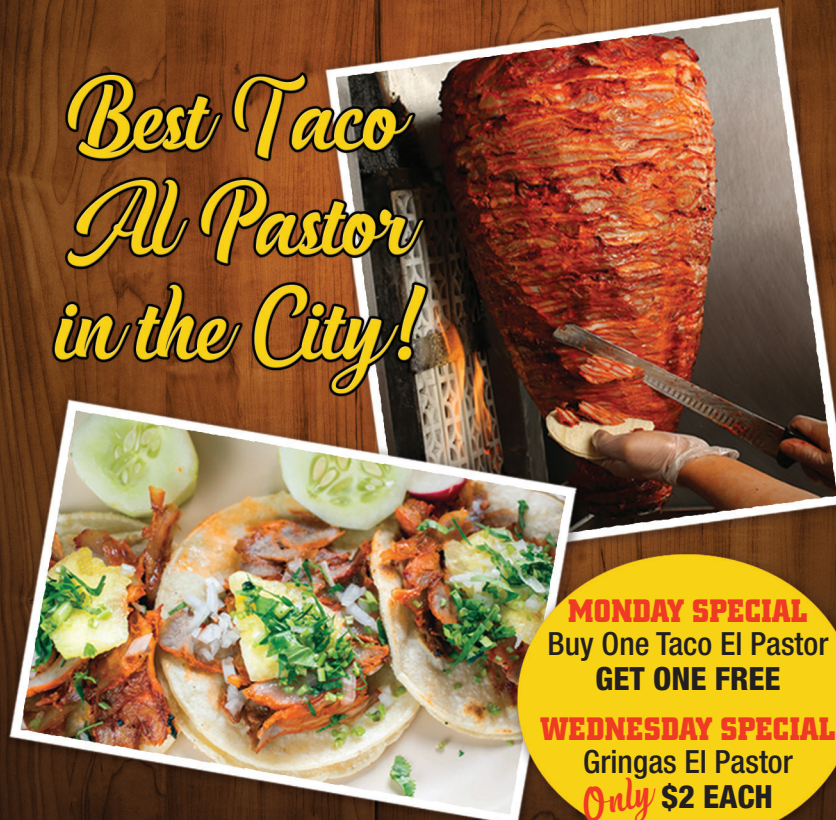
Home & Away Games!

All NCAA & NFL Games in Stock!

all events ★ all cities ★ all the time ★ all events ★ all cities ★ all the time ★ all events ★ all cities ★ all the time ★ all events



Best Taco Al Pastor in the City!



MONDAY SPECIAL
Buy One Taco El Pastor
GET ONE FREE

WEDNESDAY SPECIAL
Gringas El Pastor
Only \$2 EACH

MULTIPLE TV'S TO WATCH THE GAMES

DUBLIN • 7370 Sawmill Rd.
614-726-9185

Serving Alcohol with Full Bar
Sun-Thurs | 11am-12am • Fri & Sat | 11am-1am

Columbus • 5221 Godown Rd.
614-538-0211

Sun - Thur | 11am - 12am • Fri & Sat | 11am - 1am

Gahanna • 1376 Cherry Bottom Rd.
614-471-4717

Mon-Sun | 11am - 11pm

New Store!
Columbus • 1121 S. Hamilton Rd.
614-852-3000

Mon-Sun | 11am - 11pm

BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 45, Minnesota 31

Ohio State head coach Ryan Day on the 18-minute difference in time of possession against Minnesota: "It's hard to win the time of possession when you play Minnesota. They do a great job. (Minnesota head coach P.J. Fleck) does a really good job, and they play complementary football. There was a point there in the second quarter where we just couldn't seem to get the ball back, couldn't get off the field on defense."

Ohio State quarterback C.J. Stroud on bouncing back after throwing a first-half interception: "It's a great learning experience for me. I just talked to (offensive coordinator Kevin) Wilson and Coach Day, and they're happy with how I played and how I handled my adversity. I feel like I kept my head up, I stayed positive, and my teammates, they just kept egging me on."

Ohio State defensive lineman Zach Harrison on his strip sack at the end of the third quarter: "It's just practicing hard, working the technique and practicing. Whatever happens in practice happens in games, and during practice I had a few plays like that – the quarterbacks aren't live – but that shows in the game. That's something that (defensive line coach Larry Johnson) preaches, and all the defensive ends are capable of making that play."

Ohio State safety Lathan Ransom on Sevyn Banks' absence and his sideline guidance during the game: "It's definitely tough, but he was giving advice to me, Ryan Watts and Denzel (Burke) throughout the whole game, helping us see, giving us tips of what he's seeing and stuff like that."

Stroud on receivers Chris Olave and Garrett Wilson: "I have great teammates, but I think I'm a great player, too. I mean, maybe the first half didn't show that, but I did my best in the second half. I thought I did really well. They



SONNY BROCKWAY

CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES – Ohio State center Luke Wypler (53) hoists teammate Chris Olave (2) after one of Olave's two touchdown catches against Minnesota. Olave totaled four catches for 117 yards and scores of 38 and 61 yards during his team's 45-31 victory at Minnesota.

put me in a situation to get them the ball, and I mean that's a big opportunity for me, that's a big task but I feel like I did that. Coach Day told me that no matter how I'm playing, good or bad, he has trust in me, he believes in me. Having a head coach like that, it's a blessing from God. He's a great man."

Fleck on what it meant to have fans attendance for the game: "I want to start by thanking everybody, our student body, our

fans, our administration in working so hard to sell that game out. I want to thank our community. This city has been through an awful lot, the state has been through an awful lot in the last year and a half, two years. That's the power of football. Results aside, for one minute, that's the power of football. That's what the world should look like. Our locker room is what the world should look like. That atmosphere was special. I just want to say thank you to our fans, student body, band, to everybody involved with this. It's just really good to have football back. We have to be better, though. We didn't play well enough to beat the No. 4 team in the country tonight, but we have a lot to learn from and we will."

Fleck on Ohio State's talent and his game plan to beat the Buckeyes: "We used everybody, and then there was the running game, but Ohio State is just really good. They're really good. But I think we have a good football team, too, and I hope everybody saw that tonight. We'd like a few plays back, but you can't take plays back. We played pretty much perfect in the first half. In the second half, the sack fumble really hurt us, but there's only so many times you can run the football. We have to play-action pass sometimes. Dylan Wright runs an amazing route. He's open, and it was just an extra second. We didn't have it. They're really good."

Ohio State running back Miyan Williams on his 71-yard touchdown in the first quarter: "It felt like a dream at first. And I was like, just gotta keep going. But it felt amazing."

Day's takeaway from the hard-fought victory: "We learned a lot from this experience. To say I'm surprised with the way it played out, I'm not. We played a lot of young guys on the road, conference game, first time playing with fans in a long time. The way we rallied and played, especially in that second half, we have a lot to build on here. I'm very excited coming out of that locker room."



www.HatemAutomotive.com
service@hatemautomotive.com
 1407 West Fifth Avenue
 Columbus, OH 43212
614-486-5277

Tom Hatem Automotive
Serving all of Columbus' automotive repair needs for over 23 years.
BMW • MERCEDES • MINI COOPER • PORSCHE

MI MEXICO
MEXICAN RESTAURANT
 4775 East Main Street, Columbus, OH 43213 • (614) 577-0143

AUTHENTIC Mexican Food
 Mon. 11am - 11pm
 Tues. - Sat. 11am - 10pm
 Sun. 11am - 9pm

Every football Saturday, come in and enjoy margaritas & bottled beers at half price.
 Try our new Jumbo Sangria Margarita!

Newly remodeled bar!

www.MiMexicoColumbus.com
THURSDAY • 1/2 PRICE MARGARITAS & BEER • 3-9 pm

\$10 OFF Any Food Order of \$50 or more <small>Dine in only. Not valid with any other coupon. Not valid on Thursdays.</small>	\$5 OFF Any Food Order of \$25 or more <small>Dine in only. Not valid with any other coupon. Not valid on Thursdays.</small>	50% OFF Buy 1 entree at the regular price, get 2nd entree (equal or lesser value) for 50% off <small>Dine in only. Not valid with any other coupon. Not valid on Thursdays.</small>
---	--	---

The Numbers Game

Ohio State 45, Minnesota 31

Sept. 2, 2021 – Huntington Bank Stadium, Minneapolis, Minn.

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
OHIO STATE	7	3	21	14	45
MINNESOTA	0	14	7	10	31

First Quarter

OSU – Williams, 71-yard rush (Ruggles kick), 7:22; 5 plays, 92 yards, 1:42 TOP.

Second Quarter

OSU – Ruggles 35-yard field goal, 12:50; 14 plays, 74 yards, 6:47 TOP.

MIN – Wright, 13-yard pass from Morgan (Trickett kick), 9:11; 6 plays, 80 yards, 3:34 TOP.

MIN – Ibrahim, 1-yard run (Trickett kick), 3:32; 8 plays, 37 yards, 4:31 TOP.

Third Quarter

OSU – Olave, 38-yard pass from Stroud (Ruggles kick), 6:45; 3 plays, 75 yards, 1:02 TOP.

MIN – Ibrahim, 19-yard run (Trickett kick), 10:03; 5 plays, 75 yards, 2:40 TOP.

OSU – Wilson, 56-yard pass from Stroud (Ruggles kick), 5:12; 1 plays, 56 yards, 0:08 TOP.

OSU – Garrett, 32-yard fumble return (Ruggles kick), 2:18.

Fourth Quarter

MIN – Trickett 46-yard field goal, 10:39; 12 plays, 47 yards, 6:39 TOP.

OSU – Henderson, 70-yard pass from Stroud (Ruggles kick), 9:43; 3 plays, 75 yards, 0:56 TOP.

MIN – Williams, 2-yard run (Trickett kick), 5:31; 9 plays, 75 yards, 4:12 TOP.

OSU – Olave, 61-yard pass from Stroud (Ruggles kick), 4:39; 2 plays, 75 yards, 0:52 TOP.

Att. – 50,805

Weather – 67 degrees, rain, wind 12 mph SE

Team Statistics

	OSU	MIN
First Downs	17	24
Rushing	8	9
Passing	8	12
Penalty	1	3
Rushes-Yards	26-201	50-203
Passing Yards	294	205
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	13-22-1	14-25-0
Offensive Plays	48	75
Total Net Yards	495	408
Third Down Efficiency	4-8	7-14
Punts-Avg.	2-43.0	3-38.7
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	2-2
Penalties	5-48	5-50
Time of Possession	21:00	39:00

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) – **OSU**: Williams, 9-125; Teague 6-29; Crowley 6-19; Henderson 2-15; Stroud 3-13. **MIN**: Ibrahim 30-163; Potts 10-34; Wiley 3-4; Williams 1-2; Morgan 6-0.

PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD) – **OSU**: Stroud 13-22-1-294-4. **MIN**: Morgan 14-25-0-205-1.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) – **OSU**: Wilson 5-80; Wilson 4-117; Smith-Njigba 2-12; Henderson 1-70; Ruckert 1-15. **MIN**: Wright 5-57; Jackson 3-58; Spann-Ford 3-44; Brown-Stephens 2-34; Potts 1-12.

PUNTING (No.-Avg.) – **OSU**: Mirco 2-43.0. **MIN**: Crawford 3-38.7.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Avg.) – **OSU**: Wilson 1-1; TEAM 1-0. **MIN**: Potts 1-9; TEAM 1-0.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Avg.) **OSU**: Henderson 1-19. **MIN**: Potts 1-17.

MISSED FIELD GOALS – **OSU**: None. **MIN**: None.

FORCED FUMBLES – **OSU**: Harrison, Ransom. **MIN**: None.

FUMBLE RECOVERIES – **OSU**: Garrett 1-32; Eichenberg 1-0. **MIN**: None.

INTERCEPTIONS – **OSU**: None. **MIN**: Smith 1-3.

SACKS – **OSU**: Simon 1.0-11; Harrison 1.0-7. **MIN**: None.

TACKLES FOR LOSS – **OSU**: Simon 1.0-11; Harrison 1.0-7; Mitchell 1.0-3; Jackson 1.0-1; Stroud 1.0-0. **MIN**: Durr 1.0-2.

TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.) – **OSU**: Hickman 5-6-11; Mitchell 4-6-10; Gant 4-4-8; Simon 3-4-7; Proctor 2-5-7; Eichenberg 1-4-5; Jackson 3-2-5; Burke 3-1-4; Vincent 3-0-3; Harrison 3-0-3; Smith 1-2-3; Ransom 2-1-3; Watts 3-0-3; Shaw 2-1-3; Chambers 0-2-2; Garrett 1-1-2; Cavazos 1-0-1; Stroud 1-0-1; Johnson 1-0-1; Pope 0-1-1. **MIN**: Sori-Marin 3-3-6; Howden 4-0-4; Durr 2-1-3; Numbin 3-0-3; Mafe 3-0-3; Swenson 2-0-2; Smith 2-0-2; Rush 2-0-2; Oliver 2-0-2; Harrison 2-0-2; Gibbens 1-1-2; Howard 0-1-1; Anderson 1-0-1; Pinckney 1-0-1; Dixon 1-0-1; Dew-Treadway 1-0-1; Willis 0-1-1; Weeks 0-1-1; Lindenberg 0-1-1; Carter 0-1-1.

Players In The Game

OSU – Olave, Wilson, Stroud, Smith-Njigba, Williams, Wypler, Munford, Johnson Jr., Petit-Frere, Jones, Ruckert, Mitchell, Vincent, Harrison, Smith, Ransom, Hickman, Watts, Burke, Eichenberg, Proctor, Jackson, McCall, Cavazos, Fleming, Williamson, Banks, Babb, Jean-Baptiste, Ballard, Hancock, Scott Jr., Young, Stover, Shaw, Harrison jr., Gant, Chambers, Hooker, Crowley, Dunn, Johnson, Mirco, Simon, Henderson, Johnson, Teague, Pope, Tuimololau, Kacherski, Jones, Hamilton, Fryar, Wiglusz, Booker. Garrett, Ruggles, O'Shaughnessy.

MIN – Morgan, Jackson, Ibrahim, Kieft, Dunlap Jr., Schmitz, Olson, Ruschmeyer, Schlueter, Andried, Faalele, Smith, Pinckney, Otomewo, Durr, Harris, Howden, Nubin, Mafe, Gibbens, Sori-Marin, Carter, Walley, Swenson, Wiley, Howard, Anderson, Potts, Rush, Dixon, Glaze, Gordon IV, Oliver, Boyd, Wright, Dew-Treadway, Willis, Williams, Brown-Stephens, LeCaptain, McDonald, Weeks, Cheney, Lindenberg, Martin, Boe, Purcell, Kallerup, Spann-Ford, Trickett, Crawford, Kesich.

Season Statistics

2020-21 Game-By-Game			
Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd
Sept. 2	(4) at Minnesota	W, 45-31	50,805
Spet. 11	OREGON (11)	Noon	
Sept. 18	TULSA	3:30	
Spet. 25	AKRON	TBA	
Oct. 2	at Rutgers	TBA	
Oct. 9	MARYLAND	Noon	
Oct. 23	at Indiana	TBA	
Oct. 30	PENN STATE (19)	TBA	
Nov. 6	at Nebraska	TBA	
Nov. 13	PURDUE	TBA	
Nov. 20	MICHIGAN STATE	TBA	
Nov. 27	at Michigan	Noon	
Dec. 4	Big Ten Championship	8 p.m.	

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

Team Statistics		
	OSU	Opp
First Downs	17	24
Rushing	8	9
Passing	8	12
Penalty	1	3
Average Per Game/Rush	201.0	203.0
Average Per Game/Pass	294.0	205.0
Total Offense	495	408
Total Plays	48	75
Average Per Game	495.0	408.0
Average Per Play	10.3	5.4
Penalties-Yards	5-48	5-50
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	2-2
Third Down Efficiency	4-8	7-14
Percentage	50%	50%
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	1-1
Percentage	0%	100%
Sacks-Yards	2-18	0-0
Time Of Possession Avg.	21:00	39:00

Score

By Quarters	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	7	3	21	14	0	45	45.0
Opponents	0	14	7	10	0	31	31.0

Individual Statistics

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Miyan Williams	9	125	13.9	1	71
Master Teague	6	29	4.8	0	10
Marcus Crowley	6	19	3.2	0	7
TreVeyon Henderson	2	15	7.5	0	10
C.J. Stroud	3	13	4.3	0	6
OSU Totals	26	201	7.7	1	71
OPP Totals	50	203	4.1	3	56

Passing	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT	Effic.
C.J. Stroud	13	22	59.1	294	4-1	222.3
OSU Totals	13	22	59.1	294	4-1	222.3
OPP Totals	14	25	56.0	205	1-0	205.0

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Chris Olave	4	117	29.3	2	61
Garrett Wilson	5	80	16.0	1	56
Jaxon Smith-Njigba	2	12	6.0	0	11
TreVeyon Henderson	1	70	70.0	1	70
Jeremy Ruckert	1	15	15.0	0	15
OSU Totals	13	294	22.6	4	70
OPP Totals	14	205	14.6	1	22

Scoring	TD	EPK	EPR	EPRC	FG	PTS
Chris Olave	2	–	–	–	–	12
Noah Ruggles	–	6-6	–	–	1-1	9
Garrett Wilson	1	–	–	–	–	6
Haskell Garrett	1	–	–	–	–	6
Miyan Williams	1	–	–	–	–	6
TreVeyon Henderson	1	–	–	–	–	6
OSU Totals	6	6-6	–	–	1-1	45
OPP Totals	4	4-4	–	–	1-1	31

FG Distance	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Noah Ruggles	0-0	1-1	0-0	0-0	1-1
OSU Totals	0-0	1-1	0-0	0-0	1-1
OPP Totals	0-0	0-0	1-1	0-0	1-1

Punting	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Jesse Mirco	2	86	43.0	0	49
OSU Totals	2	86	43.0	0	49
OPP Totals	3	116	38.7	0	45

Interceptions	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
OSU Totals	0	0	0	0	0
OPP Totals	1	3	3.0	0	3

Punt Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Garrett Wilson	1	1	1.0	0	1
TEAM	1	0	0	0	0
OSU Totals	2	1	0.5	0	1
OPP Totals	2	9	4.5	0	9

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
TreVeyon Henderson	1	19	19.0	0	19
OSU Totals	1	19	19.0	0	19
OPP Totals	1	17	17.0	0	17

Def. Leaders	Solo	Asst.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Ronnie Hickman	5	6	11	–	–
Teradja Mitchell	4	6	10	1.0-3	–
Dallas Gant	4	4	8	–	–
Cody Simon	3	4	7	1.0-11	1.0-11
Joshua Proctor	2	5	7	–	–
Tommy Eichenberg	1	4	5	–	–
Antwuan Jackson	3	2	5	1.0-1	–
Denzel Burke	3	1	4	–	–
Taron Vincent	3	0	3	–	–
Zach Harrison	3	0	3	1.0-7	1.0-7
Tyreke Smith	1	2	3	–	–
Lathan Ransom	2	1	3	–	–
Ryan Watts	3	0	3	–	–
Bryson Shaw	2	1	3	–	–
Steele Chambers	0	2	2	–	–
Haskell Garrett	1	1	2	–	–
Lejond Cavazos	1	0	1	–	–
C.J. Stroud	1	0	1	1.0-0	–
Jakailin Johnson	1	0	1	–	–
K'Vaughan Pope	0	1	1	–	–
OSU Totals	43	40	83	5.0-22	2.0-18
OPP Totals	30	10	40	1.0-2	–
Fumbles Forced: 2 –Harrison, Ransom.					
Fumbles Recovered: 2 – Garrett, Eichenberg.					



Robert Bowen



THE
CASE BOWEN
COMPANY

James Case



COMMERCIAL & ASSOCIATION
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
Brokerage Services | Sales | Leasing

www.CaseBowen.com | 614.799.9800
6255 Corporate Center Drive | Dublin, OH

chocolate café

FINE CHOCOLATES • COFFEES • DESSERTS • SPIRITS & PEOPLE



1855 Northwest Boulevard
(614) 485-CAFE
chocolatecafecolumbus.com



Parties • Corporate Catering
Weddings • Baby & Bridal Showers • Tailgates

Third Year A Crucial One For New Coaches

By **PATRICK MAYHORN**

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Associate Editor

Ryan Day is doing something that very few people have ever done in preparing for the opening game of his third season at the helm of Ohio State's football program. Of the 24 names that populate the Ohio State head-coaching archives, only 13 of them saw a third season on the job prior to Day's arrival.

If you cut that list down even further, looking just at Woody Hayes to now, Day is one of only six coaches – not including Luke Fickell's interim year – to lead the Scarlet and Gray. To put it another way, excluding 2011, Ohio State has played football for the past 71 seasons with just six different head coaches. That is rivaled only by other programs that found a lifer in the middle of that stretch, such as Penn State (only four coaches since 1951), Iowa (seven), Michigan (eight), Florida State (nine), Alabama (10) and Oklahoma (10).

Unlike every other program on that list, save perhaps for Penn State, Ohio State has still yet to experience a serious lull in success since 1951 when Hayes took over from Wes Fesler. Hayes had a few down seasons, namely 1959 and 1966, but Ohio State hasn't experienced back-to-back losing seasons since the Buckeyes had three sub-.500 seasons in a row under John Wilce nearly a century ago from 1922 to 1924.

Penn State and Iowa each saw two straight down seasons in the early 2000s, Michigan hired Rich Rodriguez and Brady

Hoke, Florida State is currently enmeshed in its worst period since Bobby Bowden came to Tallahassee, and Alabama and Oklahoma each struggled to find their way through the pass-heavy revolution in the 1990s. To say Ohio State is alone in its consistency in college football sounds like hyperbole, but at least at the heights of the sport, it's hard to see a serious competitor.

That makes historical comparisons – internally at Ohio State as well as to programs around the nation – difficult to draw for Buckeye coaches. There are very few situations like the one that Day entered back in 2019.

First, Ohio State is well-described by the aforementioned historical success. This is a program that very, very rarely loses football games, and it's a program that has not seen a truly failed coaching tenure since the turn of the 20th century in 1900. Fickell is the only coach since then with a losing record as an Ohio State coach, and he didn't really even have the job on a full-time basis. The worst, statistically speaking, coach in that time who spent more than one year in town is Fesler, and he still won more than 60 percent of his games, fresh off the end of World War II.

Essentially, Ohio State has not yet hired a football coach who did not accomplish at least the baseline level of competency needed to win the majority of the games he coached. Since Hayes, the Buckeyes haven't even hired a coach who failed to compete at the top of the Big Ten as a minimum expectation. There aren't many programs that can say that, so there



SONNY BROCKWAY

THIRD FULL-TIME SEASON - With his team's season-opening win at Minnesota, Ryan Day now enjoys a 24-2 record as head coach at Ohio State. That record includes a perfect 16-0 mark in Big Ten play and a regular-season winning streak of 22 games.

aren't many programs that can accurately provide a guideline for what to expect when bringing in a new coach to run the team.

Still, there's history to be studied – and history that provides important context, even if the floor and ceiling at Ohio State aren't reflected in very many places around college football. If Day's third-season projections are based entirely around history both at Ohio State and in the rest of the sport, what should this third season hold?

Well, the general rule with a new coach according to ESPN analyst Bill Connelly, who tracks just about every piece of college football data imaginable (and has created the SP-plus analytics system, which attempts to quantify team quality), year two or three is the time for a leap, and any time beyond that is likely to be, at best, a coach settling into his baseline.

"On average, teams will drop by about 0.8 points per game in their first year under a new coach, and that's in my adjusted points per game, my SP-plus ranking, basically," Connelly told BSB. "In year two, they rise by an average of 2.7. In the third year, they rise by an average of 1.34. In year four, they rise by an average of 0.1, and then it's pretty much just slow regression from that point forward."

"Generally, what we think of college football is right. New coaches go up within a few years, and then not all that many guys can maintain it over a really long period of time. There's no question that basically your best shot is in year two. If you don't do it in year two, you probably should do it in year three;

otherwise, your window is closed, and/or you probably got fired."

At Ohio State, however, the opposite seems to be true. Success comes early and begins to plateau even earlier, with the best season on average coming for Ohio State coaches in year two. As Connelly puts it, "There's less room to improve at those (top) programs. Maybe it's easier to maintain a certain altitude, but it is going to be harder to really push things forward a little bit."

Of the 13 coaches who lasted at least three seasons in Columbus, eight managed to improve on their winning percentage in year three, but the five that didn't (John B. Eckstorm, Albert E. Herrnstein, Francis A. Schmidt, Paul Brown and Earle Bruce) saw significant drops, tanking the third-year winning percentage for the whole group to 67 percent – down from 73 percent on average in their first two seasons.

The eight who did improve (Jack Ryder, John W. Wilce, Sam Willaman, Fesler, Woody Hayes, John Cooper, Jim Tressel and Urban Meyer) did so by just five percentage points, up to 74 percent from 69 percent, though that group also carries with it a Rose Bowl winner in Fesler, a Fiesta Bowl for Tressel and the greatest prize on the board in Urban Meyer's 2014 national championship.

The conclusion? Within the program at least, it's not much. Generally speaking, Ohio State coaches are more likely to improve than they are to fall in year three, but only by a bit. If they fall, they fall by a lot (85 percent to 58 per-

The Ohio State University Alumni Association

GUIDE YOUR CAREER

3,200+

active employers working with Alumni Career Connection

4,500+

AlumniFire members ready to network

The Buckeye Network reaches **9,000+** active members on LinkedIn

BOND WITH FELLOW BUCKEYES

Join one of **121** Regional Clubs

Connect with one of **48** Societies supporting your interests



Attend special events—**168** hosted in FY16

PAY FORWARD



More than **150** volunteer projects done by Buckeyes in 2016

TRAVEL THE WORLD

Join one of **30+** trips with Alumni Tours



GET SOCIAL

Follow along to stay up to date with The Ohio State University Alumni Association



32,515 Likes



34,300 Followers



540,000+ alumni across the globe



YOU'RE A BUCKEYE FOR LIFE



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Kenwel
PRINTERS

**YOUR FULL-SERVICE
PRINTING PARTNER
SINCE 1952**

Contact us at 614.261.1011 or
✉ kenwel@kenwelprinters.com



4272 Indianola Avenue | Columbus, Ohio 43214 | www.kenwelprinters.com

OHIO STATE FOOTBALL

cent among the five who did see their records drop in year three).

If Day were to follow directly in the path of his predecessor, he'd have to improve on his first two seasons slightly while winning a national title in the process. Given his 92 percent mark through his first two years at the helm (with three wins in 2018 factored in), anything short of an undefeated or one-loss season would mean regression – a high bar, certainly.

Nationally, it's a little easier to find contemporaries for Day, even if you have to sacrifice the context that Ohio State's history provides to do so. Day was hired from within the program, promoted from his offensive coordinator role to take over for Meyer when Meyer stepped down at the end of the 2018 season.

The list of coaches hired from within to replace a national championship-contending coach is even smaller than the group to roam the sidelines in Columbus. It includes Lloyd Carr and Gary Moeller (Michigan); Larry Coker and Randy Shannon (Miami); Mike DuBose (Alabama); Jimbo Fisher (Florida State); Barry Switzer, Gary Gibbs and Lincoln Riley (Oklahoma); Mark Helfrich (Oregon); Ed Ogeron (LSU); and Frank Solich (Nebraska).

It's a very small and very manicured sample group, but Day isn't exactly standing on common ground. It's rare for a coach to last long enough to help name his successor, and it's even rarer to see it at a program with expectations as high as those at Ohio State. In fact, the Buckeyes have hired from within only five times, including Fickell, and just one of those coaches – Sam Willaman – made it to a third season. Willaman coached five seasons in Columbus, improving only slightly on what Wilce had done prior.

It's a group, still, that seems to have a lot in common and seems to follow a similar path. Only five of the 13 new coaches improved upon the overall winning percentage of their predecessor in their first two seasons, as Day did with Meyer. Coker, Ogeron, Riley and Switzer are the others. Two of those, Coker and Switzer, won national titles within their first two seasons, with Day and Riley each coming close, but falling just short.

Even better news for the Buckeyes: Eight of those 12 who came before Day made a leap

in year three from their first two seasons. The only two who won fewer than 75 percent of their games in that season were Helfrich and Shannon (each went 9-4).

That group also captured two national titles (one each for Carr and Switzer), two conference titles (Fisher and Riley) and three major bowl wins (Coker, DuBose and Moeller). The group jumped by six winning percentage points on average in year three, up to 82 percent from 76 percent. If Day keeps pace, he's likely coaching an unbeaten national champion in 2021.

Of that group, Day has been most frequently compared to Riley because of their status as young, offensive-minded gurus who immediately found success on the field and in recruiting, thanks in part to a talented and experienced returning roster, led by a Heisman Trophy-contending quarterback (Justin Fields in Day's case and Baker Mayfield with Riley). The ascension of Day and Riley each also came as a bit of surprise because of the sudden resignations of their predecessors.

George Stoia, who writes for the Denver Gazette and covered Oklahoma football for OU Daily at the time of Riley's hire, told BSB, "I think everybody when (Bob Stoops retired) was thinking, 'Is it going to be Lincoln Riley?' Because at the time, Lincoln had just interviewed for the Houston job, and he was very close to taking it. Then it was a question of, 'If it is going to be Lincoln, is Lincoln too young?' I think that was a question that some fans had, but I think people also knew that during the two years that Lincoln was the offensive coordinator, he had been a great play-caller. They knew he was a fantastic recruiter.

"Still, there was this sense that this was the perfect time to do it. If you're going to have a transition and you're going to pass the torch, (it was the perfect time to hand) it off to someone who's young, who's bright like Lincoln, and who was going to have a loaded team with returning veterans in Baker Mayfield, the entire offensive line, several key defensive players."

Also like Riley, Day stuck closely to coaches he knew and coaches that his predecessor knew when forming his first staff. Former de-

fensive coordinator Jeff Hafley and linebackers coach Al Washington worked with Day rather than Meyer, but much of Ohio State's current staff, from quarterbacks coach Corey Dennis to defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs, has a distinct Meyer flare to it. Riley tabbed his former boss, Ruffin McNeill, as a hire early on in his tenure, but he, too, has avoided straying too far from the template set by Stoops.

"I think he stuck with his guys to start, bringing in a guy like Ruffin McNeill as his first big coaching hire," Stoia said. "He was very familiar with McNeill going back to his days at Texas Tech. Still, I can tell you that whenever Lincoln has to make a big decision or something like that, he talks to Bob. He's been a sounding board for some time now. He's still in the athletic department, and Lincoln still talks to him. I know that for a fact."

However, that friendly comparison can be countered with an unfavorable one. For example, after Helfrich took over at Oregon for Chip Kelly, he found immense success early in his new role, finishing in the top 10 with an 11-2 season in year one before producing a national title berth and Heisman Trophy winner Marcus Mariota in year two. Year three marked the beginning of the end for Helfrich, though. The Ducks fell to 9-4 after Mariota's departure, and the program seemed to slip at large in the eyes of local media and fans.

"It showed cracks in 2015 when they didn't have a guy that they recruited ready to replace Marcus Mariota. Or, at least, they weren't confident, so they went out and got Vernon Adams, a grad transfer from Eastern Washington," Ryan Thorburn of The Register-Guard in Eugene, Ore., told BSB. "It was a great move. You could argue that if (Adams) didn't break his thumb in the opener, they would have won the Pac-12 and been right back in the thick of things. But he got hurt, and when he wasn't in the games, they had no quarterback that was even really functional. They didn't have a high level of recruiting waiting at quarterback, even when they did have a lot of other pieces in place."

A year later, Helfrich joined DuBose and Shannon in being fired after just four seasons, closing a disappointing tenure with a 4-8

campaign. Like Day and Riley, Helfrich stuck closely to Kelly's plan, but unlike the Buckeye and Sooners play-callers, he failed to establish himself in recruiting, quickly falling behind as the sport moved into a new era.

"It started out as everyone had hoped – that they would just do what Chip Kelly had already been doing. Don't change anything," Thorburn said. "Helfrich didn't really put his own stamp on anything. He's a personable, quotable guy normally, but he tried to even be like Chip Kelly with the media and not really give you anything – not talk about injuries, things that Chip Kelly did. They just tried to mimic him, which was understandable considering Kelly was 46-7. The staff pretty much stayed intact, too.

"I think it was the recruiting going on the downward trajectory and the staff not embracing this modern recruiting," Thorburn explained. "You have to get on social media and you have to pamper four- and five-star guys during the process and not just take three- and four-star guys and develop them. Mario Cristobal is doing that, but (the Helfrich staff) never really embraced that."

Those sorts of failures are, for this group, few and far between. Three coaches – Day, Ogeron and Riley – remain employed in these jobs (and are a bit difficult to get a full read on because of it), but six of the 10 coaches who have completed their tenures stayed at least six seasons in town, and four of those won national titles.

Their 74-percent win percentage is a slight drop from the average of the coaches who preceded them (80 percent), but it's rare that regression hits early in these programs, even in more extreme cases. Early signs certainly indicate that Day is not in for a Coker- or Helfrich-like collapse, given their status as the only two on the list who saw a significant drop from their first two seasons to their final overall record.

In the case of big-time internal hires, the trends are clear. If they win early, there's a very good chance they'll keep winning. Day has certainly achieved the former. Now, it's time to test the latter's merit.



SUMMIT
PERFORMANCE  INSTITUTE

Train to be the BEST you can be!
Designing fitness programs to meet your personal needs.

Personal Training

Group Fitness Training

Sports Specific Training

Owned and Operated By:

Brent Johnson
614-570-9918
B-fit.training@hotmail.com

Located at 2378 East Main Street in Bexley, Ohio



Let our friendly staff take care of you before, during & after the game.

Enjoy your favorite team on our many HD flat-screen TVs

Shade RESTAURANTS

Friends, Fun & Great Food!

NFL Ticket

NFL Ticket

Shade on the Canal
19 S. High St.
Canal Winchester
614-837-9873

Shade on 30th St.
850 S. 30th St.
Heath
740-788-9287

Shade on State St.
994 E State St.
Athens
740-566-1009

Mitchell Rewarded For Patience, Perseverance

By **CRAIG MERZ**

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

In another time under different circumstances, Teradja Mitchell might have become a footnote, an afterthought, in the annals of Ohio State football.

The four-star linebacker from Virginia Beach, Va., did nothing exceptional during his first three seasons at Ohio State as he bided time behind a bevy of more experienced players at his position.

While he did appear in 28 games through his junior season, the majority of his action was on special teams with only limited opportunities on defense, usually in mop-up duty when the Buckeyes had the game well in hand.

Mitchell was a perfect candidate to exercise the recent NCAA rule revision that allows players a one-time transfer without sitting out a season.

There are no doubt schools that would have wanted his services because of his potential, and with the recent enactment of the name, image and likeness provisions, a chance to go elsewhere and raise his profile for endorsements seemed inevitable.

Yet, there Mitchell was at Minnesota on Sept. 2 for the season opener as a starting outside linebacker. Not only was it his first career start for the Buckeyes, he was also doing so as a team co-captain.

"I'm walking into the season and I'm going to be a starter and captain of the team,"

Mitchell said. "It's all coming together for me. I'm glad I made the right decision (to stay). I can't wait to show the whole world.

"Some people may have forgotten about me, but I've been working my tail off for this opportunity, and I'm ready. I've seized it big-time. I've been working for this moment for a long time. I've just been patient, on God's timing. I've just put my head down and been working. But it felt good going out there with the first team.

"I've always understood that it's going to be a tough process," Mitchell continued. "I understood that it was going to take a lot of work to get on that field, and here I am. You've got to be hungry. You've got to come in here with a chip on your shoulder every day. I definitely do that. I take this very seriously. This is my dream, and as you get closer to your dream, you start to get more motivated."

Mitchell's dream was almost shattered on the first series of the game when he was flagged for targeting. If upheld by video review, he would have been ejected. Fortunately for him and the Buckeyes, the call on the field was overturned and Mitchell remained an integral part of the 45-31 victory. He had the second-most tackles in the game with 10 (four solos and six assists), one behind teammate Ronnie Hickman. Mitchell also had a tackle for a 3-yard loss.

In a way, his play was what he expected.

"Every day we go out there, we go to work," Mitchell said. "You've got to bring

your A-game every day. It's Ohio State. We're playing at the highest level of college football. I wouldn't even say the competition is amped up. It is what it is."

Mitchell, in his senior season at Bishop Sullivan High School in Virginia Beach, was ranked the No. 2 inside linebacker and No. 44 overall recruit in the country in the 2018 class, according to the 247Sports composite.

But the Ohio State roster is filled with former four- and five-star recruits, so nothing is given and everything is earned to get on the field.

In nine games as a sophomore for the Buckeyes, Mitchell had 12 tackles, including two for loss. He had only seven total stops in eight games last season for the national title runners-up while playing mostly on the kick return and punt block units.

But with the departures of veteran linebackers Tuf Borland, Baron Browning, Justin Hilliard and Pete Werner, an opportunity was created for the 6-2, 239-pound senior. All of those openings came with the criticism, however, that the standard at linebacker has been lowered this season because of a lack of experience.

"We're definitely getting tired of hearing that, but we're an inexperienced group and that comes with it," Mitchell said. "We're prepared and ready to show it. We've got something to prove. It's a big question mark in our group to the public (but) we all believe in (linebackers coach Al Washington) and in his plan and whoever he puts out there. We know whoever plays is going to ball. We have confidence in all of the guys in the room. Everybody prepares the same. We all come in to do extra work."

Mitchell said he and the other linebackers know the pressure is on them but they are up to the challenge.

"Tuf, Justin Hilliard, Baron and Pete, those guys set out a blueprint," he said. "We're just following it. We understand that we're linebackers. We've got to bring it. Got to bring it."

It might surprise outsiders to the program that someone who hasn't put up gaudy numbers or made much of an impact on the program would be named captain, but OSU

head coach Ryan Day said Mitchell has been leading by example through his work ethic and attitude over the course of his career.

"Some of our greatest leaders at times in the last five years weren't captains," Day said. "So we challenged our team to make sure that even if you weren't named a captain, it doesn't mean you're not a leader."

Mitchell's perseverance has paid off.

"He's been really working at it," Washington said. "He's eager to go out and do what he loves to do, and that's play football. The best thing about football is when you get out on the field, the play speaks for itself. He's done that and I'm really proud of what he's done so far."

Sophomore linebacker Cody Simon was not surprised by Mitchell's captaincy.

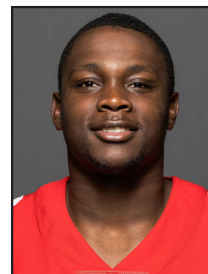
"Teradja works the hardest. He is our workhorse," Simon said. "He's our leader right now. He's the senior guy, so right now our job is to play and let him lead us. He saw what the four linebackers who left did, and now we're all trying to emulate it. I think we all took it to another level, but he's always been a hard worker, extra worker."

Washington had the pleasure of calling Mitchell's father, Terry, to inform him his son had been voted a captain. OSU sends out a series of social media videos capturing a moment like that every season after the captains are named.

"I'm standing next to Teradja," Washington told his father. "Today he found out he was voted captain, which is an unbelievable honor and I can't tell you how proud I am of him. I know you are. Through it all, he's really become a great young man and is destined for great things."

The elder Mitchell admitted to his son that he was choked up by the news, saying, "I'm just thankful for you and thank you for just believing in him, Coach, and having my back when he's away from home. I'm so proud of you, son."

The younger Mitchell is reaping the rewards of his work. A three-time OSU Scholar-Athlete and Academic All-Big Ten selection the past two seasons, the fashion and retail studies major has not only partnered with a Columbus area car dealership to receive a vehicle in return for promotional and community outreach events, but through the new NIL legislation, Mitchell will be able to profit off his own clothing line (located online at AboveTheRealm.shop) by selling T-shirts and hoodies.



Teradja Mitchell

NOW OPEN

BRINGING THE HEAT

TO HIGH STREET

EL SEGUNDO
MEXICAN KITCHEN

SHORT NORTH ARTS DISTRICT

614.965.6660 | 698 N. High Street | ElSegundoColumbus.com

Join Us!

\$100/Year 614 326-3300
buckeyeboosters.com

...as we support the Buckeyes on the road and more!

Name

Address

City State Zip

Mail check to:
Buckeye Boosters, 921 Chatham Ln., #301F, Columbus, OH 43221

Kick-Off Dinner

Travel to Away Football Games

Annual Celebrity Golf Outing

Meeting with Coaches, at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center

Munford Earns OSU's Second Block 'O' Jersey

By CHASE BROWN

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Thayer Munford is one of Ohio State's most decorated football players. He holds notable titles on the current roster, leading the program with 46 career games and standing as one of six team captains.

Munford is a first-team All-Big Ten tackle, a preseason All-American and a top offensive line prospect for the 2022 NFL draft, and he graduated from Ohio State with a bachelor's degree in sport industry.

Now, in his final year with the Buckeyes, Munford is adding more accomplishments to his résumé. On Aug. 28, the Ohio State coaching staff selected him to represent its Block "O" jersey this season.

"It's a blessing to be out here," Munford said after receiving the award. "I love this team and will do everything I can to uphold the tradition of what the Block 'O' means to our program."

The tradition started last season and was inspired by Ohio State legend Bill Willis, an All-American and national championship-winning defensive end who played for the Buckeyes from 1942-44. Willis was one of the first players to break the color barrier in the NFL as a member of the Cleveland Browns and is a member of the College Football Hall of Fame as well as the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

"The Block 'O' is a badge of honor in our program," OSU head coach Ryan Day said. "It represents everything that is important to us – fighting to be elite in all that we do. It's also about accountability and blue-collar personality. When I think of Thayer Munford, that's what comes to mind."

Ohio State retired jersey No. 99 in honor of Willis and remembered his contribution to the program in what he stood for – toughness, accountability and integrity – values that each Buckeye strives to uphold every day.

For Day and the Ohio State coaching staff, Munford exemplifies those characteristics more than any other player on the roster.

"First off, he's from Ohio," Day said. "Secondly, he's been through a lot in his career. This is a guy who wasn't very highly recruited. He had to lose a lot of weight to even earn a scholarship here and had a back injury along the way. He overcame a lot of obstacles, and he's done everything the right way."

"He decided to come back for another year, and he just has the respect from everybody around here. He exemplifies what Bill Willis stood for. Jonathon Cooper was a great first recipient of the Bill Willis Award, and I think that Thayer is going to do the same."

Cooper received the first-ever Block "O" award last season and donned jersey No. 0 at defensive end. Current NCAA rules prevent offensive linemen from wearing a number outside the 50-79 range, so Munford will instead wear a Block "O" patch much like the "C" designation that captains wear in other programs.

Whether the Block "O" acts as a number or a patch, the honor remains the same: Munford represents the heart of the Ohio State program and the journey a player can take to reach his goals.

Munford's story is unique. He spent the beginning of his high school career at Cincin-

nati La Salle, where he developed a strong connection with his coach and mentor, Nate Moore. When Moore landed a coaching job at Massillon (Ohio) Washington, he and his wife, Becca, took legal custody of Munford, bringing him with them to the new school.

However, the Ohio High School Athletic Association ruled Munford ineligible, resulting in lower recruiting attention than other top prospects in the area. Still, Munford remained determined to reach his goal of landing an offer from his dream school – Ohio State. He later received an offer from the Buckeyes and signed his letter of intent on Feb. 1, 2017.

Five years later, Munford is living his dream. He is a leader to his team, both on and off the field.

Perhaps Munford's most significant decision as a leader came when he chose to give up his left tackle spot and switch to the left guard position, offering an opportunity for other linemen to make a name for themselves.

Munford didn't overthink it, saying that becoming a guard allows him to be more versatile and sets him up nicely for a future in the NFL.

"It's a better chance for me for getting ready for the next level," he said. "So if I do this now, I can play wherever at the next level, and I'm fine wherever – tackle or guard, right side or left side."

Even after the move, fellow offensive lineman Nicholas Petit-Frere said Munford is the same hardworking teammate who prepares with a high level of intensity and urgency.

"He kind of plays the same, almost like he did at tackle – and he was one of the best tackles in the nation, so I feel like he's one of the best guards in the nation as well," Petit-Frere said. "It's a testament to who he is. He's probably one of the best offensive linemen in the nation. Thayer is just an amazing competitor when it comes to his work ethic on and off the field when it comes to film study or just being a teammate."

"His aggression on the field, how great he is technically, knowing his plays and understanding different schemes like that, that's just encompassing of him as an offensive lineman. With him switching to left guard, I feel like you're going to see that with him, even though he's played left tackle for four years now, he's still the same Thayer Munford."

With Munford's position change, Ohio State's offensive line quickly became one of the more physically imposing offensive lines in college football, with Petit-Frere (6-5, 315), Munford (6-6, 320), Harry Miller (6-4, 315), Paris Johnson Jr. (6-6, 315) and Dawand Jones (6-8, 360) as the five linemen standing upfront.

Petit-Frere said Munford's move sets up exciting possibilities for the Ohio State offense. He also said it serves as a reminder of who Munford is as a teammate and why it is clear the coaching staff selected him as the Block "O" recipient.

"Thayer has been a leader of this team even before I got here, and since I've been here, he's been a leader through and through, not only on the offensive line but on the team as a whole," Petit-Frere said. "We see him as a staple of Ohio State football right now, and I know all the coaches and everyone around



FILE PHOTO

LEADING THE WAY – In addition to earning preseason All-America honors and being named a 2021 team captain, Ohio State senior Thayer Munford (75) was selected to represent the program's Block "O" jersey this season. Munford is also switching from left tackle to left guard this year.

here would tell you the same – that Thayer is probably one of the most hardworking, dedicated people when it comes to playing football at Ohio State.

"Him representing us as the Block 'O' is

an amazing accomplishment for him, and it's great for us as a team because that's who we have as a representative – knowing that he's there for us. I couldn't be happier, and I couldn't be more proud."

The Great Taste of Mexico
only at Cucos Taqueria

HAPPY HOUR
MONDAY - FRIDAY 4-7PM

2162 W. HENDERSON RD. COLUMBUS, OH 43220
(614) 538-8701 | CUCOSTAQUERIA.COM

Order Online
Pick-up & Delivery
Drinks-to-Go

Oregon Presents Challenge And Opportunity

By **PATRICK MAYHORN**

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Associate Editor

It's been almost exactly four years since Ohio State last squared off in the regular season against a top-10 nonconference opponent. That's quite a gap, relative to program standards, though it's not exactly new to the Buckeyes since 2010.

From 2000 through 2009, Ohio State squared off against five regular-season, nonconference foes ranked among the nation's top 10 teams. Since then? Just one – the 2017 home bout with Oklahoma that OSU fans and coaches still likely remember very well, thanks to the sour aftertaste from a thorough drubbing and the celebration that followed it at the hands of quarterback Baker Mayfield.

The drop in premier nonconference matchups was not planned by Ohio State or desired by its coaches. It was quite the opposite in 2015 and 2018, when the Buckeyes really could have used a big nonconference win to make up for late-season conference losses that ultimately snuffed out each team's playoff hopes.

Rather, it seems to be just a case of bad luck, which is the risk inherent with scheduling games sometimes decades in advance as all major-college football teams do. The falls of Miami (Fla.) and Virginia Tech to mediocrity, California's return to it after a blip of success in the late 2000s, TCU's quarterback troubles and a pandemic turned a Murderers' Row into a decade of disappointment for season-ticket holders hoping to see a show in the early stages of Ohio State's seasons.

That dry spell has reached its conclusion. Ohio State vs. Oregon is on the docket for Sept. 11 in Columbus and will kick off without a hitch, barring any unforeseen circumstances. It's the second leg of a home-and-home series that has yet to run its first, after the coronavirus forced both the Big Ten and Pac-12 into conference-only slates in 2020. The year delay has done little to dull the hype of the matchup, which will be Ohio State's 10th all-time with the Ducks.

Much of that comes from Oregon's talent on paper, rather than its production in recent seasons. Fourth-year head coach Mario Cristobal has led the Ducks to a Rose Bowl win in 2019 and a pair of conference titles in 2019 and 2020, but a 9-4 campaign in 2018 and a 4-3 showing during the shortened 2020 season – Oregon was selected for the conference title game after positive COVID tests held Washington out – have blunted the ascent of the program in the public eye, despite elevated recruiting.

The expectation around Eugene, however, is that the time to jump is now, led by a defense filled to the brim with blue-chip prospects and an offense led by offensive coordinator Joe Moorhead, considered one of the nation's best. Beating the Buckeyes would go a long way toward making that jump a reality, but for Oregon to pull off the upset, it will need that star-studded defense to shine while Moorhead manufactures big plays as he did at Penn State when the Nittany Lions toppled Ohio State in 2016.

To repeat that showing, though, Moorhead may need to see senior quarterback Anthony Brown transform into something closer to Trace McSorley, who reached mastery of his offense at Penn State. After stepping into a bigger role at the end of last season as Tyler Shough's backup (Shough has since transferred to Texas Tech), Brown managed to hold off blue-chip freshman

Ty Thompson in the battle for the starting role this offseason.

Brown, a transfer from Boston College with 28 starts for the Eagles, had thrown for 4,902 yards, 42 touchdowns and a 55.2-percent completion percentage entering the season. That makes him one of the nation's most experienced starters, even if his numbers leave a bit to be desired. It was that experience that helped to secure his starting job.

"The way he handles and has control and command of the offense, his presence amongst the players at the line of scrimmage, his ability to improvise, sometimes negotiate throws in tough situations, his ability to run the ball as well," Cristobal said when asked why he named Brown the starter. "He's been really accurate, and his explosive play ratio has been really high against a defense that we feel is really good."

"When we enter those periods to test the passing game, we do team pass, team blitz, plays under pressure to really test the protections, test the quarterback, pocket presence and all that stuff. Anthony's done a great job."

In Oregon's season-opening matchup with Fresno State on Sept. 4, Brown somewhat looked the part. He completed 15 of 24 passes for 172 yards and one touchdown during a 31-24 victory for the Ducks.

Brown isn't without help around him. Oregon returns its top two rushers (halfbacks Travis Dye and C.J. Verdell) and top three receivers from last season – Jaylon Redd, Johnny Johnson III and Devon Williams.

Though Dye led the Ducks in rushing a season ago, carrying 64 times for 443 yards and a score, it's the bruising Verdell – a 1,000-yard rusher in 2018 and 2019 – who is expected to get the nod at the top spot against the Buckeyes, so long as he can stay on the field. Injuries have held Verdell back in each of his first three seasons as a starter, and looking to limit his reps in both fall camp and this upcoming season to maintain health was a focus for the Ducks.

"The good news is that we have tons of depth," said Oregon running backs coach Jim Mastro. "With him it's just managing his load. He plays a physical brand of football. He's not going to change – that's his DNA. He's going to go until he can't go anymore."

"His knowledge of the game is off the charts. With him, it's just refining his skills. He's maybe a little bit better of a route runner since we're going to ask our backs to run more routes this year. He's what you want DNA-wise. We just have to keep him healthy."

Dye will serve as the more explosive back and as the primary receiving back – a crucial part of the Moorhead offense. Dye caught just nine passes out of the backfield last season but turned those nine receptions into 239 yards (an eye-popping 26.6 yards per catch) and four scores, which will certainly draw the eyes of Ohio State's new-look linebacker corps.

The No. 2 back isn't the only test for a passing defense that Ohio State hopes has taken a serious step forward after struggling mightily in 2020. Johnson, Redd and Williams are long-term contributors on the outside for the Ducks, and slot receiver Mycah Pittman has drawn plenty of praise from his coaches entering the game against the Buckeyes. Recent seasons have seen Oregon fail to find reliable targets, but the coaching staff is confident that it has a talented group this season, though receivers coach Bryan McClendon made a point of establishing the need for production from that talent.

Get To Know ... Oregon

• **2020 Record:** 4-3.

• **Team Information:** Offensive Formation – Spread; Defensive Formation – 3-3-5; Starters Returning – Offense 7, Defense 7, Specialists 0.

• **Head Coach:** Mario Cristobal, 4th year at Oregon, 26-10.

• **Series History:** 10th meeting; Ohio State leads 9-0-0

• **School Facts:** Location – Eugene, OR.; Enrollment – 18,888; Nickname – Ducks; Colors – Green, Yellow; Conference – Pac-12 (North Division); Stadium – Autzen Stadium (Surface, FieldTurf Revolution; Capacity – 60,000).

Top Offensive Players

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD
C.J. Verdell	18	74	4.1	1
Travis Dye	13	64	4.9	1
Anthony Brown	16	56	3.5	1

Passing	Comp-Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT
Anthony Brown	15-24	62.5	172	1-0

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD
J. Johnson III	3	76	25.3	1
Mycah Pittman	3	40	13.3	0
Kris Hutson	2	22	11.0	0

Team Offensive Stats

Points Per Game – 31.0
Rushing Yards Per Game – 186.0
Passing Yards Per Game – 172.0
Total Offense Avg. Per Game – 358.0

2021 Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time/Result (ET)
Sept. 4	FRESNO STATE	W, 31-24
Sept. 11	at Ohio State	Noon
Sept. 18	STONY BROOK	7:30 p.m.
Sept. 25	ARIZONA	TBA
Oct. 2	at Stanford	TBA
Oct. 15	CALIFORNIA	10:30 p.m.
Oct. 23	at UCLA	TBA
Oct. 30	COLORADO	TBA
Nov. 6	at Washington	TBA
Nov. 13	WASHINGTON ST.	TBA
Nov. 20	at Utah	TBA
Nov. 27	OREGON STATE	TBA
Dec. 3	Pac-12 Championship	8 p.m.

Top Defensive Players

Def. Leaders	Solo	Asst.	Tot.	TFL-Yards	Sacks
Justin Flowe	5	9	14	1.0-1	0-0
V. McKinley III	4	4	8	0-0	0-0
Trikweze Bridges	4	2	6	0-0	0-0
Mykael Wright	6	0	6	2.0-4	0-0
Noah Sewell	3	2	5	1.0-7	1.0-7
Steve Stephens IV	2	3	5	0-0	0-0
Brady Swinson	1	4	5	1.0-14	1.0-14
Brandon Dorius	3	0	3	1.0-7	1.0-7

Interceptions	No.	Yds	Avg	TD
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Team Defensive Stats

Points Per Game Allowed – 24.0
Rushing Yards Per Game Allowed – 75.0
Passing Yards Per Game Allowed – 298.0
Total Offense Avg. Per Game Allowed – 373.0

"I would much rather have you say, 'You have a really, really productive room,' over 'You've got a really, really talented one,'" McClendon said. "The production needs to exceed any type of talent that we have in any room. That's the goal."

"Guys know where they stack up on that. The most productive guys are going to play. I tell those guys it's not necessarily up to me. It's up to them what they get. You get what you earn. I tell them at the end of the day, this isn't the YMCA. Everyone doesn't play. The guys that give us the best chance to win are going to get in the game."

Brown and this year's skill corps will be set to operate behind one of Cristobal's most experienced offensive lines yet, with five returning starters.

"Obviously their eyes are a year older, their understanding of what we're doing and how we do it is a year older," UO offensive line coach Alex Mirabal said. "Because that group has one year under their belt now, they're processing things a lot faster. You process things faster, you can play a lot faster on the field, you can play a lot more physical. You can be a lot surer of what you're doing."

Despite the talent on offense, Oregon's largest strength – at least on paper – remains on the other side of the ball. All four of the former five-star recruits are set to contribute for the Oregon defense, either as stars in the case of linebacker Noah Sewell and defensive end Kayvon Thibodeaux, or contributors looking to make a jump, such as linebacker Justin Flowe and cornerback Dontae Manning, each of whom is projected in the two-deep.

With seven starters back and experienced play-caller Tim DeRuyter running the show after former defensive coordinator Andy Avalos took the Boise State head-coaching job during the off-season, Oregon intends to field one of the nation's top defenses, built around Thibodeaux, a projected top-10 NFL draft pick entering the season.

Interestingly, the defensive line around the star end poses more questions than just about

any other part of the defense. Two new starters are set to take over with each spot still up for grabs entering week two, although a player the caliber of Thibodeaux can cover quite a few ills, as Ohio State learned with Chase Young and the Bosa brothers. Thibodeaux single-handedly wrecked USC's game plan in last season's Pac-12 Championship Game and has issued fair warning to any team that plans to block him with just one player.

"If you want to let me go one-on-one, so be it," Thibodeaux said. "If that's what you feel, let it be. Anybody that is smart won't let it happen. (If it was up to me), every play I would have a tight end (block me). Why would I not? Look at the rate of destruction."

All three linebackers return with former blue-chip prospect Flowe pairing up with Sewell and Dru Mathis to round out what should be one of the best groups in the Pac-12.

Oregon was still piecing together its secondary entering week one. Trikweze Bridges and Manning continued an off-season-long battle for one outside corner role, but the return of slot safety Jamal Hill and outside corner D.J. James from suspension will answer quite a few questions if both are ready to jump into the starting lineup.

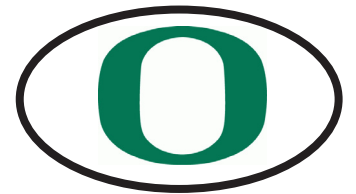
Mykael Wright and Verone McKinley III are respectively established at the field corner and field safety spots after starting last season, leaving just the battle between Bridges and Manning and the insertion of sophomore Steve Stephens IV as the new starting field safety as the only real questions for a young but talented secondary.

"I feel like with every practice, every walk-through, every meeting, our guys are starting to get a better feel for how we do things here," said Oregon secondary coach Marcell Yates. "As a unit, they're very coachable. They want to be coached up, they want to learn the game and learn what the linebackers are doing and what the defensive line is doing. They're starting to learn not just what they're doing but what the whole defense is doing."



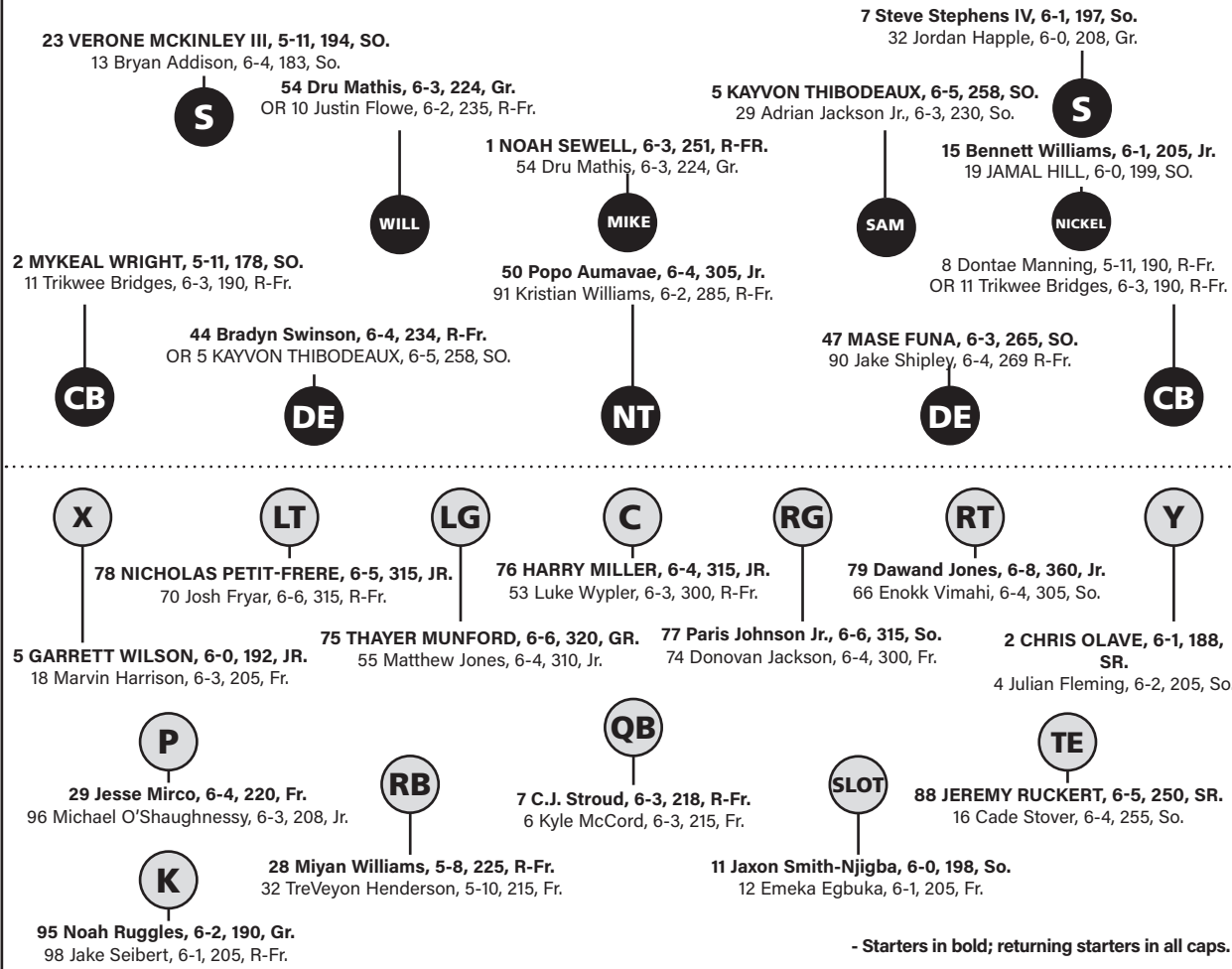
Oregon at Ohio State

Saturday, Sept. 11 • Noon • Fox
Ohio Stadium; Columbus, Ohio

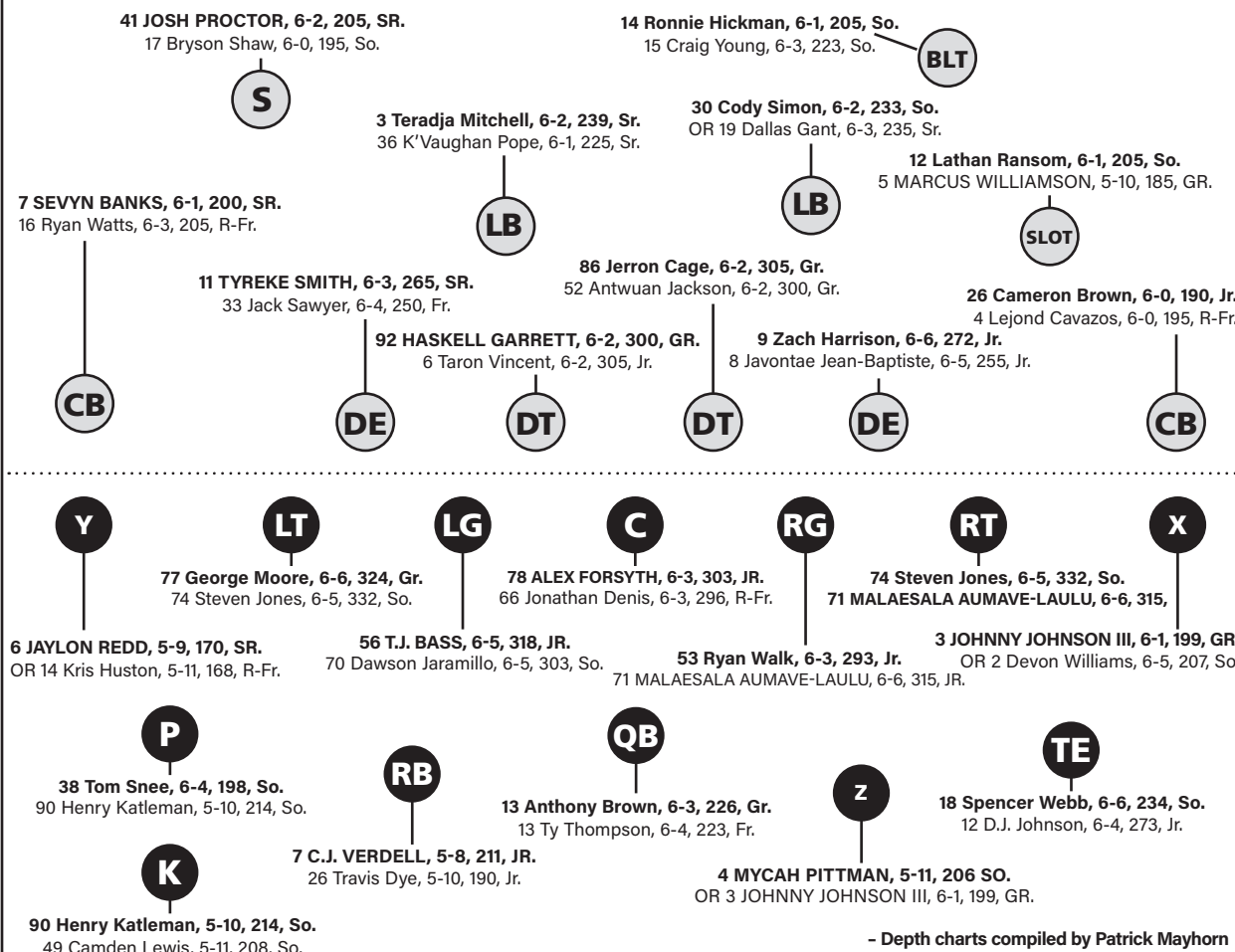


Projected Depth Charts

WHEN OHIO STATE HAS THE BALL...



WHEN OREGON HAS THE BALL...



How We See It

OHIO STATE RUSH OFFENSE vs. OREGON RUSH DEFENSE

The Buckeyes gained 201 yards on the ground while averaging a robust 7.7 yards per carry in the opener against Minnesota. Those numbers were inflated by the 71-yard touchdown run by Miyan Williams on the first drive, and the scary part is that he's not even the best runner in the room. Freshman TreVeyon Henderson had 15 yards on only two carries, but it was his wicked 70-yard catch-and-score on a swing pass that has Buckeye fans salivating. Master Teague and Marcus Crowley round out the deep group. Oregon allowed 75 yards (2.5 per carry) in the Ducks' 31-24 win against Fresno State on Sept. 4. However, Oregon might be shorthanded entering Ohio Stadium. Star defensive end Kayvon Thibodeaux did not play in the second half after sustaining a left ankle sprain. X-rays were negative, and he posted on Twitter after the game that he was OK. Thibodeaux, considered a possible Heisman Trophy candidate, is the No. 1 NFL draft prospect for 2022 in a composite compiled by CBS Sports. Also, linebacker Dru Mathis sustained a left knee injury that Ducks head coach Mario Cristobal said was more serious than Thibodeaux's. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

OREGON RUSH OFFENSE vs. OHIO STATE RUSH DEFENSE

The Ducks argue they have the best backfield in America. The stats back the claim if for no other reason than they have more experience than the Buckeyes. Juniors CJ Verdell and Travis Dye entered the season with a combined 4,363 rushing yards, the most of any returning FBS running back duo. Verdell vs. Fresno State had 74 yards on 18 totes with a 2-yard TD, and Dye had 64 yards through 13 rushes and a 4-yard score. QB Anthony Brown broke a 24-24 tie with a 30-yard run with 2:57 to play. Ohio State faced likely the biggest and most experienced offensive line it will come across all season in Minnesota, and Mohamed Ibrahim ripped off 163 yards on 30 carries before being injured late in the third quarter. **EDGE: OREGON**

OHIO STATE PASS OFFENSE vs. OREGON PASS DEFENSE

The advantage goes to Ohio State until proven otherwise. Yes, redshirt freshman C.J. Stroud was shaky at the onset of his first career start, but he was smart enough to find Garrett Wilson (five catches, 80 yards, one score) and Chris Olave (four receptions, 117 yards, two TDs). Stroud was 13 for 22 for 294 yards and second-half touchdowns of 38, 56, 70 and 61 yards. Now, he needs to spread the wealth among the receiving corps. Wilson (11) and Olave (six) were targeted on 17 of his 22 throws. The line, even without starting center Harry Miller, did not allow a sack. Oregon will try to bring pressure and rattle Stroud after sacking Fresno State QB Jake Haefner four times. Haefner was 30 of 43 for 298 yards and a TD. **EDGE: OHIO STATE**

OREGON PASS OFFENSE vs. OHIO STATE PASS DEFENSE

Take the first sentence above and reverse it. Until proven otherwise, the opponent has the advantage on the OSU pass defense. While the biggest play of the 45-31 win at Minnesota was the strip sack by Zach Harrison and fumble return for a TD by Haskell Garrett, the young secondary got torched several times and was flagged for pass interference twice, although there could have been more called. In fairness, projected starting cornerbacks Cameron Brown and Sevn Banks did not play, and their availability remains unknown for Oregon. Brown, a sixth-year senior who transferred from Boston College before last season, went 15 of 24 for 172 yards and a touchdown in the Ducks' opener. **EDGE: OREGON**

SPECIAL TEAMS

OSU freshman punter Jesse Mirco averaged 43.0 yards on two kicks with a long of 49. Grad transfer Noah Ruggles made all six PATs and a 35-yard field goal in his debut. Oregon punter Tom Snee had five punts for a 46.8 average with a 56-yarder included, and Camden Lewis made a 25-yard FG. Johnny Johnson III had two kickoff returns for 47 yards for the Ducks. **EDGE: EVEN**

INTANGIBLES

This is the game many prognosticators have circled as an upset. It reminds them of a young J.T. Barrett being rattled in an early-season home loss to Virginia Tech in 2014. Stroud could face a similar challenge against a preseason pick to win a third straight Pac-12 championship. The Buckeyes will get a huge lift finally playing in front of their fans for the first time since the 2019 season. **EDGE: EVEN**

STAFF PREDICTION

This is a great way to open the home schedule, much better than playing a MAC school (sorry, guys). There will be some nervy moments as there should be against a worthy opponent. The game could be decided by the OSU secondary. We know the Buckeyes are going to score, but how many points are they going to give up? Fasten your seat belts. **OHIO STATE 48, OREGON 35**

Buckeyes Perfect 9-0 All-Time Vs. Oregon

By **MARK REA**

BSB Managing Editor Emeritus

Despite the fact their respective campuses lie some 2,500 miles apart, Ohio State and Oregon have packed a remarkable number of highlights into a rivalry that consists of only nine games.

Rose Bowls, stadium dedications, coaching milestones and national championships are just a few of the landmark moments provided by the Buckeyes and Ducks. The teams met for the first time in the 1958 Rose Bowl, have played on six other occasions during the regular season, and since the 2009 season have squared off in two more postseason contests, including the inaugural College Football Playoff championship game.

Ohio State takes a spotless 9-0 record into this year's game, set for Sept. 11 at Ohio Stadium, but Oregon has never gone down without a fight. For example, the Buckeyes took a 10-7 win in the aforementioned 1958 Rose Bowl, but they entered the game as 19-point favorites, believed to be the most lopsided spread in game history at the time.

In the most recent regular-season renewal of the series – a 1987 showdown at the Horseshoe – fifth-ranked OSU entered the game as a 22-point favorite and settled for a 24-14 victory. It was perhaps the first inkling of how things would transpire in a season that ended with head coach Earle Bruce being fired the week of the Michigan game.

The Ducks were the early-line favorites by 3½ points in the 2010 Rose Bowl but dropped a 26-17 decision to the Buckeyes. Five years later, Oregon was favored by 5½ points in the 2014 CFP title game, but again Ohio State prevailed, rolling to a 42-20 victory.

"It truly is remarkable how much history these teams have despite not playing very often," OSU football historian Jack Park told

BSB. "When you think of the really big non-conference rivalries for Ohio State through the years, Oregon might not be a team that immediately comes to mind. That is especially so because of the fact Oregon has never beaten Ohio State in nine previous tries.

"But if you look back at the games these teams have played against one another, especially from a historical standpoint and the importance of the games themselves, it has been a rather remarkable rivalry in my opinion."

The following is a recap of the nine games comprising the all-time Ohio State-Oregon series.

- **1958** – After losing its season opener to TCU, Ohio State reeled off eight straight victories and then finished off a national championship season in Pasadena with a 10-7 win against Oregon.

OSU struck first when quarterback Frank Kremblas scored on a 1-yard run in the first quarter, a touchdown answered by the Ducks when halfback Jim Shanley scored from 5 yards out at the 12:25 mark of the second quarter.

The Ducks, who outgained the Buckeyes by a 351-304 margin, had a chance to take the lead in the third quarter, but kicker Jack Morris missed a 24-yard field-goal attempt. OSU senior Don Sutherin booted a 24-yard field goal with 14:02 remaining in the fourth quarter to snap the 7-7 tie, and his OSU teammates made the score stand up.

- **1961** – Woody Hayes marked his 100th game as head coach at Ohio State and celebrated with a 22-12 victory over the Ducks.

The game was vintage Woody as the Buckeyes used a punishing rushing attack that featured three players going over the 100-yard mark. Quarterback John Mummey led the way with 116 yards followed by halfback Bob Klein with 103 and fullback Bob Ferguson with 101.

The following week, OSU rolled to a 50-20 win over Michigan and put the finishing

touches on an 8-0-1 season. Afterward, university faculty council members voted 28-25 not to send the team to the Rose Bowl, but the Buckeyes were awarded the national championship by the Football Writers Association of America.

- **1962** – Oregon came to Ohio Stadium primed for an upset but limped home after a 26-7 defeat.

The Ducks entered the game with a 6-1-1 record, and the Buckeyes were missing four injured starters – Mummey, Klein and defensive back Bo Scott and kicker Dick VanRaaphorst. Nevertheless, Oregon was no match for Ohio State's power game.

Hayes unleashed a trio of fullbacks on the Ducks, and Dave Francis, Dave Katererich and Bob Butts combined to carry the ball 47 times for 214 yards. Meanwhile, Bill Mrukowski, who also played defense, filled in for Mummey at quarterback and ran for a pair of touchdowns.

- **1967** – The Buckeyes traveled to Eugene for the dedication game at Autzen Stadium and proved to be inhospitable guests, charging to a 30-9 victory.

Ohio State dominated every phase of the contest, holding lopsided advantages in first downs (25-8), rushing yardage (279-106) and total yardage (382-153). The defense also picked off four Oregon passes, two of which led to OSU touchdowns.

Senior fullback Paul Huff scored twice while sophomore fullback Jim Otis and senior halfback Rudy Hubbard each tallied one touchdown. The Buckeyes also got a 35-yard field goal from Gary Cairns.

- **1968** – Oregon served as victim No. 2 during Ohio State's perfect run to the 1968 national championship.

The 21-6 victory was hardly a virtuoso performance by the Buckeyes, however. They turned the ball over six times, but the defense rose to the occasion. It held the Ducks to only six first downs and 140 total yards.

OSU got on the scoreboard first when junior Mike Polaski returned a blocked punt 9 yards for a first-quarter touchdown. The Buckeyes later got a 35-yard touchdown romp from Otis and a 55-yard TD pass from sophomore quarterback Ron Maciejowski to classmate Bruce Jankowski.

- **1983** – Rather than getting caught looking ahead, Ohio State rolled to a 31-6 victory over the Ducks in the 1983 season opener.

Bruce was worried about his team's focus with a highly anticipated trip to Oklahoma the following week, but the Buckeyes

turned in an impressive performance on both sides of the ball.

While the defense was creating five turnovers – three interceptions and two fumble recoveries – the offense was led by quarterback Mike Tomczak, who completed 21 of 25 passes for 273 yards and four touchdowns. Tomczak was especially lethal in the second half when he connected on 13 of 14 throws for 182 yards.

- **1987** – The most recent regular-season meeting between Ohio State and Oregon resulted in a 24-14 win for the Buckeyes in week two of the 1987 season.

It had been an offseason of unrest for the OSU program. Bruce had turned down an offer to become head coach at Arizona, and the program mourned the death of Hayes in March. Then, in July, star receiver Cris Carter was ruled ineligible for accepting money from sports agents.

Even with all of those distractions, the Buckeyes managed to open the season with a 24-3 win over West Virginia and moved to 2-0 with their win over the Ducks. Senior quarterback Tom Tupa threw for two touchdowns, and tailback Vince Workman ran for a score.

The following week, Ohio State and LSU played to a 13-13 tie. The Buckeyes lost four of their next seven games, and Bruce was fired the week before an emotional 23-20 victory at Michigan.

- **2010** – After Pac-10 champion Oregon had taken a 17-16 lead early in the third quarter, the Buckeyes responded with 10 unanswered points to close out a 26-17 victory in the 2010 Rose Bowl.

QB Terrelle Pryor threw for 266 yards and two TDs and added another 72 yards on the ground.

Meanwhile, the OSU defense held the potent Ducks offense to only 260 total yards. Oregon entered the game averaging nearly 38 points and 425 yards per game.

- **2015** – The teams met at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, to decide the 2014 national championship with the second-ranked Ducks, led by Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback Marcus Mariota, favored to beat the fourth-ranked Buckeyes.

But running back Ezekiel Elliott continued his postseason heroics by rushing for 246 yards and four touchdowns as Ohio State overcame an early 7-0 deficit to run away with a 42-20 victory.

Mariota threw for 333 yards and a pair of touchdowns, but he was sacked twice and limited to just 39 yards rushing.



We offer **A MADE-FROM-SCRATCH MENU OF INCREDIBLE RECIPES, SERVED IN GENEROUS PORTIONS FOR FAMILIES & FRIENDS.**

MON-THUR: 11AM-8PM

FRI-SAT: 11AM-9PM

SUN: 11AM-8:30PM

397 W BROAD ST, COLUMBUS, OH 43215 | (614) 464-0143 | MEATBALLS.COM

TOPSOIL

VERY RICH PULVERIZED
OR UNPULVERIZED
"SOIL PLUS"



BLENDED SOIL WITH SAND and ORGANIC COMPOST
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL
CRUSHED LIMESTONE, WASHED SAND & GRAVEL

ANY SIZE LOAD • IMMEDIATE DELIVERY ANYWHERE

Buy Where the Professionals Do • Delivered on Time - Every Time, It Doesn't Cost Any More!

Columbus' Largest

JONES FUEL COMPANY

350 Frank Road • 443-4611 • 1-800-TOPSOIL
www.jonestopsoil.com

Reds SEPTEMBER 2021



SEPT. 3-5



FRIDAY // 7:10

- Post-game Fireworks Show, presented by Coca-Cola



SATURDAY // 7:10

- Barry Larkin Dual Bobblehead, presented by TriHealth
First 15,000 fans

SUNDAY // 1:10

- Family Sunday, presented by Klosterman Bakery
- Tyler Stephenson Fathead® Kids Giveaway, presented by Raising Cane's
Kids 14 & younger



SEPT. 17-19



FRIDAY // 7:10

- Military Appreciation Night, presented by CareSource
- Post-Game Fireworks Show, presented by Adams Recovery Center

SATURDAY // 2:10

- Reds Can Cooler, presented by Coca-Cola
First 15,000 fans



SUNDAY // 1:10

- Family Sunday, presented by Klosterman Bakery
- Eugenio Suárez Fathead® Kids Giveaway, presented by Great Clips
Kids 14 & younger



OKTOBERFEST Ticket Package

Includes a Reds vs. Dodgers ticket and a drink at the game, a commemorative Oktoberfest mug, and a drink at Oktoberfest Zinzinnati!

(item only available with purchase of ticket package)
Available at reds.com/Themes



SEPT. 20-22



MONDAY // 6:40

TUESDAY // 6:40

WEDNESDAY // 12:35

- Business Day Special!
For only \$20, get your game ticket + \$10 in concession credits!

SEPT. 23-26



THURSDAY // 6:40

- Thirsty Thursday!
For only \$30, get your game ticket + \$10 in concession credits!

FRIDAY // 7:10

- Fiesta Rojos, presented by Toyota



- Post-game Fireworks Show

SATURDAY // 7:10

- Reds Team Photo, presented by Morris Furniture
First 15,000 fans

SUNDAY // 1:10

- Family Sunday, presented by Klosterman Bakery
- Joey Votto Fathead® Kids Giveaway, presented by Chick-fil-A
Kids 14 & younger



(513) 381-REDS (7337)



reds.com/TICKETS

*Some restrictions apply. Schedule and promotions subject to change.

Rutgers QB Skips Senior Year, Enrolls Early

Four-star quarterback Gavin Wimsatt of Owensboro, Ky., has left school early and enrolled at Rutgers for the fall semester.

"We love and appreciate Gavin and everything that he's done for OHS football and Owensboro High School," Red Devils head coach Jay Fallin said. "In addition to being an outstanding football player, he's also just a great young man. It's been a pleasure to get to coach him over the last four years and watch him grow. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors."

In three games this season, Wimsatt completed 46 of 80 passes for 583 yards and six touchdowns, adding 131 rushing yards and two scores.

BIG TEN NOTES Joe Dempsey

The 6-3, 200-pound signal caller is the nation's No. 11 quarterback and No. 147 overall prospect as well as Kentucky's top recruit.

Wimsatt earned all-state honors after completing 59.7 percent of his passes for 2,349 yards and 27 touchdowns in 2020. He also rushed for 421 yards and six scores to help the Red Devils go 11-1 and reach the Class 5A state championship game before falling to Bowling Green.

Illini LB Hart Done For Season

Illinois sophomore linebacker Calvin Hart stood out during the Illini's season-opening 30-22 win against Nebraska on Aug. 28, returning a fumble 41 yards for a touchdown in addition to registering six tackles and one sack before leaving with a season-ending knee injury.

Illinois first-year defensive coordinator Ryan Walters praised Hart's performance against the Cornhuskers, particularly with the way he made Nebraska quarterback Adrian Martinez's job difficult.

"He's a savvy player who plays hard," Walters said. "He can dip in and out of blocks and turn the corner. Obviously, he was very productive in affecting the quarterback before he went out. When the ball was on the ground, he realized he had some space to scoop and score instead of fall on it."

"We hate that he got hurt, but he's going to be a really good player for us."

Another injured Illinois player, sixth-year senior quarterback Brandon Peters, remains without a timetable to return. Peters, a three-year starter who injured his non-throwing, left shoulder after taking a sack against Nebraska, missed Illinois' 37-30 loss Sept. 4 to Texas San Antonio.

Sophomore signal caller Artur Sitkowski, a Rutgers transfer, started in Peters' place. He completed 22 of 42 passes for

266 yards and three touchdowns in the loss.

5-Star CG Commits To Hoosier Hoops

Indiana first-year head coach Mike Woodson won a recruiting battle when five-star combo guard Jalen Hood-Schifino picked the Hoosiers over Tennessee.

Hood-Schifino is the No. 5 combo guard and No. 24 overall prospect in the country, marking a major win for Woodson and his staff.

The Charlotte, N.C., native had previously committed to Pittsburgh in 2019, but he de-committed from the Panthers last summer, and Kansas, Indiana, Tennessee, Texas, Memphis, and others ramped up their recruiting efforts. The Hoosiers and Volunteers became the standouts, and the 6-5, 210-pounder took official visits to each school before picking Indiana.

Hood-Schifino became the second-highest rated recruit to commit to Woodson since he arrived in Bloomington in April, trailing only incoming freshman shooting guard Tamar Bates.

A Montverde (Fla.) Academy standout, Hood-Schifino headlines the Hoosiers' 2022 class, which includes three-star power forward Kaleb Banks and three-star shooting guard C.J. Gunn. At the time of Hood-Schifino's commitment, he boosted Indiana's class from No. 20 to No. 5 in the national rankings.

NW Lands Highest Rated Recruit in Program History

Northwestern has picked up a commitment from Northfield (Mass.) Northfield Mount Hermon four-star point guard Rowan Brumbaugh. He is the highest ranked Wildcat recruit in the Internet era.

A Washington, D.C., native, Brumbaugh attended the prestigious prep school that has produced numerous college basketball players, including former Michigan and Purdue guard Spike Albrecht. Brumbaugh will bring excellent length to Evanston, measuring in at 6-4 and 180 pounds heading into his senior season in high school.

Brumbaugh held 29 offers before choosing the Wildcats, picking them despite strong interest from more prominent basketball programs such as Georgetown and Maryland. A four-star prospect, Brumbaugh is the No. 10 point guard and No. 86 overall recruit in the country for the 2022 class.

Rising PG Simpson Commits To Rutgers

Rutgers men's basketball continued to reload its roster with the commitment



BIG

2021 Standings

East Division				All			
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.	
Ohio State	1	0	1.000	1	0	1.000	
Michigan State	1	0	1.000	1	0	1.000	
Penn State	1	0	1.000	1	0	1.000	
Rutgers	0	0	0.000	1	0	1.000	
Michigan	0	0	0.000	1	0	1.000	
Maryland	0	0	0.000	1	0	1.000	
Indiana	0	1	0.000	0	1	1.000	

West Division				All			
	W	L	Pct.	W	L	Pct.	
Illinois	1	0	1.000	1	1	.500	
Iowa	1	0	1.000	1	0	1.000	
Purdue	0	0	0.000	1	0	1.000	
Minnesota	0	1	0.000	0	1	0.000	
Northwestern	0	1	0.000	0	1	0.000	
Wisconsin	0	1	0.000	0	1	0.000	
Nebraska	0	1	0.000	1	1	.500	

Aug. 28 Game
Illinois 30, Nebraska 22

Sept. 2 Game
Ohio State 45, Minnesota 31

Sept. 3 Game
Michigan State 38, Northwestern 21

Sept. 4 Games
Rutgers 61, Temple 14
Nebraska 52, Fordham 7
Penn State 16, Wisconsin 10
Michigan 47, Western Michigan 14
Iowa 34, Indiana 6
Maryland 30, West Virginia 24
Purdue 30, Oregon State 21
UTSA 37, Illinois 30

Sept. 11 Games
Illinois at Virginia, 11 a.m.
Miami (Ohio) at Minnesota, noon
Indiana State at Northwestern, noon
Youngstown State at Michigan State, noon
Oregon at Ohio State, noon
Rutgers at Syracuse, 2 p.m.
Purdue at UConn, 3 p.m.
Buffalo at Nebraska, 3:30 p.m.
Ball State at Penn State, 3:30 p.m.
Iowa at Iowa State, 4:30 p.m.
Eastern Michigan at Wisconsin, 7 p.m.
Idaho at Indiana, 7:30 p.m.
Howard at Maryland, 7:30 p.m.
Washington at Michigan, 8 p.m.

of 2022 Mount Laurel (N.J.) Lenape point guard Derek Simpson.

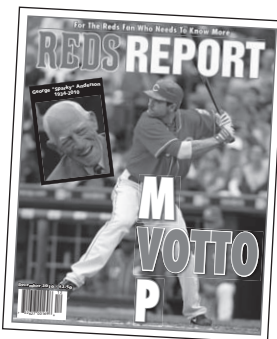
The 6-2 point guard has enjoyed an ex-

REDS FANS!

Follow The Reds Year-Round In Reds Report

Reds Report is must reading for every Reds fan. Each information-filled issue includes player features; historical articles; extensive minor-league coverage with features on top prospects, complete statistics and farm club updates; box scores and game summaries for every Reds game; complete team and individual statistics; a Reds memorabilia section and much more.

1 Year (12 issues) — \$44.95



Send to: Reds Report • P.O. Box 12453 • Columbus, Ohio 43212

- ☐ Please send me a one-year (12 issues) subscription to **Reds Report** for \$44.95.
- ☐ My check or money order is enclosed. Check # _____
- ☐ Charge to my: ☐ Discover ☐ MC ☐ Visa ☐ AMEX
- Exp. Date _____
- Card No. _____
- Name _____
- Address _____
- City _____ State _____ Zip _____

For Faster Service On Credit Card Orders Call
1-800-760-2862




Home of
THE Largest
Ohio State
Retail
Memorabilia
Collection in
the Country!



VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND USE CODE: **BSB10**
10% OFF ANY ONE ITEM
EXPIRES 12/31/21

Visit www.SportsPossessions.com
The Mall at Tuttle Crossing • Dublin (614) 389-1648
Tanger Outlet • Sunbury (740) 965-4004

BIG TEN NOTES

cellent summer in both AAU ball on the Adidas Gauntlet series and summer leagues for Lenape High School.

With coaches finally being able to watch recruits play in person, Simpson took advantage, receiving offers from Rutgers, Arizona State, St. Bonaventure, Northeastern, Albany and Delaware in addition to previous offers from St. Joseph's, Old Dominion and Rider.

As a junior, Simpson was named a third-team all-state selection by the Newark (N.J.) Star-Ledger, averaging a team-leading 20.6 points, 4.9 assists, 4.4 rebounds, and 2.1 steals.

Although the Medford, N.J., native is currently an unranked recruit, that status is expected to change once the rankings are updated by national services toward the end of the summer. Simpson had not played live in front of college coaches or recruiting analysts in two years, but he has taken advantage of his opportunities in 2021.

With Geo Baker in his final season of eligibility and Paul Mulcahy entering his junior season, the Scarlet Knights needed to find a point guard to add depth to the backcourt along with true freshman Jalen Miller.

With his commitment, Simpson joined three-star wing Braedon Moore as part of Rutgers' 2022 recruiting class. Head coach Steve Pikiell has one confirmed remaining open scholarship to fill in the 2022 recruiting class but will probably have at least one more spot open due to the unlikelihood of Ron Harper Jr. staying for a fifth season.

Athletic Wing Commits To Minnesota MBB

First-year head coach Ben Johnson secured Minnesota's third commitment of its 2022 class in wing Josh Ola-Joseph of Osseo, Minn.

Ola-Joseph saw his stock rise significantly this summer, going from zero high-major offers to earning a scholarship offer from the Gophers as well as offers from Clemson and Texas A&M.

The 6-6, 200-pound wing will bring exceptional athleticism to Minnesota, boasting a reported 40-inch vertical jump.

Ola-Joseph joins the 2022 class at Minnesota that includes 6-3 shooting guard Braeden Carrington and 6-9 power forward Pharrel Payne.

Former WBB Standout Joins Mavs As Assistant

Former Maryland women's basketball standout Kristi Toliver has joined the Dallas Mavericks staff as an assistant coach.

Toliver, who has won two WNBA

championships, currently plays in the WNBA with the Los Angeles Sparks. The former Terrapin also spent parts of two seasons as a member of the Washington Wizards coaching staff.

Toliver starred for the Terrapins from 2006-09 before she was selected No. 3 overall in the 2009 WNBA draft. She played a key role on Maryland's 2006 national championship team and hit the game-tying three-pointer in the final seconds to force overtime in the championship game against Duke.

As a senior at Maryland, Toliver averaged 18.4 points and 4.9 assists per game. Her new job with the Mavs will not impact her playing career in the WNBA.

Top Performers Across Conference

Michigan State junior tailback Kenneth Walker was the top performer in the Big Ten this week, carrying the ball 23 times for 264 yards and four touchdowns to lift the Spartans over Northwestern 38-21 in his first game since transferring from Wake Forest.

Maryland junior quarterback Taulia Tagovailoa led the Terrapins to a 30-24 victory against West Virginia, throwing for 319 yards and three touchdowns on 25-of-36 passing.

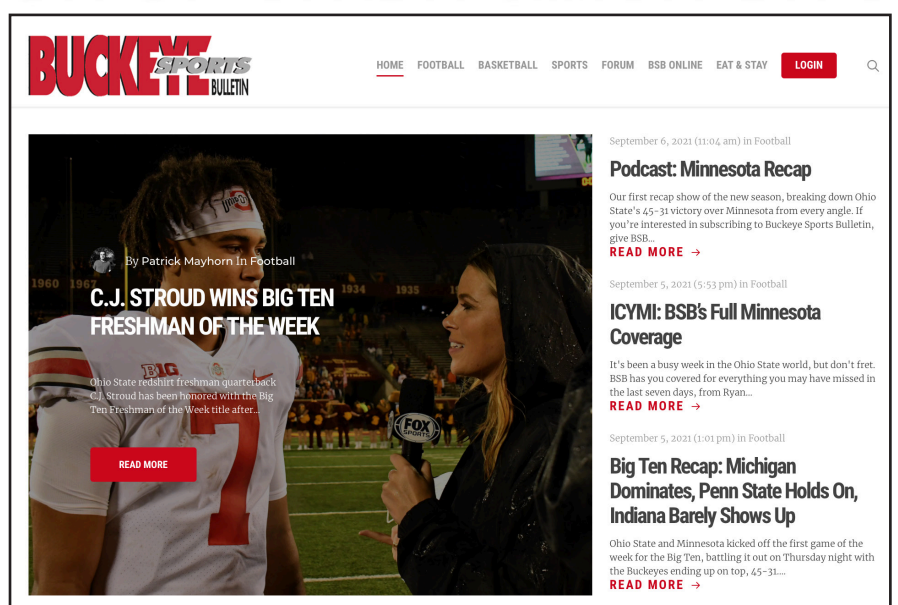
Purdue fourth-year junior quarterback Jack Plummer helped lead the Boilermakers to a 30-21 win against Oregon State, completing 29 of 41 passes for 313 yards and two scores.

Rutgers fifth-year senior linebacker Olakunle Fatukasi stood out for the Scarlet Knights in their 61-14 victory against Temple, posting seven tackles (six solo), four tackles for loss, three sacks and one forced fumble. The 2020 first-team All-Big Ten linebacker also forced a safety to give Rutgers a 2-0 lead just 3:06 into the game.

Nebraska sixth-year senior safety Deontai Williams was one of the top performers of the week, recording two interceptions along with four tackles (two solo) in the Huskers' 52-7 victory against Fordham.

Although his team lost 45-31 to Ohio State, Minnesota fifth-year senior tailback Mohamed Ibrahim deserves credit for a stellar performance during which he ran for 163 yards and two touchdowns on 30 carries before injuring his right Achilles tendon.

SEE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MISSING ON BUCKEYESPORTS.COM Free To Print Subscribers



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

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

To sign up for this free service send an email to subscriptions@buckeyesports.com and we will send you easy-to-follow instructions on how to enjoy reading Buckeye Sports Bulletin online

www.theredbricktapandgrill.com
292 E. Gates St.
Columbus (614) 444-2742

HAPPY HOUR 3-8pm Mon-Fri
Half off all 30 drafts • Half off select appetizers
Craft bottle specials all day

100 Craft Beers!
New Food & Cocktail Menu
Newly Renovated Patio with Fire Pit
Handmade Pizzas & In-House Smoked Meats

Conferences Alliance Response To SEC Move

By **WYATT CROSHER**

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Associate Editor

The Atlantic Coast Conference, Big Ten and Pacific-12 conferences announced Aug. 24 that they would be forming an alliance to work “together on a collaborative approach surrounding the future evolution of college athletics and scheduling,” according to a press release.

It is an alliance unanimously agreed upon by the 41 universities affiliated with the respective conferences, and one that was focused specifically on increasing the competition of nonconference games, which will, in turn, “enhance opportunities for student-athletes, and optimize the college athletics experience for both student-athletes and fans across the country,” the release stated.

“The ACC, Big Ten and Pac-12 recog-

nize the unique environment and challenges currently facing intercollegiate athletics, and we are proud and confident in this timely and necessary alliance that brings together like-minded institutions and conferences focused on the overall educational missions of our preeminent institutions,” ACC commissioner Jim Phillips said. “The alliance will ensure that the educational outcomes and experiences for student-athletes participating at the highest level of collegiate athletics will remain the driving factor in all decisions moving forward.”

The alliance did not come out of nowhere. On July 26, Oklahoma and Texas released a joint statement announcing their intentions to move from the Big 12 to the Southeastern Conference. Four days later, each program unanimously accepted an invitation to ultimately join the

SEC at the end of their current television contracts.

“The University of Oklahoma and the University of Texas at Austin notified the Big 12 Athletic Conference today that they will not be renewing their grants of media rights following expiration in 2025,” read a joint statement dated July 26. “Providing notice to the Big 12 at this point is important in advance to the expiration of the conference’s current media rights agreement. The universities intend to honor their existing grant of rights agreements. However, both universities will continue to monitor the rapidly evolving collegiate athletics landscape as they consider how best to position their athletics programs for the future.”

The move involving Oklahoma and Texas would expand the SEC to 16 teams, many of which – like Alabama, Georgia,

LSU and Texas A&M – are already consistently ranked among the top programs in football. With that in mind, the three so-called Power Five conferences that were not involved in the Big 12-to-SEC transaction decided to make a move.

Former Ohio State quarterback and longtime ESPN college football analyst Kirk Herbstreit lauded the alliance formation.

“I think it’s a great idea,” Herbstreit told the ACC Network. “I think the SEC power play, where they were already considered the premier conference for college football, and now they bring in two more brands in Texas and Oklahoma. I know on one hand it’s exciting for the SEC if you want to look at it through that lens.

“But if you choose to look at it through a different lens, what’s going to happen, not just to the ACC and the Big Ten, but most specifically, what’s going to happen to Kansas State, Iowa State, Texas Tech and Oklahoma State? These are good brands. Where are they going to go? Are they going to try to keep that Big 12 together? Are they going to pick up a Houston maybe?”

Herbstreit noted that with all the speculation, discussions and potential changes, he believes the college football world is currently what he described as a tsunami.

“I think the alliance and these guys communicating with one another is an example of trying to work together,” Herbstreit said. “But how are they going to eventually work with Greg after what the SEC did? You know, is Greg Sankey, the commissioner of the SEC, are they going to welcome him into their circle? Or is it everybody against Greg because of what the SEC did? And that would not be a good place, I feel like, to be.”

Longtime Buckeye Sports Bulletin contributor Mike Wachsman said he thinks the alliance was an attempt to regain some of the power the SEC is threatening to steal.

“I figured that someone was going to hit the button next as far as making a move,” Wachsman said. “Whether it was realignment and taking more teams, whether it was trying to strengthen their position of power, somebody was going to do something. It’s not surprising that the Big Ten was involved because they’re the only other league, aside from the SEC, that really has the power and leverage to do something like that. And they’ve been aligned with the Pac-12 for years with the Rose Bowl, so that wasn’t a real surprise.

“I’m a little surprised the ACC came on board, but then when you think about it, I guess the SEC could take who else? Clemson, Miami (Fla.) and maybe Florida State? The ACC would basically be in the same boat as the Big 12 if the SEC just poached their top members. So maybe they figured they wanted to counteract the SEC, and they can be aligned with the Big Ten and Pac-12.”

While Wachsman’s asserted scenario was likely what made the alliance move happen, the press release was consistent with the overall intention being toward the well-being of the student-athletes.

“The Big Ten Conference has always prioritized academic excellence as well as athletic excellence for student-ath-

playcolumbus

53,000 SQUARE FEET OF FUN!

THE WORLD'S LARGEST INDOOR ROPES COURSE IS IN YOUR BACKYARD!

- FUN FOR ALL AGES!!
- TWO-STORY ROPES COURSE
- NINJA/OBSTACLES
- CLIMBING WALLS + BOULDERING WALL
- ZIP LINE
- FULL BAR + KITCHEN WITH CRAFT, LOCAL BREWS, WINE + COCKTAILS
- 4 PRIVATE PARTY ROOMS

PARTIES, EVENTS, AND FULL-FACILITY PRIVATE RENTALS AVAILABLE!

535 LAKEVIEW PLAZA BLVD WORTHINGTON, OHIO 43085
(614) 505-8586
INFO@PLAYCOLUMBUS.COM



ACC/BIG TEN/PAC-12 ALLIANCE

letes,” University of Wisconsin chancellor Rebecca Blank said in the statement. “Today’s announcement reinforces the values of integrity, fairness and competitiveness among all members of this alliance and provides additional opportunities for our student-athletes to enhance their collegiate experience.”

Big Ten commissioner Kevin Warren reinforced that sentiment.

“Student-athletes have been and will remain the focal point of the Big Ten, ACC and Pac-12 conferences,” Warren said. “Today, through this alliance, we furthered our commitment to our student-athletes by prioritizing our academics and athletics value systems. We are creating opportunities for student-athletes to have elite competition and are taking the necessary steps to shape and stabilize the future of college athletics.”

But the timing was clearly important, and not only for the news involving the Sooners and Longhorns. There has been talk about expansion of the College Football Playoff from four teams to as many as 12, which could come into play within the next few seasons if approved.

Wachsman said that likely also played a factor in the alliance, as the SEC has more to gain with playoff expansion with all of its highly ranked matchups coming in the future.

“Realignment in and of itself is not bad,” he said. “I think this one was because, especially if the playoff is expanded, those are two more candidates for the SEC. Oklahoma will be an almost every-year candidate. Texas, maybe if something gets going, could be an every-year

candidate starting in about three years.

“So, if you’re going to have a 12-team playoff and four, maybe five of the members are one league, that’s half the play-off field just about, and so you basically have table scraps for the Big Ten, which remains a good, prestigious league.

“The pickings will be slim for any multiple-bid league that are not the SEC,” Wachsman added. “So, I really don’t think that the other leagues are really trying for expansion as much as the SEC.”

With that in mind, the alliance will allow for football matchups that “feature additional attractive matchups across the three conferences while continuing to honor historic rivalries and the best traditions of college football,” said the release.

But Wachsman said that there was something specific about the alliance that troubles him. That is the decision to make this an informal, handshake agreement between all three conferences, something that is less concrete and more a simple understanding by everyone involved. Wachsman believes that could lead to trouble down the line, especially if the SEC doesn’t take seriously something that was never set in stone.

That seemed already at play when SEC member LSU and Pac-12 rival USC were scheduled into the 2024 Kickoff Classic in Las Vegas. That revelation came only two days after the ACC-Big Ten-Pac-12 alliance was announced.

“I saw a movie recently where a guy was trying to sing at a nightclub, and then a gangster came in and he went with the gangster,” Wachsman said. “He wanted to tell the other guy he was with and he said,

‘Well, why didn’t you tell me?’ He said, ‘I didn’t know how to tear up a handshake.’

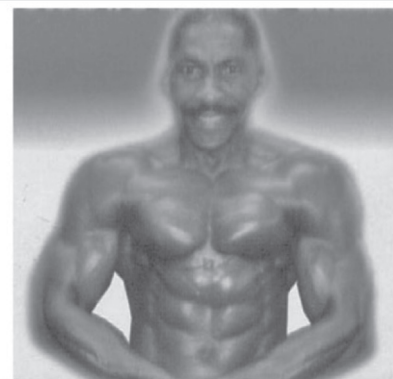
“If there’s nothing on paper, it sounds good, and maybe it does work for a few years, especially with the scheduling and if they can get one good TV deal out of it. But I guarantee you if Clemson is sitting there still dominating in five or six years, and the rest of the ACC hasn’t caught up, the SEC is going to throw money at them. And then, maybe the SEC throws money at Ohio State, too.”

But speaking of Ohio State, the alliance does not seem to be a big deal to the program at the top of the Big Ten, although according to Wachsman, the largest benefit for the Buckeyes will be an increase in ticket prices for some more marquee nonconference matchups against some alliance opponents.

“People complain. ‘Oh, they’re playing Akron and they’re playing Tulsa again,’ ” Wachsman said. “And those are the tickets people give away. It would make for a more attractive nonconference season and (athletic director) Gene Smith and the board could jack the ticket prices up again. You might be playing USC. You might be playing Florida State. You might be playing Clemson, whereas now you’re playing Tulsa, you’re playing Youngstown State, you’re playing Toledo. I think that that’s the only benefit that it would have for Ohio State – generate a slightly higher ticket revenue if they do the tiered pricing with games like that.

“The best team in the league isn’t really going to benefit a whole lot more monetarily. They’re always going to be at the top of the chain. I don’t really know

that it’s a super home run for Ohio State. I think it always helps when you’re weaker and you now go to a position of strength rather than already being the strongest link in the chain. Now you’re taking on more weight. So for Ohio State, other than tickets and more attractive nonconference games, I really don’t think it does a whole lot for them.”



TIM SWANSON
Certified Personal Trainer

Flat Stomach • Weight Loss • Strength Training • Cardio Kick-Boxing • Boot Camp

614-886-9331
foreverfitswan@yahoo.com

🐦 @REDSMUSEUM
📘 REDS MUSEUM
📺 @REDSMUSEUM



PRESENTED BY
Dinsmore

GO BEHIND THE SCENES WITH A GREAT AMERICAN BALL PARK TOUR

Tour tickets are available through the Hall of Fame Box Office and online.
Tours available Saturdays and Sundays, 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

For more information, call the Hall of Fame Box Office at (513) 765-7923 or visit

 **REDSMUSEUM.ORG**

Ohio Field Curtain Came Down Century Ago

By **MARK REA**

BSB Managing Editor Emeritus

The autumn of 1921 was one of transition at Ohio State, especially in terms of its football program. Thanks to the stardom of three-time All-American Chic Harley, the Buckeyes were experiencing the opening act of becoming a player on the national college football stage.

Harley was gone, off to the fledgling American Professional Football Association and fighting with George Halas for control of the upstart Chicago Staleys, a team that one year later would become known as the Bears when the APFA became the National Football League.

But when ninth-year head coach John Wilce gathered his Ohio State team a century ago to begin fall practice for the season, there was still excitement in the air.

A month earlier, on Aug. 3, 1921, ground was officially broken on the banks of the Olentangy River for construction of a massive stadium to replace the university's existing facility located at North High Street and Woodruff Avenue. Because of Harley's popularity and the football team's unparalleled success, the program had outgrown Ohio Field after a little more than two decades.

Ohio Field was only the third official home of the football Buckeyes, although the campus had been the site for a variety

of other sports venues. Racing was popular in the early days, and both foot and bicycle competitions were held during the 1880s at a quarter-mile track on the present site of the university's chemistry complex near 17th Avenue.

By 1890, a multiuse facility for track, baseball and football was in use and located west of Neil Avenue near the present-day site of Ohio Stadium. But it was little more than just a strip of grass with temporary wooden bleachers placed haphazardly around the field. Track and field was much more popular in those days, and those meets eventually moved to the State Fairgrounds.

Meanwhile, Ohio State hosted its first official football game Nov. 1, 1890, on a field in German Village at the corner of South High and Whittier streets. That site was known as Recreation Park, and it was there the Buckeyes suffered a 64-0 loss to the College of Wooster. The team lasted just two seasons at Recreation Park and won only one of four games played there – an 8-4 win against Denison during the final home game of the 1891 season.

With the dawn of the 1892 campaign, the Buckeyes moved to Athletic Park, located on the southern part of the campus near Neil Avenue between the Veterinary Hospital and the North Dormitory. OSU christened its new facility with an 80-0 win against Marietta College on Oct. 29, 1892, beginning a six-year stay during which the



MARK REA

HISTORICAL MARKER - Located on the Ohio State campus, on the west side of High Street and south of Woodruff Avenue, is a walking path situated on the site of Ohio Field, the home for the Buckeyes from 1898 through 1921. Among the park's features is Harley's Rock, which displays a bronze plaque commemorating the exploits of three-time All-American Chic Harley.

Buckeyes posted an 18-13-3 record.

The team was on the move again in 1898, this time to a site on the west side of High Street and south of Woodruff Avenue. The facility was originally called University Field and had a capacity of only 500 seats – more than enough, it seemed, for a program that was very much still in its infancy. During its first eight seasons of existence, the Ohio State football team had gone through four different head coaches who had combined to produce a decidedly pedestrian 28-34-4 record.

There was another problem, too. The university's Athletic Association – the forerunner of the present-day Department of Athletics – had somewhat mysteriously run up a debt of \$1,400. Not only did that anger members of the Faculty Council, but the university ruled that until that debt was

retired, any thought of constructing a new football facility would be placed on indefinite hold.

Players and other students wanted to continue work on the field, offering their services for free, but the university would not relent. For the next several weeks, a number of fundraisers were held by the Glee Club, Banjo Club and Drama Club, a sock hop was staged by the OSU Dance Band, and the basketball team turned over all of its gate receipts to help pay down the debt.

By early May 1898, the debt had been repaid, and later that month, students held a fence-raising event at the new field to signify its completion. The inaugural event at University Field was billed as a Spring Field Day although the new facility did not yet feature a running track.

Harr's FORKLIFT SERVICE, INC

SALES | RENTAL | SERVICE | PARTS

**For all your
material
handling
needs!**

*Proudly Serving
Central Ohio
for Over 50 Years*

**1181 Refugee Road
Columbus, OH 43207
(614) 443-4651**

www.harrs-forklift.com

Fax: (614) 443-4711



KOMATSU®
NOBLELIFT

FOOTBALL SEASON IS HERE.

SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AND HELLO TO DRINKS, APPS AND GAMES RIGHT HERE AT THE BUCKET.

WHEN IT COMES TO FOOTBALL WE AIN'T PLAYIN'

JOIN US AT ONE OF OUR 10 COLUMBUS LOCATIONS OR ORDER GAME-DAY GRUB TO-GO AT MYRUSTYBUCKET.COM

That fall, the football team settled into its new home and posted a 17-0 victory against Heidelberg to open the 1898 season. The Buckeyes finished with a 3-5 record that year, but they gradually improved over the next decade despite remaining a revolving door of sorts for head coaches.

As the team became more successful, demand for tickets naturally increased, and in preparation for the 1908 season, University Field was renovated, expanded and renamed Ohio Field. To celebrate, Estelle Clark Thompson, wife of university president William Oxley Thompson, was honored with formally dedicating the improved facility. But since the rechristening occurred during the height of the Temperance movement, Mrs. Thompson eschewed the traditional bottle of champagne, instead formally dedicating Ohio Field by breaking a glass flask of spring water across the cornerstone of the grandstand.

Even with expansion, Ohio Field's open-air bleachers struggled to keep up with ticket demand. Its capacity eventually grew to approximately 14,000 seats, but even those additions could not accommodate the ever-increasing demand, especially when Harley got to Ohio State in 1916.

By the time Harley played his final game in 1919, the Buckeyes had enjoyed their first-ever victory against archrival Michigan and had won their first Western Conference championship.

More than 20,000 fans squeezed their way into Ohio Field for Harley's final game, played Nov. 22, 1919, and another 20,000 milled about outside the stadium. People climbed trees, knocked down gates and sat along the sidelines and end zones, while others sat perched on nearby rooftops. OSU athletic director Lynn St. John later estimated he could have easily sold 60,000 tickets to the game.

Within just two decades, OSU football had obviously outgrown Ohio Field.

The exact day of Harley's final game at Ohio State, university officials met to vote for construction of a new football stadium to replace their antiquated football facility.

"It had been added to several times and actually had a capacity up to about 14,000, but there was only so much room they had to work with," OSU football historian Jack Park told BSB. "Then, because of Harley and the success of Ohio State's early football games in the Big Ten, Ohio Field became hopelessly inadequate to handle the fans."

"Because of the tremendous following that Harley developed during his years at Ohio State, the need for a new stadium became very, very evident. And that's why many people – old-timers, at least, of which there aren't very many anymore – would be the first to say that Ohio Stadium was literally 'The House That Harley Built.'"

Unusual Final Season

Before the new stadium, which cost the then-unheard of sum of \$1.3 million, could be completed, Ohio Field would host the Buckeyes for two more seasons.

The 1920 team enjoyed an undefeated regular season, including five wins at home by a combined margin of 136-14, and a second Western Conference championship in four years. The season also featured Ohio State's first-ever invitation to play in the

Rose Bowl, although the trip resulted in an embarrassing 28-0 loss to California.

When the 1921 season rolled around, it began with a familiar foe. Ohio Wesleyan had served as the final opponent for Ohio State at Athletic Park – taking a 6-0 victory against the Buckeyes on Nov. 25, 1897 – and in a certain kind of symmetry, the Battling Bishops were the season-opening opponents for Ohio Field's farewell season. This time, OSU fared somewhat better, rolling to a 28-0 victory on Oct. 1, 1921.

The promise of that win quickly faded the following week with a shocking 7-6 loss to Oberlin in front of a crowd of 9,000 at Ohio Field. The outcome was an upset of such magnitude that the Ohio State Journal reported, "If Mars had dropped from its place in the solar system and bumped into Mother Earth yesterday, it wouldn't have caused any greater surprise in Columbus than that kicked up by little Oberlin when it licked Ohio State's football team 7 to 6 in the Buckeyes' own back yard."

Wilce was so incensed by his team's lack of effort that he ordered his players back onto the field for practice immediately after the game. Search lights were brought in so that the practice session could continue past sunset. The hard message was apparently received, because the Buckeyes reeled off four consecutive shutout wins against Western Conference rivals.

The streak began with a 27-0 win against Minnesota – the first time the rivals had ever faced one another on the gridiron – and continued with a 14-0 vanquishing of archrival Michigan. In addition to spoiling the dedication of an expanded Ferry Field in Ann Arbor, it marked the third straight win for Ohio State against the Wolverines after the Buckeyes had started the series winless in 15 tries.

After an open week, a 7-0 win at previously unbeaten Chicago and a 28-0 home win against Purdue led to a showdown with Illinois, a team with which Ohio State had a lot of history despite playing one another only nine previous times. The Fighting Illini had ruined the final game of Harley's

career with a 9-7 victory at Ohio Field in 1919, but the Buckeyes avenged that loss a year later, taking a 7-0 win at Illinois to win the conference championship and earn their trip to the Rose Bowl.

Ohio State was heavily favored in 1921 owing to the fact the Buckeyes had shut out each of their four conference opponents, winning by a combined margin of 76-0, while Illinois entered the contest winless in four league games.

But longtime Illini head coach Bob Zuppke pulled out some new wrinkles, including a drop-back pass defense designed to counter the OSU passing attack led by Noel "Sonny" Workman. (Workman also went by the nickname "Dopey" but understandably preferred to be called "Sonny.")

Zuppke also employed the unusual psychological tactic of using only 11 players for the entire game. Meanwhile, Wilce used 33 players while trying to wear down the Illini, something that only seemed to inspire Zuppke's team.

Illinois broke a scoreless tie in the second quarter on a fluke play. With the ball on the OSU 35, Illini halfback Don Peden threw a pass to end Dave Wilson. The throw went through Wilson's hands to a waiting Cyril "Truck" Myers, the Ohio State team captain. But as Myers went to make the interception, the ball bounced off his chest and directly to his Illinois counterpart, Laurie Walquist, who raced into the end zone for a touchdown.

Several Buckeyes claimed the ball had touched the ground before Walquist grabbed it, but the officials ruled that the interception and ensuing touchdown would stand. It turned out to be the only score in a game otherwise dominated by Ohio State. The Buckeyes ran 72 plays to only 49 for Illinois and held a 251-128 margin in total yardage, but the only numbers that truly mattered were displayed on the scoreboard, and there Illinois took a 7-0 victory, a win so unexpected that a Chicago sportswriter used it to give the Illinois a new nickname.

"Harry Woodruff was covering the game

for the Chicago Tribune," Park said, "and he was so impressed by the grit and determination of the Illinois team that he referred to them as the 'Fighting Illini' in his Sunday column. That expression was first used by the university in 1921 to honor students and alumni who had served in World War I. Then, later that year, the school used the phrase as part of a capital campaign to raise money for a new football stadium.


"Obviously, the name stuck and Illinois has been known as the Fighting Illini ever since."

Meanwhile, the loss meant the Buckeyes had to settle for a second-place finish in the conference standings and provided a somewhat ignominious end for Ohio Field. Constructed only 23 years earlier, the rickety stadium was scheduled to be torn down, replaced by the modern Ohio Stadium on the banks of the Olentangy. The following October, the Buckeyes indeed moved into their spacious, new concrete home with Ohio Wesleyan once again providing the season-opening competition. Despite the facts that several areas in and around the new horseshoe-shaped facility remained unfinished and the stadium was more than half-empty, Ohio State celebrated with a 5-0 victory over the Bishops.

Meanwhile, the dismantling of Ohio Field began in earnest with its iron gates mothballed and stored away on campus and the mostly wooden structure hauled away for scrap.

For many years, Ohio Field was forgotten with the exception of a large rock near the original site that bore a plaque celebrating Harley's exploits as a football legend. In 2017, however, the university dedicated a park on the field's site complete with large markers commemorating the facility as well as many of the men who played and coached there.

The markers, situated on the yard lines of the old field, serve to provide an instructional walking tour for history buffs who wish to relive the gloried past – and perhaps exorcise some of the old ghosts – from Ohio Field.






Residence INN[®]

BY MARRIOTT

COLUMBUS DOWNTOWN

All Suite hotel • Free hot breakfast & Wi-Fi
 Historic 1927 Buckeye Savings & Loan Bank building
 12 minutes from The Ohio State Stadium
 Surrounded by bars, restaurants and entertainment
 614-222-2610 | 36 E. Gay St. | Columbus, OH 43215

Buckeye Bourbon House
 located inside
 Residence Inn by Marriott
 Columbus Downtown

Four-Star Brown Solidifies OSU Commitment

Despite being the first commitment of Ohio State's 2022 class, West Chester (Ohio) Lakota West four-star cornerback Jyaire Brown was always a player who seemed less secure in ultimately signing with the Buckeyes.

Brown's signing became even more important once five-star cornerback Jaheim Singletary of Jacksonville (Fla.) Riverside announced Aug. 1 that he was decommitting from Ohio State. But almost exactly one month after the Singletary decision,

RECRUITING
OUTLOOK
Wyatt Crosher

Brown decided enough was enough and shut down his recruitment, cutting off contact with other schools and locking into Ohio State, according to a report by Lettermen Row's Zack Carpenter.

Carpenter told BSB that while Brown did leave his recruitment more open than other recruits, it was reasonable considering the circumstances surrounding Brown because of COVID-19.

"Ohio State had four cornerbacks committed for a little while, and we all knew that the Jaheim Singletary commitment was not on the most stable ground," Carpenter said. "I mean, Jyaire was rumored to be leaving for Notre Dame as the main one, but I know Michigan and Penn State were also his staying in contact with them. But there was no reason

for him not to continue to entertain those because he hadn't visited Ohio State. He had never, outside of his high school teammate (four-star offensive tackle Tegra Tshabola), had never really talked with the other commits in person.

"What if the vibe was off? What if he just didn't jell with the coaching staff or something was just off when he visited? Because that's exactly what Jaheim did. Jaheim committed, then he visited and something was off and he backed out of that pledge."

The 6-0, 178-pound Brown committed to Ohio State back on April 22, 2020. As mentioned, he was the first commitment for the Buckeyes in the 2022 class and was followed by Tshabola a day later, then Kettering (Ohio) Alter five-star linebacker C.J. Hicks on May 1.

Carpenter said he thinks Brown has become an overlooked piece of the Buckeyes' recruiting class but should be considered a key piece who has continued to improve since his early commitment.

"He's one of the more forgotten guys in the class just because it was the very first commitment for the class basically a year and a half ago," Carpenter said. "He's not talked about that much, but he's undergone a lot of improvements over the course of the past two offseasons. He worked with Ryan Clark, the former Pittsburgh Steelers Pro Bowl safety, the past few summers, and he's worked with (LSU defensive backs) Derek Stingley and Elias Ricks in offseason training."

After losing Singletary but keeping Brown, Ohio State has three cornerbacks

OSU Football Verbal Commitments

Players in the class of 2022 who have issued a verbal commitment to play football at Ohio State.

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Stars	High School
Kojo Antwi	WR	6-0	190	★★★★	Suwanee (Ga.) Lambert
Terrance Brooks	CB	5-11	190	★★★★	Little Elm, Texas
Jyaire Brown	CB	6-0	178	★★★★	West Chester (Ohio) Lakota West
Kaleb Brown	WR	5-11	177	★★★★	Chicago St. Rita
Caleb Burton	WR	6-0	165	★★★★★	Del Valle, Texas
Bennett Christian	TE	6-6	235	★★★★	Acworth (Ga.) Allatoona
Benji Gosnell	TE	6-4	225	★★★★	Pilot Mountain (N.C.) East Surry
Kyon Grayes	WR	6-1	170	★★★★	Chandler, Ariz.
Dallan Hayden	RB	5-11	195	★★★★	Memphis (Tenn.) Christian Brothers
C.J. Hicks	LB	6-3	220	★★★★★	Kettering (Ohio) Archbishop Alter
Gabe Powers	LB	6-4	230	★★★★	Marysville, Ohio
Kye Stokes	ATH	6-2	185	★★★	Seffner (Fla.) Armwood
Tegra Tshabola	OT	6-5	340	★★★★	West Chester (Ohio) Lakota West
Ryan Turner	CB	6-0	180	★★★	Hollywood (Fla.) Chaminade-Madonna Prep

in the 2022 class, with four-star Terrance Brooks of Little Elm, Texas, and Hollywood (Fla.) Chaminade-Madonna Prep four-star Ryan Turner being the others. Seffner (Fla.) Armwood three-star athlete Kye Stokes is also expected to be in the secondary at the collegiate level.

Buckeyes Staff Able To Visit With '23 Class

College programs were officially allowed Sept. 1 to have direct contact with recruits in the 2023 class.

Ohio State jumped in immediately by tweeting out a graphic inspired by Los Angeles Lakers forward, Ohio native and longtime Ohio State fan LeBron James. The graphic, which is based on James' signature chalk toss he does before games, has a player in an Ohio State football uni-

form with jersey No. 23 and the last name of "CHOSEN." The caption of the tweet reads, "THE #CHO23N ONES."

The program sent out the graphic to a variety of targets for the 2023 class, including Denton (Texas) Ryan five-star linebacker Anthony Hill, four-star Sydair Mitchell of Oradell (N.J.) Bergen Catholic, and Des Moines (Iowa) Southeast Polk five-star offensive tackle Kadyn Proctor, who each retweeted it. Thompson's Station (Tenn.) Independence four-star tight end Ty Lockwood, Ohio State's only current commitment for the 2023 class, also posted the graphic on his Twitter page.

But despite the day signifying a new step for specifically 2023 recruits, Carpenter believes the graphic is more likely targeted to an influx of commitments from the class before them.

ASK AN ANALYST

With Lettermen Row's Zack Carpenter

You reported that West Chester (Ohio) Lakota West four-star cornerback and Ohio State commit Jyaire Brown has officially locked down his recruiting and will no longer talk to other teams. After a recruitment that seemed like a roller coaster, how big is it for the Buckeyes to lock him down for 2022?

"Ohio State took four cornerbacks, I think, knowing that they probably would not keep all four and probably only have three that sign. Numbers-wise, they took so many in the 2021 class that I think three was always the number that I was told by people I talked to. So, for Jyaire to secure that, for him to say he's in and he doesn't need to talk to other schools, it's a big deal because now the original goal is set.

"Him cementing himself in this class, it keeps Ohio State on track numbers-wise and talent-wise in that cornerbacks room, and then when you go look at the 2023 class, I think the goal there is to sign two cornerbacks. With the fact that they're shooting for such a low number means you can really put all of your focus into your top targets. Phenix City (Ala.) Glenwood School five-star A.J. Harris is the top-of-the-line target for them, and then you have guys like Ellenwood (Ga.) Cedar Grove four-star Kayin Lee; Roswell, Ga., four-star Ethan Nation; St. Louis De Smet four-star Christian Gray; and some other guys.

But when you're able to put more eggs into those baskets with Jyaire being locked down, as well as Little Elm, Texas, four-star Terrance Brooks and Hollywood (Fla.) Chaminade-Madonna Prep four-star Ryan Turner, it keeps it on track. And they can go forward and swing for the fences in the next class."

Is there any reason to be concerned with Ohio State still not having a defensive lineman commitment for the 2022 class?

"I think that is probably the position where, if it was like cornerback or linebacker or something, maybe you look at that with some

concern. But (defensive line coach) Larry Johnson is always one of those guys who recruits at his own pace. He recruits his guys and he does it his way. And he's incredibly patient. They are looking to sign five defensive linemen, and like you said, they don't have any committed at this point. But I think all the guys that they're recruiting have all been waiting for the fall to make a decision.

"Their top targets are Rancho Santa Margarita (Calif.) Catholic four-star Hero Kanu, four-star Chris McLellan of Owasso, Okla., and Greenwood (Ind.) Center Grove four-star Kaden Curry, who is the top-of-the-board guy. Then you have guys like Duncanville, Texas, five-star Omari Abor and Opa Locka (Fla.) Monsignor Pace five-star Shemar Stewart. I think once you see one of those top-line guys make a decision, I have a feeling that's going to be a domino effect where we start seeing guys at that position all fall in line and stake their claim in the class. I don't see any concerns.

"If we're here in November, and they don't have any defensive linemen committed, maybe we start to worry a little bit. But I mean, the Larry Johnson factor makes it so I don't think Ohio State fans should really be concerned at this point."

Recently, you took a trip down to spend a week with Fort Mill (S.C.) Catawba Ridge quarterback Jadyn Davis, the No. 1 overall prospect of the 2024 class. How do you expect his recruitment to go, and how will he play into what is now a big question mark as to how Ohio State recruits quarterbacks in the upcoming cycles?

"That story was one of the most fun opportunities I've ever had the chance to do. But to answer that question, it's funny because like you mentioned, the quarterback timeline was set up absolutely perfectly for Ohio State, where you get Quinn (Ewers) in 2022, he starts in 2023 and 2024, or at least competes with Kyle McCord for that job. And then, whatever happens, whoever is the starter in 2024,

I know Jadyn Davis is looking at the Ohio State succession plan. And that was lined up perfectly because he's not a kid who wants to sit for two or three years.

"He ideally would want to sit one year, learn the college offense, get experienced there, hit the strength, conditioning and nutrition program and bulk up a little bit for his freshman year, and then going into his second and third season, start and then hopefully make a push to get drafted in the NFL as a first-rounder. That's the ideal scenario. Well, once Ewers reclassified, that threw everything off because in 2024, as it stands today, if he did join Ohio State's quarterbacks room, Davis would be competing for a starting job as a true freshman.

"I say all this with a major caveat that Jadyn Davis just turned 16 on Aug. 22. But quarterbacks are almost always either the first, second or third commit in the class. They make their decisions a lot sooner because they're the leaders of their class and they want to start building that from within. Davis won't make a decision until after this fall at the earliest after he takes some visits. He's visiting for the Ohio State-Oregon game, he visited Clemson-Georgia, and then Penn State-Auburn for the White Out game.

"He's still so young. There's so much to play out. And I know he wants to see the quarterback development at top schools play out this fall, especially because Clemson, Alabama, Ohio State, those are all three of his top schools and they all have first-year starting quarterbacks. But Ohio State's a very real option for Davis even though he's from the South. They're a top option, but he also has a lot of things to evaluate. He has every major program in the country recruiting him fairly hard, so he's got a long way to go in his development and his recruitment. I think we're just getting started there."

"I see it being more for the 2022 class," Carpenter said. "In June, everything opened up, and I know a lot of people expected June to be this crazy month of commitments. But I kept maintaining that it was going to be July, once they get to go home and settle in and really compare schools. But I don't think it was as explosive a July as I imagined."

"I think we could wind up seeing that situation play out this October because kids are lining up their visits through September and through middle of October, so I'm thinking maybe mid-to-late October, early November for the 2022 class could be pretty explosive."

Looking specifically at what any of that will mean for 2023 prospects, Carpenter thinks that is a group that could follow a similar timeline to the 2022 class, despite it having an extra year to make decisions.

"As far as the 2023 class goes, it could be along those same lines," the recruiting analyst said. "I mean, it just is a case-by-case basis, what each individual player wants to do, obviously. But also, I think these guys, they haven't been able to go on visits or go through the recruiting process, and the recruiting process can be exhausting, but it also could be a lot of fun. These guys want to experience that. This is the only time they'll get to experience anything like this in their lives."

"They might be slow playing it, too, but I do think things will take off in the 2023 class, honestly, maybe in the same timeline for the 2022 guys. You could see some movement start in mid-to-late October and go from there."

What's Next For 2023 Class?

The previously mentioned Lockwood committed to Ohio State on Aug. 19, ending the program's drought in the 2023 class.

But Lockwood is still the lone player for the Buckeyes past 2022, which puts Ohio State at No. 15 nationally. Other teams such as Georgia, Notre Dame, Oklahoma and Texas A&M, who the Buckeyes consistently compete against in the national recruiting rankings, have gotten off to much faster starts.

The Sooners have the top-ranked 2023 class so far with six commitments, three of whom are five-stars. The Bulldogs, Fighting Irish and Aggies rank Nos. 2, 3 and 4, respectively and have four commits each.

So who will be the next name that Ohio State adds to the 2023 class? According to Carpenter, there is one player who could be at the top of the list. That is four-star linebacker Troy Bowles of Tampa (Fla.) Jesuit, the No. 4 linebacker and No. 52 overall prospect in the class.

The 6-1, 205-pound Bowles is the son of NFL defensive coordinator Todd Bowles, who won a Super Bowl earlier this year with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. The younger Bowles has two crystal ball predictions in favor of the Buckeyes, both of which came in late August from 247Sports director of football recruiting Steve Wiltfong and Ohio State insider Bill Kurelic, both with a six confidence out of 10.

"He has the crystal balls and what-not, and he has emerged in recent rank-

ings," Carpenter said. "He camped at Ohio State this summer, and he looked really good. He's sort of that outside linebacker, bullet sort of hybrid, and watching Al Washington work with him and Todd Bowles on the sideline watching it, I think there's a strong, strong sense of what Washington and what the Buckeye staff can do for him."

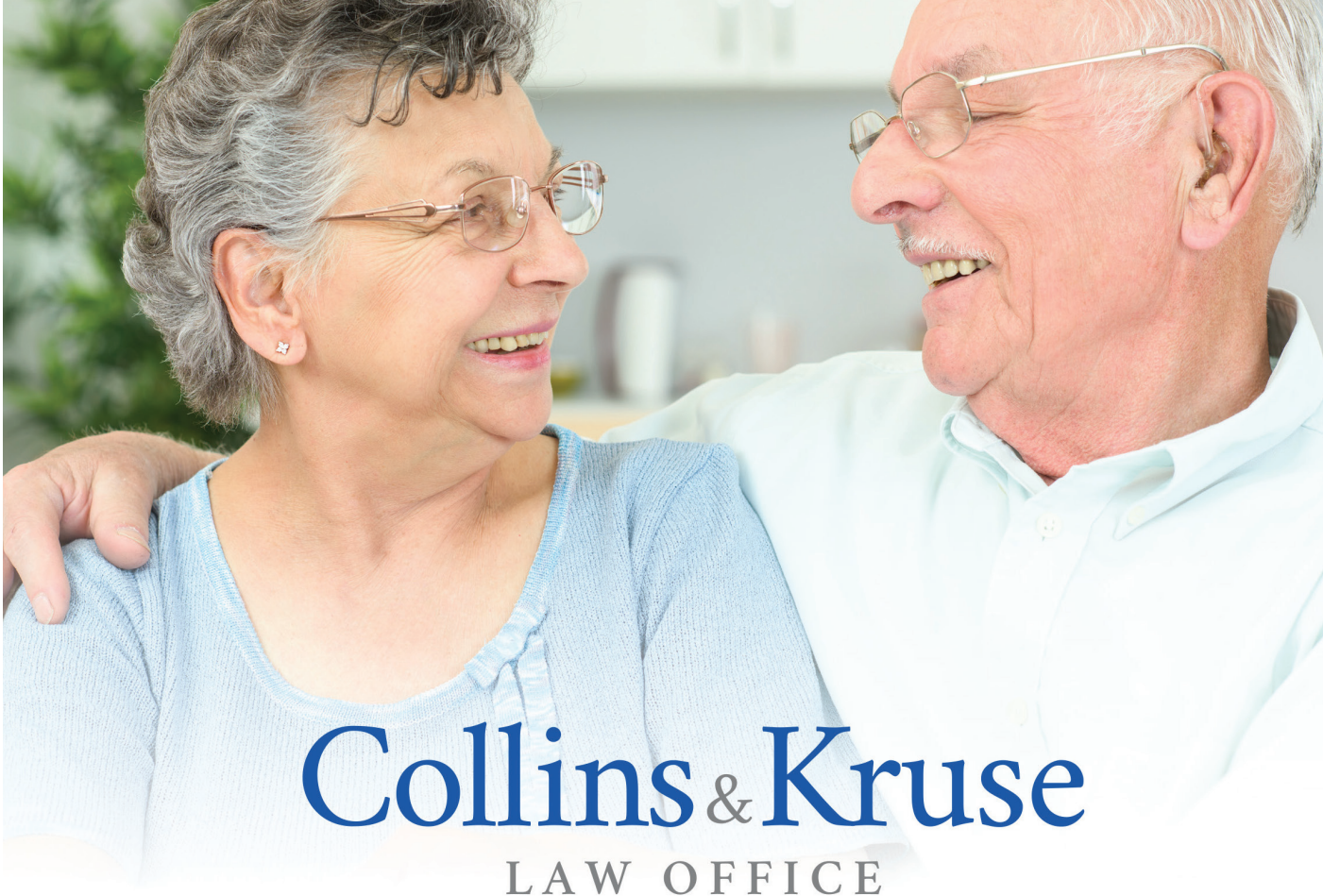
The next name Carpenter said to look for is Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy four-star wide receiver Carnell Tate, the No. 58 overall prospect in the class. Tate stands at 6-2, weighs 185 pounds, and

Continued On Page 34

GRANDAD'S PIZZA

(614)
488-9700

1254 W. 3rd Ave.
Columbus, OH 43212
Sunday - Thursday 11am - Midnight
Friday & Saturday 11am - 2am



Collins & Kruse

LAW OFFICE

Your Elder Law, Estate Planning & VA Benefits Attorneys

Collins Law Office is headquartered in Hilliard, but we proudly serves clients all throughout Ohio, including Dayton, Findlay, Cincinnati, Columbus, Lancaster & Marion!

You need a legal advocate that is willing to put in the necessary work to ensure you get the benefits you're entitled to and the assurance you rightfully deserve. This is where Collins & Kruse Law Office thrives.

**Medicaid Crisis Planning/Applications | VA Benefit Applications and Planning
Asset Preservation | Probate | Estate Planning | Mesothelioma Claims**

Columbus Office
4010 Main St., Hilliard, Ohio 43026
614-369-8634

Findlay Office
610 N. Tiffin Ave., Findlay, Ohio 45840
419-365-6900

If you or a loved one has already entered or is expected to enter a nursing home, please call us immediately for a free consultation! For all other inquiries please call or email Jackie@CKElderlaw.com to reserve your seat in one of our workshops or to set up a free consultation.



Jackie Collins
Attorney/Army Veteran



Wren Kruse
Attorney

Elite Players Include OSU Among Top Schools

Continued From Page 33

has one crystal ball for the Buckeyes and one in favor of Notre Dame. With a decision date set for Oct. 8, Carpenter said it appears to be a two-horse race.

"That's coming down to Ohio State and Notre Dame almost certainly," Carpenter said. "If we don't see any commits in September, I would say Tate's the next possibility there."

There is another name that is at the top of the minds of both Ohio State and the fan base. That would be Pickerington (Ohio) Central five-star safety Sonny Styles, the top player in Ohio, top safety and No. 8 overall prospect in 2023.

While the 6-4, 215-pound Styles does have one crystal ball in favor of the Fighting Irish, his recruiting battle should have a lot of time left.

"I know Ohio State fans would love if the answer (to the next commitment for 2023) was Sonny Styles, but that still seems a little ways away compared to the other guys I just mentioned," Carpenter said.

OSU In Top Schools For Elite Prospects

Ohio State was mentioned in the top

schools lists of three key 2023 prospects since BSB last went to press. While the Buckeyes are in the mix for a variety of players in the class, a trio of prospects ranked among the top 50 had Ohio State mentioned as one of the finalists in the race of their respective recruitments.

Four-star wide receiver Johntay Cook of Desoto, Texas, put Ohio State in his top 12 schools, along with Alabama, Florida, LSU, Notre Dame, Oklahoma, Ole Miss, Oregon, Penn State, Texas, Texas A&M and USC.

Cook is ranked the eighth-best wide receiver and the No. 45 overall prospect in the 2023 class. The 6-0, 170-pound prospect received his offer from the Buckeyes on May 10.

In 2020, Cook finished his sophomore high school season with 43 catches for 690 yards and 10 touchdowns. Currently, he has no crystal ball predictions.

Alpharetta (Ga.) Milton five-star defensive lineman Lebbeus Overton also included Ohio State in his top 12, along with Alabama, Clemson, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, LSU, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas A&M and USC.

Overton is the top-ranked prospect in 247Sports' in-house rankings and ranks

No. 2 in the composite while maintaining his spot as the top defensive lineman. Only quarterback Arch Manning of Isidore Newman High School in New Orleans ranks higher.

At 6-5, 265, Overton earned an offer from the Buckeyes on Feb. 18, but it wasn't an offer for a typical recruit. In a similar vein to fellow five-star defensive lineman J.T. Tuimolalo, who committed to Ohio State in 2021, Overton was given a dual-sport scholarship offer to play both football and basketball for the Buckeyes.

Overton has put up strong numbers during his first two high school seasons, racking up 105 tackles and 19 sacks in 2019 then 70 tackles and 21½ sacks last year. He has also forced seven fumbles and recovered a pair of fumbles in his high school career to this point.

Finally, Opa Locka (Fla.) Monsignor Prep defensive end Shemar Stewart included Ohio State in his final five schools on Aug. 26 after a summer trip to Columbus for a camp at which he made quite an impact. The Buckeyes cracked Stewart's final group alongside Clemson, Georgia, Miami (Fla.) and Texas A&M, the latter two of which are considered Ohio State's primary competition for the five-star

prospect, according to 247Sports analyst Andrew Ivins.

"While most blue-chip recruits try to claim that everyone inside their top five is running even, Stewart and those inside his camp have relayed that Texas A&M, Ohio State and Miami are the front-runners at the moment with the Aggies holding a slight edge," Ivins said.

Stewart (6-5, 260) is considered the No. 8 prospect and No. 3 defensive lineman in the 247Sports composite and is all the way up at the No. 4 spot in the 247Sports in-house rankings. He posted his official offer graphic from Ohio State on Aug. 1 and was initially given an offer back on April 4, 2020.

The five-star lineman previously had a top-10 favorites list but has since cut Alabama, Arizona State, Florida, LSU and Penn State out of the main competition.

Stewart plans to take official visits to at least Ohio State and Texas A&M this fall and will likely add more to the list.

Patrick Mayhorn contributed to this report. For the latest in Ohio State football recruiting news, be sure to check out BuckeyeSports.com, free to all BSB subscribers, daily.

A Look Back At Recruiting From The Pages Of BSB

35 Years Ago - 1986

The state of Ohio was flush with strong receiver talent in the class of 1987 recruiting pool, led by James Bradley of Orrville, Vince Marrow of Youngstown Cardinal Mooney and Anthony Morgan of Cleveland John Adams, who were each regarded as the best among the available wide receivers in the state. However, there were still others who expected to receive Ohio State attention.

Atop that list was silky-smooth Cincinnati Moeller wideout Ken Griffey Jr., the son of major-league baseball player Ken Griffey. The younger Griffey reportedly possessed all the tools colleges were looking for, but there were questions about his commitment to football since he was also considered a top baseball prospect.

30 Years Ago - 1991

Columbus St. Francis DeSales product Luke Fickell was weighing his options for college, both in potential schools and the sport he would decide to pursue long-term. Regarded as one of the nation's best tight ends, Fickell held offers from just about every school in the Midwest and focused closely on Ohio State, Michigan, Notre Dame and Penn State.

However, Fickell was also a back-to-back state champion wrestler as a heavyweight and looked to be the favorite to earn a third belt as a senior. He held plenty of top offers on the mat, too. Although several schools offered the opportunity to compete in both, Fickell wanted to pick one and settle into it alone as he made the leap to the next level, at least early on - though he wanted an assurance that he could eventually compete in both if that's what he decided.

"I'm pretty sure I'm going to pick my college for football," Fickell said. "But I'm going to tell the coaches I'd like to have the option to wrestle."

Within football, Fickell was conflicted as well. He was better at tight end than defensive tackle but wasn't yet sure which side of the ball he preferred.

"I'm not really sure if I like offense better than defense," he said. "Everyone asks me what I want to play in college, and I always tell them I don't know. I don't know if the position I want to play will have an effect on which school I choose."

25 Years Ago - 1996

John Cooper was among a growing group of coaches advocating an early signing period for football recruits.

"This is a trend that has been going on for some time now," Cooper said. "I think football players are a little bit like basketball players and they want to get that decision out of the way. They want to have time to relax and enjoy their last season of high school football, but with the phone ringing all the time, it's very disruptive."

"It wouldn't bother me if we had an early signing period for

football. I see that coming. We talked a little bit about it at the Big Ten coaching meetings and a little bit on the national level. I wouldn't be surprised to see us have that on the agenda and vote on it this year."

Cooper said he'd like to see an early signing period begin Aug. 1, before a prospect's senior year of high school.

"If you have it after the season starts, players can't come in and visit campuses during their season," he said. "What we're having now is a lot of high school players and their parents visit the campus in the summertime. Some of them want to get the decision out of the way. I would advocate an Aug. 1 signing period. That way, if a young man wants to come to your school, sign him on Aug. 1 and get it over with."

20 Years Ago - 2001

Ohio State's 2002 recruiting class swelled to 15 commitments with the Aug. 15 verbal of Upper Arlington, Ohio, defensive end Tim Schafer.

Schafer picked Ohio State over a field that included Northwestern, Notre Dame and Purdue. Schafer, judged Ohio's eighth-best prospect by The Ohio Football Recruiting News, had also made unofficial visits to Michigan and Georgia Tech.

"A bunch of people were saying I should go out of state, but I didn't care," Schafer said. "I just wanted to go to the right school."

"All along, I planned to commit before the season. I went on some unofficial visits to a lot of places. I had offers from other places, but I was sure I wouldn't change my mind and I didn't want to waste anybody's time."

15 Years Ago - 2006

The Buckeyes landed another four-star recruit for their class of 2007 when Canton (Ohio) South athlete Devon Torrence announced Sept. 1 that he had chosen Ohio State following his team's 21-19 loss to Dover.

Torrence said he had actually told OSU head coach Jim Tressel about his decision the previous night but did not announce it publicly until after his game.

"It's where I always wanted to go," Torrence said. "I like everything about Ohio State. They send a lot of defensive backs to the next level."

His arrival at Ohio State was not a foregone conclusion, though, despite the commitment. In addition to his football talents, the 6-0, 200-pound Torrence had aspirations of pursuing a baseball career. If he was drafted high enough in the upcoming MLB draft, he could forgo college eligibility and enter the minors. If not, he planned to try to play both sports at Ohio State.

10 Years Ago - 2011

If the off-the-field issues Ohio State endured all summer were having a negative impact on the team's ability to recruit top tal-

ent, it seemed those troubles were all coming to a close at the end of August.

When reports surfaced that Cincinnati Taft defensive end Adolphus Washington - the No. 1-ranked player in Ohio - had committed to Ohio State, any perceived problems seemed to be over.

Unfortunately for the Buckeyes, the reported commitment of one of 2012's most coveted recruits was premature.

"It was just a misunderstanding between me and my dad," Washington told BSB on Aug. 29 shortly after his father broke what turned out to be false news about his son's commitment to Ohio State. "I had told him I was leaning toward Ohio State, and he thought I was committing."

Five Years Ago - 2016

One week after accounting for five touchdowns during a 42-14 thumping of Canton (Ohio) McKinley, longtime Ohio State quarterback commit Danny Clark of Canton Hoban struggled mightily against defending Ohio state champion Lakewood St. Edward during a 10-7 defeat.

Clark completed just 5 of 18 pass attempts for 56 yards and an interception. His teammate and former Ohio State pledge Todd Sibley accounted for Hoban's only score.

"The big things for him were accuracy, getting rid of the ball quicker and tightening up his footwork," recruiting analyst Bill Greene said. "From what I saw from him in the summer, I saw all those things. But games are a lot different from camps and combines. There is nothing like when live bullets are flying to really evaluate a quarterback. I was surprised to see that kind of stat line for him."

One Year Ago - 2020

Ohio State's recruiting efforts had not been slowed by the Big Ten's decision to postpone fall sports. Proof came Aug. 27 when Manassas (Va.) Unity Reed four-star defensive tackle Tyleik Williams announced his commitment to the Buckeyes.

The 6-3, 330-pound Williams was considered the 10th-best defensive tackle and No. 160 prospect overall in the class of 2021. He recorded 47 tackles and 3½ sacks to help the Lions to the state playoffs in 2019. He chose Ohio State over finalists Alabama, LSU, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia Tech.

Williams had never been to Ohio State, though he was scheduled to take an official visit with teammate Shawn Murphy, a 2022 four-star linebacker, in early April. That trip was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic, so defensive line coach Larry Johnson and linebackers coach Al Washington extended a scholarship offer over the phone instead.

Top-Five Prospects Hit More Than They Miss

By **WYATT CROSHER**

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Associate Editor

Ohio State has consistently been one of the top recruiters in the country since Urban Meyer took over as head coach in 2012, something that has continued into the Ryan Day era.

That was evident in the 2021 class that finished as the No. 2 overall class in the nation behind only Alabama. Ohio State's 2021 class was given a late boost by a pair of five-star prospects – defensive lineman J.T. Tuimoloau, who made his decision to commit to the Buckeyes on July 4, and quarterback Quinn Ewers, who reclassified to the 2021 group on Aug. 2.

Those moves gave Ohio State three commits who ranked in the top five for the class with Ewers at the top, Tuimoloau ranked fourth and fellow defensive lineman Jack Sawyer coming in fifth in the 247Sports composite rankings.

But how often do players in the top five of the national composite rankings live up to all that hype?

First off, here is the explanation of what makes a five-star prospect in the eyes of 247Sports.

"The top 32 players in the country mirror the 32 first-round picks in the NFL draft," according to a 2012 story from the 247Sports staff. "These are 32 players that we believe are the most likely to be drafted in the first round from each recruiting class. The full list of 32 with five-star ratings typically isn't complete until the final ranking."

One of the better gauges to determine if players were as good as promised, of course, is where they wound up in the NFL draft, whenever it was that they ultimately decided to leave the program. While recruiting is not and never has been an exact science, as some players light it up in college but aren't stars at the next level, the 247 composite rankings (created in 2000) still serve as close as possible to an actual measurement for future success.

For this report, we took a sample of the top five players in the recruiting classes from 2000 to 2017. The start date is because, as previously mentioned, that is when the composite rankings began. The 2017 class is the end date because it is the most recent class to have each of its top five declare for the draft.

That leaves 90 players in the group, each of whom was considered a player with the highest potential in the country.

In total, 31 of the 90 top-five prospects over the first 18 years of the composite rankings went in the first round of the NFL draft. That is just 34.4 percent, though it was the most likely of the four outcomes. Going deeper than the top five, 12 of the 18 top overall prospects in a class – 66.7 percent – lived up to the hype enough to get taken among the first 32 picks by NFL teams.

It was also extremely rare for the composite rankings to completely swing and miss on first-round talents. Just one of the 18 years – 2009 – had no players taken

in the first round. But even that year likely should have had one. Linebacker Manti Te'o finished second in the Heisman Trophy voting in 2012, but his draft stock fell the following spring due to a poor performance at the NFL Combine as well as some other well-documented, off-the-field events.

Still, Te'o was selected in the second round, becoming one of 23 top-five recruits to go in the second or third rounds in the draft, good for 25.6 percent of the sample. Fifteen of the 90, or 16.7 percent, went on day three, while 21 players (23.3 percent) went undrafted. That percentage may continue to go down, as just four top-five players in classes from 2012 to 2017 went undrafted. That is just 13.3 percent.

Going position by position, the most likely group to get selected in the first round by success rate were the offensive linemen. Of the 11 tackles and one guard, five went in the first round – Eugene Monroe, Andre Smith, D.J. Humphries, Laremy Tunsil and Alex Leatherwood. Being the only guard, Smith gives the specific position a 100-percent first-round rate.

Following closely behind the offensive linemen are defensive backs and defensive linemen, the latter of which is good news for Ohio State with Sawyer and Tuimoloau entering the program. Each position had 40.0 percent of its group land in the first round.

Looking at the secondary, two out of the three cornerbacks in the sample made the cut, as did a pair of the seven safeties. Not only did defensive linemen dominate the total amount of top-five players with 20, they also had the most first-round picks with eight. They also have picked up more steam of late with the three D-linemen from the 2016 and 2017 classes each going in the first round.

The least successful position at getting drafted early (by a sizable margin) were the quarterbacks. Of the 14 signal-callers ranked in the top five, only two – Vince Young and Mark Sanchez – got selected on day one, just 14.3 percent. Even further, over one-third of the highest regarded quarterbacks – five of 14, or 35.7 percent – went undrafted.

That number would be improved dramatically with the inclusion of the 2018 class that included Trevor Lawrence and Justin Fields, each of whom was taken in the first round of the 2021 draft at No. 1 and 11, respectively. Ohio State fans can only hope Ewers continues putting the quarterback position on the right track toward the top.

Ohio State had just three top-five overall prospects through the 18 classes, and only one first-round selection. Wide receiver Ted Ginn Jr. was selected in the first round of the 2007 draft, ninth overall by the Miami Dolphins. Ginn was ranked second nationally in the 2004 recruiting class behind only Oklahoma running back Adrian Peterson.

Ginn, who hailed from Cleveland Glenville, mentioned the desire to stay within the state when he committed at the All-American Bowl on Jan. 3, 2004.

"First of all, it's my home and it's in my



FILE PHOTO

ONLY ONE – Ted Ginn Jr. is the lone Ohio State player since 2000 to be rated one of the top-five national recruits coming out of high school and then be drafted in the first round of the NFL draft. Ginn was ranked second nationally in the 2004 recruiting class, and then was selected in the first round of the 2007 draft, taken ninth overall by the Miami Dolphins.

back yard," he said. "But what I wanted, they gave to me, so there wasn't any sense for me to go anywhere else when I can go just two hours down the road and my family and friends can see me play."

Ginn committed to play under head coach Jim Tressel, who was very excited to add one of the most explosive players in the country to a recruiting class that had been ranked a lowly No. 55 overall in the nation.

"He's a great kid," Tressel said at the time. "He's the consummate team player. He will do whatever you want him to do. You could just tell his chemistry with other guys is tremendous. He's a leader. He's had great training at home. His mom and dad are great people. They've been around the sports world for a long time. There is no question that we are very proud of the fact that Teddy will be with us."

The second top-five OSU prospect from 2000 to 2017 was quarterback Terrelle Pryor, the No. 2 prospect in the 2008 class behind Clemson defensive end Da'Quan Bowers. Pryor hailed from Jeannette, Pa., but discounted his home-state Nittany Lions because of the remote location of the campus, remarking that he didn't "like that place."

Pryor waited six weeks after the traditional National Signing Day which was on Feb. 6, committing on March 19, 2008. Tressel stayed optimistic about earning the big-time commitment, leaving a roster spot open for him.

"I think we had planned on having a quarterback in this class and so, yeah, let's make a perfect world, let's get a quarterback in this class," Tressel said on the 2008 signing day. "Our plans would be further along."

Pryor was not selected in the 2011 NFL draft. That was not because of his ability as a player, but instead due to the aftermath of the so-called Tattogate scandal that ended his college career. He was ultimately taken in the third round of that year's supplemental draft by the Oakland Raiders.

Defensive end Noah Spence was ranked fifth in 2012 when he signed with OSU, but he left school before exhausting his eligibility. Facing off-field issues, he transferred to Eastern Kentucky.

Looking past the scope of top-five prospects, The Buckeyes have had 51 five-star commits during the 247 era, but so far, only five of them have lived up to their potential with a first-round selection – Ginn, defensive end Chase Young (No. 7 overall in 2017 class), defensive end Nick Bosa (No. 8 in 2016), cornerback Jeff Okudah (No. 8 in 2017) and cornerback Donte Whitner (No. 22 in 2003).

Of those 51 players, 15 are currently still on Ohio State's roster. And looking again at the top-five picks, Sawyer, Tuimoloau, Ewers and wide receiver Julian Fleming, who was the No. 3 overall prospect in 2020, still have time to improve Ohio State's numbers in that category.

Oldies But Goodies Fill Buckeyes' Roster

In the old days, the criticism of college basketball was centered on the nefarious "one-and-done" syndrome. You know, play one season at your favorite university, make somewhat of an attempt to appear to be a student-athlete, then jump to the NBA. See you later, we hardly knew you. What memories.

Those seem like ancient times with the NCAA rules changes, in part because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

COURT REPORT Craig Merz

Now, for those who remember the movie "Animal House," the classic line from John Belushi's character John "Bluto" Blutarsky almost seems relevant: "Oh, no! Seven years of college down the drain."

The Ohio State men's basketball team's 2021-22 roster, as is likely the case with many programs across the country, is dotted with fifth- and sixth-year players.

Not to say they are "wasting" their time, but the one-time rule that has allowed athletes an extra year of eligibility because of the pandemic has created the "Super Seniors" such as OSU forward Kyle Young, who opted to return for a fifth season with the Buckeyes.

Or in the cases of forwards Seth Towns and center Joey Brunk, medical redshirts have enabled each of the transfers to experience a sixth season of college ball.

That makes for an older and more experi-

enced Ohio State team. In fact, nine of the 15 players are at least fourth-year seniors.

"I think old matters," OSU head coach Chris Holtmann said. "It does matter. I think it really does help, too, if you're old and experienced together. I think that really helps your team. If you look at (national champion) Baylor this year, they were old, as were a lot of good teams."

Delving deeper, it's amusing to see how old the Buckeyes will be by the time the postseason begins in March. Among the nine elder statesmen, four will be 24 years old, four will be 23, and Justin Ahrens will be 22.

That's getting into NBA range. According to RealGM.com, the youngest projected team average age for the 2021-22 season belongs to the Oklahoma City Thunder at 23.7 years. Memphis is next lowest at 24.0. The NBA average is 26.2, with LeBron James and the Los Angeles Lakers leading the pack at 30.9.

Another factor in schools loading up on older players is the new rule that allows for a one-time transfer without having to sit out a season such as OSU forward Justice Sueing did after playing two seasons for California. He was ineligible for the 2019-20 season in Columbus but played 31 games last season for the Buckeyes as a redshirt junior.

Coaches such as Holtmann see the value in bringing in someone who is a known quantity as opposed to relying on the potential of an incoming freshman.

Holtmann saw a need to add depth to the backcourt after Duane Washington Jr. decided to turn pro after his junior season, and he brought in guard Cedric Russell, a transfer who played 124 games at Louisiana. He is

OSU Men's Basketball Verbal Commitments

Players in the class of 2022 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
Roddy Gayle	SG	6-4	195	★★★★	Youngstown (N.Y.) Lewiston Porter
Bowen Hardman	SG	6-3	160	★★★	Cincinnati Princeton
Felix Okpara	C	6-11	210	★★★★	Chattanooga (Tn.) Hamilton Hts. Christian
Bruce Thornton	PG	6-2	205	★★★★	Alpharetta (Ga.) Milton

among the five players listed as graduates on the roster.

A look at the nine senior (or more) citizens:

- Brunk will begin his sixth season on a college roster. He started his career at Butler in 2016-17 when Holtmann was the coach there. Brunk received a hardship waiver during the season and then played two more seasons at Butler and got his degree following his redshirt sophomore season.

He was a grad transfer to Indiana with immediate eligibility and appeared in all 32 games in 2019-20. He missed the 2020-21 season because of a back injury and subsequent surgery in December 2020 and transferred to Ohio State this spring.

He will be 24 on Nov. 13.

- Towns will also enter his sixth season on a campus. He was at Harvard for his first two seasons beginning in 2016-17, but a knee injury forced him to miss two seasons. He transferred to Ohio State and sat the first month while still rehabbing. Towns averaged 3.8 points, 2.2 rebounds and 11.0 minutes in 25 games last season.

Towns, who turns 24 on Nov. 5, struggled to regain the form that made him an AP honorable-mention All-American in 2017-18 at Harvard, but junior forward E.J. Liddell told Andy Katz of the Big Ten Network in August that Towns was the player he was most impressed by during summer workouts.

"He's looking really healthy right now," Liddell said. "He's getting back to who he used to be. I don't think he ever lost that, but he's been grinding really hard every day this summer doing new things he couldn't do last year because of his knee."

- Russell, in his fifth season of eligibility, led Louisiana with a career-best 17.2 points per game last season and in four seasons with the Rajin' Cajuns averaged 11.4. He was among the national leaders in three-point shooting in 2020-21, making 40.0 percent (76 for 190).

Russell turns 23 on March 6.

- Guard Jimmy Sotos enters season No. 5 for him. He spent three seasons at Bucknell before transferring and was planning to sit the 2020-21 season because of it, but he obtained

a waiver to be eligible (before the one-time rule was enacted).

Sotos, who turned 23 on Sept. 4, played in 12 games for OSU before requiring season-ending right shoulder surgery Feb. 4.

- Sueing is also part of a team for a fifth season. As mentioned earlier, he came to the Buckeyes after his sophomore season at Cal. For 2019-20, he sat per the transfer rule and also had surgery on his left foot in January 2020. He averaged 10.7 points and 5.5 rebounds while playing every game last season.

He will celebrate his 23rd birthday March 15.

- Jamari Wheeler, a transfer grad guard, played in 127 games for Penn State over four seasons, not missing a game, and he will join the five-season club as a Buckeye. He was on the Big Ten All-Defensive Team the past two seasons.

He will be 24 on Dec. 9.

- Young surprised many by returning for a fifth season of his injury-plagued career. The heart and soul of the team, his 18 points in the first half against Purdue in the 2021 Big Ten semifinal matched his career high for a game before he sustained a concussion and missed the rest of the postseason.

He turns 24 on Jan. 5.

- Ahrens, who will be 22 on Nov. 24, enters his fourth season. The senior forward/guard has been the Buckeyes' three-point specialist. Last season, he made 54 of 127 (42.5 percent) from beyond the arc with at least one made three in 23 of 31 games.

- Harrison Hoofkin will be another "true" senior after appearing in 13 games through his first three seasons. The center turns 23 on Jan. 1.

Big Man On Bench?

Former OSU standout center Greg Oden, who led the Buckeyes to the national championship game in his lone season on the roster in 2006-07, will return for a second time as a graduate assistant, according to a Sept. 1 report in The Columbus Dispatch.

Oden, the former No. 1 overall pick of the 2007 NBA draft, was hired in 2016 by then-head coach Thad Matta as a student manager as he sought his degree. Oden stayed on the staff when Holtmann took over and remained until 2019 when he earned a degree in sports medicine.

Ohio State had not made the move official as BSB went to press.



Reynolds Travel "On the Road Again" for 2021 Ohio State Football Away Games

Reynolds Travel is once again offering packages to all 2021 Ohio State Away Football Games and a Bengals vs. Packers Same Day trip and hope you can join us for another great football season. Here is a listing but full details are available on our website at www.reynoldstravel.com.

OSU vs. Rutgers-Sept. 30-Oct. 3- 3-night motorcoach trip to New York/Piscataway, N.J. with 3 nights accommodations in the heart of Manhattan at the Sheraton Times Square with breakfast daily, Tour of New York, game tickets in Ohio State section with transportation. Also offering land only package from Thurs, Sept. 30-Sun., Oct. 3 with 3 nights at the Sheraton Times Square with breakfast daily, airport transportation roundtrip, tour of the New York, game ticket and transportation.

OSU vs. Indiana- Oct. 22-24- 2-night motorcoach to French Lick, Indiana with accommodations at the French Lick Resort with visit to a horse farm in Kentucky and lunch at Churchill Downs enroute, game day roundtrip transportation from French Lick and game ticket in Ohio State section.

OSU vs. Nebraska-Nov 4-7 -5-night motorcoach trip with 1 overnight in each direction with accommodation for 1 night at Jumer's Rock Island Hotel and Casino in Rock Island, Illinois and 3 nights at the Embassy Suites in Omaha, Nebraska with breakfast

daily and city tour of Lincoln, game tickets in Ohio State section with transportation and 1 night on return at the Pair of Dice Hotel and Casino in East Peoria, Illinois on the return. Also offering air package or land only package from Thursday, Nov. 4-Sunday, Nov. 7 at the Embassy Suites in Omaha with breakfast daily, game tickets in Ohio State section with transportation and city tour of Lincoln. Air packages on Southwest Airlines roundtrip from/to Columbus to/from Omaha, Nebraska.

OSU vs. Michigan-"Big Game in the Big House"- Nov. 26-27- 1 night motorcoach trip with accommodations for Friday night at the MGM Resort and Casino in downtown Detroit including breakfast on Saturday and game tickets in Ohio State section at Michigan Stadium with return to Columbus when the game is over.

NFL Game- Cincinnati Bengals vs. Green Bay Packers-Oct. 10- Same day trip to Cincinnati by deluxe motorcoach to see the Bengals vs. Packers at the Bengals Stadium in Cincinnati. Game tickets are in Section 201 which is corner end-zone.

Trips fully escorted by Reynolds Travel, offering Ohio State trips since 1978. Visit our website at www.reynoldstravel.com to see more.



8934 Commerce Loop Dr.
Columbus, OH 43240
Phone: 614-847-8008
Toll Free: 866-880-0577

A West Side Tradition
Since 1967

1189 N. Wilson Rd.
(614) 279-3344
& Next Door Tavern

Catch all the Ohio State action
Big Ten Network • NFL Sunday Ticket
14 TVs • OSU Memorabilia

BUCKEYE SCOREBOARD

2021 FOOTBALL (1-0)

Sept. 2 at Minnesota, W 45-31; **11** OREGON; **18** TULSA; **25** AKRON.

Oct. 2 at Rutgers; **9** MARYLAND; **23** at Indiana; **30** PENN STATE.

Nov. 6 at Nebraska; **13** PURDUE; **20** MICHIGAN STATE; **27** at Michigan.

Dec. 4 Big Ten Championship Game at Indianapolis.

2022 FOOTBALL

Sept. 2 NOTRE DAME; **10** ARKANSAS STATE; **17** TOLEDO; **24** at Michigan State.

Oct. 1 at Penn State; **8** RUTGERS; **15** IOWA; **29** INDIANA.

Nov. 5 at Northwestern; **12** WISCONSIN; **19** at Maryland; **26** MICHIGAN.

2023 FOOTBALL

Sept. 2 at Indiana; **9** SAN JOSE STATE; **16** WESTERN KENTUCKY; **23** at Notre Dame.

Oct. 7 MARYLAND; **14** at Purdue; **21** PENN STATE; **28** at Wisconsin.

Nov. 4 at Rutgers; **11** MICHIGAN STATE; **18** MINNESOTA; **25** at Michigan.

CROSS COUNTRY

Sept. 3 Evansville Opener at Indiana, Men: 1/6; Women: 1/7; **10** Spiked Shoe Invitational at Penn State; **23** Bill Dellinger Invite (Women Only) at Eugene, Ore.

Oct. 1 Joe Plane Invitational at Notre Dame; **15** FSU Invite/Pre-Nationals at Tallahassee, Fla.; **29** Big Ten Championships at University Park, Pa.

Nov. 12 NCAA Regional Championships at Evansville, Ind.; **20** NCAA Championships at Tallahassee, Fla.

FIELD HOCKEY (2-1)

Aug. 27 at Ball State, W 1-0; **31** at Kent State, L 3-1.

Sept. 3 BUCKEYE INVITATIONAL vs. LAFAYETTE, W 4-3 (2OT); **6** BUCKEYE INVITATIONAL vs. MIAMI, 3 p.m.; **10** at Wake Forest, 5 p.m.; **12** at Appalachian State, 1 p.m.; **17** at Michigan State, 3 p.m.; **19** VIRGINIA, Noon; **27** LOUISVILLE, 4 p.m.

Oct. 3 MICHIGAN, Noon; **8** INDIANA, 3 p.m.; **10** OHIO, 1 p.m.; **15** at Northwestern, 4 p.m.; **17** at Iowa, 1 p.m.; **22** PENN STATE, 3 p.m.; **24** RUTGERS, Noon; **29** at Maryland, 7 p.m.; **31** at St. Joseph's, 1 p.m.

MEN'S GOLF

Sept. 5-7 Erin Hill Collegiate at Erin, Wisc.; **13-15** Maridoe Invitational at Dallas; **27-28** Windon Memorial at Glencoe, Ill.

Oct. 4-5 Barbara Nicklaus Cup at Dublin, Ohio.

WOMEN'S GOLF

Sept. 13-14 Michigan Invitational at Ann Arbor, Mich.; **24-26** Mason Rudolph at Nashville, Tenn.

Oct. 4-5 Barbara Nicklaus Cup at Dublin, Ohio; **15-17** Tar Heel Invitational at Chapel Hill, N.C.

MEN'S SOCCER (1-2)

Aug. 27 WOLSTEIN CLASSIC vs. MEMPHIS, W 3-2; **29** WOLSTEIN CLASSIC vs. UAB, L 2-1 (OT).

Sept. 3 IU Classic vs. Xavier at Bloomington, Ind., L 2-1; **6** IU Classic vs. Creighton at Bloomington, Ind., 5 p.m.; **10** at West Virginia, 7 p.m.; **15** AKRON, 7 p.m.; **21** CLEVELAND

STATE, 7 p.m.; **24** MARYLAND, 7 p.m.; **29** BOWLING GREEN, 7 p.m.

Oct. 3 at Northwestern, 4 p.m.; **8** WISCONSIN, 7 p.m.; **12** at Indiana, 7 p.m.; **17** at Michigan State, TBA; **22** PENN STATE, 7 p.m.; **26** MICHIGAN, 6 p.m.; **31** at Rutgers, 1 p.m.

WOMEN'S SOCCER (4-2)

Aug. 10 at Notre Dame (Exh.), L 3-2; **13** PITTSBURGH (Exh.), L 2-0; **19** at BYU, L 3-0; **22** AKRON, W 4-1; **26** BOWLING GREEN, W 3-1; **29** NORTH CAROLINA, L 2-0.

Sept. 2 CENTRAL FLORIDA W 4-2; **5** NAVY, W 2-1; **9** at Dayton, 7 p.m.; **12** TCU, Noon; **19** at Maryland, 2 p.m.; **23** MINNESOTA, 7 p.m.; **26** at Penn State, TBA; **30** INDIANA, 7 P.M.

Oct. 3 RUTGERS, Noon; **10** at Michigan State, 1 p.m.; **14** PURDUE, 7 p.m.; **17** MICHIGAN, Noon; **20** at Wisconsin, 6 p.m.; **24** at Northwestern, 2 p.m.

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL (5-0, 0-0)

Aug. 27 NORTHERN KENTUCKY, W 3-0; **28**

WASHINGTON, W 3-1.

Sept. 3 Red Raider Classic at Lubbock, Texas, vs. Rhode Island, W 3-0; **4** Red Raider Classic at Lubbock, Texas, vs. Texas State, W 3-1; **4** Red Raider Classic at Lubbock, Texas, vs. Texas Tech, W 3-0; **10** VCU Invitational at Richmond, Va., vs. James Madison, 1 p.m.; **11** VCU Invitational at Richmond, Va., vs. VCU, 9 a.m.; **11** VCU Invitational at Richmond, Va., vs. Virginia, 2 p.m.; **17** at Notre Dame, 7 p.m.; **19** NOTRE DAME, 2 p.m.; **24** at Purdue, 7 p.m.; **26** at Penn State, 4 p.m.; **29** INDIANA, 6 p.m.

Oct. 2 MARYLAND, 7 p.m.; **8** at Michigan State, 7 p.m.; **10** MICHIGAN, 1 p.m.; **15** PURDUE, 6 p.m.; **15** RUTGERS, 7 p.m.; **22** at Wisconsin, 9 p.m.; **24** at Minnesota, 5 p.m.; **29** at Michigan, 7 p.m.; **31** MICHIGAN STATE, 1 p.m.

Nov. 4 MINNESOTA, 7 p.m.; **6** NEBRASKA, TBA; **13** at Northwestern, 2 p.m.; **14** at Illinois, TBA; **19** IOWA, 7 p.m.; **21** PENN STATE, 3 P.M.; **24** at Rutgers, 7 p.m.; **26** at Maryland, 7 p.m.

You Can Count On These Services From

THE QUICKPRINT CENTRE

1350 W. 5th Ave., Suite 14, Columbus, OH 43212
614-488-2683 • FAX 614-488-0059 • qpoh@aol.com

Offset-Printing
Typesetting
NCR Forms
Laminating
Brochures

Digital Color Copies
Ship UPS
Fax Service
Announcements
Wedding Invitations

Digital B&W Copies
Rubber Stamps
Business Cards
Binding
Labels

REDS HALL OF FAME MEMBERSHIP KNOCKS IT OUT OF THE PARK

Join today to get these exclusive membership benefits and MORE!

- Unlimited admission to the Reds Hall of Fame
- Collectible gifts
- 2021 Reds publication
- Early access and special discounts for many HOF events
- Discount in the Hall Shop—now 15%
- And new for 2021—a member-exclusive commemorative pennant!

@RedsMuseum Reds Museum @RedsMuseum

For more information, call the Hall of Fame Box Office at (513) 765-7923 or visit



RedsMuseum.ORG



McGuff, Bucks Ready To Up The Tempo

By **WYATT CROSHER**

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Associate Editor

Ohio State women's basketball's Twitter account on Aug. 30 posted a 26-second video showing the team back at practice with the caption "back in the lab." In that video, 12 shots are taken – six are layups, six are three-pointers.

The video, while lasting less than 30 seconds, is the perfect representation of what the Ohio State offense is hoping to achieve with the roster it possesses entering the 2021-22 season.

In a world with the ever-growing transfer portal, Ohio State had a relatively quiet offseason with just two players departing and one player coming in. But those three moves were each substantial. The Buckeyes lost their two starting forwards in Dorka Juhasz (transfer to Connecticut) and Aaliyah Patty (Texas A&M) while gaining former Oregon guard Taylor Mikesell.

Mikesell is currently ineligible while Ohio State looks into a waiver to have her play this year, and while her impact would certainly be noticed, the Buckeyes will have the numbers at the guard position regardless.

Ohio State, including Mikesell, has 13 players on the roster. Only three of those players are listed as pure forwards, leaving freshman Taylor Thierry, listed as a guard/forward, as well as nine other players named strictly as guards.

While that lopsided roster could serve as a problem for some teams' systems, that is not the case for Ohio State, according to head coach Kevin McGuff.

"It certainly highlights our style of play to be a little more guard-heavy, and so that works for us," McGuff told BSB. "We're excited about the group that we have and think we have the talent to be really successful. It's just a matter of evolving, even a little bit more toward this type of offensive system than we even were a year ago."

That style of play, to put it simply, is to be fast. In Ohio State's last six seasons, the team has ranked in the top 100 in the country in

pace (possessions per 40 minutes) five times and in the top 30 four times, according to Her-HoopsStats.com. Last year, even with a more traditional lineup, the Buckeyes ranked No. 15 in the nation with 76.3 possessions per 40 minutes.

Going that fast has led to OSU becoming an excellent offensive team, ranking in the top 10 in scoring all four of the seasons when it had a top-30 pace. That came at the sacrifice of defense, of course, which did not rank in the top 250 those years, and yet Ohio State still won plenty of games in that span.

But now, the roster, at least on paper, is possibly the most prepared to see McGuff's vision of speed fully played out.

"I think we'll be deep and certainly talented with our perimeter players," the OSU head coach said. "It should allow us to play a pretty aggressive up-tempo style of play, and all while maintaining fresh legs and so forth."

The other key piece of a guard-dominant team is usually a heavy reliance on shots behind the arc. Again, that would not be a large departure for a McGuff-led team. Ohio State has ranked in the top 60 in both three-point makes and attempts four of the last six seasons.

But McGuff said he still believes it is important to do more than fire away from behind the arc.

"Certainly shooting the three will be a big part of what we do, but we definitely want to find some balance in the offense," he said. "A lot of times, people just equate scoring around the basket with post play, but there are a lot of ways to create space and drive the ball and get to the free-throw line as well."

The player who could stand to benefit the most from a faster, more shooter-friendly offense is Jaci Sheldon, who enters her junior year after leading the team in scoring (16.7 points per game) as a sophomore.

Sheldon upped her production across the board in year two, and did so without sacrificing efficiency, keeping her field-goal percentages (48.3 percent in 2019-20, 48.6 percent in 2020-21) and three-point percentages (34.6

OSU Women's Basketball Verbal Commitments

Players in the class of 2022 who have verbally committed to play basketball at Ohio State. (Star ratings are from the ESPN rankings.)

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Stars	High School
Kaia Henderson	PG	5-6	N/A	New Hartford, N.Y.
Cotie McMahon	SG	5-11	★★★★	Centerville, Ohio
Mya Perry	SG	5-10	N/A	Reynoldsburg, Ohio

percent to 34.4 percent) at nearly identical rates.

The former five-star prospect out of Dublin (Ohio) Coffman does plenty of her work from three but also is one of the best players at scoring in transition in the Big Ten. She told BSB she agreed that style of offense should help her improve as well as the rest of the roster.

"It's not a secret that we have a lot of guards," Sheldon said. "Our goal is to play really fast this year, and it will be helpful having a lot of guards. The bigs that we have like to play fast, too. They're really skilled, so that will be fun. Our goal is to just be the faster, more ready team each game."

McGuff agreed this could be a big year for Sheldon, who he said has only improved every year during her time at Ohio State.

"She's really made great progress since she's been here," the coach said. "She's an incredibly hard worker, and this style really suits her well, so I think you'll continue to see her make strides."

The fast style of offense is something that McGuff has instilled in his Ohio State teams for much of his tenure, but he is not alone in the Big Ten. The conference has had a make-over in mentality over the past few seasons, and 2020-21 showed to be an offensive explosion for the conference.

Last year, eight of the 14 Big Ten teams finished among the top 50 nationally in scoring, led by Maryland and Iowa, which finished Nos. 1 and 2 in the country with 90.8 and 86.1 points per game, respectively. Ohio State finished third in the Big Ten and 10th in the nation with 80.2 points per contest.

"I think it just shows you where our league

has evolved," McGuff said. "We kind of had this reputation in years past as being a physical league that just pounded it inside. Now, the league has really evolved. There are great players, great coaches with great strategy, and we have some of the best offensive teams and one of the best offensive leagues in the country."

"Really, in the last couple of years, it's just a lot of people that are playing with a lot more pace and a lot more spacing (in the Big Ten), relying on the three-point shooting more, and it's been fun to see. And certainly, we're conscious of having to make sure we're ready to go this year to compete with that."

Ohio State is going to play fast, but not the typical fast that it has done during the McGuff era. Big Ten Player of the Year Kelsey Mitchell still had forward Stephanie Mavunga during her tenure, while Sheldon, Madison Greene and Braxtin Miller – last year's starting guards – had Juhasz and Patty.

None of Ohio State's forwards on the roster is stuck under the rim and, according to Sheldon, all 13 players are ready to run even faster this year to get the best out of McGuff's play style.

"The goal we're setting is to get in shape, get our wind back and build ourselves up to be back in shape to play as fast as we want," Sheldon said. "I don't know if it's a big change, but it's our goal this year to be in shape and play the way we want to, so we don't limit ourselves in that way. We're excited. Playing fast is the mentality this year, so we're excited for that."

For more news coverage surrounding the women's basketball team as it heads into the 2021-22 season, go to BuckeyeSports.com.

Buckeye Sports BulletinBoard

RULES AND RATES: 20 cents per word, 10 cents for more than one insertion. Minimum order of \$5. No agency discounts. Make checks payable to Buckeye Sports Bulletin. We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express.

All ads are uniformly set with the first two words set in boldface capital letters at no charge. However, no other words may be set in boldface. Anyone planning a larger or more distinct ad may receive our ad rate card upon request.

We reserve the right to request additional information or merchandise be submitted from advertiser prior to acceptance of an ad, and we reserve the right to refuse advertisements considered objectionable.

Deadline is one week prior to publication date. Call (614) 486-2202 or write P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio, 43212 for info.

WANTED TO buy: OSU football memorabilia and equipment, programs, pennants, glasses, books, jerseys, helmets, ticket stubs. One item or a hundred. Will travel. Call George at (614) 506-1081.

WANTED TO buy: OSU basketball tickets/stubs from the 1960s, '70s, '80s, '90s & 2000s. Call Mike at (704) 995-0414.

FOR SALE! Woody Hayes glasses frames from 1963. The real ones. Call (513) 947-0120 or (937) 402-9765.

WANTED TO buy: OSU football memorabilia, programs, ticket stubs, pennants, championship rings, gold pants, helmets, autographs, game-used equipment, small or large collections. Call Chris at (419) 957-6789.

FOR SALE — OSU-MICHIGAN Game, 1975 - original RADIO broadcast on CD! Woody's last great team & Archie's last UM game as Bucks go 11-0! Three-disk set runs 3½ hours! Listen in your car! \$25 + \$3 S & H. Call 1-630-527-8890!

BSB PUBLISHER Frank Moskowitz and other members of the BSB staff are available to speak at your business, social or alumni group meetings. Informative and fun. Call (614) 486-2202 for details.

Press
Pub + on 5th
GOOD FOOD + FINE DRINKS

Press good food
fine drinks **Grill**

Both locations open for lunch & dinner daily!

1505 W. 5th Ave
Near Grandview Ave
614-817-1198

Monday - Saturday:
11 AM - 10 PM

Sunday:
NOON - 10 PM

KITCHEN UNTIL 10 PM NIGHTLY

741 N. High St
In the Short North
614-298-1014

Monday - Saturday:
11:30 AM - 12:30 AM

Sunday:
NOON - 12:30 AM

KITCHEN UNTIL MIDNIGHT DAILY

presscolumbus.com

PXG
GEN₄
GOLF CLUBS



**THE MOST
AMAZING CLUBS
TO EVER EARN
THE PXG NAME**

Announcing our new PXG GEN4 golf clubs!
Without a doubt, the best clubs we've ever made.

Featuring incredible sound and feel, unbelievable
forgiveness, explosive distance, and of course,
drop dead sexy looks. Ka-Boom Baby!

Learn more at [PXG.com](https://pxg.com).



PXG.
**THE SCIENCE
OF SEXY.**

PXG clubs are only sold direct by PXG.
PXG.COM | 844.PLAY.PXG



**NOBODY MAKES GOLF CLUBS
THE WAY WE DO. PERIOD.®**



GEN4
ESF
EXPLOSIVE
SOUND & FEEL

GEN4
UF
UNBELIEVABLE
FORGIVENESS

GEN4
SHL
SMOKING-HOT
LOOKS

GEN4
CD
CRAZY
DISTANCE

GEN4
PP
PERSONALIZED
PERFORMANCE

Strom Jumps On Homecoming Opportunity

By **CHASE BROWN**

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Lisa Strom grew up loving golf. She started playing at a young age, eventually making her high school team at Lansdale Catholic High School in Pennsylvania. From there, Strom started dreaming of playing the sport professionally.

To achieve her dream, Strom needed to continue surrounding herself with the game, so she committed to play golf for Therese Hession at Ohio State. She felt the program and Hession's experience offered her the best chance to make it to the LPGA. Four years later, Strom's dream became a reality, and she began what would become an 11-year professional career.

After her playing days came to a close, Strom entered coaching. She started as an assistant at Ohio State then broke through as a head coach at Texas State before leading the Kent State women's team. Now, over 20 years after graduating, Strom is back at her alma mater to lead the Buckeyes.

On July 2, 2021, Strom became the sixth head coach in Ohio State women's golf history after successful tenures in her two previous stops. She replaces Hession, who will remain the director of golf for both the men's and women's teams.

"It's just a dream come true to be able to come back to my alma mater and return to Columbus," Strom said. "It just feels like home, and I'm super excited. I don't think I can fully put it into words. I now get a chance to return to the university that has given me so much."

For Strom, this is yet another opportunity for a homecoming at the school that started it

all, first as a player and then as an assistant under Hession from 2011-16.

In four seasons as an Ohio State golfer, Strom earned two All-Big Ten honors and four Academic All-Big Ten honors. She and her teammates won the 1999 Big Ten championship and finished first at the 2000 NCAA East Regional championship.

After graduating from Ohio State, Strom turned professional, playing 50 LPGA-sponsored events on the LPGA tour during her 11 professional seasons, with a career-best finish of 13th at the 2007 Navistar LPGA Classic.

She also competed on the Futures Tour for seven seasons, with her best finish being second at the 2002 El Paso Futures Golf Classic.

Strom considered playing more seasons on tour but felt a strong calling to retire after her 11th year.

"I wasn't injured, and I wasn't walking away from the sport or mad at it," Strom told BSB. "I still to this day love the game, but the time had come for me to think about my future and what it would look like."

Ultimately, Strom just felt fatigued – like she didn't have the energy to keep fighting for her spot in the LPGA. It was a tour that had changed a lot during her professional career.

"I think a lot of people daydream about what it must be like for a PGA tour player or LPGA tour player to live that dream," Strom said. "What they don't see is all that hard work that goes behind it and in getting to those moments like having your best finish on tour or winning an event."

"People paint this rosy picture of private planes, traveling on Monday morning to meet tour reps waiting to see what clubs you might need and the like, but that couldn't be farther

from the truth. It's a grind."

Perhaps even more important, competing on professional tours kept her away from loved ones to the point where she missed family events and time with friends to play in tournaments.

"There were things I had to give up," Strom said. "Maybe it was a weekend with my family, a wedding, an anniversary, or birthdays. I'd always be at a golf tournament instead. There's a lot that goes into it."

She knew she wanted to keep golf in her life, but she wasn't sure how to make it work. Enter Hession.

The longtime Buckeye head coach talked with Strom about coaching and the opportunity to give back to others, offering her a chance to start her coaching career at Ohio State and to learn under her former coach.

"I couldn't have been happier or more grateful that she offered me the opportunity," Strom said. "She took a chance on me as a student-athlete – I wasn't on full scholarship at Ohio State until my fifth year – but she took a chance and saw my hard work and how much I wanted to earn it, and that paid off. It was a no-brainer to accept the offer."

Strom packed her bags and moved to Columbus to begin a six-year tenure as an Ohio State assistant coach.

Under Hession, Strom helped lead the program to six straight NCAA Regional appearances and four trips to the NCAA championships. The Buckeyes won nine tournaments, including three consecutive Big Ten championships in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Strom developed her coaching style, adopting some of Hession's patterns in building relationships with players, creating connections and offering constructive criticism in the form of tough love.

"I learned that coaching leaves a big impact, and you have to take it seriously," Strom said. "You have to be all in with these kids, and they have to be understanding that you're going to be there for them through ups and downs, highs and lows. I learned this from, in my opinion, one of the best college coaches in golf."

In what would be her final season as an Ohio State assistant, Strom dealt with some personal issues regarding her father's health. After winning the 2016 Big Ten championship, Strom received news that her father had lost his battle with lung cancer. He had been managing treatment well but unexpectedly passed away.

She left the team to be with family, spending time mourning the loss of her father and celebrating his life. She later returned to the team for the national championship tournament.

After the season concluded, Strom received a phone call from Texas State asking her to become the program's next head coach. She wrestled with the idea of leaving Ohio State, especially after a year full of so much turmoil. Strom asked those closest to her for advice and decided to accept the offer.

"I am grateful for them to give me a chance to get better coaching experience," Strom said. "I went through some great times and some tough times to learn what it means to be a head coach, but ultimately that's where you learn to grow and be uncomfortable."

Strom coached Texas State for the next three seasons. She led the program to two tournament titles and a runner-up finish at the 2019 Sun Belt Conference championship. Strom's team set seven school records in her final season with the Bobcats and finished with the highest final season ranking in program history.

After her successful year came to an end, another opportunity arose for Strom. Then-Kent State head coach Greg Robertson accept-

ed the head coaching position at Oklahoma State University, his alma mater. Kent State had been one of the top programs in the area for years, establishing a mid-major dynasty. The women's golf team had won 21 consecutive MAC championships but needed someone to fill the void. Strom had the experience and the talent for the job.

"I had the chance to take a great team to a national championship that first year, probably one of the most talented teams I'll maybe ever coach," Strom said. "It was a lot of fun."

In two seasons with Kent State, Strom led the team to its 22nd consecutive MAC championship. In May, Strom and the Golden Flashes competed in the NCAA Regional at Ohio State's Scarlet Course, finishing tied for fifth in an 18-team field and advancing to the NCAA championships.

The coronavirus pandemic shortened both seasons at Kent State. Still, Strom relished the chance to develop her skills as a coach and a teacher of young athletes. She credits her time with the Golden Flashes as a significant period of growth.

Meanwhile, at Strom's alma mater, Hession was planning to move away from the day-to-day coaching responsibilities after an illustrious career in Columbus. She had coached the women's program since 1991 and led the Buckeyes to 11 Big Ten championships and 25 Regional appearances. In 2018, Ohio State promoted her to the director of golf, allowing her to remain around the program, even if she stepped away from the head coaching role. After the 2020 season, she decided it was time.

With her history at the university, athletic director Gene Smith and associate athletic director Dan Cloran allowed Hession to conduct her own coaching search. Her first call was to Strom.

"We had a history, and that was important to me," Hession said. "I had known her as a player, as an assistant coach and as a person. I knew that I could rely on her. We kind of operate things out of the same mold, so I knew that she would be the person to move this program in the right direction."

Hession felt Strom could coach at a high level and could elevate the program as a head coach and that she would be a great fit with the current roster. For Strom, it was a call she'd waited on for years.

"In all my years coaching, my ultimate goal was to make it back to Ohio State," Strom said. "At Texas State and Kent State, that was always in the back of my mind."

Much like with the other offers she'd received in her short 10-year coaching career, Strom's decision on this one was easy. She accepted. She reached her goal, again.

"Lisa will provide a great experience for our athletes," Hession said. "She will make things better for women's golf. She's been in their shoes. She was a student at Ohio State, and she knows what it's like to play golf here. That's great to have on the résumé."

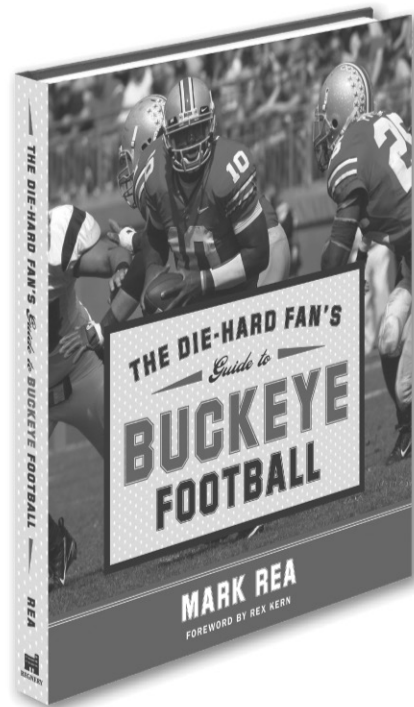
Strom's new goal, now that she's reached the peak, so to speak, is to help her golfers achieve their dreams in the same way she did – though she certainly wouldn't complain about claiming Ohio State's first national title in the process.

There will be adversity and challenges along the way, but she is confident that her players can learn from her journey.

"You can't bottle your experience and put it into someone else or hope that they understand what it feels like," Strom said. "It's one of those things that you only know if you've done it. It helps me relate to young women that I'm coaching. The game is hard, and it does reward hard work, but it requires a lot of you."

CALLING ALL BUCKEYE FANS:

YOUR INDISPENSABLE OSU FOOTBALL GUIDE IS HERE!



Do you bleed scarlet and gray year round?

If so, then *The Die-Hard Fan's Guide to Buckeye Football* by Buckeye football expert Mark Rea is for you! This must-have book works its way "Across the Field" through nearly 120 years of Buckeye football, including complete coverage of the national championship seasons and Heisman Trophy winners.

Full of color photos, amusing anecdotes, and little-known facts, *The Die-Hard Fan's Guide to Buckeye Football* is unlike any other book you've read. One minute you're reading about legendary coaches like Paul Brown and Woody Hayes and the next you're visualizing stories of the Horseshoe's greatest games and discovering who Woody Hayes referred to as his "greatest booster."

It is for you, the fans, that this book has been created—the ultimate guide for the most diehard members of the Buckeye Nation! GO BUCKS!

Available in bookstores, online, or call
(614) 486-2202

Since 1947
REGNERY PUBLISHING, INC.
An Eagle Publishing Company • Washington, DC
www.Regnery.com

Old And New Come Together For First Victory

The Minnesota Golden Gophers couldn't row the boat fast enough to keep up with the Ohio State Buckeyes in the second half of the Sept. 2 season opener for both squads.

Both teams had some seasoned veterans coming back this year, but some new faces and new names were going to be important for team success in 2021, especially for Ohio State. The Buckeyes would have to rely on an "untested-in-battle" quarterback, a new trio of linebackers, and a largely uncertain secondary to carry the team forward in the always physical Big Ten conference.

COACH'S CORNER Bill Conley

It would be a combination of the new and veteran, the young and the old that had to come together with perfect team chemistry to help the Buckeyes continue their winning ways. It was only one game and one victory, but the near future seems bright for Ryan Day, his coaching staff and his team.

First Test Passed

C.J. Stroud was initiated into Big Ten college football in Minneapolis. In his first start in his college career, he faced a formidable opponent in a hostile environment away from home on national television. That was a daunting task for a redshirt freshman who just a few days before was announced as the starting quarterback by Day to lead his team.

Even though the announcement took a little stress off the young quarterback, it wasn't going to be a cakewalk against the Golden Gophers, who were returning an experienced defense that helped the team go 11-2 in 2019. Coach Day made it very clear that C.J. was going to hold the reins of the Ohio State offense against Minnesota, and he was going to give Stroud every chance to carry his team in the season opener without fear of being benched early if things didn't start off right.

At the same time, Day made it clear Stroud had earned the opportunity to start the first game, but it wasn't a coronation for the entire season. Stroud would be given those reins for one game, an audition of sorts to see if the 19-year-old could handle the pressure of being the Buckeyes' starting quarterback.

The game didn't start off well for Stroud in the rain at Huntington Bank Stadium. The Buckeyes did strike first with a 71-yard scamper around right end by Miyan Williams for a touchdown, but the lead would not hold up and the Buckeyes would go to the locker room trailing the Gophers by four points at half.

For Stroud, he had thrown for just 58 yards and an interception by the break. It

was obvious C.J. was not setting the world on fire in his debut as starting quarterback. He seemed confused and uncomfortable in the pocket the first two quarters. His passes weren't accurate, his reads inconsistent and his decision-making questionable. Things were going to have to get better the second half for both the Buckeyes and this young quarterback.

What Buckeye Nation witnessed in the second half from C.J. Stroud was a complete turnaround in performance from the first 30 minutes of play. A young man was maturing before our very eyes as his confidence grew as did his production on the field. Protected by one of the very best offensive lines in college football, Stroud delivered strikes to his most veteran receivers and finished the game with four touchdown passes and 294 passing yards. He didn't take a sack and even added 13 yards rushing.

It is way too early to know how good C.J. Stroud will be at his position, but for now, he "passed" his first test.

RB Depth Impressive

Everyone knew that returning depth on the offensive line, at wide receiver and tight end was a given for the Buckeyes. We also knew that whoever would emerge as the starting quarterback would be a rookie. The running back position would be solid, maybe special, and the result of the opener in Minneapolis made the latter seem very possible.

Master Teague and Marcus Crowley were back and healthy. Miyan Williams showed he had great potential at the end of 2020, and true freshman TreVeyon Henderson was highly touted. In the final analysis of the performance against Minnesota, it looks like Williams and Henderson may carry the bulk of the load at the running back position. Teague and Crowley each carried the ball six times vs. the Gophers and did a good job, and they will be valuable to the Buckeyes this season.

But it was Williams who stole the show at running back, putting up 125 yards on nine carries for an average of just under 14 yards per carry. Henderson had just two carries for 15 yards but took a swing pass 70 yards for a score, jetting through and by defenders on his way to the end zone.

Both Williams and Henderson can kick it into a different gear when necessary. They are fast, fluid and elusive in space. Look for the stable of all these running backs to take the running game of Ohio State to the next level this season.

Jury Out Defensively

One of the major concerns going into the 2021 campaign centered around a defense that has shown inconsistency during the past few seasons, especially on the back end. Buckeye defensive backs have not been proficient in either pass defense or run support. They have given up way too many big plays

via the air and poor open-field tackling.

Ohio State has had many fine defensive backs go on to the NFL in recent years, but as a unit, the performance has been questionable. The secondary play would have to improve for the Buckeyes to repeat as Big Ten champions and advance into the playoffs. The Golden Gophers were the first test, but not the toughest to come, for a defensive secondary to prove its worth in 2021.

Pass coverage is not all on the secondary, however. It also takes putting pressure on opposing quarterbacks from the defensive front along with sound under coverage by the linebacking corps. Going into the season opener in Minnesota, the OSU coaching staff would rely on the experience up front and a back seven that was composed of one returning starter – Josh Proctor at safety – and six first-time starters. They had to shut down a veteran quarterback in Tanner Morgan, who was good enough to manage an offense that also featured the returning Big Ten's top running back, Mohamed Ibrahim.

The season opener in Minneapolis had its highs and lows for the Buckeyes defensively. The veteran front led by Zach Harrison, Antwan Jackson, Haskell Garrett, Tyreke Smith and Taron Vincent played well. They went up against a huge Gophers offensive line and more than held their own against the run, freeing the linebackers to try to corral Ibrahim.

Ohio State linebackers Teradja Mitchell, Cody Simon, Dallas Gant and Tommy Eichenberg combined for 30 tackles for the evening. Ibrahim did have 163 yards rushing,

largely due to a 56-yarder on a fourth-and-1 in the second quarter, but the OSU rush defense was respectable in the opening game.

In terms of pass defense, the Buckeyes also put in a solid performance in allowing just 205 yards in the air. Morgan was sacked twice, and the longest pass given up was 22 yards. The biggest defensive play of the night came when Harrison stripped Morgan of the football, which Haskell Garrett scooped up and took 32 yards for a touchdown, all but putting the nail in the coffin for Minnesota.

The Gophers did have success in the underneath zones vacated by the Ohio State linebackers who were wired up to stop the Gophers' rushing game. First-time starters cornerback Denzel Burke and bullet Ronnie Hickman performed at a high level – Burke broke up three passes while playing tight coverage and Hickman was in on 11 tackles.

The overall defensive play for the Buckeyes away from home in the season opener was admirable, and some first-time starters performed well. There were many positives on which to grow as the season unfolds.

As good as things went for the defense, the Buckeyes did give up 31 points, equaling the most points given up in a season opener since 1950 against SMU. The Ohio State defense has great potential, but only time will tell how good it can become. The jury is still out.

Bill Conley played football at Ohio State under Woody Hayes and coached under Earle Bruce, John Cooper and Jim Tressel.

If things are changing at your bank, maybe it's time to *change banks.*

Personal & Business Banking/Lending • Treasury Management
Agribusiness Banking • Financial Planning




PROUD SPONSOR OF OHIO STATE ATHLETICS

HEARTLAND BANK

Visit us online at [Heartland.Bank](https://www.Heartland.Bank)

#FeelGoodBanking   

Member FDIC NMLS# 440231  Equal Housing Lender



Marsha's
SINCE 1984
HOMEMADE
Premium Quality
BUCKEYES

Perfecting game day gatherings
of all sizes for over 30 years
Individually Wrapped Buckeyes
& 50 Pack Party Tubs Available
Visit www.MarshasBuckeyes.com
to get yours today.

OSU Takes Care Of Business But Has Work To Do

Now that that's out of the way ...

No, it wasn't a masterpiece. No, it wasn't the dominant performance one would expect from a team that's used to dominating the Big Ten. Heck, it may not have been much above average for a team that's been anything but average.

THE FACTS MAN Mike Wachsmen

But it was a victory – on the road, no less.

And after some anxious moments, Ohio State was able to put its foot on the gas pedal and cruise away from a Minnesota team that, at least according to one particular observer, might be underrated.

There was a lot of good that came out of the win over the Gophers. The receiving

corps was as good as advertised, the offensive line kept C.J. Stroud out of harm's way almost the entire night and opened massive holes for the running backs, and Stroud showed resolve in the second half after playing a subpar first 30 minutes in his first-ever real action.

And there was also enough bad that the coaches will be able to keep everyone in line heading into the big showdown with nationally ranked Oregon.

There were more missed tackles than usual, and the coverage by the secondary was average – and maybe that's being generous. It should be noted that both regular corners were out, so guys who weren't really supposed to be factors had to step in. That said, the corners were a bit too handsy and drew a few pass-interference penalties that kept Minnesota drives alive and allowed the Gophers to hang in a bit longer than they should have. It's the hope from here that the return of Sevn Banks and Cameron Brown

helps lock down those issues. It should be noted that after an early pass-interference penalty, freshman Denzel Burke played pretty well.

There was also some shuffling with the linebackers, which is understandable given that all of last year's starters departed for the NFL. It seemed as though the coaching staff couldn't agree on which guys to have on the field together, so they were doing a lot of mixing and matching. For my money, it looked like Teradja Mitchell, Tommy Eichenberg and Cody Simon played the best, and if OSU is going to use three linebackers, those are the guys who appeared to stand out.

Mitchell especially was all over the place, netting 10 stops and a tackle for loss. He's been waiting seemingly forever for an opportunity, so it was nice to see him take advantage when it was presented. Simon played an active, fast game and lassoed Minnesota QB Tanner Morgan on a nice delayed blitz that stopped the Gophers' momentum just before the half.

It was, shall we say, interesting following social media while the game was going on.

In the first half, it was "Put in (Kyle) McCord" and "Stroud was a five-star? How?" along with "It's obvious the moment is too big for (Stroud)," responses that elicited more than just a slight chuckle from yours truly. Were there a few miscues? Sure. Fans were spoiled by just how well Justin Fields threw the ball from outside the pocket, so when Stroud misfired on the move, it was a big deal. He sailed a couple and just flat missed on a couple of others, but Ryan Day and his offensive staff did a great job settling the young man down. The results were there in the second half – Stroud threw eight passes, four going for touchdowns. Nerves defeated.

I wouldn't worry too much about Stroud going forward, especially now that he has the first game under his belt. Look for him to be much more decisive and crisper with his passing and for the air attack to keep on humming.

What I really liked is the fact that maybe, just maybe, Day is transitioning to more of a grind-it-out, run-the-ball coach. There were very few RPO sets with Stroud, which is by design as he isn't known for being a great runner. The Buckeyes ran the ball 26 times, compared to just 22 passes, and averaged 7.7 yards per carry. That's a pretty good clip, and if it stays that way, there may be little reason to throw the football. And that would warm my old-school, black-shoes, play-in-shirtsleeves-in-winter heart.

What I didn't like in the run game was the fact that Miyan Williams and TreVeyon Henderson combined for just 11 carries. That can't happen going forward. They are easily the two most explosive backs on the roster and should combine for 80 percent (or more) of the team's totes in a game. Henderson had just two runs but made jaws drop when he took a simple swing pass and split two Minnesota defenders on the way to a 70-yard score. The future seems limitless for this young man.

The run-pass ratio showed great balance, and in the end that's what makes a team difficult to defend. Coaches talk all the time in postgame about balance when yardage figures are similar, but that's not bal-

ance because yardage isn't anything you can control. Play-calling you can control, and that's where the real balance is. If you call 40 passes and 10 runs, but gain 250 yards on each, that's not a balanced attack. That's coincidence.

It should be a spirited week of practice leading up to game two, but you remember how the old adage goes, right? Teams are supposed to improve the most between the first and second games. Making judgments about a team after one game is a fool's errand – or do you not remember 2014? You know, when fans declared OSU "dead" after a bad home to loss to Virginia Tech?

Oregon has a reputation for coming after the quarterback but will have its hands full against an OSU line that allowed zero sacks and only two hurries. Compounding matters is an ankle injury to star edge rusher Kayvon Thibodeaux, which forced him to leave in the second quarter of the Ducks' 31-24 win against Fresno State. X-rays were reportedly negative, but there's no word on whether he will be able to play. If he can't, that's a huge factor in Ohio State's favor.

Speaking of injuries – you have to feel for Minnesota running back Mohamed Ibrahim. The guy is nearly impossible to bring down and is the definition of a "runner with heart." He churns out every available yard and seems at his best after contact. His 56-yard run on fourth-and-1 from his own 29 was a thing of beauty – he spun off a hit and churned all the way down to the OSU 15-yard-line, setting up the Gophers' first touchdown of the night. When he went down in front of the bench late in the third quarter with a leg injury, you knew his night – and possibly his season – was over.

It's a shame to go out like that, because he is a bad, bad man. I don't often root for opposing players, but that guy can play on my team any day of the week. Ibrahim has that same violent running style that Gophers backs of old used to have – guys such as Marion Barber and Laurence Maroney, dudes who would run to contact and then pick up yardage after trucking you. Let's hope we see Ibrahim on a football field sooner rather than later.

Given how anemic Indiana looked during its loss to Iowa and how much Penn State's offense struggled in its win over Wisconsin, it seems fair to say (after one week, anyway) that the Big Ten East is still in Ohio State's control. The Buckeyes have the most talent, the best coaching staff and a schedule that is mostly agreeable and conducive to a run at the College Football Playoff.

But let's not get that far ahead just yet. It's better to savor the taste of victory, but also know that tougher missions lie ahead. Nothing is a given in college football, and if the Buckeyes are satisfied with the fact they went into Minneapolis and vanquished a pretty good team, then they are fooling themselves. Every team has something they need to improve on – even Alabama, though it may not look like it. OSU has some wrinkles but also has the means to iron those out.

Enjoy the victory over Minnesota – even if it was more kids' kindergarten painting than Picasso – and realize there's a lot of football yet to be played.

Ohio State Fans!



Weekly September through November
Five times from January through mid-March
Biweekly mid-March through mid-May
Monthly December, June through August

Some Ohio State sports fans need more information on the Buckeyes than they can find in their local newspaper. Buckeye Sports Bulletin is for those fans. By subscribing to Buckeye Sports Bulletin, they receive 24 issues a year featuring:



- In-depth coverage of all Ohio State sports
- The latest comments from coaches and players
- The latest in recruiting information
- Personality profiles
- Features on former Buckeye greats
- Rosters, schedules, statistics, photos
- Check us out on the Web at www.BuckeyeSports.com

- ☐ 1 Year, \$99.95 ☐ 1 Year, First Class Mail, \$159.95
☐ 2 Years, \$169.95 ☐ 2 Years, First Class Mail, \$279.95

I want to know more about Ohio State sports. I am enclosing \$ _____

☐ Money Order ☐ Check ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Discover ☐ Amer. Express

Credit Card # and Exp. Date _____

Credit Card Orders Accepted 24 Hours A Day
Call (614) 486-2202 or (800) 760-2862

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

Mail To: Buckeye Sports Bulletin
P.O. Box 12453
Columbus, Ohio 43212
www.BuckeyeSports.com

Win Over Gophers Comes With Mixed Results

For any hand-wringing by Buckeye fans, and for all the talk from any announcers that an upset was in the making before the game had even reached the half, and “P.J. Fleck, P.J. Fleck, P.J. Fleck,” Ohio State’s season-opening game wound up going as it had been predicted. Most betting lines before the game had the Buckeyes winning by 14, and sure enough, they won, 45-31.

There were lots of ups and downs by both teams and big plays on both sides, but in the end, Ohio State’s superior talent on offense prevailed, despite any opening-night jitters by inexperienced quarterback C.J. Stroud.

“That’s one of the best offenses I’ve ever coached against,” Golden Gophers head coach Fleck said afterward. “They make you cover the entire field. They’re all first-round draft picks.”

Everyone knew going in that Stroud had never so much as attempted a collegiate pass. But they also knew he was going to line up behind a huge and talented line and alongside a talented running back (whoever that ended up being), and he was going to look out at possibly the best collection of receivers in the country. It seemed more than enough to help pull Stroud through his starting debut.

As the game unfolded, I was surprised that the outstanding receiving tandem of Chris Olave and Garrett Wilson didn’t have more of an impact in the early going. Stroud just missed Wilson on a long pass that the speedster might still have been able to catch, but the two receivers combined for just three receptions for 21 yards in the first quarter and five catches for 31 yards in the entire opening half, with Olave grabbing only one pass for 7 yards before the intermission.

Fortunately, Miyan Williams, the unheralded back out of Cincinnati Winton Woods, continued to open a lot of eyes, this time with a 71-yard TD run on Ohio State’s first possession. Then Master Teague pounded out 29 rushing yards on six carries to help set up a 35-yard Noah Ruggles field goal for a 10-0 lead early in the second quarter. Stroud had put the Buckeyes in scoring position with a 15-yard completion to tight end Jeremy Ruckert to the Minnesota 18, but the young signal-caller started to show some chinks in his armor when he could come up with just one completion on three consecutive passes, good for only a yard, and the Buckeyes had to settle for three.

Meanwhile, the Gophers, spurred by a 56-yard run from Mohamed Ibrahim on a fourth-and-1 at his own 29 and aided by a Stroud interception, scored a pair of touchdowns to take a 14-10 lead into the locker room at the break and spark talk of the big upset.

Lost in the excitement over the modest Minnesota lead was the fact that Ohio State was set to receive the second-half kickoff. And it didn’t take long for the Buckeyes to flex their offensive muscle.

Stroud quickly got Olave involved in the action, first with an 11-yard strike and then with a 38-yard scoring pass to cap a seven-play, 81-yard touchdown drive that was aided by three carries from Williams for 27 yards. That would be the first of five second-half touchdowns – one by the defense – that each were from 32 yards out or longer.

“We knew that with the structure of their defense we were going to be able to take some shots, and I think that’s a very strong suit of my game,” Stroud said. “I think I can put a ball down the field really well.”

Stroud completed only five passes in the final 30 minutes but accounted for 236 yards

THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

and four touchdowns. While Stroud completed three of those long scoring passes to Wilson and Olave, I think the touchdown reception that OSU fans are going to remember most was the 70-yard bolt by freshman TreVeyon Henderson. Henderson, a running back who came to Ohio State as heralded as Williams was unheralded, took a short pass and turned on the jets in a way reminiscent of Ted Ginn Jr. He blew by the Minnesota defense that quickly.

It was certainly a sign of good things to come this season and beyond.

Normally, with an offensive performance like that, you would think the Buckeyes would have run away with the game in the second half.

But just as Buckeye fans and observers knew coming in that Stroud was raw at quarterback, they also knew that the defense that had struggled last season was still suspect coming into this season.

While Ohio State, despite its inconsistent first half, was racking up 495 yards of total offense, it was allowing Minnesota to gain 408 of its own.

The Gophers were led by Ibrahim, who carried 30 carries for 163 yards before leaving the game with what was reportedly a season-ending Achilles injury. Tanner Morgan, a solid and veteran quarterback (but hardly Aaron Rodgers), chipped in with an efficient 14-of-25 passing for 205 yards with a touchdown and no interceptions.

The Buckeyes aided the Minnesota cause with several missed tackles, including one on Ibrahim’s long run, and with a revolving door at linebacker, they seemed to be confused at times in the middle of the defense. Things could have been even worse. Several Ohio State defensive backs seemed to get away with potential pass-interference plays that, if called, might have altered the outcome of the game.

Even the highly touted defensive line seemed to struggle at times. It had been hoped that pressure from the big guys up front would help protect the back seven. That pressure was inconsistent, and the Buckeyes recorded just two sacks of Morgan and one quarterback hurry. And, of course, Ibrahim had to pierce the defensive line on his way to 163 yards.

Things were not completely dire on the defensive side of the ball, however.

For one thing, the two sacks were each critical to the outcome of the game. First and foremost was the highlight-reel strip sack by Zach Harrison that was picked up by Haskell Garrett and returned 32 yards for a touchdown to give Ohio State a 31-21 lead late in the third quarter.

Ohio State’s other sack might not have been quite as spectacular as the Harrison/Garrett special, but proved almost as important.

After the Gophers took their 14-10 lead in the second quarter, they had one last shot at adding points before the half, taking over at their own 44 after a 37-yard Jesse Mirco punt with 1:28 on the clock. Minnesota moved to the OSU 41, but on third-and-6, Cody Simon blew through for an 11-yard sack of Morgan, snuffing out the chance for any more Gopher scoring and any more Minnesota momentum heading into the half.

We had been hearing a lot about Simon, a 6-2, 233-pound linebacker out of New Jersey, during the preseason, and he wound up with

seven tackles, including his sack.

I also wanted to make note that while Ibrahim racked up his 163 yards, 19 of his 30 carries went for three yards or less. Take away his 56-yard, fourth-down run as well as his 19-yard scoring run in the third quarter – which I realize you can’t do – and his numbers become 88 yards on 28 carries for 3.1-yard average. My point is Ibrahim might not have run quite as roughshod over the Buckeyes as his total numbers might indicate.

As for the linebackers, it seemed like Day, defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs and linebackers coach Al Washington, were auditioning players to find the best talent and combinations available. While the constant rotation seemed to create chaos at times, it could also help the staff ultimately settle on a consistent linebacking corps.

“A lot of guys played a lot of football, so we have an opportunity now (to use that),” Day said after the game. “We’ve recruited a lot of young players. We lost those four linebackers, and because of that you can see that we matched the personnel a little bit differently this game.”

“Now we’re going to have to go back and assess and really get a feel for those guys because when you’re going in scrimmages and practice, you get a good feel for things but you don’t really know until you get into a game. I think it’s going to sort itself out a little bit, but we do like playing depth and guys who deserve to play are going to.”

Facing a league foe to start the season left the staff with a less-than-ideal way to get a feel for those linebackers.

“When you start with maybe a nonconference game and you can get some guys in the game in the second half, it’s a little different,” Day said of running so many linebackers in and out against a tough opening opponent. “We started in the conference.”

And at the back end, it should be noted that the Buckeyes were without two of their more experienced defensive backs with both Sevy Banks and Cameron Brown sitting out the game. Certainly, their return could help the secondary, though it is difficult to forget that last year’s top vet, Shaun Wade, struggled in 2020.

While Banks and Brown were absent, young players such as Denzel Burke, Ryan Watts and Lathan Ransom saw plenty of action, with the true freshman Burke recording four tackles and three pass breakups.

A big concern right now would be the condition of veteran safety Josh Proctor, who left the game with an undisclosed injury.

If the Buckeyes can get their defensive secondary veterans back on the field to mix with the youth, the improvement that Ohio State fans have been hoping for in the backfield might not be just a dream.

And if the other parts of the defense also fall into place, the Buckeyes could wind up with a unit on that side of the ball that better complements what is almost certain to be a dynamic offense.

Can a return to the playoffs be in the cards? Bring on Oregon.

Quick Hitters

- In my traditional tight end watch, Ruckert’s reception to help set up the second-quarter field goal was the only reception by an Ohio State tight end. You would think that such a tight end as Ruckert would make a large and desirable target for an inexperienced

quarterback such as Stroud. On the other hand, Stroud ultimately showed that he was perfectly capable of finding fleet receivers such as Olave and Wilson downfield, especially if they had worked themselves wide open.

- The kick game was a concern for many heading into the season.

Ruggles, a graduate transfer from North Carolina, proved to be a nice find. He nailed the 35-yard field goal and all six of his extra points, and the Gophers returned just one of his kickoffs for 17 yards.

New punter Jesse Mirco was more of a mixed bag. He had a 49-yard punt in the third quarter that left Minnesota at its own 22, but he also had the 37-yarder that helped give the Gophers a chance to add points before the half.

For the game, Mirco averaged 43.0 yards, but neither of his kicks ended up inside the 20.

- Here’s something to watch for in the weeks ahead. Listening to this group of Buckeyes after the game, I found them to be more articulate than some of the groups in the past. Among those was Stroud, who readily admitted that he had jitters entering the game and told of his teammates repeatedly trying to pick him up, which they did successfully if his second-half performance was any indication.

I think some of the eloquence and candor from the current Buckeyes may be a reflection of Day, who seems less prone to use coach-speak than his predecessors Jim Tressel and Urban Meyer. Tressel spoke like a politician when dealing with the media – he’s actually quite engaging when not in front of the media masses – and Meyer was pretty much void of personality, always looking and sounding as if he would rather be out recruiting than dealing with the press.

Now that I have pointed it out, listen to the players and see what you think.

First-Class Upgrade?

By now, you have had a couple of chances to see how your mail delivery of Buckeye Sports Bulletin looks to be this football season. If delivery has not been timely, we strongly suggest upgrading to first-class mail in an envelope for football season for just \$28. You can upgrade through the traditional recruiting season for \$38. We especially recommend the upgrades for BSB readers living outside Ohio.

Give us a call at (614) 486-2202 to upgrade immediately with a credit card or send your check, money order or credit card information to P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio 43212. Be sure to mention either the “football” or “recruiting” upgrade.

Attention Reds Fans

Will the Cincinnati Reds make it to the playoffs? You can read about the stretch run and much more in our sister publication, Reds Report.

If readers of this column act now, we’ll send you a year of Reds Report, regularly \$49.95, for just \$19.95. And because you saw it here, we’ll give you a chance to see the playoff drive for yourself with four free tickets to either the game with the Dodgers on Sept. 19, the Pirates on Sept. 21 or the Nationals on Sept. 26.

Just call or write the number or address in the note above and ask for the Reds Report “15th and High Special.” Hurry to make sure you get tickets to the game of your choice. This offer is only good while ticket supplies last

HEADS UP CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS

FOR ATHLETES

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that affects how your brain works. It can happen after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that causes your brain to rapidly move inside your skull.

CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS

- Headache, nausea, vomiting,
- balance problems, dizziness,
- double or blurred vision,
- sensitivity to light or noise, feeling
- sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy,
- just not "feeling right" or
- "feeling down," memory
- problems, confusion, and
- trouble sleeping.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?

REPORT IT. Tell your coach, parent, and athletic trainer if you think you or one of your teammates may have a concussion. It's up to you to report your symptoms. Your coach and team are relying on you. Plus, you won't play your best if you are not feeling well.

GET CHECKED OUT. If you think you have a concussion, do not return to play on the day of the injury. Only a healthcare provider can tell if you have a concussion and when it is OK to return to school and play. The sooner you get checked out, the sooner you may be able to safely return to play.

GIVE YOUR BRAIN TIME TO HEAL. A concussion can make it harder to do everyday activities, such as concentrating at school. You may need extra help getting back to your normal activities. Be sure to update your parents and doctor about how you are feeling.

WHY SHOULD I TELL MY COACH AND PARENTS ABOUT MY SYMPTOMS?

Playing or practicing with a concussion is dangerous and can lead to a longer recovery.

While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have another concussion. This can put you at risk for a more serious injury to your brain and can even be fatal.

GOOD TEAMMATES KNOW: IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON

<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/concussion>

This work is funded either in whole or in part by a grant awarded by the Ohio Department of Health as a sub-award of a grant issued by Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant under the Injury Prevention Program by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, grant award. Number 1 NB01OT009358-01-00.



Department
of Health



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention