

*Buckeyes Set Record With Fifth Straight Season-Ending Defeat***Bowl Loss Has No Effect On Cooper's Status**

By MARK REA  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

As Ohio State president Gordon Gee stood in the press box shaking hands with members of the media covering the Florida Citrus Bowl, there was something familiar about him.

The smile was back.

The usually affable Gee had turned grim during the last few days of the 1992 football season as rumors circulated that he would have to dismiss head coach John Cooper if the Buckeyes did not beat Michigan and win their bowl game.

But in the wake of OSU's 13-13 tie with Michigan and a favorable review of Cooper by athletic director Jim Jones, Gee could return to his smiling self, even though the Buckeyes dropped a 21-14 decision to Georgia in the Citrus Bowl.

"That's all behind us," Gee told reporters. "John Cooper is our coach, he will remain our coach, and we won't say we'll evaluate him any more."

And had the Buckeyes been soundly defeated by the Bulldogs?

"If we had gotten beat by two or three touchdowns," Gee said, "we would have gotten beat by two or three touchdowns."

Cooper signed a new four-year contract in July that runs through the 1995 season. He will return to Ohio State for a sixth year as head coach next season, making him only the fifth man in history to last that long with the Buckeyes.

Woody Hayes coached for 28 seasons, followed by John Wilce with 16, Earle Bruce with nine and Francis Schmidt with seven.

THE BUCKEYES set a dubious school record with the loss to Georgia. It marked the fifth straight season in which they had finished the year with a loss, the first time that has ever happened in school history.

The last time Ohio State won a season finale was in 1987, when the Buck-



Ohio State tailback Robert Smith (26) rambles through a gaping hole in the Georgia defense for his second touchdown of the Citrus Bowl, a five-yard scamper that tied the game 14-14 in the third quarter. Smith rushed for a team-high 112 yards, caught two passes for 49 yards and scored two touchdowns for the Buckeyes, but it wasn't enough as Georgia prevailed by a 21-14 score.

eyes upset Michigan 23-20 in Bruce's final game as head coach. The Buckeyes finished 6-4-1 that year and did not go to a bowl.

The bowl loss also ran the team's

postseason losing streak to four. The Buckeyes haven't won a bowl game since beating Texas A&M 28-12 in the Cotton Bowl following the 1986 season.

The loss in the Citrus Bowl dropped Ohio State's overall bowl record to 11-14 and equaled a school mark for four straight bowl losses. The Buckeyes' other four-game bowl drought occurred from 1978-80 with consecutive losses in the Sugar, Gator, Rose and Fiesta bowls to Alabama, Clemson, Southern Cal and Penn State, respectively.

Despite the end-of-the-season slide, the Buckeyes still achieved some things this season they never had under Cooper.

The 8-3-1 overall record was the best in the coach's five-year tenure. Likewise, the Buckeyes finished the season ranked among the country's top 25 teams for the first time in five seasons under Cooper.

OSU SENIOR middle linebacker Steve Tovar finished his career in style, registering a team-high nine tackles against the Bulldogs.

It was also his devastating sack of Georgia quarterback Eric Zeier in the fourth quarter that caused a fumble and led to the Buckeyes' getting a chance for a go-ahead score.

However, Tovar admitted to having some problems early in the game, trying to adjust to Georgia's overall team speed.

"I don't think you can simulate the kind of speed that they had," Tovar

said. "I think we tried to in practice, and we worked hard. But in certain situations, they just seemed to have too much speed."

Tovar especially singled out the play of Georgia running back Garrison Hearst, who gained 163 yards and scored two touchdowns to win game most valuable player honors.

After trying to chase Hearst all over the field, Tovar gave him some high praise. Despite playing against backs such as Anthony Thompson of Indiana, Tico Duckett of Michigan State, Nick Bell of Iowa, and Ricky Powers and Tyrone Wheatley of Michigan, Tovar said Hearst eclipsed them all.

"I've played against some good backs over the years," the OSU linebacker said. "He's probably most like Vaughn Dunbar of Indiana, except Hearst is a lot faster, a lot quicker and a better athlete. I think very highly of Vaughn Dunbar and what he did in the Big Ten, but definitely, over my career, I think Garrison may be the best I've ever faced."

FOR SOMEONE who had performed above and beyond the call of duty all season, it was tough to watch quarterback Kirk Herbstreit struggle throughout the game with his passing control.

Several times, Herbstreit was victimized by dropped balls. But there were many other times when he simply overthrew potential receivers by several feet.

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## Buckeye Sports Bulletin

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As a result, he completed only eight of 24 attempts for 110 yards, his worst completion percentage of the year and his second lowest yardage total.

"For some reason, I was pressing a little bit," Herbstreit explained. "I really couldn't find my groove. I was trying to loosen up on the sideline and I just couldn't do it. Also, mix that in with them doing a good job of covering our people downfield."

Herbstreit's longest completion of the day was his screen pass to tailback Robert Smith in the fourth quarter, a catch-and-run play that covered 45 yards. His next longest completion was a 17-yarder to senior split end Brian Stablein on the second play of the game.

Herbstreit's favorite target all season, Stablein was sidelined late in the second quarter by strained knee ligaments. He was coming over the middle on a third-down play and was hit hard by a Georgia defender, knocking him out of action for the rest of the day.

"That hurt us tremendously just because of the fact that Brian has been there all year for me," Herbstreit said. "Whenever it's third and five or 10, nine times out of 10, we're going to Stablein. To lose him early in the game really hurt us. I'd be lying if I said it didn't."

"The other guys stepped up and did a good job. Greg Beatty and Chris Sanders and Allen DeGraffenreid all did a good job for us. But it really hurt not to have Brian in there."

Herbstreit entered the game having completed 61.3 percent of his passes for the season, just ahead of Jim Karsatos, who set the school record in 1985 by completing 61.2 percent of his attempts.

However, Herbstreit's day against the Bulldogs dropped his season percentage to 58.7, still the third-best mark among OSU quarterbacks who have attempted 200 passes or more in a single season.

He also finished the year with 1,904 yards passing, the 10th-highest single-season total in school history.

**DESPITE FAILING** to click much of the day in the passing game, Ohio State still managed to total 289 total yards of offense. That includes 179 yards on the ground, about 15 more than the Bulldogs gave up on the average during the regular season.

Still, one member of the Buckeye offense thought his team should have gotten even more yardage.

"I think we were a little inconsistent on offense today," said OSU tailback Robert Smith. "Georgia is very quick up front defensively, and we had a little trouble. Not just the linemen, but a couple of times, (fullback) Jeff (Cothran) and I had a little trouble where exactly we should make a cut. It was an inconsistent day for us offensively."

Smith was on the receiving end of that 45-yard screen pass in the fourth quarter, easily Ohio State's most exciting offensive play of the game.

He got excellent blocks on the play from several teammates, including center Paul Long, tackle Alan Kline, tight end Cedric Saunders and Cothran, and appeared for a while like he might take the play all the way for a touchdown.

When asked to explain what happened on the play, Smith replied, "I caught the ball and ran and was tired afterward. I didn't think I was going to

go all the way because I was pretty well gone there at the end.

"I don't know what to say. It's a play that we work on every day, but it's never worked like that when I've been in there. I really can't say that play more than any other one got us going. I think every play you hope for a big gain. It was just another play."

It turned out to be Smith's last play from scrimmage in an Ohio State uniform. Three plays later, Herbstreit and Cothran mishandled an exchange and fumbled, a turnover the Bulldogs eventually turned into the game-winning touchdown.

Smith got his hands on the football

only once more in the game, returning a punt 12 yards in the final seconds. Three days after the game, he announced his intention to forgo his final two years of college eligibility to go pro.

His final college game was a good one — 112 yards and two touchdowns on 25 carries, two pass receptions for 49 yards and 28 more yards on kick returns.

He refused any comment on his future plans after the game, but when a reporter asked him if he would be satisfied with his performance if it was his last at OSU, Smith replied, "No. We lost, and I'm never satisfied with a loss."



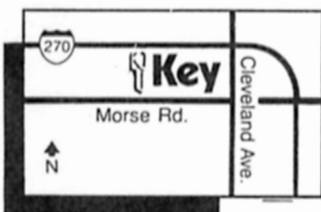
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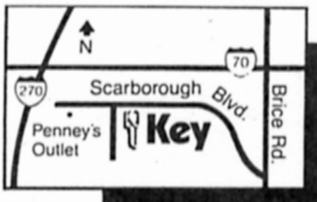


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*Coach Also Credits Bulldogs As An 'Excellent Football Team'*

# Cooper Laments Buckeyes' Missed Chances

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This football season, *Buckeye Sports Bulletin* will publish excerpts from Ohio State head coach John Cooper's post-game press conference. Here is what Cooper had to say after the Buckeyes' loss in the Citrus Bowl to Georgia.

**COOPER:** "Let me start by saying how much we appreciate the opportunity to come down here and play in this great bowl game. Everything here has been first-class from the time we got here. The hospitality, all the attractions, practice facilities, the game itself; everything was great except for the outcome of the game. Obviously, we would have loved to have won the game."

"I told my football team I was proud of them. I thought we had a good year. Certainly, we would have loved to have won the game today, but sometimes you have to give credit to the other team, and I think that's the case today. Georgia is an excellent football team. There is no question that their skilled athletes are outstanding."

"(Wide receiver Andre) Hastings is an outstanding football player. Garrison Hearst is every bit as good as advertised. I think he was probably the difference in the game today. Time after time, it looked like we had them backed up, and he was able to break tackles."

"They moved the football on us. They were able to keep the ball. I don't have the stats in front of me, but I'm sure they possessed the football much longer than we did today."

"We had our opportunities. I really thought when we had the football, after we forced a turnover, and Robert (Smith) made that nice run on the screen pass, we were going to win the game. It was third down and about 10, and our thinking was to run the trap play."

"It was a trap where you check at the line of scrimmage which way you're going to run it, whether it's going to be right or left, and apparently our



Thanks to blocks from offensive linemen Steve Roberts (left), Alec Millen (center) and Paul Taylor (right), Georgia running back Garrison Hearst has a huge hole to run through during Citrus Bowl action New Year's Day. Hearst made the most of this hole and many more like it to rush for 163 yards and two TDs, earning game most valuable player honors and leading the Bulldogs to victory.

fullback did not hear the audible at the line of scrimmage and went the wrong way. Then, of course, we mishandled the ball, turned it over, and from that point on, it was pretty much Georgia's

game. They moved the ball down the field, scored with about four and a half minutes left to go in the game."

"We debated whether we were going to punt the ball on our last possession, actually our next-to-last possession. We punted the football and took our timeouts, but we didn't stop them as quickly as we thought we would. We should have stopped them because they had a second down and long. But they ran the ball for a first down; so give them a lot of credit. They're a good football team."

"I thought (quarterback Eric) Zeier did an outstanding job throwing the football today. Their ability to throw the football and our inability to throw it, I thought, was probably the difference in the ball game. We lost (split end Brian

Stablein with an injury fairly early in the game."

**Q.** Was the fumble your team had the key point in the game, or were there others you could point to that caused the loss?

**COOPER:** "Well, I thought (the fumble) took the momentum away from us. I thought, had we scored there, we would have had a chance to go up on top of them for the first time. It seemed like we were playing catch-up all day. They took the opening drive, their first possession, right down the field and scored. Then they took the opening possession of the second half and scored. So after that, I thought had we scored instead of fumbling, who knows? It might have been a different ball game."

**Q.** On that play, what was the quarterback seeing that caused him to

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audible at the line of scrimmage?

**COOPER:** "No, it was a trap. I called a trap play because it was third down and a passing situation, and our thinking was, 'Let's try to pop the trap. Let's try to pop Jeff Cothran up the middle.' Even if he doesn't make the first down, we'd still be in good position to kick the field goal. So the play was called in the huddle. The only thing called at the line is which direction the play is going, and the fullback just went the wrong way. He didn't hear the count."

**Q.** Was Georgia much better defensively than you had anticipated?

**COOPER:** "No. I think Georgia is a good defensive football team. They'd only been giving up 12.8 points per game this year and that's indicative of what kind of team they are. They run well. I thought their safety, (Greg) Tremble, made a lot of nice plays there today coming up with support on the running plays."

**Q.** They seemed to have a pretty good day pressuring your quarterback as well. Was that a surprise?

**COOPER:** "Well, Georgia has good athletes. They've always played good defense. I think they're better offensively than they are defensively, but they're not a bad defensive football team. Any time you win nine football games in the Southeastern Conference, I don't care who you play, you're a good team."

**Q.** Before the game, you talked about Georgia's capabilities of scoring quickly. Yet their first score came after a 14-play drive that went 80 yards and lasted over six minutes. Did that take a lot out of your team early?

**COOPER:** "I don't know if that took a lot out of our team. The fact that we were down 7-0 and they kept the football for long periods of time was a bigger problem. I think you have a tendency to maybe ... panic is not the right word ... but you have a tendency to think that you have to do the same thing. You have to take it and go score real quick. When we were patient, we

were able to line up and run the football against them."

**Q.** What happened with your passing game today?

**COOPER:** "Unfortunately, we did not throw the football as well today as we have against some other teams. You know, we can sit here and look for a lot of excuses and all that kind of stuff, but we just didn't get it done. We didn't protect our quarterback as well as we have on occasion. You can give them credit, or you can say we didn't throw and catch the football. We dropped some passes today; we didn't throw the ball as well as we have in some other games."

**Q.** Assess the way your defense played today.

**COOPER:** "We would have liked to have played better defense. I think you have to give them credit. As I mentioned earlier, Hastings is a great player and, certainly, Garrison Hearst is a tremendous running back. He's a great back."

**Q.** What was your defensive game plan?

**COOPER:** "We wanted to try and force them to throw the ball. As I mentioned earlier, I think what was probably the difference in the game today was their ability to throw and our inability to execute the passing game. They converted some key plays, some key third-down situations. At one time during the game, they went exclusively to the shotgun and a no-huddle offense. Again, I thought Zeier did an outstanding job throwing the football. I don't know what his stats were. I haven't seen those yet, but I thought he did a nice job throwing the ball."

**Q.** Assess Robert Smith's performance today and answer whether or not you believe he will return next season.

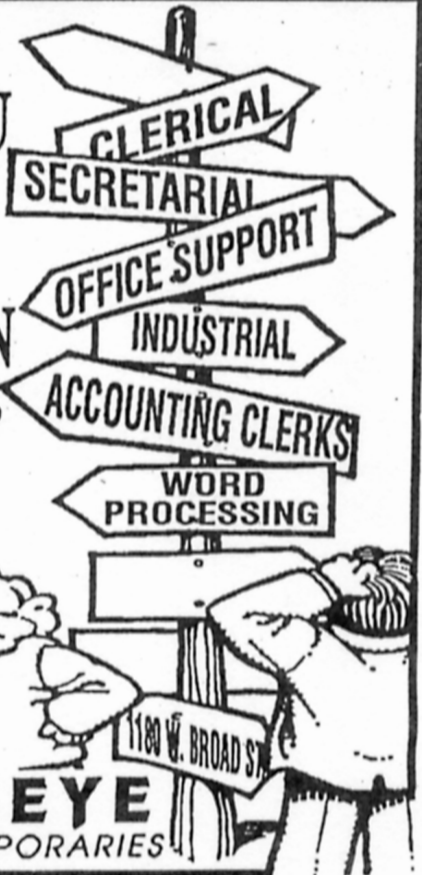
**COOPER:** "Robert played a good ball game. Of course, that screen pass gave us a chance to win the game. Certainly, I hope he comes back. I hope every one of our football players comes back. I think they should stay in school and graduate if they have a chance."

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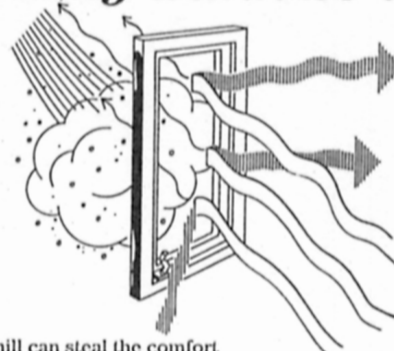


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# The Numbers Game

## Bulldogs 21, Buckeyes 14

GEORGIA	7	0	7	7	21
OHIO STATE	0	7	7	0	14

UGA — Hearst, 1 run (Peterson kick) 6:48  
 OSU — Rob Smith, 1 run (T. Williams kick) 1:17  
 UGA — Hearst, 5 run (Peterson kick) 13:27  
 OSU — Rob Smith, 5 run (T. Williams kick) 3:31  
 UGA — Harvey, 1 run (Peterson kick) 4:32  
 Att. — 65,861

	UGA	OSU
First Downs	26	18
Rushing	11	12
Passing	13	5
Penalty	2	1
Rushes-Yards	49-202	47-179
Passing Yards	242	110
Passes	31-21-0	24-8-1
Plays	80	71
Total Net Yards	444	289
Third Down Efficiency	10-16	6-16
Punts	6-39-0	8-37-1
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	1-1
Penalties	3-30	5-35
Time Of Possession	31:01	28:59

### Individual Statistics

**RUSHING** (Att.-Net Yds.) — UGA: Hearst 28-163; T. Davis 7-42; Strong 5-14; Harvey 3-10; Zeiler 6-(-32). OSU: Rob Smith 25-112; Harris 7-38; By'not'e 4-17; Cothran 3-11; Herbstreit 8-1.  
**PASSING** (Att.-Comp.-Int.-Yds.-TD) — UGA: Zeiler 31-21-0-242-0. OSU: Herbstreit 24-8-1-110-0.  
**RECEIVING** (Rec.-Yds.) — UGA: Hastings 8-113; Strong 3-20; Mitchell 2-39; Bohan-non 2-29; Graham 2-15; Thomas 1-13; Etheridge 1-10; Harvey 1-5; Hearst 1-(-2). OSU: Rob Smith 2-49; Stabilein 2-31; Saunders 2-16; Beatty 1-8; Cothran 1-6.  
**PUNTING** (No.-Avg.-Lg.) — UGA: Armstrong 6-39.0-52. OSU: Kessel 5-37.1-53.  
**PUNT RETURNS** (No.-Avg.-Lg.) UGA: Hastings 1-6.0-6. OSU: Taylor 1-17.0-17; Rob Smith 1-12.0-12.  
**KICKOFF RETURNS** (No.-Avg.-Lg.) UGA: Hastings 3-27.0-49. OSU: By'not'e 1-26.0-26; Rob Smith 1-16.0-16.  
**DEFENSIVE FUMBLES RECOVERED BY** — UGA: T. Jones. OSU: R. Brown, G. Smith.  
**INTERCEPTIONS** — UGA: M. Jones. OSU: None.  
**TACKLES FOR LOSS** — UGA: M. Davis (3), Harrel, Godfrey, Daniels. OSU: Tovar (2), G. Smith, Styles, Simmons.  
**TACKLES** (Solo-Assist-Tot.) — UGA: Chris Wilson 7-2-9; Godfrey 2-6-8; Tremble 5-2-7; Ward 3-3-6; Barnum 3-2-5; M. Davis 2-3-5; Harrel 3-0-3; M. Jones 2-1-3; Jackson 1-2-3; T. Jones 1-1-2; Daniels 1-1-2; Owens 1-0-1; Muschamp 1-0-1; Evans 1-0-1; Pledger 1-0-1; David 1-0-1; Mailb 1-0-1; Fouch 1-0-1; Chad Wilson 0-1-1; Clemons 0-1-1. OSU: Tovar 6-3-9; Nelson 4-5-9; Cook 6-2-8; Harper 6-1-7; G. Smith 6-1-7; M. Williams 4-2-6; Powell 4-2-6; Styles 3-1-4; Walton 3-0-3; Wilkinson 2-0-2; Foster 2-0-2; Paul 1-0-1; Simmons 1-0-1; T. Williams 1-0-1; Taylor 0-1-1; Borchers 0-1-1.

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## OSU Season Statistics

RUSHING	ATT	GAIN	LOST	NET	AVG	TD	LG	FIRST DOWNS	OPP	OSU
Robert Smith	147	858	39	819	5.6	10	64	Rushing	209	238
Raymont Harris	106	486	23	463	4.4	5	25	Passing	96	131
Jeff Cothran	98	423	13	410	4.2	3	40	Penalty	102	91
Butler By'not'e	58	295	12	283	4.9	1	39	AVG PER GAME/RUSH	11	16
Eddie George	37	190	14	176	4.8	3	60	AVG PER GAME/PASS	128.5	186.0
Joey Galloway	1	50	0	50	50.0	1	50	AVG PER PLAY/PASS	183.1	163.5
William Houston	9	25	0	25	2.8	1	12	AVG PER PLAY/PASS	6.1	7.1
Brian Stabilein	2	23	0	23	11.5	0	13	TOTAL OFFENSE	3739	4194
Chris Sanders	3	33	11	22	7.3	0	24	Total Plays	811	819
Bob Hoyer	5	7	17	-10	-2.0	0	5	Average Per Game	311.6	349.5
Kirk Herbstreit	75	182	211	-29	-4	0	24	Average Per Play	4.6	5.1
OSU Totals	541	2572	340	2232	4.1	26	64	PENALTIES-YARDS	71-595	55-390
OPP Totals	448	1956	414	1542	3.4	14	37	Offense	31-231	25-172
								Defense	24-221	19-142
								Special Teams	16-143	11-76
								FUMBLES-LOST	17-7	17-9
								3rd DOWN EFFICIENCY	68-178	68-170
								Percentage	382	400
								4th DOWN EFFICIENCY	7-14	9-13
								Percentage	500	692
								SACKS BY	29-182	30-237
								TIME OF POSSESSION	347:56	372:04
								Average Per Game	28:59	31:01

Sacks: Kirk Herbstreit 27-167, Bob Hoyer 2-15

RECEIVING	NO	YARDS	AVG	TD	LG	Average Per Game							28:59	31:01
Brian Stabilein	53	643	12.1	2	46	SCORING		TD	EPK	EPP	EPR	FG	PTS	
Cedric Saunders	28	342	12.2	0	38	Tim Williams		31-31	-	-	-	16-29	79	
Chris Sanders	22	360	16.4	0	54	Robert Smith	10	-	-	-	-	-	60	
Jeff Cothran	19	207	10.9	0	28	Eddie George	5	-	-	-	-	-	30	
Greg Beatty	14	153	10.9	2	25	Raymont Harris	5	-	-	-	0-1	-	30	
Robert Smith	9	84	9.3	0	45	Jeff Cothran	3	-	-	-	-	-	18	
Allen DeGraffenreid	6	65	10.8	0	18	Greg Beatty	2	-	-	-	-	-	12	
Butler By'not'e	6	62	10.3	0	13	Brian Stabilein	2	-	-	-	-	-	12	
Joey Galloway	3	24	8.0	0	17	Butler By'not'e	1	-	-	-	-	-	6	
D. J. Jones	1	11	11.0	0	11	Joey Galloway	1	-	-	-	-	-	6	
Raymont Harris	1	9	9.0	0	9	William Houston	1	-	-	-	-	-	6	
Joe Metzger	1	2	2.0	1	2	Joe Metzger	1	-	-	-	-	-	6	
OSU Totals	163	1962	12.0	5	54	Tito Paul	1	-	-	-	-	-	6	
OPP Totals	199	2197	11.0	5	58	OSU Totals	32	31-31	-	-	0-1	16-29	271	
						OPP Totals	20	13-16	1-2	0-2	7-11	158*		
PUNTING	NO	YDS	AVG	TD	LG	* includes punts								

PUNTING							* Opp Totals						
NO	YDS	AVG	TD	LG	BK	LG	20	13-10	1-2	0-2	7-11	150*	
							** Includes safety						
Joel Kessel	54	1915	35.5	7	17	0	53						
OSU Totals	54	1915	35.5	7	17	0	53						
OPP Totals	71	2528	35.6	11	13	5	62						
FG DISTANCE							0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	TOTAL		
							Tim Williams	7-10	6-10	2-6	1-3	16-29	
							OSU Totals	7-10	6-10	2-6	1-3	16-29	
							OPP Totals	3-5	3-4	1-2	-	7-11	
PUNT RETURNS							NO YARDS AVG TD LG						

PUNT RETURNS	NO	YARDS	AVG	TD	LG	INTERCEPTIONS	NO	YARDS	AVG	TD	LG
Brian Stabilein	16	99	6.2	0	20	Roger Harper	4	17	4.3	0	14
Walter Taylor	9	87	9.7	0	18	Bryan Cook	3	50	16.7	0	24
Robert Smith	3	40	13.3	0	18	Chico Nelson	3	18	6.0	0	18
Tito Paul	1	28	28.0	1	17	Tim Walton	2	59	29.5	0	59
Steve Tovar	1	17	17.0	0	17	Marlon Kerner	2	52	26.0	0	38
Jason Louis	1	11	11.0	0	11	Steve Tovar	2	25	12.5	0	25
OSU Totals	31	282	9.1	1	20	Walter Taylor	1	51	51.0	0	51
OPP Totals	9	74	8.2	0	22	Jason Louis	1	20	20.0	0	20
						Brent Johnson	1	10	10.0	0	10
						OSU Totals	19	302	15.9	0	39
						OPP Totals	7	60	8.6	0	37

KICKOFF RETURNS	NO	YARDS	AVG	TD	LG	SCORE BY QUARTERS	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	AVG
Robert Smith	8	197	24.6	0	34	Opponent	24	53	47	34	158	13.2
Butler By'not'e	7	191	27.3	0	43	Ohio State	57	89	58	67	271	22.6
Chris Sanders	3	51	17.0	0	18							
Roger Harper	2	40	20.0	0	27							
Cedric Saunders	2	16	8.0	0	11							
Joey Galloway	1	22	22.0	0	22							
OSU Totals	23	517	22.5	0	43							
OPP Totals	30	830	16.6	0	49							

## Defensive Statistics

DEFENSE	SOLO	AST	TOT	TAC-LOSSES	QB-SACK	PBU	FC	FR	TDS	BK
Steve Tovar	73	55	128	11-41	3-21	4	3	-	-	EP/PT
Bryan Cook	48	22	70	2-3	-	4	-	1	1	-
Greg Smith	35	34	69	7-29	3-17	2	1	1	-	-
Chico Nelson	31	37	68	1-4	-	2	1	-	-	-
Roger Harper	37	29	66	2-6	-	6	-	-	1	-
Mark Williams	27	39	66	2-6	-	1	3	1	-	-
Tim Walton	34	20	54	1-3	-	4	-	1	2	-
Craig Powell	31	16	47	-	-	1	3	-	-	-
Dan Wilkinson	26	20	46	10.5-83	6.5-64	1	-	-	-	-
Jason Simmons	30	14	44	14-62	5-40	1	-	-	-	-
Derrick Foster	18	20	38	6-42	4-34	1	-	1	-	-
Lorenzo Styles	24	9	33	4-17	1-9	-	-	-	-	-
Walter Taylor	18	10	28	1-4	-	3	1	1	-	PT
Marlon Kerner	17	8	25	-	-	3	1	-	-	-
Randall Brown	14	9	23	6.5-33	4.5-29	2	1	1	-	-
Alex Rodriguez	13	6	19	2-13	2-13	-	-	-	-	-
Brent Johnson	7	7	14	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Tito Paul	12	1	13	-	-	-	1	-	-	PT/PT
Tom Lease	5	1	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jason Louis	5	1	6	1-14	-	-	-	-	-	PT
Matt Bonhaus	2	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pete Beckman	3	0	3	1-10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Luke Pickell	0	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Team	2	0	2	2-15	1-10	-	-	-	-	-

Two Total Tackles (1 solo, 1 assist): Jeff Cothran, Dave Monnot, Tim Paillo  
 One Solo Tackle: Butler By'not'e, Matt Christopher, Paul Long, Matt McCoy, Brad Pope, Robert Smith, Rod Smith, Tim Williams (has one touchdown save)  
 Tackles for loss by OSU 74-385  
 One Assist Tackle: Jim Borchers, C. J. Kelly, Joel Kessel  
 Sacks by OSU 31-237



## Players Go About Making Announcements In Different Ways

## Smith, Harper Decide To Bolt To NFL Draft

By MIKE WACHSMAN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The whispers and rumors turned into reality a few days after the Citrus Bowl as Ohio State tailback Robert Smith and strong safety Roger Harper decided to throw their hats into the NFL draft ring.

The two players became only the second and third Buckeye football players ever to voluntarily leave school to make themselves eligible for the NFL draft. Defensive lineman Alonzo Spellman became the first to do so last year, winding up with a multimillion dollar contract after being a first-round selection of the Chicago Bears.

Smith, a 6-2, 195-pounder, left with two years of eligibility remaining, while Harper, a 6-4, 224-pound defender, would have been entering his senior season with the Buckeyes.

Both went about their announcements in different ways, with Harper holding a press conference and entertaining questions and Smith releasing a short statement through the Ohio State sports information office.

"I love football and the opportunity to play the game at the highest level must be seized," Smith said in his statement. "Therefore, I am making myself available for this year's National Football League draft. Thank you."

A draft of the statement was reportedly delivered to the university by Smith's teammate and fellow running back Raymond Harris.

One day later, during a news conference in the office of a Columbus law firm, Harper said, "I feel confident and secure about my decision. This was not an easy decision. After consultation with my family, I am sure I have made the best decision."

Both players contributed heavily to the Buckeyes' 8-3-1 season, with Smith leading the team in rushing with 819 yards and Harper leading the squad with four interceptions and 66 tackles,



Robert Smith

third highest among secondary members and tying him for fifth-best on the team.

Since rumors of Smith and Harper leaving early for the pros had been around for a couple of weeks, the decisions by both players were not shockers to OSU head coach John Cooper.

"I've always said if they can go in the first round, they should go," he said. "But if it's any lower than that, then they should come back. I believe players should stay in school and get their degrees. I wish both of them the best of luck and appreciate all they've done for Ohio State."

A scout for one NFL team, who spoke with BSB on the condition of anonymity, said that both Smith and Harper are taking chances that they will be first-round selections.

"In each case, I think the players would have been better served with one more year of college ball," the scout told BSB. "There are many, many marquee players out there this year, and many more of them are underclassmen."

"Don't get me wrong. Both players



Roger Harper

have had very good careers as college players, and both are very capable of doing well at the scouting combines. Where they are selected in the upcoming draft could very well be dictated by how well they actually do at those combines."

The scout refused to speculate on the round in which either player would be taken, but offered, "I think both will probably be long gone by the end of the third round."

Smith finished his OSU career with 1,945 yards rushing, 14th on the school's all-time list. He set a school freshman season record in 1990 with 1,126 yards and earned *United Press International* national freshman player of the year honors.

Harper wound up with 157 career tackles, 10 pass deflections and seven interceptions. He was a candidate for the Jim Thorpe Award this season, symbolic of the country's top defensive back, and earned first-team All-Big Ten honors this year.

Harper said the idea of going pro had been germinating in his mind for a long time.

"I thought about it prior to the season," he admitted. "I made up my mind after the bowl game. I feel I'm ready for the next level."

Harper said all indications point to his being chosen somewhere late in the first round or early in the second round. He added that if he believed he would be taken any later than that, he would have decided to return to OSU for his final campaign.

Harper also said that he knew that Smith planned to depart OSU.

"Robert and I talked," he said, "so it wasn't really a surprise to me because he let me know late in the season when he started playing a lot again that he was going to go. We talked about things we had heard about the draft. I knew Robert was going to leave. I respect Robert as a player and wish him all the luck in the world."

Smith and Harper join 34 other underclassmen who petitioned for the NFL draft. Those include linebacker Marvin Jones of Florida State, this year's Butkus Award winner, quarterback Drew Bledsoe of Washington State, projected as going in the top three overall picks, and Georgia running back Garrison Hearst, the third-place finisher in the Heisman Trophy balloting.

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# The View From 15th and High

By Frank L. Moskowitz, Publisher

## Fans Concerned With State Of Program Have Legitimate Beef

Back in October, when veteran sportscaster Jimmy Crum was calling for John Cooper's scalp following Ohio State's two straight losses, I disagreed with Crum's timing. I think coaches need to be evaluated on their full season. After all, the Bucks could have come back and won out, beating Michigan and winning their bowl game. That would have been an acceptable season by virtually everyone's standards.

Well, the season's over now and it's time for evaluation. Of course, the Buckeyes fell short of winning out.

It would have all been so much easier if Ohio State had defeated Georgia in the Citrus Bowl. The tie with Michigan, while a solid performance by the Bucks, was really a swing game. If they had defeated the Bulldogs, fans would be talking about how the Buckeyes closed with strong performances against highly ranked Michigan and Georgia, performances to go along with their strong early season showing against Syracuse.

With the loss to Georgia, however, instead of remembering the fine performance against the Wolverines, many are left recalling that the Bucks under Cooper have yet to beat Michigan or win a bowl game.

And I think those fans concerned with the state of the Buckeye program have a legitimate beef. You have to begin to wonder, after five years under Cooper, if the team has reached the level they are going to reach with him at the helm. The records are starting to seem so similar — 8-4, 7-4-1, 8-4 and 8-3-1, following a 4-6-1 campaign in Cooper's first year. It's taken the Buckeyes five years to get back to within a half-game of the 9-3 level that used to be unacceptable at Ohio State.

I know the Buckeyes have improved. I think anyone who has watched them

has to concede that. Unfortunately, football teams are not measured in terms of improvement. They're measured in terms of wins and losses. And somehow, the Bucks keep falling slightly short on that measuring stick, at least by Ohio State standards (or what used to be Ohio State standards).

At some point, the head coach has to be held accountable.

Let me make an analogy with another sport. If a boxer dominates a fight for 11 rounds, I mean he just does everything right, but is knocked out in the 12th round, are people going to remember that he fought a great fight? No. They'll remember that he lost. That's the reality of big-time sports.

And I'm a little fed up with this "parity" excuse. The word parity is for losers. Parity hasn't bothered Michigan, the team closest to Ohio State in the Big Ten in terms of opportunity and tradition and a team that has finished in the national top 10 every year that Cooper has been at OSU.

In that same time frame, Iowa has had a 10-1-1 season, Illinois has posted a 10-2 campaign, and Michigan State has equaled OSU's best of 8-3-1, finishing ahead of the Buckeyes in the conference three of five years. Additionally, incoming Penn State has an 11-2 season to its credit. It's not unreasonable for Buckeye fans to expect a nine, 10 or 11-win season at some point.

As I seem to say at this time every year, Cooper can make all of these discussions go away. All he has to do is lead the Buckeyes to a big season next year. Six years is more than enough time for a coach to show his stuff. If the Bucks are in that eight-win range again, throw me in with Jimmy Crum.

**BSB LETTER** writer Charles Toft of Columbus makes an interesting point in this issue, noting that traditional powers OSU and USC have gone dif-

ferent routes, with the Buckeyes retaining Cooper and the Trojans forcing Larry Smith out. Toft wonders which team will return to the Rose Bowl first.

For the record, Southern Cal last appeared in the Rose Bowl following the 1989 season, while the Buckeyes last traveled to Pasadena following the 1984 campaign.

**I FEEL** bad for Jeff Cothran. The OSU fullback will probably be most remembered for helping cause the fumble that contributed to the OSU loss to Georgia.

That's too bad because I believe, after Kirk Herbstreit, Cothran was the most valuable player on the offense, if not the team.

**GOOD RIDDANCE** to Robert Smith. I know Robert is a super talent, but I don't believe he's the type of player who you build championship teams around. His mouth and his ego are too big and too much of a distraction.

Time and time again, Smith seemed to act like he was bigger than the Ohio State football program. Two times now, he's quit on his teammates, the second departure seeming to contradict the reasons for his first departure. I don't think Robert is nearly as smart and worldly-wise as he and certain reporters seem to think he is. Maybe the NFL will teach him a little humility.

**WITH FOOTBALL** out of the way, perhaps basketball can finally take the spotlight it deserves.

The Buckeyes have performed about as you would expect a young but talented team to perform. The ambush at West Virginia or the loss to powerful North Carolina were not entirely unexpected. Nor was it that surprising that the Buckeyes came back from Oregon with a tourney title.

And a sluggish performance by the Bucks against lowly Penn State fol-

lowed by a huge upset of Iowa may be the type of inconsistent performance Buckeye fans should prepare for while this team jells.

The big surprises for me this season have probably been Tom Brandewie and Derek Anderson. True, Brandewie has fallen from the starting lineup, but even off the bench, his play has been more than I expected. I'm sure Randy Ayers was glad to have the senior's nine rebounds against Oregon State or his six rebounds and physical play with Acie Earl in the upset of Iowa.

Anderson, a late signee, seemed to be lost among all those "Mr. Basketballs" when he arrived with the other freshmen. But even with an injured hand, the Louisville native seemed to be the first of the freshmen to gain Ayers' confidence.

Another freshman, Greg Simpson, was a bit of an early disappointment, but, with a 23-point performance against the Hawkeyes, he seems to be coming on strong. Ayers admitted before Simpson arrived that the guard from Lima would have to curtail the free-wheeling shooting style he was allowed in high school. I think, at first, Simpson was tentative with his shot, but as he understands more and more when he should be shooting, he should only get better.

My biggest disappointments have probably been Charles Macon and Jimmy Ratliff. Maybe my expectations for Macon were a little high as he came to OSU with the Indiana "Mr. Basketball" award and that great nickname of "Killer." I think Macon was hurt by the shorter preseason practice and should contribute more as the season progresses.

Ratliff was the surprise of the competitive Worthington Summer League and people were expecting big things from him this season. He earned a starting spot but has since lost it and seems to be moving farther down the bench. If Ratliff gets his confidence back, he may be heard from yet this season.

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Please note that this is the first 1993 issue of *Buckeye Sports Bulletin*. We will be on the weekly schedule for 10 straight issues and then publish every other week for four issues, before going monthly in June, July and August. **BSB** is published 30 times a year.

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