

BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

March 30, 1996

IS STAN THE MAN?

Or Will New QB Be Garcia, Tom Hoying Or Germaine?

By **STEVE HELWAGEN**
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

For the first time in several years, a number of the most prominent positions on the Ohio State football team are up for grabs.

At the forefront of the talent search this spring will be the competitions at four key spots on offense at the quarterback, tailback, tight end and flanker positions.

The Buckeyes enter spring practice, which begins April 2 and runs through the April 27 Spring Game at Ohio Stadium, without a number of the big names that fueled last year's 11-2 team.

Gone are Heisman Trophy-winning tailback Eddie George, standout quarterback Bobby Hoying, Fred Biletnikoff Award-winning flanker Terry Glenn and monster tight end Rickey Dudley.

But as OSU coach John Cooper begins his ninth spring practice with the Buckeyes, the staff is certain new faces will step up to accept these roles beginning this spring.

George's void at tailback will likely be filled by juniors Pepe Pearson or Jermon Jackson or by a member of OSU's stellar incoming freshman class. That position does not have the coaching staff too worried.

Finding a quarterback who can fill Hoying's shoes does — to an extent.

Quarterbacks coach Walt Harris will have these four players to watch and evaluate this spring:

- Junior Stanley Jackson, Hoying's primary backup the past two seasons;

- Junior Tom Hoying, Hoying's brother and a close challenger to Jackson the past two years;

- Junior Mark Garcia, a junior college transfer from Modesto, Calif., who developed into one of the nation's top JUCO players last year; and

- Sophomore Joe Germaine, a JUCO transfer from Mesa, Ariz., who was red-shirted and ran the scout team at OSU last year.

Harris said his criteria for finding OSU's new starting quarterback are actually quite simple.

"We are looking for a guy who is the best executor of the system, a guy who understands what we want to get done and gets it done," Harris said. "We need a guy who can think, throw the ball accurately and keep it out of the hands of the opposition.

"It is a wide-open challenge. Some might say that Stan, with the most practice time in the system, has got the

BSB's 1996 Spring Preview

- Associate athletic director Archie Griffin discusses his evaluation of the OSU football program (Page 5)

- Andy Katzenmoyer to wear fabled No. 45 Griffin made famous (Page 5)

- Offensive coordinator Joe Hollis assesses his unit's retooling task (Pages 6-7)

- New defensive coordinator Fred Pagac likes having 10 starters back (Pages 8-9)

advantage. Mark Garcia, just coming in here, may be at a disadvantage. What I'm hoping for is for the cream to rise to the top," he said.

Heading into the spring, Jackson is listed as No. 1 on the depth chart. But Harris said past performance will have little to do with who is under center for OSU's Sept. 7 season opener against Rice.

"Really, even Stan doesn't have all that much practice time, although he has way more than anybody else," Harris said. "Tom Hoying has been here too for three years and Joe Germaine was in here last fall, but (Mark and Joe) might be looked at with a little different eyes this spring than Stan and Tom, who know the system."

Jackson, a 6-1, 203-pounder, is a true athlete with lethal running ability and a deceptively strong arm. In his two years as Bobby Hoying's understudy, he showed an ability to make things happen. But the coaching staff would like it if those things happened within the framework of the offense.

"Stan can run around back there, but that's not really what we're looking for," Harris said. "What we want is to have somebody who can stand back there, stay live in the pocket, exhaust the progression (of receivers) and then, if nobody is open, it's nice to have a guy like Stanley Jackson back there who can run.

"A lot of times, guys have problems going through the progression. But Stan is much improved," he said.

In two years, Jackson has completed just under half of his pass attempts (26 of 53) for 307 yards with two touchdowns and two interceptions. Perhaps



"JACK" TAKES THE BALL — Junior quarterback Stanley Jackson, pictured at Pittsburgh last season, is one of four quarterbacks who will be vying for the vacant starting QB job with the Buckeyes when spring practice begins on April 2.

his best showing came against Indiana last year. With Hoying sidelined due to injury, Jackson went in and directed three scoring drives, completing 4 of 4 passes and rushing for 39 yards.

In this off-season, the easygoing Jackson has begun to take a more serious approach to football, an approach that has Harris counting the days until he gets to see him work out this spring.

"He has decided he wants to be a player here," Harris said. "In the past few months, he has made more inroads in showing that he wants to do it. He

has worked hard a lot this off-season. It excites me about his future."

With OSU in full control of many of its games last year, Tom Hoying got several opportunities to show what he could do. In five games, he completed 2 of 7 passes for 19 yards, but both of his completions were for touchdowns.

"For quite a while last year, it was a three-man race," Harris said. "In fact, at times it was easier for me to play Tommy as the backup because he knew

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Griffin Working On Evaluations, Grid Schedule

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

As the focus returns to Ohio State football with the start of spring practice, one of the athletic department's key figures has a lot on his plate.

Associate athletic director Archie Griffin is busy finishing his annual evaluation of OSU coach John Cooper and the football program as well as working diligently on filling holes on the team's future schedule.

As a popular former player, Griffin is also one of the department's key contacts with former players and Varsity "O" members.

Last season, OSU posted an 11-2 mark. The year was punctuated by losses at Michigan and to Tennessee at the Citrus Bowl. Nonetheless, OSU rated its first top 5 finish in nine years.

"I haven't done a formal evaluation yet," Griffin said. "They still have to go through spring ball and finish up (spring quarter) classes. But as far as the football end of it is concerned, certainly they graded out pretty well. We got into the last two games and those were disappointing, but when you look at that schedule overall, it was an outstanding season."

"I don't know if there has ever been a year where we have won the type of individual awards we won this past year with Eddie (George), Terry (Glenn), Orlando (Pace) and Bobby (Hoying)."

Griffin said he and athletic director Andy Geiger base their evaluation of the football program on a number of factors.

"When you evaluate the program, you certainly look at the wins and losses," he said. "You look at how things are going for the kids in the classroom and if they're doing the things they should be doing as student-athletes. We look at the relationships between the players and coaches. We look at (the program's) relationships with the rest of the university and the rest of the athletic department."

"We like to see if the coaches are doing it the right way, seeing if they are in compliance with NCAA rules and Big Ten rules. We look at the program as a whole academically to see how the kids are doing gradewise, see if they're making their study tables and see if we have any problems with that. We check the relationship the sport as a whole has with the academic counselors."

"Recruiting is another area we look at, and when you look at it on paper this year, it was an outstanding year. If you look at the names we got and the caliber of players and where we're rated by the so-called experts, all of that is good for the program."

"Obviously, you never really know about recruiting until they put on the uniforms, but it looks good," he said.

Although Cooper signed a five-year extension after the 1994 season — and, by finishing in the top 10 in '95, he received an automatic one-year extension to take him through the 2000 season — Griffin maintains the coach and his staff have some accountability to the athletic department.

"We will go over these things with John every year, and John is pretty astute about these things," Griffin

Future OSU Opponents

1996	Sept. 7 RICE	1998	Sept. 5 at West Virginia
Sept. 21 PITTSBURGH	Sept. 12 TOLEDO	Sept. 12 TOLEDO	Sept. 19 MISSOURI
Sept. 28 at Notre Dame	Oct. 3 PENN STATE	Oct. 3 PENN STATE	Oct. 10 at Illinois
Oct. 5 PENN STATE	Oct. 12 WISCONSIN	Oct. 17 MINNESOTA	Oct. 24 at Northwestern
Oct. 19 at Purdue	Oct. 26 at Iowa	Oct. 31 at Indiana	Nov. 7 MICHIGAN STATE
Nov. 2 MINNESOTA	Nov. 9 at Illinois	Nov. 14 at Iowa	Nov. 21 MICHIGAN
Nov. 16 at Indiana	Nov. 23 MICHIGAN		
1997	Sept. 13 OREGON	1999	Sept. 4 CINCINNATI
Sept. 20 ARIZONA	Sept. 27 at Missouri	Sept. 11 UCLA	
Oct. 4 IOWA	Oct. 11 at Penn State	2000	Sept. 9 MIAMI (OHIO)
Oct. 18 INDIANA	Oct. 25 NORTHWESTERN	Sept. 16 at Arizona	
Oct. 25 NORTHWESTERN	Nov. 1 at Michigan State	2001	Sept. 22 at UCLA
Nov. 5 at Minnesota	Nov. 15 ILLINOIS		
Nov. 17 at Michigan	Nov. 22 at Michigan		

said. "He knows what he and his program are being evaluated on, and he's on top of it."

ASIDE FROM evaluating the football program, Griffin is also heavily involved in scheduling future opponents.

There have been no recent additions to Ohio State's future schedules (see chart). However, plans are in the works for OSU to schedule a rare seventh home game in 1999, a plan that could mean a considerable financial windfall for the university. OSU has done that on only eight occasions since Ohio Stadium was opened in 1922, with the most recent instance coming in 1991.

"I would like to get another home game for 1999, if I can, so we can have three (non-conference) home games," Griffin said. "Plus, we're trying to get another home game for 2000."

In the coming years, Griffin said OSU will make an effort to schedule one Ohio-based Division I school per year. OSU will play Toledo in 1998, Cincinnati in 1999 and Miami (Ohio) in 2000.

"We're still going to continue to try and get an Ohio team in here," he said. "I think that's a good move on our part."

OSU's current two-game contract with Notre Dame expires after the Buckeyes visit South Bend this season. But Griffin is optimistic the two schools — which had not met since 1935-36 — can get back on the field again soon.

"We have not really talked about playing Notre Dame again, but I don't think it will be another 60 years before it happens again," Griffin said.

GRIFFIN IS working with former players and Varsity "O" members on scheduling the extremely popular "Tunnel of Pride" this season.

Griffin said former players will congregate to form a tunnel for the team before the Nov. 23 Michigan game and could, perhaps, do likewise for the Oct. 5 Penn State game at Ohio Stadium. The current Big Ten scheduling cycle would have OSU hosting its top two conference rivals in even-numbered years.

"We will definitely do it for Michigan, but there's been some different thought on that," he said. "Some people would like to do it every week, but it will definitely be done at every Michigan game we have at home. There's a possibility that we might want to do it for Penn State. That's a game we definitely want to

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OSU Brings No. 45 Out Of Mothballs Katzenmoyer Set To Wear Jersey Griffin Made Famous

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

After 20 years in storage, the Ohio State football program will bring the fabled No. 45 uniform back into action.

That number — worn last by Archie Griffin, the school's two-time Heisman Trophy winner — will come off the "do not issue" list and will be worn by star linebacker recruit Andy Katzenmoyer.

Besides his number, Griffin said the school may be moving toward issuing other numbers belonging to Heisman winners that have long been off-limits.

But in an effort to keep these so-called sacred numbers and their legendary wearers in the public eye, OSU may be considering erecting a "Ring of Honor" at Ohio Stadium.

"That's all been talked about," Griffin said. "You may see some numbers out. If they're out, it's being done with permission from the people whose numbers have been in limbo for a few years. They will know about it before we would do it."

OSU has never officially retired any jersey numbers. Rather, the school has simply refrained from issuing several of the key jersey numbers from OSU football lore. Among those are No. 22, worn by 1944 Heisman winner Les Horvath; No. 31, worn by 1950 Heisman winner Vic Janowicz; No. 40, worn by 1955 Heisman winner Howard "Hopalong" Cassidy; and Griffin's No. 45.

OSU has not issued a full 1996 roster, so it's unclear whether any of these other numbers or No. 27, worn by 1995 Heisman winner Eddie George, will return to the rotation this year.

Griffin said he had no problems approving the idea to bring his number out of mothballs.

"I understand there is a great linebacker (Katzenmoyer) who would like to wear that number," he said.

"I don't have any qualms about that. It is Ohio State's number. I feel like I was fortunate to wear that number. It is special to me because of what I did here at Ohio State and I was able to wear that number on into professional football," he said.

Katzenmoyer, the Ohio Associated Press "Mr. Football" award winner and USA Today's national defensive player of the year last year, wore No. 45 as a prep player at nearby Westerville South. He is excited to have the chance to wear one of OSU's treasured numbers.

"It's kind of neat," Katzenmoyer said. "It's the first time somebody has worn that number since Archie Griffin left. It is a special honor."

"When they were recruiting me, I asked about it because I wanted my high school number. They said they had to talk to Archie and to the athletic director about it and they would get back to me. They told me about it on the day I signed," he said.

"I'm sure there will be some expectations because of that number, but I'm just going to go in and try to do my best," he said.

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Key Battles Set At Quarterback, Tailback, Guard

Hollis Has Holes To Fill In OSU Offense

By JEFF RAPP

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

As Joe Hollis prepares for his sixth spring as part of the offensive brain trust for the Ohio State football team, the veteran assistant coach will wrestle with one glaring need: finding a starting quarterback.

But Hollis said that was just part of the equation as April, and the return to the field, neared.

"I think our goals can probably be broken into three things," the offensive coordinator told *BSB*. "No. 1, of course, is the competition at quarterback. We have three returning players and a junior college quarterback that all need to prove some things to us. Obviously, that's a keen interest of everyone involved with the offense.

"But we also need to find a left guard to replace Jamie (Sumner), and as practice goes on we really need to find some playmakers. We lost some tremendous playmakers in Eddie George, Bobby Hoying, Terry Glenn and Rickey Dudley. That's a boatload of talent to try and replace, but it'll be interesting to see what happens."

If Hollis can find success with his three-pronged plan, then the Buckeyes would figure to stick a sharp trident into opponents this fall. After all, the offense was record breaking once the

pieces were put in place last season.

But all three areas of extra attention are fraught with major ifs.

First of all, the quarterback situation is as unsettled as any in the John Cooper era with the return of juniors Stanley Jackson and Tommy Hoying and sophomore Joe Germaine and JUCO transfer Mark Garcia now in the mix.

Jackson could be the type of playmaker Hollis is looking for, but quarterbacks coach Walt Harris will continue to test Jackson's pocket skills and ability to find the open receiver more than anything else this spring. Hoying needs some added confidence and zing on his passes, while Germaine and Garcia are throwers unfamiliar with the major college game.

The offensive line quandary is not as pressing, but possibilities are many. Redshirt freshmen Rob Murphy and Drew Elford will work in at left guard, and any strong impression by Brooks Burris or Larry Waldon, now a walk-on, could pave the way for tackle Eric Gohlstin to move inside. Burris could also be tried at the spot.

A majority of the line spots are set with Lombardi winner Orlando Pace at left tackle, Juan Porter at center, LeShun Daniels at right guard and Gohlstin currently situated at right tackle. The blocking also looks strong in

Sizing Up The OSU Offense

The Plus Side:

• **Solid Foundation** — If frosh Jefferson Kelley is as good as advertised, OSU could possess the best offensive line in the nation. Even though Kelley doesn't come on board until fall, four starters, including Lombardi winner Orlando Pace, will be raring to prove their dominance. Solid backups and a new starting guard candidate (Rob Murphy) will be on hand as well.

• **Good Numbers** — Almost throughout head coach John Cooper's tenure, offensive depth has been scant in the spring. Blame it on injuries, few able linemen, other sports (track, baseball) — you name it. This time, there are barely enough reps to go around with so many in camp.

• **Uncle Walt** — Last year, new quarterbacks coach Walt Harris put some zing back in the arm of Bobby Hoying. This year, Cooper needs his expertise again as OSU looks for Hoying's replacement. If anyone can settle on a QB and develop him, Harris is the guy. Joe Hollis' flexibility aids the situation.

The Minus Side:

• **QB Hunt** — OSU has one offense, one spot at quarterback and four contestants with vastly different skills. The coaches will probably try to treat Stanley Jackson as head gunslinger, but have to keep a very open eye out for Tom Hoying, Mark Garcia and Joe Germaine. Not usually a situation that is handled perfectly.

• **No Star Receiver** — Just as it did last year — until Terry Glenn embarked on a record-setting year, that is — the wideout spot needs a true force. Buster Tillman is the logical choice, but he caught just one TD last year.

• **Eddie, Where Are You?** — Saying the Buckeyes will miss Eddie George this year is as obvious as predicting OSU will need to run the ball to be effective. But the fact is, George, on top of his talents, gave OSU a focal point last season. Simply put, the offense needs a seasoned veteran to rally around. Tillman, again, could emerge here as well as Stanley Jackson.

the tight end and fullback spots as D.J. Jones, Steve Wisniewski, Bob Houser and John Lumpkin work at tight end and Nicky Sualua, Matt Calhoun and Joe Montgomery all are expected to compete at fullback.

Hollis named some skill players who could help ring in the new era for the offense in wideouts Dimitrious Stanley and Buster Tillman and tailbacks Pepe Pearson and Jermon Jackson. But they'll have to attain key player status in the structure of spring drills.

"I can guarantee you this," Hollis said, "we definitely won't shortcut fundamentals in any way. This is my 10th year with John and he is definitely a big believer that spring is the time to improve the individual football player."

"We're not worried about game plans and strategies right now. We're worried about becoming better football players and a better team."

That could be tough to do, however, since several green linemen will be lining up against an OSU defensive front that figures to be among the best in the nation.

"We're going to have to depend on some freshmen in our front line — several of them will be in our two-deep," said Hollis, who was promoted to offensive coordinator four springs ago.

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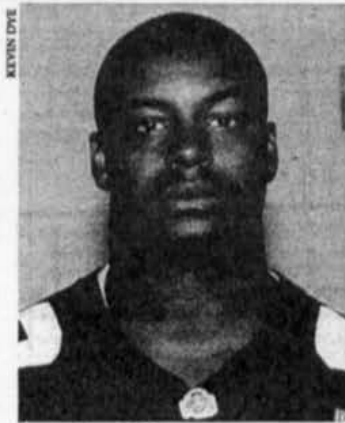
• **Dee Miller** — He made this list last year, but his maturation was put on hold because of the emergence of Terry Glenn. This time, the much ballyhooed wideout from Springfield, Ohio, will be feeling the pressure to perform.

• **John Lumpkin** — With Rickey Dudley now waiting for NFL millions, Lumpkin is the heir apparent at tight end. Even if D.J. Jones can return to form, the Buckeyes need a big target with big-play capabilities to work zone coverages. Bob Houser and Steve Wisniewski will push him.

• **Brooks Burris/Larry Waldon** — If these two tackles can put together an eye-opening spring, the coaches will have more options with the line. If just one of them can impress, Eric Gohlstin could get serious reps at left guard, thus taking pressure off Jefferson Kelley's first weeks in fall camp.

• **Joe Montgomery** — After much anticipation, the time has come for Montgomery to create a niche for himself. Will he challenge Nicky Sualua at fullback, get a decent look at tailback, or fade into the background — possibly for good? Stay tuned.

• **Any and Every QB** — Don't expect to



Joe Montgomery

see Coop hobnobbing too much on the sideline with so much to be decided at the offense's most important spot. Every single toss will be scrutinized and all four candidates will be under the proverbial microscope, bringing a new tension to April workouts.

tion in the South, Hollis looked in on early practices at Florida State, North Carolina and South Carolina only to find those programs were in the same situation.

"It's not like years past when you had 3½ units on offense and defense," Hollis said. "Everybody has to rely on some of their young guys anymore."

Still, offense vs. defense drills and scrimmages will be a viable component to spring practice. Hollis and company especially want to see how many of the young players respond in drills that simulate third down, plays inside the red zone and against different defensive alignments.

Germaine, for example, slung passes deep into the defense almost without thought as the scout team QB last year. Stanley Jackson and Hoying rarely have even worked with the first-string offense, let alone dealt with many true pressure situations.

Pearson and Jermon Jackson have been effective perimeter runners in a pinch, but now someone has to inherit a good chunk of the workload left vacant by George. The exploits of runners Charlie Sanders, Matt Keller and Montgomery are virtually unknown as well.

Receivers such as Stanley, Miller, Alonzo Shavers, redshirt freshman Jimmy Redmond and Lumpkin (if his foot heals) will all try to foil the first-team defense, too.

"This time of year you can really see the maturing process at work," Hollis said. "I believe a young man can mature a lot between the fall and the spring and we need some, really all, of our guys to do that."

But because it is just the onset of spring, Hollis can enjoy the process instead of feel the urgency of fall practice.

"This time of year is always fun," Hollis said. "But we've got a lot of work to do, too."

OSU May Erect Ring Of Honor At Ohio Stadium

Continued From Page 5

Griffin said uniform numbers are another enticement schools use when wooing top recruits. Another top OSU recruit, Columbus DeSales back Gary Berry, admitted he was glad he could continue to wear his No. 1 with the Buckeyes.

"Kids in the recruiting wars ask for certain numbers," he said. "Sometimes, in the heat of battle, you try to oblige that."

But he does not believe recruits are naive or shallow enough to base their whole decision on what number they'll wear.

"I don't believe that is the case. I think kids know what's the best place for them," Griffin said.

OSU'S POTENTIAL "Ring of Honor" could be similar to what has been erected by the NFL's Dallas Cowboys at Texas Stadium.

There, Cowboys greats have their name and number painted on the stadium's facade. OSU could do something similar with scarlet and gray paint on the facade of C-deck.

"I've heard some talk," Griffin said. "I guess it's a possibility, however, there's nothing definite on that at this point in time."

"If we would do something like that, we would probably put the player's name and number up. I don't know where the right place for that is right now. We need to do some research and find out where the best location would be at Ohio Stadium," he said.

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New Coordinator Pagac Says All Jobs Are Open

By **MIKE WACHSMAN**
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The way Fred Pagac sees it, he's not going to give the Ohio State defense a radical overhaul this spring.

With that tack, Pagac approaches the spring with guarded optimism, knowing he has 10 starters returning from a unit that alternately delighted and broke hearts.

Making the latter a less frequent occurrence is precisely what spring ball is for.

"We won't make a whole lot of changes," Pagac said. "We're just getting back to basics, back to fundamentals. That's what this is all about."

Pagac, in his first spring as defensive coordinator after years of overseeing the linebackers, will stamp his trademark — intensity — into everything the Buckeyes do this spring, whether it involves contact or just routine drill work.

It's all about getting better, and you can't do that if you don't put in the effort, Pagac said.

"We want to have 16, 17, 18 kids we can roll in and out," Pagac said. "Those are the kids we believe in and think we can win with. We'll keep them fresh that way, plus it will help from a competitive standpoint."

There will be evaluations going on in the midst of the practices, namely by new coaches Jim Heacock (defensive line) and Jon Tenuta (secondary).

With the new coaches having no preconceived notions about how the Ohio State players perform, fresh opinions can be formed. Opportunities can be won or lost by players who are, in some instances, starting over.

"We'll be evaluating," Pagac assured. "We have to find some replacements and some backup guys. This is mostly about getting better, but you have to evaluate all the time, see what works for the kids and for you."

He's got a great foundation to start with, namely up front with ends Mike Vrabel — an All-American last season — and Matt Finkes, along with the steadily improving Luke Pickell inside. Replacing Matt Bonhaus at tackle is a big order of business, one that might be handled by equally big Winfield Garnett.

The linebackers are solid, with Greg Bellisari manning the middle — at least for now — and Ryan Miller and Kevin Johnson flanking him. Jerry Rudzinski and Roedell Dupree will also get hard looks.

The secondary is rife with talent, including incumbents Ty Howard, Rob Kelly and Anthony Gwinn. Shawn Springs is the marquee name, but he'll likely be held out of many things this spring as he nurses a shoulder injury suffered in OSU's 20-14 loss to Tennessee in the Citrus Bowl.

Antoine Winfield, Che Bryant, Damon Moore, Dan Colson, Central

Sizing Up The OSU Defense

The Plus Side:

• **Ten Starters Return** — With 10 starters back, the Buckeyes have the luxury of fine-tuning an almost set defensive lineup. That could allow the staff a chance to develop several youngsters because, after this year, they will need them: As many as 10 spots will open up after this year.

• **Staff Shake-Up** — While OSU will miss Bill Young and Lovie Smith, the Buckeyes will press ahead with Fred Pagac as the new coordinator, Jim Heacock working the defensive line and Jon Tenuta overseeing the secondary. A similar shake-up worked wonders for the offense last year. Maybe more of the same could happen here.

• **Depth Aplenty** — While a number of starters return, OSU has depth at several key spots like defensive end, outside linebacker and safety.

• **Star Quality** — Defensive ends Mike Vrabel and Matt Finkes and cornerback Shawn Springs have all earned All-Big Ten honors in the past and are proven play makers. Although Springs may miss much of the spring due to injury, players like this can lead by example.

The Minus Side:

• **Uncertainties At Safety** — This is actually more of a pleasant problem for the OSU staff. Seniors Rob Kelly and Anthony Gwinn return at the strong and free safety spots, respectively. Sophomores Damon Moore and Che Bryant are pushing for playing time, while sophomore Antoine Winfield — a big hitter as a backup cornerback last year — may also try to squeeze in here just to get on the field with Springs and Ty Howard set at the corner spots.

• **Depth at Tackle, Nose Guard** — The interior line took a "big" hit when Marcus Spriggs flunked out. That leaves OSU thin at these two spots with no one to push Luke Pickell at nose guard or Winfield Garnett at tackle.

• **Stopping the Run** — Michigan and Tennessee exploited OSU's susceptibility against the run. OSU seems to have a plethora of athletes at linebacker, but the Buckeyes still need to develop someone who can consistently stuff the run. In the same vein, it will be interesting to see how much of a challenge Roedell Dupree, Jerry Rudzinski and Matt LaVrar mount at the various LB spots this spring.

McClellan, Percy King and Ahmed Plummer are some of the names expected to throw their hat into the ring from the secondary.

Things will be a little different this time around as some staples of past springs will be gone.

"There won't be any of the black shirts (symbolizing starters) this year," Pagac said. "We want to put guys in different situations and different combinations and see how they do. We want the best guys to step forward and be on the field."

But some things will remain ever so simple, such as hard work and competition. And there are jobs there for the taking.

"All 11 of them," Pagac said when asked how many spots were up for

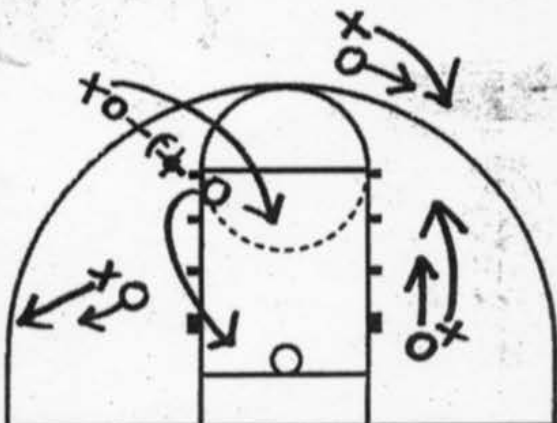
grabs. While it's hard to envision Vrabel or Springs being unseated, it certainly will make for a feisty atmosphere around the Woody Hayes Athletic Center.

"There are no spots that are going to be given to anyone," Pagac assured. "We want to keep the chemistry, but we want to have the best people out there, the ones who will help this football team win."

With most of the participants in spring ball well aware of how things are run, there's less of an acclimation period.

That should make it easier to install most facets of the defense, which should be in more of an attack mode this season.

"We'll try a few new things," Pagac



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Defensive Players On The Spot

• **Winfield Garnett** — This 6-6, 310-pounder has the inside track at the defensive tackle spot vacated by Matt Bonhaus. Garnett must make the transition from situation player, primarily in the Jumbo goal-line package, to regular. Watching his weight and improving his stamina are keys.

• **Rob Kelly/Anthony Gwinn** — This duo started at the safety spots last year with adequate results. Even though they are seniors, they will be pushed by a group of youngsters. The coaches may see one of these safety spots as a chance to develop someone for the future, meaning if it's a tight race, the nod could go to someone like Damon Moore or Antoine Winfield.

• **Roedell Dupree** — At 6-3, 248 pounds, he is an imposing figure, but a year away due to Prop 48 made him a tad rusty. This spring could be his best chance to make a lasting impression, what with prep All-American inside LB Andy Katzenmoyer arriving in the fall.

• **Jeff Wilson** — This sophomore emerged as the No. 3 end by the season's close. His



Roedell Dupree

emergence could allow OSU some versatility to use, say, Matt Finkes at another line spot to shore up depth problems.

said. "We're going to install most of our package and run it in the spring. We want to make sure these guys understand what we want out of them. We'll see what we like best and what works and go from there."

All the fancy terminology and all the great athletes won't mean anything, though, if the players can't grasp the basics.

And if it's the last thing he does, Pagac wants to make sure that those basics don't get lost in the wash.

"We're going to be working them hard and they know that," Pagac said. "This is no time to take it easy. This is when you work toward winning. We're going to work on pursuit angles, tackling — especially tackling — and running to the ball. We just have to improve on the basics."

Pagac is of the old school, the one that says getting down in the dirt and slugging it out is the best way to be successful. The glitz that seems so pervasive in college football today is mere window dressing to him.

So he's going to be no-nonsense, working everyone to the limit and then some.

"You need to have a good spring because a lot of what we do here will carry over into the fall," he said. "The guys who have a good spring will have confidence for the season, while the ones who don't will fall back. This can establish a lot of things. We'll be watching very closely."

And if Pagac finds the machine humming to his liking, it will have been a productive spring.

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Mark Garcia



Tom Hoying

Harris Ready For Chance To Assess OSU's Passers

Continued From Page 1

what we were doing better (than Stan)." Now, though, Harris said it is time for the 6-4, 221-pound Hoying to master the physical side of the quarterback position.

"It's up to Tommy to improve his skills so he can be in the competition," Harris said. "There is no smarter person in my meeting room right now than Tom Hoying. He knows what's going on like a coach. Now is his time to come through and show what he can do."

Germaine, at 6-2, 196 pounds, arrived at OSU last fall after transferring from Scottsdale Community College. He was redshirted at OSU last year, leaving him with three years of eligibility.

"Joe Germaine was recruited by the previous quarterbacks coach, Larry Coker," Harris said. "I like the heck out of Joe. He really showed some spark last fall about being a disciplined football player, but that was before he was just buried by the system and we had to go with what we had."

"It was fortunate that we had a red-shirt year to use with him, but in that time he was able to work hard and improve his skills," he said.

This past winter, Harris signed his own JUCO transfer in the 6-4, 215-pound Garcia.

At Modesto Junior College, Garcia threw for 3,260 yards and 31 touchdowns in accumulating the second highest passing efficiency rating in JUCO history. Because he has his academics in order, Garcia was permitted to transfer to OSU for winter quarter and he will join the Buckeyes on the practice field this spring.

"I saw him practice twice at Modesto," Harris said. "I got a chance to see him throw the ball and I liked his athleticism and his arm strength, not to mention the fact his team was 10-1 and he threw 31 touchdowns against just six interceptions."

"But that was last year. Whether he will be a great football player at this level, no one knows," Harris said.

Upon his signing, Garcia told reporters that Harris had said he would have a chance to compete for the starting job. That was probably the main reason why he left his home state, spurning a comfortable scholarship offer from nearby Cal, to come to OSU.

"I know he made a tremendous sacrifice in coming here," Harris said. "He could have taken the easy route and gone to Cal and been coached by Steve Mariucci, the former quarterbacks coach for the Green Bay Packers. But he opted to come here."

"For a California boy to come out here in the winter and walk to class in the freezing weather was a big sacrifice," Harris said.

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According to Harris, the OSU coaches already have some notions on which way they are leaning. But they still want to let the competition unfold this spring.

"They've been watched and evaluated since they've been here," Harris said. "I've told them that I already have an opinion, but it can be adjusted."

"My job as a coach is to get the best player I have available ready to play, regardless of who he is or who recruited him."

"The plan is to start out with all of them practicing, but I can't imagine that will continue for very long because it's not possible to get anybody better if all of them are taking turns. I'm hoping a player steps up early and takes command," he said.

Expecting someone to live up to Bobby Hoying's production — he set school records with 29 touchdowns and 3,269 yards last season — is hard to imagine. But Harris said the Buckeyes aren't ready to button things up just yet.

"Bobby Hoying set a pretty good precedent for us to follow last year," he said. "Now we have to live up to his standard."

While many would think OSU will have to simplify its offense with relative neophytes running it, Harris said that, too, may not be the case.

"I don't think we did a lot of complex things last year," he said. "I think it was simple, but we may have to do more complex things this year due to our personnel."

"Last year we had Terry Glenn, and everybody was scared to death of him. Then, they were scared of Rickey Dudley. Plus, we had Eddie George. That was a good complement. I think we still will be able to run the ball at a high level, whether it's with Pepe Pearson or Jermon Jackson or one of the new kids coming in."

"It will be a little different. We'll also need one of the receivers to step up and take Terry Glenn's place, and I know (receivers coach Chuck) Stobart is high on Dimitrious Stanley," he said.

Harris said his impending quarterback dilemma is similar to the situation he faced when he was the quarterbacks coach at Illinois in 1980 and he had a pair of future NFL talents, Dave Wilson and Tony Eason, battling for the starting job.

"Dave Wilson had been around and he understood a more sophisticated passing game than Tony, although Tony showed tremendous talent," Harris said.

"Tony, even though he didn't know what he was doing part of the time, still got a lot of things done. That year, we went with Dave and redshirted Tony so he could play the next two years."



Joe Germaine

"But really, to be a player, you don't have to know everything. You have to execute what the coaching staff wants," he said.

OSU WILL hold 14 spring practice sessions with a 15th officially constituting the Spring Game.

Practices are typically held at 3:30 p.m. each day at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, although times and dates are tentative. In years past, the team has also bused over to Ohio Stadium for scrimmages.

The practice schedule begins April 2 with practices also set for April 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23 and 26.

There is some conjecture at this point about the April 27 Spring Game and what format it will have.

Currently, with star offensive tackle Orlando Pace hobbled by a shoulder injury, the Buckeyes may have only six healthy scholarship offensive linemen available for spring practice.

Junior Larry Waldon, a massive 320-pounder who apparently is back on the team after missing last year due to academics, could ease the depth problem if he returns in shape. And help is on the way in the fall when at least four new offensive linemen — including prep All-American Jefferson Kelley — join the squad.

But the staff is reportedly concerned about being able to field a full team for the Spring Game. Last year, Cooper devised an interesting format pitting the offense against the defense with the defense awarded points for stops and turnovers. That was necessitated due to a lack of fullbacks and tight ends.

Entering live game conditions without a full and healthy offensive line to protect the quarterbacks is another matter, though.

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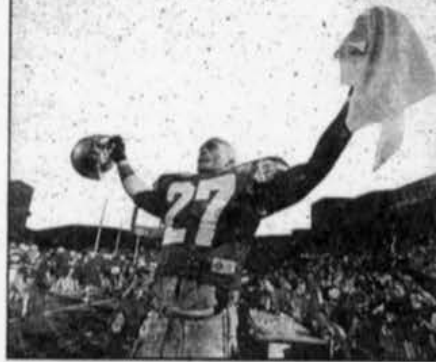
A Buckeye Season

The Inside Story of the
Glory and Heartbreak of Ohio State's
1995 Season

Jeff Snook

A BUCKEYE SEASON

The Inside Story of the
Glory and Heartbreak of Ohio State's 1995 Season



1995 was a banner year of unlimited potential and bitter disappointment for the Ohio State Buckeyes. While their football team marched to its best start and greatest media attention in years, Buckeye fans across the nation were stunned when the 11-0 football squad lost to conference archrival Michigan in the last game of the season. A season that had amazed even the most skeptical fans had ended in an all-too-familiar way: no Rose Bowl, another loss to Michigan, another Bowl loss. Head Coach John Cooper, once absolved of the wrath of fans, was once again facing accusations that he can't win a bowl game or beat the Wolverines — the two most important accomplishments to Ohio State football fans.

A Buckeye Season recounts this bittersweet year for the Buckeyes with an inside look at a college football team. Veteran sportswriter and OSU graduate Jeff Snook spent the entire season with the Buckeyes, from the opening of practice to the Citrus Bowl and tailback Eddie George's selection as the 1995 Heisman Trophy winner. The accomplished result is *A Buckeye Season*, a fascinating view of the highs and lows, the glory and heartbreak of Ohio State's 1995 season.

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Season At Fork Union Has Helped Provitt Mature, Develop Physically

By GARY HOUSTEAU
Special to Buckeye Sports Bulletin

By the time Vanness Provitt finally makes it to Ohio State upon graduation from Fork Union (Va.) Military Academy, he'll only vaguely resemble the high school senior who was recruited by the Buckeyes out of Warren, Ohio, during the 1994 football season.

After spending the full academic year at Fork Union, the new and improved Provitt will be bigger, stronger and faster than the two-sport star he was at Warren Harding High School, the same school that produced current Buckeye LeShun Daniels and former great Corey Stringer.

While at Harding, the 6-3, 175-pound Provitt led the football Raiders to an 8-2 record as a senior, catching 23 passes for 400 yards and six touchdowns. On the hardwood, the versatile athlete led the basketball team to a 16-4 mark, averaging 14.6 points and 10.3 rebounds a contest. Behind a valiant effort led by Provitt, the Raiders battled eventual state champion Zanesville in the regional finals before bowing out.

Despite having a 3.0 grade-point average at Harding, Provitt was unable to secure the required ACT score. He spent last summer retaking the test and playing in high school all-star football games.

He never did manage to score above 16 but was named Ohio's MVP in the Big 33 All-Star game. In a losing effort to the Pennsylvania stars, Provitt caught touchdown passes of 68, 14 and 12 yards while performing on the same team with a few players who became members of the Buckeye freshman class last fall.

Provitt chose to attend Fork Union to preserve his years of college eligibility and obtain a passing ACT score. And from day one at the military academy, all of Provitt's vital numbers have gone way up, both on and off the football field.

"He was our big-play receiver," Fork Union coach John Shuman said. "Because of his size and speed and height, we definitely tried to feature him a lot on our fade routes and down the middle on our seam routes."

Provitt, one of the main cogs for the 8-1 postgraduate team at Fork Union, averaged 19.5 yards on 32 receptions, with 12 going for touchdowns.

"We were 8-0 going into our last

The Provitt File

NAME — Vanness Provitt
HIGH SCHOOL — Warren (Ohio) Harding
PREP SCHOOL — Fork Union (Va.) Military Academy
POSITION — Wide receiver
HEIGHT, WEIGHT — 6-4, 200 pounds
BENCH PRESS — 270 pounds
40-YARD DASH TIME — 4.4 seconds
GRADE-POINT AVERAGE — 3.0 in high school
COLLEGE ENTRANCE TESTS — 17 on the ACT
VITAL STATISTICS — Provitt has grown an inch and put on 25 pounds since his senior year at Warren Harding. Provitt scored 12 touchdowns and teamed with running back James Jackson, a former Notre Dame recruit headed to Miami (Fla.), to comprise a potent offensive unit that averaged 42 points a game for Fork Union's postgraduate team. He was rated as the 15th-best junior college/prep school player in the nation by *The National Recruiting Advisor*. As a senior at Harding in 1994, he caught 23 passes for 400 yards and six touchdowns.
COACH'S COMMENT — "He led us in receiving in just about every game and he's a great big-play maker. I have great positive feelings with Vanness, and I hope he'll do a great job and keep this going when he gets to Ohio State." — Fork Union football coach John Shuman.
SCHOOLS INTERESTED IN — Signed with Ohio State over Illinois, Michigan State and Indiana.

game and, quite honestly, he was one of the major reasons," Shuman said. "I've been around here for 16 years and, athletically, he's right up there with the best of them."

Quarterbacks Don Majkowski and Vinny Testaverde, linebacker Robert Jones, defensive back Tyrone Drakeford and, of course, Ohio State Heisman Trophy winner Eddie George are just some of the talented players Shuman was referring to.

"He's just a great young man who has fit in well here," the coach said. "He's worked hard with his discipline and with academics, since he's eligible now. He's definitely a great story and he's done a great job all year."

"We're expecting great things for him next year and the years after to keep this Fork Union tradition going."

Provitt, promoted from private to sergeant in his short stay at the school, is scheduled to finish the academic year at Fork Union. He will not join OSU for spring football.

"We are definitely appreciative that he and his family are upholding his commitment, and he is still here," Shuman said. "We are going to graduate on June 1 and I feel strongly that he is committed to our program and he will walk across the stage. I'm real pumped

up about Vanness. It's just a great success story."

Provitt has practiced with the school's basketball team and works out as well with the track team. Besides weightlifting, he works on his speed and jumping ability. This spring, he'll join other Fork Union cadets for the school's version of spring football.

"When we come back from spring break, we will do two practices a day on Tuesdays and Thursdays," Shuman said. "We'll go out there and throw it around a little. It's just to keep people in better condition and better football thinking."

Provitt is in better condition now, both mentally and physically, than he was at this time a year ago. He still has five seasons to play four at Ohio State.

"He's probably better athletically because of his size. His strength has gone up, too," Shuman said of the 6-4, 200-pound specimen who couldn't bench press any reps of 225 pounds when he arrived. He's up to six reps currently. "His shoulders and arms are a lot fuller than what we started with."

Provitt says he's better off from his experience at Fork Union.

"It was a big change," he admitted. "I wasn't used to the military stuff and



Vanness Provitt

getting up early in the morning, doing this and that. I made a big adjustment with that. As far as the rest of the stuff, it helped me a lot as far as getting a lot of discipline."

Being eight hours away from home, there were none of the distractions for Provitt at the all-male school.

"You're able to concentrate more on your books and the things you have to get done as far as lifting weights and doing things to help yourself," he said.

Provitt is able to concentrate and focus on his goals more because of the things that have been instilled at Fork Union. There has been nothing but Ohio State on his mind since his visit to the school in early December.

"My goal now is to go on to Ohio State, start and try to be the best that I can be," said Provitt, working on a conditioning program that Ohio State sent to him. "I just want to go there and perform and do the best that I can do to earn a position and be a standout player."

With Terry Glenn's early departure to the NFL and a thin crop of receivers returning next year, Provitt, with 4.4 speed, is not really thinking about redshirting next season.

"Well, that's kind of like in the back of my mind because I'm not really thinking about that," he said. "I'm trying to just go out there and play so that I don't have to redshirt. If it so happens that I redshirt, then I'll have to deal with it. But I'm not looking to redshirt."

Provitt most certainly has the discipline in him now to be patient and wait for his opportunity to shine at Ohio State, much like George. And everyone knows what he did once he got his shot.

Tunnel Of Pride Could Be Added For Penn State

Continued From Page 5

get up for.

"That would be one we want to take a strong look at. Most likely, we'll probably do it. We don't want to make it where it is not a special thing, but Penn State certainly is an outstanding football team," he said.

Another project Griffin would like to see completed is a Varsity "O" room at Ohio Stadium. That could come about if OSU follows through with a proposed \$80 million renovation project at the

stadium.

"If we ever get these renovations that we talk about, that will certainly be on the list of things we'll want to do," he said. "That's something we've been talking about for a long time, a Varsity 'O' room where former players can meet before games and socialize with each other."

"I know Michigan has something similar at the clubhouse of the golf course across the street from the stadium. We had something similar to that before, and I think we would like to do it again," he said.



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