

BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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Vol. 15, No. 4

"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

October 7, 1995

BUCKS BLAST THE IRISH

Ohio State Rallies To First-Ever Win Over Notre Dame

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

After close to 10 years of buildup — and for some people, 59 years of waiting — the game lived up to its billing.

Ohio State capitalized on several Notre Dame miscues by going on a second-half scoring barrage and rolled past the Fighting Irish 45-26 on Sept. 30 at Ohio Stadium.

The Buckeyes prevailed in just the third game ever between the two schools steeped in football tradition, and, at the same time, exacted revenge for the school's 1935 and '36 teams who dropped consecutive games to Notre Dame.

Players and fans alike reveled in this non-conference game, an OSU event unmatched in recent memory.

"Coach Cooper talked about it at the beginning of the game," said OSU quarterback and co-captain Bobby Hoying, who tossed four touchdown passes against the Irish. "He said it's a game you'll be talking about for the rest of your life. We're the first Ohio State team to beat Notre Dame.

"It's just phenomenal. I can't put it into words. When you're sitting out there in the fourth quarter and you've got the game won, that's a phenomenal feeling."

Yes, the Buckeyes and their faithful will have a lifetime of memories from one 3½-hour football game. It was a brief moment in time where two of the most storied programs in college football collided head-on.

There are so many stories and subplots that spring out of an event of this magnitude.

Among them:

- Ohio State's continued fine offensive play. The Buckeyes rolled up 533 yards of total offense and, after trailing Notre Dame 17-14 at halftime, exploded for 31 second-half points to seize the day.

- The return to Columbus of Notre Dame head coach Lou Holtz, an assistant under Woody Hayes on OSU's 1968 national championship team. Holtz coached the game from the sideline, despite his ongoing recovery



- Game coverage begins on page 6.

- Festivities for the big game highlighted on pages 12-13.

- Photo essay on pages 24-25.



SEE YOU LATER — Ohio State flanker Terry Glenn looks to see who, if anybody, will catch him on an 82-yard touchdown pass from Bobby Hoying. Glenn outraced ND defenders Lyron Cobbins, LaRon Moore and Allen Rossum to the end zone. The score helped OSU down Notre Dame 45-26.

from spinal surgery performed just 18 days prior.

- OSU's second-ever "Tunnel of Pride" — a congregation of about 1,000 former Buckeyes and their guests — helped lift the Buckeyes to victory, just as it did the first time last November against Michigan. The Tunnel served as a direct link to OSU's glory days, a tie that seems to be growing with each passing day.

- The presence of an Ohio Stadium-record 95,537 fans, many of whom paid hundreds of dollars for \$25 face value tickets just to join in the fun. This produced an atmosphere of football fans who wanted to be there and, in turn, brought about an air of electricity unmatched at the stadium in years. Plus, the game was televised nationally by ABC.

- Ohio State ends up the non-conference portion of its season with a perfect 4-0 mark, having beaten three ranked teams. But the challenge has

only just begun, with road games at defending Big Ten champion Penn State and Wisconsin the next two weeks.

Against Notre Dame, the Buckeyes went back to their most reliable weapon. Senior tailback and co-captain Eddie George was named the *Big Bear Buckeye of the Week* after rushing for 207 yards and two touchdowns on 32 carries. Once again, the Heisman Trophy talk is at full volume for George, who now has 640 yards on 109 carries with six touchdowns.

"I really don't know (about the Heisman)," George said afterward. "All I know is I played the game today against Notre Dame and I did my job to the best of my ability. If I'm up for it, that's great. If I'm not, we've got to play Penn State next week, then Wisconsin and Purdue and it just goes on and on."

Hoying had another outstanding day passing as well, completing 14 of 22 attempts for 272 yards and four scores with no interceptions. He completed

passes of 51 yards to Buster Tillman and an 82-yarder to Terry Glenn, one of two touchdown catches for him.

"We were so conscious this week of not concentrating on Terry Glenn so much because of the big game he had at Pittsburgh," Hoying said. "We were really working on spreading the ball out and, for the most part, we did that. We got a lot of people involved."

Glenn, coming off a school-record 253 yards receiving at Pitt on Sept. 23, caught four passes for 128 yards.

"I'll never forget this for as long as I live," Glenn said. "The crowd was really like a big factor in the ball game, the 12th man."

Notre Dame's ground attack, keyed by Randy Kinder and Marc Edwards, pushed the Irish in front 17-7 midway through the second quarter.

Continued On Page 14

Buckeyes Pile Up 533 Total Yards Against Notre Dame

Offense Ups Octane Level In Second Half

By JEFF RAPP

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz donned a neck brace on the sideline, but it was the ND defense that looked like it needed extra support Sept. 30. That's because the vaunted Ohio State offense has a way of putting teams in traction.

The offense — led by Eddie George and a seeming cast of thousands — took a lot of fight out of the Irish in the convincing win, showing a national television audience its definition of "high-powered" in the process.

"There's no doubt about it, once we smell blood we kind of go for the kill, and that's the good thing about this offense," tight end Rickey Dudley said. "We got a little anxious about that and our intensity level raised after every score."

OSU missed a pair of early opportunities and was blanked in the first quarter. But the Buckeyes started churning in the second quarter with 14 points and coasted in the second half, tacking on another 31. Quarterback Bobby Hoying engineered the push with 276 aerial yards and four touchdown tosses and George aided the ride with 130 of his 207 rushing yards and two TD jaunts in the second half.

The onslaught left a stunned ND bunch, a record Ohio Stadium crowd, an awaiting Big Ten Conference and a nation wondering: Are the Buckeyes a machine?

"I don't know if it's a machine," Hoying said modestly. "We've shown, especially at Pitt, that we can self-destruct by throwing interceptions. But as long as we don't turn the ball over and play smart we're a pretty good offense."

That seems a bit like shortened praise when considering the facts. With another 533 yards of offense against Notre Dame, OSU now has rolled up 2,108 for the season, an average of 527 per contest. The seven-for-14 efficiency on third down vs. the Irish brought the season figure down to 58 percent.

The scoring output raised the team's average to 41 per game, which ranks in the top 10 in the country. The Buckeyes also rate among the nation's best in turnover margin, yet another model of the team's sure-handed play lately.

Want a more striking example of the potency of this group? The Buckeyes rolled up the most points ever against a Lou Holtz-coached Notre Dame team and still don't feel they've peaked.

"We should have had seven more," Hoying said of the 45-point shiner the Buckeyes put on the ND defense. "I



DUDLEY CHURNS TOWARD GOAL LINE — OSU tight end Rickey Dudley fights his way toward the end zone on a third-quarter touchdown catch from Bobby Hoying that gave OSU the lead for good at 21-20. He carries ND defenders Brian Magee and Lyron Cobbins (6) with him.

think after I settled down I had a good game, but I'm going to look back at some of those passes I missed — especially early on — and be like 'wow.' We'll be better."

WHEN YOU have a fine-tuned machine, you need plenty of outlets to plug it into. That's no problem for the Buckeyes, who have been unrelenting in their ability to let all feast when moving the football.

The number one beneficiary, of course, is Hoying, who used to feel the weight of having to force plays and look only for certain players in times of need. Now, he simply needs only to remain poised and sharp, knowing his supporting cast has every dimension covered.

"That's why you love playing quarterback at Ohio State," said Hoying, who connected on 14 of his 22 passes. "When you have a guy like Eddie who can run like that, they've got to stop both things. When you can go back and the defense doesn't know what to expect, it's all the better. It seems like

we have so many outlets that we can go to this year."

Hoying, who did not throw an interception but overshot receivers early on, was more proud of his second-half showing. But even so, he said much of the credit for his numbers goes to the receiving corps.

One case in point was a 17-yard lob to flanker Dimitrious Stanley late in the first half.

"He made a heck of a play," Hoying said, reminding that Stanley turned cornerback Shawn Wooden inside-out on the play and sighted the ball last-second. "You can't expect that he'll adjust like that. You just hope he can. It was a linebacker blitz, I think, and I just let it go toward the corner. He was looking back into the sun, too, so he made a great catch."

OSU trailed the entire first half but caught the Irish when Hoying found Dudley on a short dump pass over the middle in the third quarter. The 6-7, 240-pound TE then eluded defenders for

an impressive 15-yard score.

"In the second half, I'm just making my reads. That's an easy throw to Rickey Dudley and he turns around and scores for me," Hoying said. "It goes down as a touchdown pass for me, but really it's just a smart decision."

Dudley deferred back to Hoying, who put the right touch on the ball.

"It was one of our sit routes, in which I just go over the off-inside guard about five or six yards and kind of just read Bobby's eyes," he said. "He laid it out to my left a little bit and read that I had my man beat a little bit. After that, Terry Glenn gave me a great block on one of the DBs and I just found my way into the end zone."

But the play that really started the wheels turning — and nurtured Hoying's day — was an 82-yard catch-and-go to Terry Glenn, who outraced speedy ND corner Allen Rossum for most of the yardage.

"Bobby threw the ball early, which is key on a hook route," Glenn said. "I just



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split the two defenders and the whole time I was thinking that number 15 (Rossum) is supposed to be a track All-American or whatever and he's going to challenge me right now, so as I was running I got confidence. I knew he wasn't going to catch me."

Glenn's team-best 132 yards receiving followed up his record-setting afternoon (253 yards) at Pitt. His latest performance may have been as electrifying, especially for Hoying.

"That's an amazing feeling," the quarterback said. "You can look up in the stands and see everybody going nuts. Terry's a great athlete. He turns a 10-yard pass into an 80-yard touchdown."

OSU'S FIRST scoring drive of 80 yards illustrated its ability to hang in offensively, even when all the pistons aren't firing.

"I just think there in the first half for some reason we didn't click," Hoying said. "Whether I was a little jittery about the game, I don't know if that was it or not. We settled down and that's the great thing about this offense, that we can rely on a lot of people when we need to."

OSU hoped to showcase Dudley early on to keep pressure off George, who caused ND to show a 4-3 front because of his 443 yards rushing in the previous three games, and Glenn, who was bracketed all day by ND after embarrassing Pitt.

But the plan didn't materialize at first as Dudley stretched out but couldn't pull in a fourth-down, on-the-run pass from Hoying in the first quarter. Moments into the next period, Dudley had his mitts on a scoring toss over the middle but couldn't hang on

when linebacker Lyron Cobbins knocked the ball free. Still, Dudley felt his impact was coming, and he proved himself right with his key touchdown in the second half.

"Pretty much I told myself that play's over and I'll have another chance sometime this game," he said. "It's like the play in the first quarter. We were just trying to establish ourselves then. We were trying to get a quick score, but once it didn't happen I kept my head up, Bob kept his head up and I knew we would get it going."

George used that same line of thinking to blast off a 61-yard run that helped seal the game. He had been getting solid yardage all day but felt his performance wasn't what it could be.

OSU offensive coordinator Joe Hollis said the play came from good blocking and a hunch.

"We had been going so heavy with motion to twins and running the off-tackle play to twins, especially to the wide side of the field. The last two times they had taken their defensive linemen and slanted in to him," Hollis explained. "That particular time they rolled into three-on-two coverage (in the secondary) and once we hit the crease there was nobody there."

"Those calls are tough because you don't want to do anything stupid when you're ahead, but that first-and-10 is so important because second-and-four is a pretty simple call. We said we were going to make the decision to run it — I thought that was probably our best opportunity based on what we had seen the last two series — and Eddie popped it."

Hoying, too, persevered from his early tension, but once again proved he is a calming force for the offense.

"You're dealing with a fifth-year player that you can make adjustments with — game adjustments. Sometimes that's the biggest thing we do," Hollis said of his All-Big Ten candidate at QB. "We don't panic. We believe in what we're doing. If they're doing certain things to us, we can sit there and take a fifth-year senior and some receivers and linemen with experience and make some adjustments."

That goes for the front five as well, which kept Hoying nearly free of contact all day.

"We can adjust and adapt and that's encouraging," left guard Jamie Sumner said. "Up front, we're all athletic enough and obviously our receivers and running backs are all athletic enough that we can adapt to whatever we see. I think we've done a pretty good job of doing that so far."

The line and George also have been adept at bullying the opposition in the second half, a point team members and coaches were quick to make after disposing of Notre Dame, one of the nation's most notorious fourth-quarter teams year in and year out.

"I think conditioning is a factor," Hollis said flatly. "I don't think there's any doubt about that. I think (strength and conditioning coach) Dave Kennedy and our program are unbelievable. Our confidence is high because of it — just look at our production in the second half."

Head coach John Cooper concurred, praising Kennedy in front of the team and the vast media afterward.

"He was one of the first people (Cooper) gave credit to in the locker room," Sumner said. "Coach K, he works us so hard in the summer and when you're doing it you wonder, 'Why am I doing this? Why am I going through this when other guys are sitting in air conditioning?' The answer comes today on national TV against Notre Dame."

"We did wear them down. We can pound on people and I think that's going to help us down the stretch."

THE OFFENSE actually caught gear without sophomore tackle Orlando Pace, a 6-7, 320-pound bulldozer who

recently was announced as one of a dozen finalists for the Lombardi Award.

Pace became ill just prior to OSU's second touchdown drive and was escorted to the locker room.

"While the defense was in, I was over there coughing and vomiting," he said. Pace was given a shot at halftime and returned to action, but redshirt freshman Brooks Burris made sure the offense kept chugging.

"You don't ever want to lose a player like 'O,' but I don't think you have time to think about that," Sumner said. "We had to use what we had and to Brooks' credit, he came in and did a great job. You figure a guy who's been on the sideline that long — his mind could be in the stands or a million miles away. But he came in and did a great job and they did pick on us with some twists and stunts. He deserves a lot of credit."

With Burris in at the all-important left tackle slot, the Buckeyes marched 76 yards in 12 plays to cut the deficit to 17-14 with only 38 seconds left in the half.

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Fumble-Fingered ND Commits Three Second-Half Miscues

OSU Defenders Dine On Irish Turnovers

By MIKE WACHSMAN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The Ohio State defense may not have beaten Notre Dame, but it sure did its part in turning the game around.

How can that be when the D — which stood more for "demolished" than "defense" the first 30 minutes — gives up 447 yards of total offense and allows a runner over 100 yards for the third time in four games?

Easy.

It turned the course of the game around just long enough for the offense, machinelike as always, to find its afterburners. OSU scored 31 second-half points, proving the stop troops more than did their job.

Three second-half turnovers and a few key third-down stops foiled Notre Dame's late-game heroics and allowed OSU to cruise to a monumental win, for both the team and program.

After allowing 17 points and forcing zero turnovers in the first half, the defense — more generous than Old Saint Nick at Christmas — buckled down, allowing only a field goal and a Randy Kinder touchdown.

The second-half turnaround may not have been overwhelming from a yardage standpoint — OSU gave up 229 yards — but it was enough.

"The first half, they were getting the running plays and hitting us on deep passes," said Luke Fickell, who played his best game of the year, finishing with 10 stops. "We weren't getting much pressure on (Ron) Powlus. We were getting a little frustrated up front. Our offense did a great job keeping us in it. If one of us isn't on, then the other has to pick us up."

Notre Dame's offensive line, a veteran unit, had its way with the Buckeyes' quicker, smaller front. When Kinder, who finished with 143 hard-charging yards, scored from three yards out to open up a 10-0 Irish lead, the isolation blocking was a thing of beauty. Kinder wasn't touched on the run. Fullback Marc Edwards, a Cincinnati native, also victimized the Bucks, rushing for 49 yards and catching two passes for 48 more.

"They were doing a lot of reach blocks," captain Matt Bonhaus said. "I was getting cut off my gap. We made adjustments and shut them down pretty much."

Among those adjustments were aligning the front line a little wider and plugging the gaps. OSU also put more emphasis on the left side, where ND was directing most of its runs.

It certainly aided the Buckeye cause



THE FUMBLED SNAP — Notre Dame quarterback Ron Powlus (3) looks down at the football after a bad snap during the third quarter of the OSU-Notre Dame game. OSU's Matt Finkes (92) also eyes the ball, but defensive tackle Matt Bonhaus recovered it for the Buckeyes.

when the Irish shot themselves in the foot — Powlus botching a center snap and Emmett Mosley muffing a punt — and turned the tide toward the Buckeyes.

ND's average starting position in the second half was its own 19-yard line. That, more than anything, allowed the Buckeyes to take some chances.

"Field position is the whole key," defensive coordinator Bill Young said. "They field a kickoff on the 11, we strip the ball on a punt and we get it at the 15. Those are things that win ball games, especially games against this caliber of team."

Anytime a team has an explosive offense like the one Ohio State possesses, the defense needs only to fight and scrap to stay in the game.

That's precisely what it did.

There was no finger-pointing or hand-wringing, just good old-fashioned playmaking.

"A lot of teams might have folded after giving up some scores and big yardage like that," defensive end Mike Vrabel said of OSU's first quarter. "Long drives usually kill a defense.

Anytime a defense is on the field for more than 15 plays, it's not a good situation. To be able to do that, to bend but not break, we're not going to give up. We have a lot of heart and ability."

Cornerback Shawn Springs, with eight tackles and one leaping interception, believed all along the Buckeye defense would get a jump-start. It was just a question of when.

"We knew we could play much better than we were playing in the first half, so we said now it's time to step it up," he said. "We pride ourselves on being in shape. Ohio State has the best stamina and best athletes and we knew if we kept playing they would wear down before we would."

By the time the fourth quarter rolled around, the Buckeyes held a 35-20 lead after an Eddie George TD and things were pretty much in the books.

Vrabel knew his bunch had the wherewithal to fend off any challenge the Irish might bring to the table.

"One of our goals is to win the fourth quarter," Vrabel said. "We did that today without a doubt."

"It's a little ironic that that's what

Notre Dame did to Texas last week (in a 55-27 win). It was the same exact thing. It was a close game, anyone's ball game, and all of sudden, bam, Notre Dame snowballed. It's a little ironic that we did the same thing they did to Texas."

Powlus HAS been under a microscope since day one with the Irish, and he's done little to alleviate that pressure.

He has played well this season, though, so the Buckeyes knew they'd have to be on guard or he'd burn them.

After a fine first half, completing five for eight for 99 yards, Powlus ran into trouble — and Buckeyes — later in the game. He was finally getting pressured, and that led to a few bouts with pressure.

He was seen pushing Buckeyes and officials, as well as yelling at his center on the fumbled exchange.

All in all, the second half is probably one he'd just as soon forget.

"The crowd noise started to get to him," Fickell said of Powlus' antics. "All of them got rattled, really. They had a hard time hearing things, they can't make check-offs and have a hard time

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making their calls. It's tough down in the closed end of the field. They couldn't hear a thing and I couldn't hear a thing. Not the cadence, nothing. They had to go on the first sound on the snap count."

Even the normally reserved Bonhaus let Powlus know his mischief wasn't appreciated.

"You could sense it," he said. "I was around his knees on one play and he started talking to me. I told him that wasn't very nice, let's have some good sportsmanship here. That happens when we win, I guess."

YOUNG GROUSED a great deal last season about the Buckeyes' lack of turnovers.

He wanted this year's group to be all-out to the ball, swarming to the runner and stripping the ball at every turn.

That happened often against Notre Dame, but Young still isn't smiling as wide as you might think.

"We're not nearly as happy about the turnovers as we could be," the coach said. "We thought there were a lot out there that we could have got and should have got. They fumbled and we didn't get on the ball one time, let them take the ball away from us another time, had the ball hanging out there a couple times and we don't strip it out. We're not the most talented team in the country defensively, so we have to take advantage of opportunities when they appear."

To a man, the Buckeyes felt Mosley's fair catch and subsequent muff was the game's turning point.

The Buckeyes scored off the turnover

to lead 21-20 in the third before Springs made a great play to intercept a Powlus-to-Derrick Mayes hookup.

"Anytime you can get a big play like that, where the emotion and things can change, it's great," Fickell said of Mosley's miscue. "The defense was getting ready to run back on the field, and we'd been out there so long and weren't stopping them, and that kind of play changes momentum and gives us some rest."

Bonhaus, who took advantage of his moment in the sun by pouncing on Powlus' bungle, felt the pendulum swing in OSU's favor on the play.

"That was big," Bonhaus said. "We had a lot of big plays, a lot of turnovers that led to touchdowns. We were hustling and got around the ball and did the job."

THE CHESS match between Springs and Mayes was talked about pregame, and it turned into a dandy duel for the duo.

Mayes caught five passes for 125 yards but failed to score. He did bust one over the middle for 30 yards on Notre Dame's first scoring drive, a play that saw Springs get lost on coverage after getting cleared out of the zone.

But the Buckeye sophomore exacted his revenge, laying out for a Powlus overthrow two plays after Mayes made a great play on a 56-yard streak down the sideline.

"I was like 'OK, he made a good play, good pass and good catch, now I have to bounce back and play my responsibility,'" Springs said of the pick. "He got me, so it was my turn to get him. I made the play on him."

The bomb left Young in awe, especially since Springs had such good coverage and help from Rob Kelly.

"They made a couple really outstanding plays," Young said. "We were in man-under two-deep on the long pass to Mayes. We can't cover him any better than that. Buster threw the ball right in a little window and he made a great catch."

Springs came away impressed with Mayes, one of the nation's best, but says he has better battles in practice with his teammates.

"He's a pretty good receiver, but I'm used to seeing good receivers every day," Springs said. "You check Buster (Tillman) and Terry (Glenn). Terry runs a 4.2, Buster has good speed and moves. So I'm used to playing against good guys every day."

There was some verbal sparring between the two, but mostly in fun.

"We talked the whole game," he explained. "He's a great person. I was telling him 'It's really loud today' and he was 'Yeah you're right, I can't even hear anything.' He talked to me after the game and said, 'Dag, Shawn, you're the first person to ever jam me.' I said 'Well, you're the first person to ever catch a 60-yard bomb on me like that.'"

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Holtz Bemoans Turnovers In Second Half

Continued From Page 1

OSU narrowed the lead to 17-14 at halftime when Hoying and Dimitrious Stanley hooked up on a 17-yard scoring strike with just 44 seconds left in the half.

"We haven't been in that situation all year where we have to play catch-up," Hoying said. "Sure, there was some concern and a sense of urgency and we were thinking we had to go out there and get the game turned around. We got down there and scored and that was one of the key points of the ball game."

In a span of six minutes in the second half, OSU turned three ND turnovers into touchdowns.

"I thought their strength up front wore us down," Holtz said. "We make no excuses. I just credit Ohio State. John

Cooper has done a nice job and this is a fine football team he has."

The win touched off a massive on-field celebration and partying in the campus area continued unabated well into the night. There were a number of incidents and police issued 47 citations as a result of merriment that got out of hand.

But coach John Cooper's Buckeyes had clearly made history.

"It was a great victory and I'm just proud of our senior football players," said Cooper, who was nearly trampled before the game while trying to traverse the Tunnel of Pride. "Of course, they made history today: It was the first time that Ohio State has ever beaten Notre Dame."

HOLTZ HAD originally planned to be in the press box, as he was for Notre Dame's Sept. 23 win over Texas. But defensive coordinator and acting head coach Bob Davie convinced Holtz, neck brace and all, to join the team on the sideline.

"I had really planned on being upstairs, but in talking to Bob Davie last night, he felt it was better if I was on the field if I was up to it," Holtz said.

"During the game, you get involved in it. After the game, I'm pretty well beat. I don't know if it was such a good decision. But during the game, the adrenaline gets going. There isn't going to be any setback. I've just got a lot more discomfort, but hey, the greatest discomfort is losing the football game. I'm drained a little bit, but that was a long game," he said.

From Holtz's perspective, ND's three costly turnovers spelled defeat.

"When you have a game like this that's hard fought for 3½ quarters, it's going to come down to a mistake here or there and we made them," Holtz said.

"We could not make more mistakes than Ohio State and win the game. We have three turnovers, we're forced to run a fake punt at the end. We make three mistakes and they don't make any, and that's the difference in the game."

Powlus was practically disconsolate after the loss, a game he says the Irish should have controlled.



KAVIN DYE

QUIET, PLEASE — OSU defensive end Mike Vrabel motions to the crowd to quiet down after a request by referee John Nealon. Notre Dame complained about excessive noise during the third quarter, where the game turned decidedly in OSU's favor.

"We shouldn't have lost the game the way they beat us," he said. "If they were going to beat us, it should have been on a last-second field goal or a touchdown. We beat ourselves today, there's no question. They capitalized on our mistakes and that makes them the better team."

"They didn't force the fumbled snap. They didn't force the interception. They didn't force the bad catch on the punt. There's three turnovers they turned into scores."

Glenn felt OSU's superior conditioning may have played a part in Notre Dame's late collapse.

"They wore down a lot," he said.

"That was one of the key points Coach Cooper talked about to us. They get fatigued. I guess Coach Cooper talked to some other coaches in the conference and found out that by the fourth quarter, they'd be out of it."

IF OSU'S players had any doubts about the magnitude of this game, they were erased when they came out of the locker room and saw the Tunnel of Pride which stretched nearly the length of the football field.

But winning the game was an even bigger thrill.

"It's unbelievable," said OSU middle linebacker Greg Bellisari, who notched a game-high 12 tackles. "This is just

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such a big win for us. They are a great program. It is very prestigious just to play them, let alone beat them. All in all, it's just a great win."

THE GAME figured to be a high-scoring battle with Powlius and his lead receiver, Derrick Mayes, taking on the Shawn Springs and the secondary.

Powlius completed 13 of 26 passes for 243 yards, while Mayes hauled in one 56-yard pass among his five catches for 125 yards.

Springs, who came up with the timely interception to snuff out a prolonged ND march, put Mayes in the group with some of the best receivers he has faced.

"He's a good receiver, but when you come to practice and check Terry, Chris Sanders, Buster and Joey (Galloway) — let's not forget Joey with a 4.17 (40-yard time) and a 420-pound bench — I've been facing some good receivers."

"(Michigan's) Amani Toomer and (Penn State's) Bobby Engram and Freddie Scott, they're all good receivers."

SPEAKING OF Penn State, that is the next stop for the OSU football express.

While the Buckeyes moved up two spots in this week's Associated Press poll from seventh to a tie for fifth with

Southern Cal, Penn State dropped six spots from sixth to 12th after dropping a 17-9 decision to Wisconsin in its Big Ten opener.

The loss snapped a 20-game Penn State winning streak, dating back to OSU's 24-6 win in 1993.

The Buckeyes, of course, recall last year's 63-14 pasting at Happy Valley and want to make their upcoming trip there happy for themselves.

"We've been in a situation where it's been one big game after another, and we're used to it by now. We'll be ready," Hoying said.

"We've beaten some good teams, we've put some big numbers up on offense, and that should speak for itself."

OSU has won by an average of 20.3 points in its three wins over ranked opponents (Boston College, Washington and Notre Dame). George said he thinks those wins have given the Buckeyes confidence to be able to tackle tough road challenges like Penn State and Wisconsin.

"We gained some confidence," George said. "Beating Notre Dame is a tremendous feeling for us. The next two weeks is going to be a challenge for us. That confidence is going to help a lot."

"I know we still have room for improvement. We're just going to keep working hard. We can't worry about where we're ranked or where we're going to be next week. We just need to keep working hard and those things will come," he said.

OSU offensive coordinator Joe Hollis said the Buckeyes, who received a pair of first-place votes in the *USA Today/CNN* coaches poll, where they are also ranked fifth, need to continue to focus on the task at hand.

"I think it's going to test our coaching skills," Hollis said. "I think they'll approach it in the proper manner, but I still think the media this week is going to make our players all-world. You're going to see national title listings and all that. We've got to be mature enough to know humility is one week away."

COOPER WAS asked to size up where the win over Notre Dame stood in his coaching career.

"Well, it doesn't get any bigger than Michigan," Cooper said. "You can talk about any game you want to, but I'd be lying to you if I told you this one was bigger."

"The biggest game I've ever coached in was winning the Rose Bowl (at Arizona State over Michigan in 1986). The second biggest was last year beating Michigan," he said.



NICE PLAY, TERRY — OSU wide receiver Terry Glenn leaps into the arms of teammate Rickey Dudley after making a nifty grab of a 10-yard touchdown pass from Bobby Hoying in the first quarter of OSU's 45-26 win over Notre Dame.



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Cooper Pays Tribute To Senior Team Members

EDITOR'S NOTE: Throughout the football season, *Buckeye Sports Bulletin* is publishing excerpts from Ohio State head coach John Cooper's postgame press conferences. Here is what Cooper had to say following the Buckeyes' win over Notre Dame:

COOPER: "I don't know how much anybody out there paid for tickets today, but I guarantee they got their money's worth."

"That was a great, great football game. You know, I was coaching at Tulsa and Lou (Holtz) beat us seven years in a row (at Arkansas), but today made up for it, I'll tell you that right now."

"It was a great victory and I'm just so proud of our senior football players. Of course, they made history today: It was the first time that Ohio State has ever beaten Notre Dame."

"I can't say enough good things about Notre Dame. I thought Lou . . . he's a master. He did a great job. He kept us off balance. We were over-rotating our secondary and trying to take the passing game away from (Derrick) Mayes. Of course, he hit the fullback down the middle and up the seam. And I'll tell you, he had us over there sort of second-guessing ourselves a little bit defensively."

"Lou does a great job calling plays and Notre Dame is a class program. No question about it."

"But the credit goes to our senior football players. They've worked hard, they are in good condition. Eddie George, of course, had a great football game. Terry Glenn had a great game. Bobby Hoying, I thought, did a good job. The offensive line played well and Shawn Springs came up with a great interception."

"The name of the game is turnovers. They turned the ball over four times and we got three touchdowns off of them. They mishandled a punt, the

fumbled snap from center, the pass that Springs caught and then, of course, the fourth-down gamble there on the punt."

"I know you're going to ask me why we went for it early instead of kicking a field goal. Looking back, it was a bad call. If we hit the touchdown pass, it's a great call. And that's the way it goes."

"But going into the game, I thought that our offense was going to have to win the game. I thought Notre Dame had a great offense and I thought it would be a scoring contest. For once in my coaching career, I think was I right. We felt like we needed to score (a touchdown) there, we had a good play called and had we executed properly, I think we would have scored."

"But it was just a great victory. I'm just really happy for this football program."

Q. Was the muffed punt the big play of the game as far as momentum was concerned?

COOPER: "The muffed punt and the fumbled snap from center both were big plays. You look back and, you know, Terry Glenn catching the ball and running for a touchdown was big. You don't want to get in a foot race with Terry. Their guy (cornerback Allen Rossum) ran a 10.02 hundred meters in high school according to their press guide, so that makes Terry the world sprint champion, I guess, because their guy didn't catch him."

Q. What about the crowd noise today?

COOPER: "The crowd, the 12th person on our team, really helped us. I was a little disappointed there one time because I thought the official was going to make us quiet the crowd down. They brought their officiating crew with them and, of course, we don't have that rule in the Big Ten anymore. But I think the crowd really, really helped us. And I'm told they just let them tear down the goal post out there, so there'll be some celebrating tonight. I can promise you that."



SAVORING THE MOMENT — Ohio State head football coach John Cooper races off the Ohio Stadium field after his Buckeyes downed Notre Dame 45-26. Before ducking into the locker room, Cooper tossed his hat to one lucky fan.

Q. What happened when you were leading the team out of the tunnel at the start of the game?

COOPER: "Well, I tripped. I thought I was going to get trampled. (Laughs) Our team was ready to play. There was no question. But they almost ran over me. I'm not as fast as I used to be."

Q. With all of the hype leading up to this game, was it finally a relief to you and your players just to tee it up and play?

COOPER: "I'll tell you what: It was a relief once we started the game, but I thought that game lasted a week. I don't like games like this. You know that. I'd rather go out there and dominate from the get-go. Never did I feel like we had the game won until they punted the ball with about five minutes left to go in the game. After running the fake punt earlier, I was a little surprised they punted the ball right there, but I didn't feel like we had it won right up until that point."

Q. Can you talk about Eddie George's performance again today?

COOPER: "Well, Eddie has done it all year long. This is four ball games in a row and if he doesn't jump right into the middle of that Heisman race now, I don't know what it takes. He's done everything we've ever asked of him. He needs to block a little better, but he caught the ball coming out of the backfield and ran the ball I don't know how many times today. The stat that I like, though, is the fact that he hasn't turned it over all year long. I knock on wood when I say that because that's the reason we're winning games."

Q. Did you have to calm Bobby Hoying down a little bit early in the game? He seemed to be off early, but then really got things together.

COOPER: "They were putting a lot of pressure on Bobby. I don't think Bobby was playing extremely well in the first quarter, but as the game went on, he really settled down. The best

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thing Bobby does is run the offense. When we get a lead late in the ball game, he holds off the snap count until there's only about one second on the play clock. He did a great job directing the offense today."

Q. Were you surprised to see Holtz on the sidelines at the beginning of the game?

COOPER: "No, I wasn't surprised at all. Lou's a great competitor, but I told him before the game to make sure and not overdo it. You know, I've had three back operations and I probably came back a little early from the first one myself and had to have a second one, so I hope that he doesn't overdo it. But Lou's a competitor."

Q. The physical results from the turnovers was obvious, but talk about the emotional aspect of getting those turnovers for the team and the crowd.

COOPER: "It kept the crowd in the

game. It brought the crowd back. We weren't slowing them up very much as you know up until that point and then they made a mistake in the kicking game. Of course, we keep talking about the kicking game and I think we've got to kick the ball better. But those turnovers were big plays, no question. They gave us a lift and you can't play good defense unless you're emotional."

Q. What does this victory mean to you personally?

COOPER: "Well, you know, it feels great. But again, I'm happy for the assistant coaches, I'm happy for (strength coach) Dave Kennedy, but I'm happy most of all for these senior football players."

Q. What was the mob like at the end of the game?

COOPER: "Like it was at the end of the Michigan game last year."

Q. But what was it like being inside of that mass of people?

COOPER: "Well, I was being interviewed by ABC and ESPN and the policemen did a good job holding the people back so we could be interviewed. But the mob didn't bother me. I'd like to see that kind of ending in every game we play."

Q. Did the excitement of this game come up to the level of that of a Michigan game?

COOPER: "Well, it doesn't get any bigger than Michigan. You can talk about any game you want to, but I'd be lying to you if I told you this one was bigger. The biggest game I've ever coached in was winning the Rose Bowl. The second biggest was last year beating Michigan."

Q. Will you do anything different in preparation for the Penn State game this season?

COOPER: "No. Everything will be the same way we've been doing it since the Penn State game last year. We'll enjoy the victory tonight, come back tomorrow and go to work."

Q. Were there any major injuries today?

COOPER: "We've obviously got some kids that are banged up, but I don't think we have anybody that will miss any practice this week."

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Ohio State head coach John Cooper on how his team came together to pull off the win against Notre Dame: "The credit goes to our senior football players. They've worked hard, they're in good condition. Eddie George, of course, had a great game. Terry Glenn had a great game. Bobby Hoying, I thought, did a good job. The offensive line played well and Shawn Springs came up with a great interception."

Notre Dame quarterback Ron Powlus on his team's inability to communicate in a noisy Ohio Stadium, a problem that contributed to a fumbled snap that helped spell defeat for the Irish: "We had a problem (with the noise). I couldn't hear myself. I talked to him, and the official said we had to run the play or we would get a delay of game. It was a little bit of a surprise. I did ask him to give us a little bit of leeway because we couldn't hear."

OSU tight end Rickey Dudley on his 15-yard touchdown catch from Bobby Hoying that put the Buckeyes in front for good: "It was one of our routes where I go over the opposite guard. At about five or six yards, Bob reads me and keeps an eye on me. My linebacker played me a little too much to my right side. I pushed off and after that it was pretty much a great block by Terry Glenn. I thanked him for that, and I scored. It was a will or a want to get into the end zone."

Hoying on his role in the 17-yard TD pass to Dimitrios Stanley just before halftime: "I actually let the ball go because of protection. I took seven steps and let the ball go before he even broke. It's kind of like you just have to put it out there and hopefully he makes the play and the defender bites on the post move. He made a heck of a play for us."

Hoying on his 82-yard TD pass to Glenn, where Glenn came off a hook pattern, caught the pass and outspurred a pair of ND defenders the remaining 60 yards: "We caught them in some type of man or a soft four-deep. I just knew exactly where he would be. I threw the ball before he turned around, and that's really what enabled him to score. He splits the defenders and he was gone right when he caught it."

Dudley on where Notre Dame rates and on the tough road ahead for Ohio State: "It's by far the best team we've played this year, but there are more important games for us starting next week."



Rickey Dudley



Shawn Springs



Terry Glenn

Glenn on OSU's upcoming match-up with Penn State, a team that defeated the Buckeyes 63-14 last year: "This is the big payback. I'm not going in too high on this game, but I feel if we go in there and do what we normally do in practice and as far as the four games past, we should come out with a victory."

Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz on bringing his Fighting Irish into a hostile environment at Ohio Stadium: "When you're on the road and you have a crowd like this, you know that's going to happen. We don't want to take the crowd out, but we would like an opportunity to snap the ball and let everybody know what you're doing, but you don't always get that. That's a tribute to Ohio State."

ND's Powlus on the interception he threw to OSU's Springs in the third quarter, squashing an Irish scoring threat: "It was a fade and their defensive back played it perfectly. I'm throwing it to a spot and he got there first."

Springs on what he was thinking on his crucial interception: "We needed a play. If you come to our practices, the first thing you hear our coaches say is 'Get the ball.' When the ball is in the air, you're the receiver. That's how I play. The ball is in the air. It's coming my way. Now it's my time to catch the ball."

ND punt returner Emmett Mosley on what happened on the muffed punt that gave OSU a chance to take the lead in the third quarter: "The ball drifted on me a little bit. I somehow misjudged it. When I went to catch it, I felt my man right here and maybe he didn't hear the (fair catch) call. So I was thinking it was going to hit him, so I had to make the catch. But it wasn't my man, it was their man who was near me. If I had known that, I would have moved and not even tried to catch it."

OSU defensive end Mike Vrabel on the Buckeyes' penchant for making the stops at the key moments: "It's a little reassuring to know that when we need to come up big we can. I think we just need to hopefully play like that the whole time, realize we can play lights-out defense and run to the ball, make plays and have fun."

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By Frank L. Moskowitz, Publisher

Was Win Over Irish Bigger Than Rose Bowl?

Here's a warning to any of you Ohio State football traditionalists who may be reading this: I'm going to say something blasphemous here shortly. So if you think you can't handle it, skip this column!

It has to do with an argument that has raged in Columbus over the last few weeks. It was the debate over how important the Ohio State-Notre Dame game really was. After all, it had no impact on the Big Ten standings, on the race for the Rose Bowl. And as any Big Ten football player knows from the day he is recruited to come to Ann Arbor or Madison or Columbus or State College or Iowa City, going to the Rose Bowl is the most important thing.

And there isn't an OSU fan worth his or her Buckeye nuts or Woody Hayes poster out there who doesn't know that the Bucks haven't been to Pasadena since the 1984 season.

But do you want to know the truth? (Avert your eyes traditionalists. Here comes the blasphemy.) In the big picture, winning this game may have been more important than going to the Rose Bowl. Heck, a team like Ohio State can (and should) contend for the Rose Bowl every year. But the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame, the most glamorous team in all of college football, only comes to town once every 60 years.

And here's an Ohio State team trying to regain the national respect that has somehow eroded over the past few years. Here is John Cooper, a head coach still trying to completely win over the fans after seven-plus seasons, trying to shake the perception that he is unable to win the big game. Here is Eddie George, trying to prove that he is a legitimate Heisman Trophy candidate. What better way to accomplish all of these things than with an impressive showing against the darling of the public and the media, Notre Dame.

But I think there was something going on here far more important than winning national attention, Heisman Trophies or support for Cooper, though something connected with those things.

The fever for this game had been building for weeks, maybe even months or years. Maybe it had been building since that fateful day back in 1935, when they played the "Game of the Century." By the time the week and day of the game finally rolled around, Columbus was worked up in a way that most observers hadn't seen in years.

Let's face it. The collective ego of Buckeye fans had taken a bit of a bruising lately. Suddenly, it was fashionable to be a Buckeye fan again. The OSU flags were out all around town. People dusted off their sweatshirts and Woody Hayes hats and confidently talked Buckeye football, even with the all-too-present Irish fans. Anyone who was going to the game talked of how early they were going to go, despite the 3:30 start, not only to get a good parking space, but to take in the electric atmosphere.

By the time kickoff finally rolled around, the town was in a frenzy.

After all that buildup, I think a loss by the Buckeyes would have been devastating to the fans. Sure the Buck-

eyes would have still had the entire Big Ten season in front of them. But this game just meant too much to too many people who want so badly to be proud of their Buckeyes.

And proud they have every reason to be. It was an impressive victory over a team that proved to be the best team that Ohio State has faced so far this season. Oh sure, there are plenty of potential obstacles remaining on the schedule this season. But at least for this one Saturday, the team, the coaches, and maybe most importantly, the fans, are on top of the football world.

As far as my blasphemous statement about this game being more important than going to the Rose Bowl, maybe this will be the year the Buckeyes beat Notre Dame and go to the Rose Bowl. It all starts in State College and I believe the Buckeyes have a bit of a score to settle there. Maybe not a 60-year score to settle, but a score to settle, nonetheless.

WHILE MANY have noticed that this may be the best team that Cooper has ever fielded at Ohio State, they may not have noticed some more subtle changes going on off the field.

Much of Cooper's woes have stemmed from public relations problems, rather than just his won-loss record at OSU. It seems like he is working much harder (and much more successfully) at improving his image around Columbus. If you've ever met John Cooper, you know he's a nice guy. Yet he seemed, at times, to be unable to get that image across to the OSU football masses.

Some of the more cynical might say things are going better for Cooper simply because the Buckeyes are winning. To me it seems — win or lose — that Cooper is coming across better lately.

If you've had your ear to the ground,

you might know that there was some grumbling among former OSU players that Cooper wasn't giving enough respect to those former players and the traditions of Ohio State football. It seems like the coach has been working really hard at mending that fence (be that fence real or imagined). The Tunnel of Pride with its gathering of the former players started at the Michigan game last year and continued at the Notre Dame game is not only inspirational for the players and fans, but a great way to get the former Buckeyes involved.

And I found the selection of John Hicks and Frank "Moose" Machinsky as honorary captains for the Notre Dame game — the biggest game in years — interesting. Hicks, one of the greatest linemen in OSU history, has been an outspoken critic of Cooper in the past. And Machinsky, as the current president of Varsity 'O,' the athletic alumni association, is certainly an important link to past players. Hopefully, they will be taking back a positive message as they meet with their colleagues.

The great football programs are exactly that — programs, not teams. In order to be a great program, everybody needs to be working together, including former players and fans. Maybe it takes a little understanding on both sides. Maybe a victory like the one over Notre

Dame is what it will take to solidify the OSU program.

WE WANT to send out our special best wishes to BSB staffer Julia Grubb, who married Gene Roy on the evening of the Notre Dame game. Julie's dad, Jack, one of the biggest Buckeye fans around, was forced to miss the game with the Irish but gave his ticket to Julie's uncle Andrew Chute, who had been at the famous game in 1935 and was in from California for the wedding.

Now it may look like Julie was trying to get out of working on one of the biggest weekends in our 14-plus years of business. But actually, Sept. 30 was the anniversary of the day that Gene proposed to her. Former BSB editor Mark Rea was kind enough to help out on this issue in Julie's absence.

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