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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

September 29, 2001

Ohio State Touched By National Tragedy

Geiger Quick To Postpone Game

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

In a time of deep national tragedy, the world of athletics logically went on hiatus.

That was the reaction at Ohio State and across the country in the wake of the series of terrorist attacks Sept. 11 that left over 6,000 people missing or dead in New York, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C.

Terrorists hijacked four separate cross-country flights that morning and succeeded in flying two of those planes into the World Trade Center towers in New York City and another into the Pentagon outside Washington, D.C. The fourth plane crashed in rural Pennsylvania, killing everyone aboard.

In the hours and days following the tragedy, professional and college athletic teams and their leagues postponed and canceled games for the remainder of the week.

In fact, Ohio State was one of the

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DARRELL DAWSON

STAND AT ATTENTION — A uniformed officer passes by Ohio State football players Maurice Hall (left) and Simon Fraser during the "Show You Care" rally held at Ohio Stadium Sept. 15.

Defense Capable, Offense Culpable In Loss At UCLA

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

If the case ever goes to trial, Ohio State's 13-6 loss at UCLA Sept. 22 would be considered Exhibit A.

The lawsuit in this analogy would be the OSU defense suing the OSU offense for nonsupport. The defense would have an open-and-shut case, based on what happened on a brilliantly sunny day at the Rose Bowl.

But all parties involved say there are no plans to file charges — yet.

"We're in a growth mode and we will be in a growth mode for some time," said OSU head coach Jim Tressel after suffering his first defeat with the Buckeyes. "We knew there would be a point in time where this new family was going to have some tough times. We just have to deal with it."

The OSU defense played well enough to win on just about any other given Saturday. The Buckeyes bottled up explosive UCLA tailback DeShaun Foster, limiting him to just 66 yards on 29 carries. The defense also helped force five UCLA turnovers.

But the OSU offense could not capitalize on any of them, managing just 166 total yards and eight first downs. The Buckeyes got their only touchdown off a Mike Doss blocked punt that was recovered in the end zone by Ricky Bryant.

It should be noted — before the case goes to the jury — that Ohio State was at a small disadvantage. The

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Sept. 22 Issue Postponed

Because Ohio State's Sept. 15 game with San Diego State was postponed due to the national tragedy, BSB publisher Frank Moskowitz decided to postpone the issue dated Sept. 22. Instead, BSB subscribers will now receive an extra issue in October, dated Oct. 20, when the Buckeyes are now scheduled to host San Diego State.

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- OSU verbal A.J. Hawk of Centerville, Ohio, looking forward to his future with Buckeyes (Page 29)



A.J. Hawk



SONNY BROCKHAW

BAD DAY AT THE OFFICE — Ohio State quarterback Steve Bellisari (8), trying to avoid UCLA's Marques Anderson, had a rough day in the loss at UCLA. He completed only 5 of 23 passes for 45 yards and two interceptions as OSU fell 13-6.

OHIO STATE VS. UCLA

No Offense, Buckeyes Lose

OSU Attack Grinds To A Halt In 13-6 Loss To No. 14 UCLA

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

The Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif., is one of the most picturesque settings for college football in the U.S.

But 14th-ranked UCLA and No. 21 Ohio State combined to play one ugly football game on the hallowed ground of the Rose Bowl Sept. 22.

Then again, if you're a fan of hard-hitting, defensive football, you probably fell in love with UCLA's 13-6 win over Ohio State.

"I think sometimes people look at us and see those baby blue jerseys and don't think we're very physical," said UCLA coach Bob Toledo, whose Bruins limited Ohio State to just 166 yards total offense and eight first downs. "But after we play, I think they realize we do have some physical football players."

In recent years, UCLA's defense has been both riddled and ridiculed.

So it was certainly a strange sight to see some of the crowd of 73,723 chanting, "Defense, defense!" as the Bruins trudged off the field after a long, hot day in the sun.

"I am really happy and proud of our defensive football team," Toledo said. "They've been maligned and they've been ridiculed, you name it and they've been. For them to pitch a shutout today was outstanding."

"They never gave in to the bad things that happened. They never let themselves get down."

The OSU defense also turned in a stellar effort. It succeeded in bottling up UCLA running back DeShaun Foster. But the OSU offense failed repeatedly to capitalize on the biggest of breaks, including an amazing seven fumbles by the Bruins

— four of which OSU recovered.

In defense of OSU (1-1), this was the school's second game, while the Bruins (3-0) already had wins over Alabama and Kansas to work out the kinks. The Buckeyes missed out on some valuable experience when their Sept. 15 game with San Diego State was postponed after the national terrorist tragedy.

But OSU failed to score after recovering or returning four of those UCLA fumbles inside the Bruins' 45-yard line.

"We probably had more opportunities than we deserved," said Jim Tressel, who suffered his first loss as the OSU head coach. "They were all hurtful. We feel like we let the rest of the group down."

"I'm proud of the way our guys kept fighting. Despite the fact we didn't move the football, the defense still came up with some stops to keep us in the game."

OSU's only touchdown came on a blocked punt by Mike Doss, which teammate Ricky Bryant recovered for a first-quarter score.

Most of the onus for the poor offensive showing was on quarterback Steve Bellisari, who was 5 of 23 passing for 45 yards and two interceptions. Bellisari was a dismal 1 of 17 for 9 yards over the last three quarters.

"Some of the things we asked of Steve, he did," Tressel said. "There were things he could have done better. But at the same time I could say that about the rest of the offense and the coaches, too."

"We struggled some up front. We struggled some with our design. We struggled some at receiver and we struggled some at quarterback."

OSU limited the explosive Foster to 66 yards on 29 carries. He was pulled late in the game after fumbling for the fourth



STEVE HELWAGEN

LEADING TO A SCORE — OSU junior Mike Doss (2) leaves his feet to block UCLA punter Nate Fikse's kick. Ricky Bryant (9) recovered the loose ball in the end zone for what proved to be the Buckeyes' only score in their 13-6 loss to the Bruins.

time.

"He's a real good back, up for the Heisman," said OSU defensive tackle Tim Anderson, who forced two UCLA fumbles. "He's quick, he's fast and he's a good cut-back runner. He can run through a tackle. It was important for us to get a lot of guys on him."

Quarterback Cory Paus picked up the slack for the Bruins by completing 16 of 25 passes for 262 yards and a touchdown.

"We were trying to play ball control today," Paus said. "This season we've won a game with 20 points and we've won a game with 13 points. That's a testament to our defense. This is a team game."

OSU made the long flight back to Ohio agonizing over:

- Six penalties that cost them 59 yards in the absolute worst possible moments;
- A missed PAT kick by Mike Nugent and missed field goals by Nugent and Josh Huston;
- Conversion rates of 1 for 14 on third down and 0 for 2 on fourth down. The Buckeyes averaged a paltry 0.8 yards on third down; and
- Failing to score after recovering UCLA fumbles at the Bruins' 9-, 38- and 44-yard lines and returning another to the UCLA 15.

As It Happened

UCLA opened the game with a 14-play, 80-yard scoring march that lasted just over 7-1/2 minutes.

The Bruins converted all four of their third downs on the drive, including three of them on passes by Paus. The touchdown also came on a Paus pass as he dropped and threw a 24-yard scoring strike to Ryan Smith, who broke loose from safety Donnie Nicky in the right corner of the end zone.

"They caught us on a blitz on that touchdown and he threw a strike in there," Tressel said.

Paus audibled on the play. "The play in the huddle was planned, but the play at the line, I made it up," Paus

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said.

The touchdown, which put UCLA up 7-0 with 7:27 left in the first quarter, came after UCLA twice averted disaster by recovering Foster fumbles. The Bruins also caught OSU off-guard with a "swinging gate" trick play where Foster took a direct snap from Paus and rolled around the end for 16 yards and a key first down.

A holding penalty curtailed OSU's first possession, but Andy Groom backed the Bruins up to their own 10-yard line with a 61-yard punt.

That advantage in field position meant something moments later as Doss made a pair of big plays. First, he stopped Foster cold on a quick pass in the flat for a 1-yard loss on third down. Then he came up the middle on the fourth-down punt attempt by Nate Fikse, who was slow in delivering the kick, and easily blocked the ball.

The ball bounced into the end zone, where OSU's Bryant fell on it just inside the end line for a touchdown. Nugent's PAT kick was wide right, leaving OSU behind 7-6 with 3:31 left in the first quarter.

"It's always a big play to get a blocked kick like that for a touchdown," Doss said. "We would have liked to have gotten two or three more. We were close, but we couldn't get them."

OSU then got a big break as Nicky hit UCLA receiver Bryan Fletcher to force a fumble, which OSU's Cie Grant scooped up and returned 35 yards to the UCLA 15.

But, in what would become a familiar refrain, the Buckeyes failed to capitalize. The first-down play was negated by a 15-yard face mask penalty by OSU tackle Tyson Walter. Bellisari completed a pair of passes, but OSU had to settle for Nugent's 28-yard field-goal attempt, which he missed wide right.

UCLA then drove into scoring position, but kicker Chris Griffith missed a 40-yard field goal. The Buckeyes gave it right back, though, as Bellisari was intercepted at the OSU 43 by UCLA's Marques Anderson.

The OSU defense held the Bruins out on the ensuing possession, but after an OSU punt, the Bruins drove 39 yards in 10 plays before Griffith came on and kicked a career-long 49-yard field goal to push the UCLA lead to 10-6 with 2:31 left in the first half.

The Buckeyes picked up a first down on their last possession of the first half but could not move past the UCLA 30 before punting on the final play of the half.

OSU figured to have an advantage by getting the ball to open the second half. But Bellisari threw an ill-advised interception on the fourth play of the series. He was rolling left off a fake and tried to throw back across the field to TB Jonahan Wells. But Wells was double covered and the pass was easily picked off by UCLA cornerback Matt Ware, who returned it to the OSU 17.

After OSU's Anderson and Will Smith sacked Paus on third down, Griffith returned to attempt a 38-yarder. His kick was no good, and OSU had dodged another bullet.

The Buckeyes then got a huge break as Mike Collins punched the ball away from Foster and Tim Cheatwood recovered the fumble at the UCLA 9 with 8:45 left in the third quarter.

But this possession, too, was doomed. Bellisari went down on a coverage sack on second down and his third-down jump ball to Michael Jenkins in the back of the end zone was batted away by UCLA linebacker Ryan Nece. Then, after OSU was backed up 5 yards by an illegal procedure penalty, Huston came on in relief of Nugent and missed a 32-yard field goal wide left.

The Bruins answered with a strong 10-

play drive, including Paus spirals of 18 and 21 yards to tight end Mike Seidman. But the OSU defense stiffened and forced UCLA to settle for Griffith's 33-yard field goal and a 13-6 lead with 3:00 left in the third quarter.

The Buckeyes got one more huge break early in the fourth quarter as Cheatwood hit Foster and forced another fumble, this time recovered by Doss at the UCLA 44.

Bellisari scrambled for a 10-yard gain — giving the Buckeyes just their seventh first down of the game with 13:45 left — but the drive stalled at the UCLA 30, where Bellisari's fourth-down pass down the right sideline to Chris Gamble was batted away by UCLA's Anderson.

OSU had one more golden chance as UCLA punt returner Craig Bragg was stripped of the ball by OSU's Jason Bond and teammate Angelo Chattams recovered it at the UCLA 38 with 6:06 left.

But two running plays netted just 3 yards before Bellisari threw incompletions on the next two plays. On fourth-and-7 at the UCLA 35, Bellisari rolled left but was pressured by UCLA's Steve Morgan. As he was going down, his desperation pass was nearly intercepted by Joe Hunter, who caught the wounded duck but fell out of bounds.

UCLA regained control with 4:39 left and succeeded in putting the game away. Paus hit fullback Matt Stanley, a Bexley, Ohio, native, for a 25-yard gain and then drilled in a 17-yard rocket to Tab Perry. OSU had used two of its timeouts previously, so the Bruins were able to take the clock all the way down to 14 seconds before OSU regained control after a punt.

But the Buckeyes were backed up on their own 5, and the game ended after two more Bellisari incompletions.

"I think these kind of games are good because it makes you really realize that you've got to keep hanging in there, you've got to keep battling, you've got to keep fighting, and if you do, it always gives you a chance to win at the end," Toledo said.

Game Notes

• OSU's six points were the school's fewest since being shut out 28-0 at Michigan in 1993.

• The series between the two schools is now dead even at 4-4-1. This was the

return game for UCLA's 1999 visit to OSU, which the Buckeyes won 42-20.

• OSU's 166 yards of offense and eight first downs were the team's lowest totals in each category since 1999, when the Buckeyes had 79 yards and four first downs in a 23-7 loss to Michigan State.

The total of 45 yards passing is OSU's lowest in that department since a 37-yard output in a 1989 win over Indiana. The Buckeyes defeated the Hoosiers 35-31 that day behind 253 yards rushing. Quarterback Greg Frey was 5 of 6 with two touchdowns in that win.

For UCLA, the passing yardage allowed was the lowest for a UCLA opponent since a 1994 win over Oregon State.

Discounting the 1999 Kickoff Classic loss to Miami (Fla.), where Bellisari played sparingly and threw only one pass, this was his second-lowest yardage total in his two-plus seasons as a regular. He was 6 of

12 for 40 yards in the 1999 win at Minnesota as he split time with backup Austin Moherman.

• The Buckeyes failed to contain UCLA linebacker Robert Thomas, who finished with nine tackles with five of them going for losses.

• As many as 10,000 OSU fans filled most of the north end zone at the Rose Bowl and, along with a small alumni band, provided good spirit for much of the game.

However, the first resounding boo of the Tressel era came with 5:18 left. Facing second-and-9 at the UCLA 37, Bellisari ran a keeper and was stuffed after a 2-yard gain.

Two incompletions later, OSU's last real chance to pull the game out had ended.

• Country recording artist Lila McCann sang the national anthem prior to the game, while UCLA student Tesz Milan highlighted the patriotic halftime show with her rendition of "America, the Beautiful."

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Buckeyes Say No One's To Blame But Themselves

On a day when the Ohio State defense rose up in the Rose Bowl and the Buckeyes were afforded every imaginable chance to pull off an upset, the OSU offense looked like an Oldsmobile gridlocked on the Pasadena Freeway at rush hour.

In other words, from an offensive standpoint, the game with UCLA was U-G-L-Y.

Fullback and offensive co-captain Jamar Martin seemed to sum up the feelings of most of the team by saying the offense's putrid showing — zero points, eight first downs, 166 net yards and a combined 1-of-16 showing trying to convert on third and fourth downs — was merely a matter of self defeat.

"We basically beat ourselves," Martin said. "It was mostly mistakes. As an offensive unit we need everybody to be in sync and I think that first half we were out of sync. In the second half, we were out of sync on like one or two plays and that really hurt us. We really beat ourselves by not taking advantage of our opportunities."

Added equally agitated tight end Darnell Sanders, "We didn't execute and do what we needed to do to win the game, period. They're a good team, but if we would have executed we would have been able to hold our own."

Certainly this was not the output most on hand expected to see. Moving the ball on UCLA has been a birthright for opponents in recent years. But the Bruins came in focused and equipped to handle what proved to be a very pedestrian OSU attack. In fact, in its 2-0 start UCLA held consecutive foes to less

INSIDE THE GAME

with
Jeff Rapp

than 20 points for the first time since 1997.

The Bruins boast star power in the three main areas of the defense in end Kenyon Coleman, linebacker Robert Thomas and safety Marques Anderson. All three lived up to the billing and then some.

"I'm so proud of our defense," said Thomas, a menace all day with a team-high nine tackles, five of them for losses. "We've been through so much in the last couple years. We have senior leadership on our defense and we're doing whatever it takes to get the job done. We're out there tackling and playing our assignments, and this year everyone believes in ourselves."

"It's nice out there when you're making plays and celebrating. It's fun."

But it was anything but fun for the supremely frustrated Buckeyes, who left town with added respect for the guys in the powder blue uniforms and more questions about their own capabilities.

"I thought they would be good before the game because they're experienced, they have good size and they seem to be playing very well together," OSU offensive coordinator Jim Bollman said. "I don't want to sell UCLA



SONNY BROCKWAY

MISSED OPPORTUNITY — OSU receiver Michael Jenkins reaches for a pass in the end zone during third-quarter action. The pass was batted away by UCLA defender Ryan Nece and, one play later, the Buckeyes missed a field goal.

short, but, yes, we've got to get better on offense.

"We've got to improve especially in a perimeter aspect of things and we've got to be able to threaten the field better. Hopefully in the future we can do more things both laterally and vertically."

Bollman said the Buckeyes respected UCLA's defensive team speed so much that they didn't bother trying to run outside. With just about every running play directed up the gut, OSU managed just 121 yards with an average of 3.5 per carry. Martin gained 32 yards in just two totes but the other four runners gained just over 3 yards per carry.

"We're not making any excuses — we just got beat today," said tailback Jonathan Wells, who was held to 47 yards on 14 attempts. "We have to regroup."

Bruins Give Bucks Third-Down Blues

Most alarming was OSU's inability to come up with third-down conversions. The Buckeyes, in fact, were a pitiful 1 for 14 in that department, the one success a fall-ahead running play by Sam Maldonado on third-and-2. Even then, Maldonado managed just 2 yards on the play.

Many of the conversion attempts weren't even close to moving the sticks as OSU averaged a meager 0.8 yards on third-down plays.

Bollman, however, bristled at the notion that UCLA easily snuffed out OSU's third-down plays.

"We had one third-and-2 I can recall that we picked up easily and I don't know if we had many other third-and-shorts," he said. "I wouldn't say they had our number or anything like that."

Still, OSU's attempts to move the chains gave the appearance that UCLA had 13 or 14 defenders on the field. OSU basically stayed completely away from three-receiver sets until desperate "drives" in the fourth quarter and Sanders and the other tight ends were shut out of the offense. On run-pass option plays for quarterback Steve Bellisari, passing avenues were shut down and running lanes closed quickly.

"We struggled some up front, we struggled some with our design, we struggled some at receiver and we struggled some at quarterback," OSU head coach Jim Tressel said of the failed key plays.

Bellisari Endures Tough Afternoon

The latter part of Tressel's assessment can be construed as an understatement.

Bellisari, whose "bust-out" game came two years ago in a romp over UCLA, had one of his poorest showings. He was just 5 of 23 passing for 45 yards and pitched a pair of interceptions. One pick was a hasty read and the other was a forced pass that was off the mark. His longest completion of the day was for 11 yards and he managed just one connection in the final three quarters.

Ironically, Thomas said UCLA was most concerned with Bellisari going into the game.

"He's an athletic quarterback," he said. "He can drop back and pass, and he's also a threat to run it. We knew we had to keep an eye on him. Even as linebackers, sometimes you can get scared that he's going to run and lose your coverage."

Bellisari took off nine times, sometimes by design, and garnered just 15 yards on the ground. Several of his pass attempts came on called rollouts, an obvious ploy to take advantage of his athleticism. However, that wrinkle only seemed to take away half the field and help the Bruins flow to the play.

Many of his incompletions were to the boundary sideline where a would-be receiver often was double-covered. On the day, Bellisari completed just two passes to wideouts — an 11-yard out pass to Michael Jenkins and a 9-yard square-in to true freshman Angelo Chattams. Basically none of the 18 incompletions could be considered drops, although Chattams did slip on one route with the ball on the way and Jenkins momentarily had his hands on a lofted toss to the end zone.

Bellisari did not talk to reporters after the game.

Defense Makes Statement By Keeping Bruins In Check

Afterward, it was hard for the defense to feel too responsible for the 13-6 loss. The Buckeyes' stop troops turned away repeated attempts by the Bruins to put the game away and stood tall after allowing an early touchdown. For the most part, the tackles were sure and cohesion was very sound.

"The defense played excellent," defensive lineman Darrion Scott said. "Coming into this game we really didn't have a name for

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ourselves, especially losing a couple guys going pro, but we were able to stop the run. They converted a lot of third downs early on but I think we played well overall."

Coordinator Mark Dantonio said the defense set out three basic goals: contain talented tailback DeShaun Foster, win the turnover battle, and keep the Bruins from producing any long gainers. Two of the three criteria were met, and the Buckeyes often came up big after giving up 20-yard-plus plays.

"I'm real proud of our players," Dantonio said. "They played with great toughness and great effort, and, for the most part, they were very responsibility-oriented."

Dantonio said he was impressed with the effort of many players but singled out Mike Doss, Matt Wilhelm and Scott, who combined for 21 tackles and showed constant hustle.

"We just wanted to keep bringing it to them," said Doss, OSU's standout strong safety. "They have All-Americans over there, and we just wanted the nation to know we have All-Americans over here and that we play pretty good football over in the Midwest."

The Bruins took early control with a 14-play drive in which they converted four third downs. After that, UCLA was just 2 of 13 on third down.

"I think that was just effort and being more into the game," Scott said. "Sometimes early on it may take you a couple of plays to feel ready and tuned in. But we were able to get some momentum."

UCLA was held to 323 total yards, including 105 in the second half. A Heisman Trophy candidate, Foster had zero rushing yards on 10 carries in the second half and the Buckeyes recovered four fumbles and a blocked punt on the day.

Statement made.

"I know teams out there who will watch this film and study for us are going to be impressed," Wilhelm said. "We ran around, there were a few busts here and there, but all in all the defense played their (tails) off today."

Buckeyes Found Fumbling Foster

Foster came into the game with 299 rushing yards in two games but was held to 66 after a hot start. The Buckeyes not only gang-tackled him, they poked the ball away from him four times.

"The question coming into the game was could we tackle him, because we felt like he was a really, really good back and our goal was to keep him under a hundred yards rushing," OSU linebackers coach Mark Snyder said.

"I thought the guys tackled him well and I thought we stroked him. He put the ball on the ground a couple times, so we met our goals. I feel real good about what we saw."

Snyder and Dantonio said the coaches harped on creating turnovers in the two weeks following the season-opening win over Akron, when the defense caused no turnovers.

"We were very disappointed with the last game and not getting any turnovers," said Wilhelm, who forced a UCLA fumble. "We want to be plus-2 after the game, and we weren't. The offense turned the ball over a few times but it's our job to get it right back."

"Today, we knew Foster was a great back but we also knew he had a liability, and that was he sometimes puts the ball on the ground. In tackling him, all week we talked about stripping the ball and trying to poke it out. We wanted to give the offense as many chances as possible."

Added Scott, who also forced a Foster fumble, "From watching the film we saw their running back carries the ball far out. He doesn't really have it tucked in. I yanked the ball out a couple times and I was trying to tell other people, 'Try to get that ball out of there.'"

The Buckeyes tuned into the message, causing seven UCLA miscues.

"Everybody was trying to get at that ball," Dantonio said. "I think it's contagious."

But stopping the shifty Foster took a lot more than merely sticking out arms and raking the ball.

"We studied the film a lot," defensive tackle Tim Anderson said. "In the games we studied, the defensive linemen and linebackers weren't filling the gaps. That was one of our biggest concerns today — that we had our gap and took away the cutback. I think we contained him today."

"He's a real good back, up for the Heisman. He's quick, he's fast and he's a good cutback runner. He can run through a tackle. It was important for us to get a lot of guys on him."

Paus Was Reason For Much Concern

While Bellisari seemingly regressed from two years ago, UCLA quarterback Cory Paus showed the composure and savvy that were lacking when he began leading the Bruin offense a couple of years ago. Paus was 16 of 25 for 262 yards, one touchdown and no interceptions.

He seemed to make just about all the right decisions,

finding the safety valve receivers, stepping up in the pocket when needed, staying away from trouble and burning OSU with the occasional over-the-top pass.

"He played better than I thought (he would)," Dantonio admitted. "He did a nice job of finding the open receiver. Almost all of them were right on target, and the other thing that he did was he got them in the right play."

OSU's underestimation of Paus was most evident on the first drive of the game. On the game's first third-down play he got rid of the ball quickly and hit receiver Tab Perry in stride on a crossing route, good for 11 yards. Moments later, on another third-and-8, he foiled the OSU blitz with a flanker screen to Craig Bragg that gained 15.

After seven straight running plays, six by Foster, Paus sealed the drive with a perfectly thrown 24-yard lob to Ryan Smith in the end zone. The play victimized OSU safety Donnie Nickey.

"On that first series they did a nice job," Dantonio said.

"We pressured them and they were able to hit the correct guy."

UCLA coach Bob Toledo said Paus was able to make the right checks based on what the OSU defense showed. The Buckeyes often stacked up against the run in order to control Foster.

"You can't cover everything," Paus said. "You can take certain things away, and it's obvious what they wanted to take away."

"I give credit to the quarterback," said Wilhelm, who had a game-high 10 tackles but never got to Paus. "He was making a lot of checks and tried to put them in the best scenario possible. At first they were picking us up so it was up to us to find a way. But he's a shifty guy. That's something we really didn't expect back there."

"He moved around, and their receivers did a great job of breaking off their routes and coming back. They made receptions and moved the ball down the field."

MIRACLE MOTOR MART

After arriving in Columbus in 1978 to play football for **Woody Hayes'** Buckeyes, I became awestruck by all the wonderful traditions that Ohio State University had to offer. I was one of eleven children and knew what it was like to be part of a big family. OSU became an extension of that family back home in Akron. Being from a large family I understood the concept of everyone working together for the common good, setting goals and striving to achieve those goals for the betterment of the family. In the recent movie, "Remember the Titans," the coach asked the players, "Who's your Daddy?" ... At Ohio State, **Coach Hayes** could have asked the same question. Woody became like a father to me and **Earle Bruce** was of the same mold. I will never forget some of the expressions **Coach Hayes** used to make his point, things like "the early bird catches the worm" and "if you are 1 minute late you're 100 minutes late because there are 100 men on this team!" **Coach Bob Tucker**, my position coach (now part of Coach Tressell's staff), would always say, "Perfect practice makes perfect performance!" All of these words of wisdom and all of the hard work that it takes to become part of the OSU football family are things that mold each and every player on the team. The words and the work become lessons for life ... they are the bricks and mortar that each player uses to build his future. Such have they been for me.

After not making the final cut for the Minnesota Vikings in 1982, I chose to begin building the foundation for my future right here in Columbus, Ohio. I began working for one of the larger car dealers and realized how similar business was to football. In one word, **TEAMWORK**, what my coaches had been telling me all along, was what made the difference between the successful business and the not-so-successful business. It was the **DAILY, WEEKLY, and MONTHLY GOAL-SETTING**. It was, and still is, everyone concerned pulling together and doing his part to accomplish these goals. Shortly thereafter, I decided to become a dealer myself. Through teamwork and goal setting, last month **Miracle Motor Mart** finished 134 out of 4,200 dealers in the State of Ohio (# of used cars sold). This month we plan to finish in the top 100.

Being able to work side-by-side with my family and friends and living here and getting to know the exceptional people in central Ohio are a few of the things that bring pleasure to myself and my family. One of the people that I work with daily (and have for the last 5 years), is a former teammate of mine from Ohio State, **Luther Henson**. Back in 1978, I served as Luther's "tackling dummy," as he was a junior and I was a freshman. Luther didn't look down upon me because I was a freshman. He was friendly (except on the field) and grateful, like me, to have the opportunity to wear the **Scarlet and Gray**. Since joining our team at **Miracle Motor Mart, 2380 Morse Road**, five years ago, Luther has been the top salesman every month.

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OHIO STATE VS. UCLA

Tressel Says Struggles Were More Than At QB

Throughout the football season, BSB is publishing excerpts of Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel's postgame press conferences. Here is what Tressel had to say following the loss to UCLA.

Q. Did changing quarterbacks at all enter into your mind?

Jim Tressel: "I just didn't think there was a right time for it. Strictly subjective."

Q. It looked like the big problem was you had trouble blocking people and Steve (Bellisari) had trouble hitting people. What's your thought after the game?

JT: "Anytime you do good things, there's a whole bunch of people that you have to say good things about, and when you struggle, there are a whole bunch of people who struggled. We struggled some up front, we struggled some with our design as coaches, we struggled some at receiver, we struggled some at quarterback. But there was nobody that you could say wasn't part of us not getting the job done."

Q. They came out and scored on the first series. Did they hit you with some things you did not see or did not expect?

JT: "They came up with a couple of little things ... That little swinging gate that tricked us when we had them under

control. They hit a couple of good throws and good catches. They caught us in a blitz on the touchdown and threw the strike in there. But there's no question that our guys defensively, from that point on, went after it with a vengeance and gave us many opportunities to win the game."

Q. Talk about your young kickers.

JT: "Well, they're young kickers. I've been around a lot of real good kickers in my life, and when all of them were young, they had their moments. We mentioned to our team after the game that all of us have been young at some point in time. Make sure we find some of these young guys that are in our room right now and tell them we're going to stick with you."

Q. In the first half you had something like 15 yards rushing, yet you didn't abandon the running game in the second half.

JT: "We made a few less mistakes in the second half. We didn't eliminate them. That first half we would have a good first-down play and then have a penalty or something and it was second-and-long. So we really were out of sorts in the first half. In the second half, maybe we got an inch better, but not enough."

Q. It looked like their penetration up front really kept you guys from getting

consistency. What was going on up there, what were your linemen telling you was going on?

JT: "There's no question they reared their ears back and came after us. They've got some veteran players up there and we have some guys who I'm not sure you'd call veterans. LeCharles (Bentley) and Tyson (Walter) tried to hang in there with us. Give UCLA's front some credit but we need to grow."

Q. Is there any one chance that hurts

you more than another? You had it twice inside the 15 and then the last fumble. Just reflect on all the opportunities.

JT: "Well, they seemed like they were never-ending. We had more opportunities than we deserved. They're all as hurtful as the rest. We feel we let the rest of the group down, and that's the most disappointing part of it. We had moments there where some people were good enough to allow us to win and, over on our offensive side, we didn't do that. We don't feel good



SONNY BROCKWAY

CONGRATULATIONS OFFERED — Jim Tressel congratulates UCLA's Bob Toledo at midfield of the Rose Bowl as the two head coaches met following the Bruins' 13-6 victory over the Buckeyes.

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OHIO STATE VS. UCLA

about that."

Q. Do you almost feel like it was a season opener with all the misfires and mistakes?

JT: "I don't know if it felt like a season opener. We're in a growth mode and we will be for some time. We knew there was going to be a point in time where this new family was going to have some tough times. Sometimes they happen in the beginning, sometimes in the middle and sometimes when you think you've got it going. We just have to deal with it."

Q. Where are you quarterback-wise coming out of this game?

JT: "I think it's hard to tell. There were some things Steve did that we asked of him and there were things he could have done better and there were things we could have done better coaching-wise."

Q. Andy Groom seemed to be having a good game. B.J. Sander got off the one punt and ended up not hurting you in the long run. What was that call there?

JT: "We went into the game thinking that from our own goal line to the 40, that Andy would be the punter. From the 40 to the 40, it would be B.J., and if we were ever pooching it from the 40 and in, it would be Andy. It just fell in with the formula. The other thing is that B.J.'s punt is hard to field, and they had muffed four punts in nine tries in their first two games. We felt B.J.'s punt, the way it drifts, might have been something that came into play."

Q. Was it unfair from your perspective to put Scott (McMullen) into a tight game? Is that why you didn't go with Scott, because the time never seemed right to get him an opportunity there?

JT: "I didn't think it was the right thing for the group. Whenever we think about what we're going to do, we think about that and the individual as well. We didn't just protect Scott so it wouldn't hurt Scott. I didn't think it was the right thing for the group."

Q. Did having a more mobile quarterback play into that?

JT: "We had some things in the plan that we wanted our quarterback to move around. You have to admit Steve's a tough kid. He's got a bit of a banged-up foot. We just didn't get it done."

Q. How much did the missed kicks

alter your game plan?

JT: "Not much. When we went for fourth downs, those would have been long attempts — 47 yards, 48 yards."

Q. Do you think you might have gone for them anyway had the earlier kicks been made?

JT: "I don't think so. We had a lot of confidence in our defense. The way it looks right now, even if we get stopped, they're going to get us the ball back and really they did."

Q. Despite the loss, are you just happy to have gotten back on the field today?

JT: "Football is part of who we are, football is part of this society. The people that came out here today, this was great therapy for them. I hope the people who watched on TV, that it was a great plus for them. We're proud to be in the group that provides some of those positive things."

Q. What did you tell your players after the game?

JT: "We just talked about the fact that we felt bad for them and that we didn't take advantage of some opportunities. We appreciated how much effort they gave us. We know we're going to have to grow from this. We're going to challenge ourselves to become closer and stronger when you go through these tough times."

Q. You didn't go to the tight end more than once. Were they taking that away?

JT: "We had him in the route progression a normal number of times, and in fact we threw to him the first play of the game. We just didn't complete it."

Q. Was the misdirection screen they intercepted something they just read well or is it a thing where Steve maybe gave it away?

JT: "In all decisions we make, we have to see what's there before we make it. I'm not sure we saw what was there. We say to our quarterbacks that your most important throw of the day might be the one you throw out of bounds. That might be a case right there."

Q. You have two kickers you say you're confident in, yet you get no points from the kicking game. How disappointing is that situation?

JT: "That's disappointing. It's a big game and we didn't make the kicks. They make them in practice, and now they've been in prime time and didn't make them and what will their reaction be?"

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BSB Quotebook: UCLA 13, Ohio State 6

UCLA coach Bob Toledo was overjoyed with his team's win over the Buckeyes: "Anytime you can beat a team like Ohio State, it's a heck of a win. They've got a tradition-rich program. They've got an excellent football team. They've got some great football players and Jim Tressel is doing a heck of a job."

UCLA defensive tackle Ken Kocher said the OSU offense went from loud to silent as the day wore on: "They did a lot of talking when the game started, then they got real quiet. By the time the game ended, it was like they didn't even want to come up to the line of scrimmage."

OSU's Tressel was asked if he could recall a previous loss in his career where his team failed to take advantage of a series of big breaks: "One doesn't come to mind. Every game is so different. I know we feel real bad about letting the defense down. They had a good performance today."

OSU defensive tackle Tim Anderson on the Buckeye offensive showing: "It means the offense just needs to work a little bit. If we wouldn't have given up 13 points, we would have won the game. Both sides of the team have to work harder. We tried our best to pick it up and get them going."

OSU defensive tackle Mike Collins refused to blast the offense: "I'm not going to downsize the offense or make negative comments toward them. The defense tried to make things happen. There are some positive things the defense can take from this game — not quitting and being relentless. All the way through the game until the last minute, the defense was there. I am proud of the defense. The offense tried real hard, too. I'm not going to fault anybody for this loss."

OSU safety Cio Grant said it's hard to accept this defeat: "It's frustrating, but we're a team. Both sides of the ball need to get better. Defensively, we played well, but we still have to stop it up. I know offensively they'll have a good week and move back to where they should be."



SONNY BROCKWAY

THAT'S OURS! — Mike Doss of Ohio State looks to the officials after recovering a fumble in the fourth quarter. The Buckeyes caused seven UCLA fumbles and recovered four but couldn't convert any of them into points.

While the defense largely played well, OSU safety Mike Doss noted that two prolonged UCLA possessions — one for a touchdown and the other to run out the clock — factored in the loss: "The defense is out there to give the offense opportunities, and I don't think we did that. We let them have too many sustained drives. We have to give our offense more time with the clock."

OSU center LeCharles Bentley on the offense's poor performance: "It's an obvious thing. It hurts. It's not a good feeling. We can't hide from it. We have to go back to the drawing board and start over."

OSU's Grant said he wasn't waiting around for a ruling on his recovery of a fumble by UCLA's Bryan Fletcher, which could have easily been ruled an incomplete pass: "I wasn't sure exactly. I saw the hit and the fumble. I was going to let the refs make the call. I just picked it up and started running. You've got to keep playing when that happens and let them do their job."

OSU tailback Jonathan Wells rolled his eyes when asked if there was anything positive the offense could take from this game: "I don't know. I know we have a long flight back. That will give us a lot of time to reevaluate ourselves. I don't know what positive we'll get out of this offensively."

UCLA linebacker Robert Thomas, who missed the 1999 OSU-UCLA game due to a suspension, said it felt good to lead the charge with five tackles for loss in this game: "It meant a lot because back in my sophomore year I had to sit out this game. I was back home in Imperial (Calif.) watching the game with my parents, and it ate me up every quarter that went by. I wanted to be out there so bad. But that's in the past, and now I'm out here having fun."

OSU linebacker Matt Wilhelm on whether this was a physical game: "It definitely was. I think it had to do with waiting two weeks and the tragedy that happened because you just want to go and line up against somebody else. Plus these were two great, athletic teams. They've got an All-American linebacker and All-American tailback and we've got great players, too. Both teams were trying to show the nation in front of all these cameras what their teams are all about."

UCLA's Thomas said he and his defensive teammates took their team's four fumbles lost in stride: "It wasn't frustrating. There have been a lot of times when our offense has stepped up for us. We have great unity on this team and we all believe in each other."

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The Numbers Game

UCLA 13, Ohio State 6

Sept. 22, 2001 — The Rose Bowl; Pasadena, Calif.

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
OHIO STATE	6	0	0	0	6
UCLA	7	3	3	0	13

First Quarter

UCLA — Smith, 24-yard pass from Paus (Griffith kick), 7:27; 14 plays, 80 yards, 7:33 TOP.

OSU — Bryant, blocked punt recovery in end zone (Nugent kick failed), 3:31.

Second Quarter

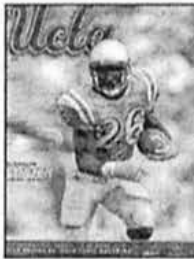
UCLA — Griffith, 49-yard field goal, 2:31; 10 plays, 39 yards, 3:54 TOP.

Third Quarter

UCLA — Griffith, 33-yard field goal, 3:00; 10 plays, 64 yards, 4:08 TOP.

Att. — 73,723

Weather — 84 degrees, hazy; wind 10 MPH from S.



Team Statistics

	OSU	UCLA
First Downs	8	18
Rushing	7	4
Passing	1	13
Penalty	0	1
Rushes-Yards	35-121	41-61
Passing Yards	45	262
Passes (Att.-Comp.-Int.)	23-5-2	26-16-0
Offensive Plays	58	67
Total Net Yards	166	323
Third Down Efficiency	1-14	6-15
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-2	0-0
Punts	7-41.4	5-36.6
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	7-4
Penalties	6-59	4-30
Time of Possession	27:32	32:38

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) — OSU: Wells 14-47; Martin 2-32; Maldonado 8-26; Bellisari 9-15; Ross 2-1. **UCLA:** Foster 29-66; Stanley 3-19; Harris 4-5; Bragg 1-(-8); Paus 4-(-21).

PASSING (Att.-Comp.-Int.-Yds.-TD) — OSU: Bellisari 23-5-2-45-0. **UCLA:** Paus 25-16-0-262-1; Perry 1-0-0-0-0.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) — OSU: Wells 2-16; Jenkins 1-11; Martin 1-9; Chatters 1-9. **UCLA:** Perry 4-83; R. Smith 4-49; Seidman 2-39; Fletcher 2-35; Stanley 1-25; Poli-Dixon 1-17; Bragg 1-15; Foster 1-(-1).

PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) — OSU: Groom 6-46.8-61; Sander 1-9-0-9. **UCLA:** Fikse 4-45.8-49; Team 1-0-0.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — OSU: Vance 1-9; Doss 1-17. **UCLA:** Manning 2-14; Bragg 1-14.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — OSU: None. **UCLA:** None.

FUMBLE RECOVERIES — OSU: Grant 1-35; Doss 1-0; Cheatwood 1-0; Bryant 1-0; Chatters 1-0. **UCLA:** None.

INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) — OSU: None. **UCLA:** Ware 1-17; M. Anderson 1-0.

SACKS — OSU: W. Smith 1-8; Peterson 1-6; Bullard 1-6. **UCLA:** M. Anderson 1-2.

TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) — OSU: Scott 3-5; Wilhelm 2-12; W. Smith 2-12; Bullard 2-8; Doss 2-2; Peterson 1-6; Cheatwood 1-2. **UCLA:** Thomas 5-11; Kocher 2-3; Anderson 1-2.

TACKLES (Solo-Assst.-Tot.) — OSU: Wilhelm 8-2-10; Doss 6-1-7; Cheatwood 5-0-5; Grant 4-0-4; D. Ross 4-0-4; Scott 4-0-4; Bullard 3-1-4; J. Cooper 3-1-4; Nickey 3-1-4; Peterson 3-0-3; W. Smith 3-0-3; Collins 2-0-2; Reynolds 2-0-2; T. Anderson 1-1-2; Bond 1-0-1; Wells 1-0-1; Britton 0-1-1. **UCLA:** Thomas 6-3-9; Nece 6-2-8; T. Anderson 5-3-8; Kocher 2-3-5; Stephens 0-4-4; Leisle 2-1-3; Coleman 2-0-2; Ware 2-0-2; Williams 1-0-1; Vieira 1-0-1; Short 1-0-1; Reese 1-0-1; Hunter 1-0-1; Manning 1-0-1; Chillar 1-0-1; Fletcher 0-1-1; Ball 0-1-1.

PLAYERS IN THE GAME — **OHIO STATE:** Starters: Offense, Jenkins, Walter, Stepanovich, Bentley, Bishop, Oliva, Sanders, Bellisari, Wells, Martin, Hartsock, Huston, Defense, Scott, Collins, T. Anderson, W. Smith, J. Cooper, Wilhelm, Bullard, D. Ross, Nickey, Doss, Britton, Groom. **Reserves:** Childress, Vance, Maldonado, Grant, Bryant, McNutt, Chatters, McFadden, Groom, Sander, Allen, Kline, L. Ross, M. Cooper, O'Neill, Reynolds, Pagac Jr., Muhammad, Tucker, Cheatwood, Clarke, Jacobs, Fraser, Hooks, Gamble, Nugent, Bond, Thompson, Peterson. **UCLA:** Starters: Defense, Coleman, Fletcher, Leisle, Ball, Chillar, Thomas, Nece, Manning, Stephens, M. Anderson, Ware, Fikse. Offense, Poli-Dixon, Bohlander, Elseaff, Danoff, S. Lehmann, Saffer, Fletcher, Paus, Stanley, Foster, Perry, Griffith. **Reserves:** Attar, Short, Norton, Seidman, Hunter, Raymo, Joyce, Harris, D. Reese, White, Brant, Faga, M. Reese, Ball, Sua, Grau, R. Lehmann, Vieira, S. Smith, Dubravac, Bragg, Peters, Morgan, Williams, Warfield, Fletcher, Kocher, Phillips.

Season Statistics

Date	Opponent (AP Rank)	Result	Crowd
Sept. 8 (25)	AKRON	W, 28-14	102,602
Sept. 22 (21)	at UCLA (14)	L, 13-6	73,723
Sept. 29	at Indiana		
Oct. 6	NORTHWESTERN		
Oct. 13	WISCONSIN		
Oct. 20	SAN DIEGO STATE		
Oct. 27	at Penn State		
Nov. 3	at Minnesota		
Nov. 10	PURDUE		
Nov. 17	ILLINOIS		
Nov. 24	at Michigan		

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

Team Statistics	OSU	Opp
First Downs	35	32
Rushing	19	11
Passing	16	19
Penalty	0	2
Average Per Game/Rush	178.5	87.5
Average Per Game/Pass	167.0	198.0
Total Offense	691	571
Total Plays	143	132
Average Per Game	345.5	285.5
Average Per Play	4.8	4.3
Penalties-Yards	9-89	5-35
Fumbles-Lost	5-2	8-6
3rd Down Efficiency	8/29	10/30
Percentage	28%	33%
4th Down Efficiency	0/2	0/2
Percentage	0%	0%
Sacks-Yards	5-32	3-17
Time of Possession Avg.	31:29	28:31

Score By Quarters	1	2	3	4	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	20	7	7	0	34	17.0
Opponents	7	10	3	7	27	13.5

Attendance	Games	Total	Avg.
Home	1	102,602	102,602
Away	1	73,723	73,723
Total	2	176,325	88,163

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Jonathan Wells	38	166	4.4	2	15
Sammy Maldonado	22	94	4.3	0	19
Jamar Martin	2	32	16.0	0	31
Maurice Hall	3	30	10.0	0	28
Lydell Ross	6	17	2.8	0	5
Steve Bellisari	18	17	0.9	0	11
Scott McMullen	2	1	0.5	0	1
OSU Totals	91	357	3.9	2	31
OPP Totals	74	175	2.4	0	30

Receiving	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Michael Jenkins	7	117	16.7	0	25
Ricky Bryant	4	46	11.5	0	19
Jamar Martin	4	32	8.0	1	12
Jonathan Wells	2	16	8.0	0	8
Chris Vance	1	61	61.0	1	61
Darnell Sanders	1	27	27.0	0	27
Ben Hartsock	1	15	15.0	0	15
Chris Gamble	1	11	11.0	0	11
Angelo Chatters	1	9	9.0	0	9
OSU Totals	22	334	15.2	2	61
OPP Totals	31	396	12.8	2	46

Scoring	TD	EPK	EPR	EPP	FG	PTS
Jonathan Wells	2	—	—	—	—	12
Chris Vance	1	—	—	—	—	6
Jamar Martin	1	—	—	—	—	6
Ricky Bryant	1	—	—	—	—	6

Josh Huston	0	2-2	—	—	0-1	2
Mike Nugent	0	2-3	—	—	0-2	2
OSU Totals	5	4-5	—	—	0-3	34
OPP Totals	3	3-3	—	—	2-5	27

Passing	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	INT	TD	Rating
Steve Bellisari	20	47	426	291	2	2	100.09
Scott McMullen	2	5	400	43	1	0	72.24
OSU Totals	22	52	423	334	3	2	97.42
OPP Totals	31	58	534	396	0	2	122.16

FG Distance	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Mike Nugent	0-1	0-1	0-0	0-0	0-2
Josh Huston	0-0	0-1	0-0	0-0	0-1
OSU Totals	0-1	0-2	0-0	0-0	0-3
OPP Totals	0-0	1-3	1-2	0-0	2-5

Punting	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk.	Long
Andy Groom	8	381	47.6	0	61
B.J. Sander	4	119	29.8	0	46
OSU Totals	12	500	41.7	0	61
OPP Totals	13	524	40.3	1	55

Interceptions	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
OSU Totals	0	0	0	0	0
OPP Totals	3	104	34.7	1	87

Punt Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Chris Vance	5	61	12.2	0	18
Mike Doss	1	17	17.0	0	0
Ricky Bryant	0	0	0.0	1	0
OSU Totals	6	78	13.0	1	18
OPP Totals	5	21	4.2	0	14

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Jonathan Wells	1	18	18.0	0	18
OSU Totals	1	18	18.0	0	18
OPP Totals	2	44	22.0	0	23

Defensive Leaders	Solo	Ass.	Tot.	TFL	Yds.	Sacks
Matt Wilhelm	9	6	15	2-12	—	—
Joe Cooper	12	2	14	1-6	—	—
Donnie Nickey	7	3	10	—	—	—
Mike Doss	7	3	10	3-10	1-8	—
Derek Ross	9	0	9	1-1	—	—
Cie Grant	7	1	8	1-0	—	—
Tim Cheatwood	8	0	8	3-8	1-4	—
Courtland Bullard	5	2	7	3-10	1-6	—
Darrian Scott	6	0	6	3-5	—	—
Will Smith	3	1	4	2-12	1-8	—
Mike Collins	3	1	4	—	—	—
Tim Anderson	1	2	3	—	—	—
Kenny Peterson	3	0	3	1-6	1-6	—
David Thompson	2	1	3	—	—	—
Robert Reynolds	2	0	2	—	—	—
Simon Fraser	1	1	2	2-4	—	—
Bobby Britton	1	1	2	—	—	—
Jason Bond	1	0	1	—	—	—
Sammy Maldonado	1	0	1	—	—	—
Maurice Lee	0	1	1	—	—	—
Dustin Fox	0	1	1	—	—	—
Jonathan Wells	1	0	1	—	—	—
OSU Totals	89	26	115	22-74	5-32	—
OPP Totals	81	62	143	13-39	3-17	—

Fumbles Forced
2 — Tim Cheatwood; 1 — Matt Wilhelm, Donnie Nickey, Darrian Scott, Mike Collins, Angelo Chatters.

Fumbles Recovered
1 — Mike Doss, Cie Grant, Tim Cheatwood, Jason Bond, Angelo Chatters, Ricky Bryant.

Blocked Kicks
1 — Mike Doss.

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COVER STORY: DEFENSE CAPABLE, OFFENSE CULPABLE

Offense Struggled To Find Any Sort Of Consistency

Continued From Page 1

Buckeyes had played just one game, while UCLA had road wins over Alabama and Kansas to its credit. OSU was counting on building some momentum for this game by hosting San Diego State Sept. 15. But that game was postponed after the terrorist attacks that gripped the nation earlier that week.

When asked how missing that game affected his team, Tressel replied, "No differently than it did any other team. We worked hard to get better at some things. I think in two-thirds of the game we did take some steps forward with our special teams and our defense."

"As everybody who was there knows, we struggled to gain any kind of rhythm or consistency offensively."

"It would have been good to have another game. I think we learned a whole bunch of things in the Akron game and it would have been neat to see if we learned them or not, but everyone is going through that."

Instead, the Buckeyes were on the firing line on a red-hot day in Pasadena, Calif. Unfortunately, the OSU offense wilted like, well, three-week-old roses.

"It was a tough situation to be in," said OSU center LeCharles Bentley. "We don't like it, and we have to bounce back from it."

Tressel praised the defense for its stellar play.

"I'm proud that the guys kept fighting," he said. "Despite the fact we didn't move the football, they kept coming up with ways to keep us in the game — the special teams and the defense."

"Of course, I'm disappointed with what we did and didn't do on offense. That's just something we need to bang away at. We said going into the game that if we played superior special teams and relentless defense and didn't make mistakes on defense, we would win. But we didn't get there."

A Case For The Defense(s)

This game seemed to have the makings of an offensive shootout. But each side took turns stymying the other.

"I really couldn't ask the defense to play better football than they did today," said OSU tailback Jonathan Wells. "The job they did was outstanding. We didn't put any points on the board for them. That has to fall on our shoulders."

"But we're going to stick together and we're going to get better."

Freshman receiver Angelo Chattams, who notched his first career reception, seemed to sum it all up.

"Personally, I feel we let the defense down," he said.

OSU defensive end Tim Cheatwood emerged as one of the leaders with the



STEVE HELWAGEN

ANY SUGGESTIONS? — OSU head coach Jim Tressel and offensive coordinator Jim Bollman had a tough time coming up with much offense against UCLA. The Buckeyes were held to 166 total yards and just 45 through the air, the least since 1989.

way he helped hound Foster.

"We pretty much did the job we wanted to do, but I guess it wasn't good enough because we didn't win," he said. "If we don't have a 'W' in our column, we didn't play good enough."

But Cheatwood and his defensive mates said they will not abandon the OSU offense.

"It's a little frustrating, but we're all a team here," he said. "We're not going to look down on our offense for not getting the job done today. There will probably be times during the season that we don't get the job done and they'll pick us up."

Added OSU linebacker Matt Wilhelm, "We're not down on them. They're probably down on themselves and disappointed. Some guys are even saying they're sorry. But, hey, we lost the game so we're all down right now."

No 'O' In This Team?

Much of the debate following the loss at UCLA centered on the status of quarterback Steve Bellisari. Playing on a tender ankle — which he appeared to reinjure — the senior co-captain was an abysmal 5 of 23 passing for 45 yards with two interceptions.

Bellisari was not available to reporters following the game.

But Tressel was grilled about whether he considered pulling Bellisari in favor of backup Scott McMullen.

"I didn't think it was the right thing for the group," Tressel said. "I wasn't trying to protect Scott. I just didn't think it was the right time for it. That was strictly subjective."

Reporters then went a step further, asking Bellisari's teammates to assess his performance.

"I can't really evaluate him," Bentley said. "I think he always goes out and plays hard. That's all you can ask of a quarterback each week, to go out and play hard."

Wells added his two cents to the

now three-year-old debate.

"That's not my call," he said. "I'm just trying to make plays in the backfield. That's a coaches' decision."

The questions kept coming such as, "What is wrong with this offense?"

"I don't know either," Bentley said. "We have to watch the film and the coaches have to make those decisions. We have great coaches and it will be up to them."

Getting Back To Action

When factored against the trying times the U.S. has faced since the terrorist attacks, OSU's defeat takes on much less significance.

In fact, OSU and UCLA were featured in a national telecast by ABC from the Rose Bowl, perhaps the nation's most revered football theater.

"We were all proud to be part of this game," Tressel said. "It was a game that was coast to coast on national television. We talked about the fact that we wanted to represent, with the way we played the game, just how proud we are of where we live and the people who have done great things."

UCLA coach Bob Toledo said it was a relief to finally play.

"I told the team in my pregame talk, 'You don't know what tomorrow is going to bring. Live each day to the fullest, go out and give it your very best,' and they did," he said. "To get out there and see a great crowd and have a great college football game in that setting was really a great experience."

For the Buckeyes, the real relief will probably come Sept. 29, when they visit Indiana to begin Big Ten play.

"To travel this distance and play in the Rose Bowl, this is something we can build off of," Doss said. "We came out here and traveled long hours. We were just trying to get this victory, but we came up a little short."

With nine games left — including all eight Big Ten games — Tressel has already begun circling the wagons.

"We challenged our older guys to be there for our younger kids," the coach said.

It sounded like the message had gotten through.

"As a captain of this team," said full-back Jamar Martin, "I feel like it's my responsibility to say something to each player, and after the game I just told everybody, 'This is not the end of the season. We've got a long way to go and we've got a lot more opportunities to take advantage of. There's a lot of big things that we still need to do.'"

"So we need to move on, learn from this game and put it behind us. We can't dwell on it for too long. We need to really focus on ourselves and make ourselves better."



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COVER STORY: OSU TOUCHED BY TRAGEDY

Geiger: Playing Would Be Wrong Thing To Do

Continued From Page 1

first college teams to announce a postponement. Speaking less than 12 hours after the hijackings, OSU athletic director Andy Geiger announced the school's Sept. 15 home game with San Diego State had been postponed until Oct. 20, an open date for both schools.

"I think we felt strongly that we should not play on Saturday," Geiger said. "It was very clear that trying to play this game would be the wrong thing to do."

"I cannot imagine, feeling the way I feel right now and seeing the pictures on television that we've all seen all day long, bringing 100,000 people to Ohio Stadium in four days."

Adding to the uncertainty was the fact that San Diego State would have needed to make a cross-country flight. The Federal Aviation Administration closed all airports nationally for two days after the tragedy.

Initially, a number of Division I-A schools announced plans to go ahead and play their weekend football games. However, by Sept. 13, all Division I-A games had been canceled. Major League Baseball also canceled all games through Sept. 16, while the National Football League wiped out its slate of games set for Sept. 16-17.

According to Geiger, his quick decision was based on discussions with football coach Jim Tressel, university administrators and San Diego State athletic director Rick Bay.

"Getting Jim's feelings on the mood of the team, we didn't feel that we needed to go any further," Geiger said. "I talked with (OSU President) Dr. (Brit) Kirwan and I met this afternoon with the university vice presidents and the president's cabinet."

"I also chatted with Rick Bay several times today and found him very much concurring with the decision."

Bay, a former OSU AD, said the postponement was an easy call.

"This is the right thing to do," Bay told the San Diego Union-Tribune. "Some would argue that the U.S. is weakened by any interference to its normal activities, but in this case I feel the proper thing to do is reflect on what happened and make the game up (Oct. 20)."

In addition to the football game, Ohio State also canceled all other intercollegiate games and competitions through Sept. 16.

However, the newly renovated Ohio Stadium served as the site for a hastily planned rally and telethon Sept. 15. Over 15,000 attended the event, includ-

ing members of the school's athletic squads and marching band, and over \$585,000 was raised for the American Red Cross disaster relief fund (see story, page 19).

Initial Reaction

Reporters met briefly with Tressel just two hours after news had broken on the hijackings. The coach, fresh off a 28-14 win over Akron in his first game as the OSU coach, appeared at his weekly press luncheon.

But football was the last thing on anyone's mind.

"We've said and known all along there are a lot more important things than football," Tressel said. "This is another tremendous example of that."

Tressel said he contacted his daughter, Carlee, who was planning to go to the University of Chicago in the days following the tragedy.

"You would think that Chicago would also be a primary target," he said. "You really don't know what to think."

Reporters tried to get Tressel's sense on whether the games should go on.

"There are a lot of emotions," the coach admitted. "You are mad at the people who are doing it. You don't want them to ruin this country. But then you also have to be compassionate and think of the families and the people."

"We can't even visualize what's taken place, the disaster. As we sit here, that puts a lot less importance on Saturday."

Tressel said Geiger told him of the initial attack during a morning meeting of all OSU athletic coaches at the Faculty Club.

"Andy whispered in my ear that there appears to be a terrorist attack," Tressel said. "I thought he was kidding at first."

Dealing With Tragedy

With San Diego State off the docket — at least for the time being — the OSU football team focused on its impending Sept. 22 trip to UCLA.

But even Tressel was having a problem putting the week's events in perspective.

"I'm not an expert on dealing with tragedies like this," he said. "I know first and foremost that we have to have respect for the victims and just let those people who have been directly affected know that they're in our thoughts and prayers."

"I think this is a time of true reflection for all of us. I'm not telling anyone what to reflect about, it's just a time to be there for each other. That's what's



DANIEL DAWSON

SIGNS SAY IT ALL — A pair of attendees at the Sept. 15 rally held at Ohio Stadium display the thoughts that were on the minds of many.

wonderful about being part of a group in a difficult time."

The coach and his players hoped the remainder of their games this season would help the healing process.

"I think we understand that we are somewhat entertainment to people," Tressel said. "Obviously, it's an opportunity to teach the kids what we're involved with and for our fans it's definitely something for them to emote about."

"Maybe they can get their minds off those other things for three hours as we play."

Linebacker Joe Cooper voiced concerns over the safety of players and fans alike in the days following the terrorist attack.

"It makes you think," he said. "On Saturday, especially at a school like Ohio State, there's going to be a lot of people (there). I'm no genius. I don't know anything, but to me it seems like they'd try to attack where there's a lot of people and there's over 100,000 people in the Horseshoe on Saturday, so it's in the back of your mind."

"You take it for granted sometimes and say, 'Well, it would never happen here,' but you can't think like that."

Linebacker Matt Wilhelm was asked if winning games each week means as much in the wake of this tragedy.

"Winning still means the same," he said. "It definitely is the same. I know for me personally it's important. You want to win for yourself, but you feel like you've got to take on another opponent, even though they're from the United States of America, and get out some aggression, because you do have pent-up aggression in a situation like this."

"You don't know whom to blame. There are guys who get paid a lot of money who are trying to figure that out. But you've just got some aggression inside you that just has to come out, whether it be on the practice field or in the game."

"We're lucky as football players that

once a week or so we get to let it loose. If you talk to pro athletes, college athletes or even some guys in high school, they will tell you they feel free on a football field, and in that moment everything outside of football kind of fades away."

Wilhelm was glad OSU wasted no time in making the proper call.

"I was proud of that," he said. "It's a great representation of the university that we were the example for the rest of the country, and I think it speaks highly for the type of people we have leading this university in President Kirwan, Andy Geiger and Coach Tressel."

Tailback Jonathan Wells admitted it was hard to face a beautiful fall Saturday without football, but he said his school made the right choice.

"I knew it would happen yet I was still a little disappointed," he said. "But there's a much bigger issue going on. I couldn't agree with the decision more. A lot of innocent people lost their lives. It's bigger than Ohio State football, way bigger."

For OSU, the only point of reference was the situation in November 1963, when OSU and Michigan postponed their season-ending game one week after the assassination of President Kennedy (see story, page 20).

Never before in its 112 years of football had Ohio State postponed or canceled a game due to war or civil unrest.

The SDSU game was to serve as the induction weekend for the 2001 class for the OSU Athletics Hall of Fame. Those ceremonies will now take place over the weekend of Oct. 19.

The SDSU game was also to be broadcast by ESPN with a 12:10 p.m. start time. No starting time or television assignment had been announced for the new date on Oct. 20, although 12:10 p.m. still seemed like a safe bet.

BSB staff members Jeff Rapp and Mike Wachsmann contributed to this story.



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RALLY AT OHIO STADIUM

Thousands Show Their Spirit At Stadium Rally

By DARRELL DAWSON
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

At times, it sounded as if there was a game going on in Ohio Stadium. Other times, you couldn't even hear its ghosts.

Such is life in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist tragedies. But for a couple of hours, fans and dignitaries from across Ohio remembered those lost and celebrated the nation we live in.

There were a variety of speakers at the Horseshoe Sept. 15 for the "Show You Care" rally and telethon. But all it took was a single bagpiper to upstage some of the state's most beloved statesmen and public figures.

A crowd in excess of 15,000 attended the rally and, by the time the three-hour broadcast on WBNS-TV and Ohio News Network had gone off the air at 3 p.m., more than \$170,000 had been raised for the American Red Cross disaster relief fund.

Including donations made by telephone, the sale of American flags at the stadium and drive-up donations made outside the Horseshoe, WBNS-TV reported a total of over \$585,000 in donations had been made by the time its 11 p.m. newscast hit the air.

Near the end of the two-hour-long program, the City of Columbus Bagpipers played a traditional Scottish version of "Amazing Grace." During the closing strains, one of the players got up from his perch with the others in the north end zone and walked up the north ramp and out of view.

You could hear a pin drop. On the turf.

Each of the event's speakers was at the top of his or her game.

"They were just like us," said OSU President Brit Kirwan of those who died in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. "Mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, husbands and wives, sons and daughters — all gone. Here today at Ohio Stadium we mourn their losses."

Ohio Gov. Bob Taft spoke of the many Ohioans who are on the scene at the disaster sites and those who are helping closer to home through donations of blood, money and food.

"It is time to demonstrate that the American spirit is alive and thriving here in this stadium, here in Columbus, here in Ohio and throughout this great nation of ours," he told the flag-waving crowd to loud cheers.

"Let's move toward a new peace on Earth. A peace that was meant to be."

Following a speech by Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman, OSU athletic director Andy Geiger took the microphone.

"This is a place of celebration, of human achievement, whether academic when commencement is held here, or athletic," Geiger said. "We would rather be watching football, for that would mean that last Tuesday never happened."

Throughout the process of refurbishing Ohio Stadium over the past couple of years, Geiger talked about the three prongs the project represented: preservation, renovation and expansion.

During his speech, he widened his thoughts on those three sentiments.

- "Preservation — We must believe even more deeply in our freedoms and our democratic ways of life."

- "Renovation — We must learn of our new sense of vulnerability ... We must also work on sensitivities toward

our fellow human beings.

- "The third part is expansion. The tragic loss of life is all-inclusive. ... Our love for one another should also be all-inclusive."

Soon after Geiger left the podium, it was OSU head football coach Jim Tressel's turn. Though Buckeye fans only recently reacquainted themselves with Tressel, many look to the coach for words of wisdom at times like these, regardless of whether the coach ever asks to be put in that position.

By all accounts, Tressel came through. He gave what may have been the most uplifting thought of the day.

"A week ago today, we came out in front of 100,000 fans and I wasn't sure there would ever be a more glorious day in Ohio Stadium," he said.

"But once again, central Ohio proved us wrong. There's never been a more glorious day in Ohio Stadium than today."

Mitch Brown, safety director for the city of Columbus, also spoke. WBNS-TV anchorwoman Angela Pace was the emcee.

The OSU marching band provided a number of patriotic tunes, including a stirring rendition of "Stars and Stripes Forever." The Otterbein College concert choir also provided music.

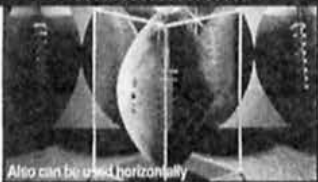


WORDS OF COMFORT — Old Glory flies above Ohio State head football coach Jim Tressel as he talks to the gathering at the "Show You Care" rally at Ohio Stadium Sept. 15.

Athletes from many of OSU's athletic teams, including the football squad, filled a section of seating in the lower level of the stadium.

Those from the general public nearly filled all of the sections in the north end zone of the stadium.

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