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## Tressel Likes Ones He Got

### Experts Split On OSU Recruiting Haul

By STEVE HELWAGEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

A negative person could have looked at the last day or so before national signing day — when Ohio State failed to close on six key prospects it was tracking — and say things did not go well for the Buckeyes.

A positive person could have looked at OSU's football recruiting effort as a whole for 2003 and found plenty — no less than eight SuperPrep All-Americans among the 14 high school signees — to be happy about.

In this instance, both of these people would be correct.

In case you were wondering, OSU coach Jim Tressel — still beaming from winning the 2002 national championship — fit firmly in the second category on signing day.

"I think our staff did a fabulous job with the season and with the yearlong efforts with recruiting," Tressel said as he met the media Feb. 5. "I think they did a heck of a job in putting together a heck of a class."

"It is most important that you feel good about the ones we got, and I feel extraordinarily good about the ones we got."

Part of Tressel's optimism could be due to things beyond the recruitment of high school players.

Tressel noted that three OSU seniors-to-be (Michael Jenkins, Darrion Scott and Will Smith) all decided to stick around for their final season instead of leaving early for the NFL.

"Our recruiting year began when those players chose to come back for their senior year," Tressel said. "That was obviously something we had to be alert for and planning for."

Plus the Buckeyes seemed to pull off a coup by accepting a transfer from middle linebacker Anthony Schlegel, a two-year starter at Air Force (see story, page 32).

A year after OSU nailed down the nation's No. 2-ranked recruiting class, national experts were divided on where to rank the Buckeyes. Some, such as SuperPrep's Allen Wallace, ranked OSU as high as 11th nationally. Others, including Rivals100.com's computerized ranking system, had the Buckeyes as low as 40th.

An average of six recognized recruiting services left the Buckeyes at 24th nationally with this class.

Tressel did well to disguise any notion of disappointment after the Buckeyes lost out on three national top-100 players on signing day.

Ohio defensive end/linebacker Shawn Crable picked Michigan, Kentucky quarterback Michael Bush signed with Tennessee and New Jersey defensive end Claude "Turk" McBride went to Tennessee.

OSU lost a previous commitment as Florida defensive end Stanley McClover signed with Auburn. OSU also was after Florida offensive lineman James Lee, who went to Georgia, and California wide receiver Devin Stearns, who signed with Cal.

Tressel said it doesn't do any good to get upset about the players who didn't sign with the Buckeyes.

"I know that (Crable) had consistently been saying that one moment he would think about this and the next moment he would think about that," Tressel said.

"That was consistent with what he had been telling us. 'You've been around us long enough to know we're



Photos by STEVE HELWAGEN

**PRIDE OF MASSILLON** — OSU signees Devin Jordan (left) of Massillon Washington and Kirk Barton of Massillon Perry share a laugh during festivities for the Ohio All-Star Classic.

Continued On Page 6

## BSB's 2003 Recruiting Wrap-Up Edition



**EARLY ENROLLEE** — Donte Whitner of Cleveland Glenville has already enrolled at OSU.

### Inside BSB's Recruiting Wrap-Up Edition:

- Recruiting experts discuss OSU's class, national race (Pages 8-9)
- A look at how the rest of the Big Ten and Notre Dame fared in recruiting (Pages 10-12)
- Seven OSU signees to play in Ohio All-Star Classic (Page 13)
- BSB tracks where Ohio's top prospects landed (Pages 14-15)
- Bios and photos of OSU's 2003 football signees (Pages 16-17)
- Recruiting Outlook: Crable to Michigan, Bush to Louisville (Pages 18-20)
- BSB's Gary Housteau shares his diary after a signing day odyssey (Pages 22-23)
- OSU assistant Mel Tucker helps deliver Cleveland for the Buckeyes (Page 25)
- A look at the top underclassmen in Ohio and across the Midwest (Pages 26-31)
- Air Force linebacker Anthony Schlegel opts to transfer to Ohio State (Page 32)



**TRESSSEL'S TROOPS** — OSU head coach Jim Tressel likes his 2003 recruiting class.



## COVER STORY: FOOTBALL RECRUITING

## Seven OSU Signees Run 40s Of 4.5 Or Better

Continued From Page 1

not going to get upset about it. What's that do? Michigan is a good school. That means we're recruiting the right guys. It's just like we want to win all our games. We lost five (in 2001) and didn't get upset. We just went to work.

"That's the way it goes. That means we were recruiting the right guys. You're not going to get them all."

Tressel touted the versatility and athletic ability of the 14 high school players signed with the Buckeyes.

"We have a number of players capable of helping us at a couple of different positions," Tressel said. "It is nice to have that kind of flexibility. We will just have to wait and see what happens in the fall and then evaluate how those new players can best help us."

Seven of OSU's signees boast 40-yard dash times of 4.5 seconds or better, another nice component with this class.

"In the game of football, it's crucial to have great speed," Tressel said. "You heard about it the entire month leading up to the national championship game — those were two teams that had a lot of speed."

"If you look at history, speed has been the hallmark of great Ohio State teams and great Ohio State players."

The class includes 12 prep players from Ohio — not including quarterback

## OSU Football Signees

Football players who have signed letters of intent to play college football at Ohio State, with rankings as overall prospects from The Ohio Football Recruiting News for the Ohio players and All-American honors listed (all players from Ohio unless noted).

TOFRN Rank	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	High School	All-American Honors
29	Kirk Barton	OL	6-6	275	Massillon Perry	
14	Sian Cotton	DL	6-4	290	Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary	PFR
16	Marcel Frost	TE/DL	6-5	235	Lyndhurst Brush	
8	Tony Gonzalez	DB	6-0	187	Cleveland St. Ignatius	PFR, SP
—	Ira Guilford	DB	5-11	183	Hoboken, N.J.	SP
6	Dareus Hiley	DB	6-1	195	Cleveland Glenville	SP
4	Louis Irizarry	TE	6-5	235	Youngstown Ursuline	RR100, G&W, PFR, PS, SP
10	Devin Jordan	WR	6-3	190	Massillon Washington	PFR, SP
15	Curt Lukens	DB	6-3	200	North Canton Hoover	
11	Brandon Maupin	DL	6-6	270	West Chester Lakota West	PFR, SP
3	David Patterson	DT	6-3	280	Warrensville Heights	RR100, G&W, PS, SP
17	Reggie Smith	LB	6-2	235	East Cleveland Shaw	
2	Donte Whitner	DB	5-11	175	Cleveland Glenville	RR100, G&W, PFR, PS, SP
—	Ashton Youboty*	DB	6-1	180	Houston (Texas) Klein	G&W

\*Already enrolled at OSU

All-American Honors Key: RR100, Rivals100.com Recruiting (top 100 nationally); G&W, G&W Recruiting Report (top 100); PFR, Tom Lemming's Prep Football Report (top 200); PS, PrepStar Dream Team (top 110); SP, SuperPrep (top 288).

Todd Boeckman, who plans to enroll in winter 2004 and count on the 2004 class. Also, there is one player each from New Jersey and Texas.

"Ohio is always going to be our focal point," Tressel said. "You have to get the great ones here at home and I think we did that."

The Buckeyes succeeded in signing three national top-100 players, all from Ohio, in tight end Louis Irizarry, defensive lineman David Patterson and defensive back Donte Whitner. Whitner and fellow defensive back Ashton Youboty from Texas have already enrolled at OSU (see below).

Just at a glance, it is clear that OSU fortified itself nicely along the defensive line with four signees and in the secondary with six. The Buckeyes also got impact players at wide receiver and tight end with Ohio standouts Devin Jordan and Irizarry, respectively.

Tressel said he hopes OSU's national championship will give the Buckeyes a boost in the years to come.

"I don't think any of the players we signed came here because we won the national championship," he said. "But a lot of times you hear young people say they are excited about a school because they saw something exciting happen when they were younger."

"I know Donte Whitner talked about looking at the great teams Ohio State had in 1994, '95, '96 and '97 and always wanting to be a Buckeye. Yes, I think it will pay off in the years ahead as long as we do everything we need to do."

## Individually Speaking

Tressel discussed many of the notable players in this year's class. Here is a sampling of some of his comments on these signees.

• **On defensive back Tony Gonzalez** — "Tony is a guy who could play wide receiver and defensive back. I believe Coach (Ted) Ginn (from Glenville) had timed him at 4.25 in the 40 in one of their winter workouts."

"He has great speed and great athleticism. He is a big-play guy on either side of the ball."

• **On defensive back Dareus Hiley** — "Dareus' nickname is Superman, so everybody calls him 'Supe.' I asked him about how he compared with the other guys in terms of speed. He said, 'With my helmet on, I'm faster than all of them.'"

• **On Ira Guilford** — "He is a big hitter at the safety position. He has great hitting ability. Some have used the same terms they used to describe Jack Tatum, who also came from New Jersey."

"He was also a great tailback. He could help us on the offensive side of the ball as well. I know (running backs coach Tim) Spencer expects to have him over there for a few snaps."

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## COVER STORY: FOOTBALL RECRUITING

• **On Jordan** — "He caught 100-and-some balls as a junior when Justin Zwick was his quarterback. But the thing that impressed me the most was the team guy he was. He was an outstanding leader. He only caught about 35 balls as a senior. It was a different offense, but he was still making plays."

• **On Irizarry** — "He is a tremendous route runner and a big-play guy. Where he dominates is after the catch. He's extraordinary in that respect. He is a tight end who can stretch the whole field."

• **On tight end/defensive end Marcel Frost**, who decommitted from Iowa and chose OSU five days before signing day — "Marcel is a versatile guy. He could play outside linebacker, defensive end, tight end. We are excited about Marcel Frost because of the speed with which he plays the game."

• **On Patterson** — "We feel that David Patterson is one of the outstanding defensive front people in the country. He is extraordinary and has great explosion. He loves the game. He loves to talk football. If you call him, he'll talk football with you until you're exhausted."

• **On defensive lineman Sian Cotton** — "Sian is a guy with excellent athletic ability. He's close to 290 pounds and he said they had him playing out on the wing in basketball. He is a power guy who will begin on defense. But we all know you can never guess what a guy is going to be when he grows into what he can be."

• **On offensive lineman Kirk Barton** — "Kirk has shown great athleticism and he has played on both sides

of the ball. We feel he has what it takes to become an outstanding lineman. Some of our people have remarked that he looks like a Jim Lachey kind of lineman with great athletic ability."

• **On the group as a whole** — "We feel good about this group. I feel good about the seriousness and the responsibility that our staff has taken. They have brought people to Ohio State that we will be proud of. We feel good about these kind of guys."

## Getting A Head Start

Tressel introduced early enrollees Whitner and Youboty to the media.

They follow in the footsteps of tailback Maurice Claret and defensive back Michael Roberts, who each enrolled early a year ago.

"A year ago, Maurice Claret came in," Tressel said. "He had one goal in mind and that was a passion to get his feet on the ground and learn what college life was all about."

"We are fortunate to have two guys do the same thing this year. Donte Whitner has enrolled in school and he is doing a great job in our workout program and getting his feet on the ground academically, as he did in high school."

"Ashton Youboty comes in from Klein High School in Houston, Texas. Those two guys give us a heck of a start."

Whitner and Youboty each completed high school graduation requirements in December and enrolled at the start of winter quarter in January.

Whitner said he was not sold originally on enrolling early.

"My coach came to me and asked me and said it was a possibility," Whitner



STEVE HELWAGEN

**EARLY ENROLLEE** — Ashton Youboty started taking classes at OSU early so that he could get a jump on the competition he's sure to face next season.

said. "I talked with my parents and at first I wasn't going to do it. I wanted to play basketball and run track. We were third in the state last year and I wanted to win the state this year."

"I went to a basketball game early in the year and we had a bunch of

turnovers and I thought, 'I'm not going to go. I'm going to stay here and play basketball.'

"But my coach said I could not let my emotions take over me. I agreed the best thing for me was to come in early."

Whitner said he is getting used to college life.

"Being here at Ohio State is a great step for me," he said. "I am enjoying being with my teammates and coaches and getting ready for the 2003 season."

While Whitner is only 2-1/2 hours from home in Cleveland, Youboty is much further from his home in Houston.

He knew late in the fall he could graduate early. He just couldn't settle on a school between OSU and Penn State.

"Both schools had a lot to offer and a great living environment," Youboty said. "I thought about it for almost two full months. Finally, in late December I committed to Ohio State."

"Since I've been here, it's been a growing process. It was snowing and I didn't have a heavy jacket. School-wise, I think I've handled it pretty nicely."

Youboty said it is exciting to be able to participate in winter conditioning and spring football.

"Before I came I knew there would be competition here," he said. "But I knew I would have a chance to play if I came in early. I'm excited about it."

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## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: THE EXPERTS

## Experts Torn Between LSU, USC, Florida

By STEVE HELWAGEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

Where is the BCS when you need it? For the ninth year in a row, BSB polled six of the nation's leading football recruiting analysts to compile a national consensus poll.

When all of the votes were tabulated, though, we had our first-ever three-way tie for the top spot.

LSU and Southern California each had three first-place votes. But Florida,

named the No. 2 team on all six ballots, also ended up with 54 voting points.

Oklahoma (38 points) and Miami (Fla.) (35 points) rounded out the top five.

Experts picking LSU No. 1 included Prep Football Report's Tom Lemming, Rivals100.com's Jeremy Crabtree and PrepStar's Rob MacIntyre.

Those going with USC included SuperPrep's Allen Wallace, G&W Recruiting Report's Phil Grosz and Bill Kurelic of The Ohio Football Recruiting News and the BSB Internet site (ohiofootballrecruiting.com).

Breaking it down scientifically, this race may be too close to call. USC took a slight edge with nine Rivals100.com national top-100 prospects to eight each for Florida and LSU.

At the same time, several national experts noted that LSU's class could have multiple academic casualties. That was enough, at least in their eyes, to give the Trojans the upper hand.

"A lot of people may rank LSU No. 1, but the reason I won't is because I understand they had 20 openings and they signed 29 kids," Grosz said. "They may have double digits of kids who don't qualify. A lot can happen between February and August to affect a class like this. Some of these kids may get placed at a prep school or a junior college, and that could hurt LSU."

USC's haul included 17 SuperPrep All-Americans among its 28 signees.

"It was an amazing effort," said Wallace, who is based in California. "They got eight of the top 11 guys in California. They did not get the quarterback they wanted in (Miami-bound) Kyle Wright. But they really didn't miss on anybody else they wanted."

"This may be the best running back class they've ever had with Reggie Bush, LenDale White and Chauncey Washington."

California standouts Bush (No. 2 overall nationally by Rivals100.com) and wide receivers Whitney Lewis (No. 3) and Steve Smith (No. 30) were all big for the Trojans.

"The stars just aligned perfectly for USC," said Crabtree, who is based in Texas. "UCLA struggled a little bit by not naming a coach until late. Plus, they just dominated the West Coast."

"They captured 12 of the top 17 players in California," added Grosz, who is based in Pennsylvania. "Plus, they got a big break there at the end by signing Whitney Lewis. They did a good job for need, everywhere except quarterback."

PrepStar's MacIntyre, also based in California, was impressed as well.

"They dominated California and got some of the nation's top players," MacIntyre said. "They got three of our top

## National Recruiting Experts Rankings

BILL KURELIC Ohio Football Recruiting News	JEREMY CRABTREE Rivals100.com	ROB MACINTYRE PrepStar
1 USC	1 LSU	1 LSU
2 Florida	2 Florida	2 Florida
3 LSU	3 USC	3 USC
4 Oklahoma	4 Miami (Fla.)	4 Miami (Fla.)
5 Notre Dame	5 Oklahoma	5 Oklahoma
6 Texas A&M	6 Georgia	6 Georgia
7 Miami (Fla.)	7 N.C. State	7 N.C. State
8 Michigan	8 South Carolina	8 South Carolina
9 N.C. State	9 Texas A&M	9 Texas A&M
10 Georgia	10 Auburn	10 Auburn
14 OHIO STATE	40 OHIO STATE	40 OHIO STATE

PHIL GROSZ G&W Recruiting Report	TOM LEMMING Prep Football Report	ALLEN WALLACE SuperPrep
1 USC	1 LSU	1 USC
2 Florida	2 Florida	2 Florida
3 LSU	3 USC	3 LSU
4 Oklahoma	4 Notre Dame	4 Oklahoma
5 Miami (Fla.)	5 Miami (Fla.)	5 Notre Dame
6 Texas A&M	6 Oklahoma	6 Miami (Fla.)
7 Notre Dame	7 Michigan	7 Texas A&M
8 Auburn	8 Texas	8 N.C. State
9 Georgia	9 Tennessee	9 Michigan
10 N.C. State	10 N.C. State	10 South Carolina
25 OHIO STATE	15 OHIO STATE	11 OHIO STATE

NATIONAL RECRUITING EXPERTS CONSENSUS POLL  
(Determined by voting points; First-place votes in parentheses)

1 (tie) LSU (3)	54	6	Notre Dame	23	11	South Carolina	7
1 (tie) USC (3)	54	7	Texas A&M	18	12	Auburn	4
1 (tie) Florida	54	8	N.C. State	15	13	Texas	3
4 Oklahoma	38	9	Georgia	13	14	Tennessee	2
5 Miami (Fla.)	35	10	Michigan	9			

Average Ohio State Ranking: 24th

10 players nationally in Steve Smith, Whitney Lewis and Reggie Bush."

LSU nailed down nine SuperPrep All-Americans. Among Rivals100.com top-100 picks, the top names were in-state defensive back Nick Child (No. 41) and running back Alley Broussard (No. 42) and Mississippi defensive end Sean Merrill (No. 43).

"They got a majority of the best players in their own state, 14 of the top 15, I believe," said Lemming, who is based in Illinois.

Crabtree added, "They recruited nationally very well. They went out of state and landed some important recruits. Plus they dominated inside their state."

The Tigers, under Nick Saban, closed nicely with late verbal from in-state defensive tackle Carnell Stewart (No. 66) and Alabama quarterback JaMarcus Russell (No. 79), whom they took away from Miami (Fla.).

"They started out hot and stayed consistent," MacIntyre said.

Florida coach Ron Zook was a lightning rod for controversy in his bid to follow Steve Spurrier. But Zook quieted his critics with a class everybody judged as the nation's second-best.

"Ron Zook sure proved a lot to the naysayers," Crabtree said. "I think their success was a combination of things. Florida State was a little bit down. But I also think that Zook and his staff worked hard at it. He made his presence known more than any other head coach in the country this year."

Zook and his staff locked up 10 SuperPrep All-Americans.

"They are not going to accept failure there at Florida," Wallace said. "Coach Zook understands he needs to be successful on the field. The Spurrier years were just too good. Zook answered very quickly that he will be a good recruiter. He likes it. He is very aggressive like (USC's) Pete Carroll."

"They robbed the other two Florida programs and took some good JUCO kids that will help them right away."

The Gators picked up three top-25 players late with in-state wide receiver Andre Caldwell (No. 4) and defensive end Joe Cohen (No. 16) as well as Texas defensive end Jarvis Moss (No. 25). Also key was an early verbal from North Carolina record-setting quarterback Chris Leak (No. 26).

"They picked up Chris Leak in early January and everything went their way after that," MacIntyre said. "They got some great players like Joe Cohen and Andre Caldwell who fit their system."

Oklahoma was fourth in the consensus poll, while Miami (Fla.) was fifth. They each bagged five national top-100 prospects.

The top name for the Sooners was Illinois defensive lineman Moe Dampeer (No. 29).

Miami bagged Wright (No. 5) from California and also took New Jersey defensive tackle Nathaniel Robinson (No. 15) and Pompano Beach (Fla.) Ely teammates running back Tyrone Moss (No. 44) and offensive lineman Andrew Bain (No. 59).



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## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: THE EXPERTS

The second five had Notre Dame sixth (see sidebar, page 12), followed by Texas A&M, N.C. State, Georgia and Michigan.

Michigan actually took the fourth-highest total of national top-100 players with six. But UM's relatively small class with 16 signees kept it from ranking any higher than 10th in the consensus poll.

For more on the Wolverines and the rest of the Big Ten, see the story on pages 10-12.

The following are comments from several of these experts on Ohio State's 2003 recruiting effort.

## Kurelic

Kurelic rated OSU's recruiting effort as second in the Big Ten behind Michigan and 14th-best nationally.

"I think, looking at signing day, Ohio State fans are going to be disappointed that they lost out on some players they had a shot at," Kurelic said. "I'm sure the Ohio State coaches are disappointed as well."

"But in the big picture, Ohio State got a solid recruiting class. It is a class where there are some impact players."

OSU landed six of Kurelic's top 10 Ohio players, led by defensive back Donte Whitner (No. 2), defensive lineman David Patterson (No. 3) and tight end Louis Irizarry (No. 4).

"Donte Whitner has a chance to play as a freshman," Kurelic said. "With Louis Irizarry, you're not going to find a much better tight end anywhere in the country. He can stretch defenses. He could also be a factor this season."

"I think, overall, Ohio State did a good job of filling their needs. I would have liked to see them get a few more offensive linemen. But they made a decision. They weren't going to take any borderline offensive line prospects and risk not being able to take a good or great player at another position."

Kurelic believes the strength of OSU's class is in the secondary, where they took six signees.

"Nobody did better in the defensive backfield than Ohio State," he said.

## Crabtree

Using a computerized method that weighs players based on their rankings, Crabtree's Rivals100.com service downgraded OSU's small class to 40th nationally.

"It was unfortunate that they lost some guys on signing day," he said. "If they had gotten a few of them, this might have still been a top-10 class. It hurts to lose some of those guys."

OSU signed three of Rivals100.com's national top-100 players in Whitner (No. 27), Irizarry (No. 38) and Patterson (No. 83).

"We really like Irizarry," Crabtree said. "Miami had him for a short while and Ohio State did a good job to get him back. He was a real bonus for them."

## Grosz

Grosz rated OSU's class 25th nationally and second in the Big Ten.

"They only took two out-of-state guys with Ira Guilford and Ashton Youboty," he said. "That last one, Youboty, was a stab in the heart to Penn State, who thought they had him."

"Overall, those two help them have a great group of defensive backs. Donte Whitner is one of my top three cornerback prospects in the country."

Grosz noted OSU's overall strength in Ohio as well.

"I know it was disappointing for them to lose Shawn Crable to Michigan," he

said. "But Coach (Jim) Tressel has done a marvelous job of re-establishing relationships with the coaches in Ohio. Coach (John) Cooper had a bad relationship with those coaches."

"It will be difficult for people to get people out of the state of Ohio in the future. I think everything sets up well for them in the years ahead."

## Lemming

Lemming ranked OSU's class 15th nationally.

"What happened to them at the end is what happens to a lot of schools," Lemming said. "I thought their planning was good with the limited scholarships. As it turned out, though, they could have been in on a few extra guys."

OSU's success on the field may have actually worked against the Buckeyes.

"They weren't going to get any good running backs because kids see the success Maurice Clarett is having there," Lemming said.

Lemming believes the Buckeyes, with the ability to take close to 25 next year, are positioned for another big year.

"Like somebody said on ESPN, they are setting themselves up to maybe have a No. 1 class next year," he said. "Coming off the national title, they have a lot to work with for the next year or so."

## MacIntyre

PrepStar's ratings, coincidentally or not, mirrored those of Rivals100.com. The service also had OSU 40th nationally.

"It is an outstanding class, but the numbers are down," MacIntyre said. "They only had so many scholarships to give and that hurt them a little bit."

MacIntyre liked how the Buckeyes loaded up on defensive backs, many of whom can play more than one position.

"It was a good year for defensive backs nationally, and Ohio State loaded up on them," he said. "They got five or six great ones. In my opinion, defense is how they won the national championship, so they're sticking with that formula."

## Wallace

Wallace picked OSU the highest of anybody, ranking the Buckeyes 11th nationally and second in the Big Ten.

"They signed four of our Elite 100 players in Ira Guilford, Louis Irizarry, David Patterson and Donte Whitner," Wallace said. "It is a good-looking class, especially on the defensive side of the ball."

In addition to those four, OSU also signed four other SuperPrep All-Americans (national top 288) in defensive backs Tony Gonzalez and Dareus Hiley, wide receiver Devin Jordan and defensive lineman Brandon Maupin.

But Wallace noted that OSU's slow finish hurt the class rank.

"I had Ohio State ranked ahead of Michigan until the last couple of days," he said. "They lost Stanley McClover to Auburn and didn't finish with Crable."

In terms of sleepers, Wallace likes defensive linemen Sian Cotton and Marcel Frost.

"We don't have either one of them ranked as All-Americans, but they could go on and maybe perform that way at the college level," he said.



Louis Irizarry

## The Rivals 100

Here is a look at the final Rivals 100 list, with players ranked in order from 1-100. Ohio State signed three of these players. Additionally, eight others (marked with an asterisk) visited OSU officially.

Rank	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Hometown	Commitment
1	Ernie Sims	LB	6-0	220	Tallahassee (FL) N. Fla. Christian	Florida State
2	Reggie Bush	RB	6-0	180	San Diego (CA) Helix	Southern Cal
3	Whitney Lewis	ATH	6-1	215	Ventura (CA) St. Bonaventure	Southern Cal
4	Andre Caldwell	WR	6-2	180	Tampa (FL) Jefferson	Florida
5	Kyle Wright	QB	6-4	200	Danville (CA) Monte Vista	Miami-FL
6	Prescott Burgess*	DB	6-3	210	Warren (OH) Harding	Michigan
7	Tony Hills Jr.	TE	6-6	260	Alief (TX) Elisk	Texas
8	Jorrie Adams	OL	6-7	275	Jasper (TX)	Texas A&M
9	Paul Oliver	DB	6-0	185	Kennesaw (GA) Harrison	Georgia
10	Greg Olsen	TE	6-6	235	Wayne Hills (NJ)	Notre Dame
11	Martin O'Donnell	OL	6-5	290	Downers Grove (IL) Downers Grove S.	Illinois
12	Dee Webb	DB	6-0	185	Jacksonville (FL) Ed White	Florida
13	Wesley Jefferson*	LB	6-2	230	Brandywine (MD) Gwynn Park	Maryland
14	LaMar Woodley	LB	6-3	245	Saginaw (MI) Saginaw	Michigan
15	Nathaniel Robinson	DT	6-4	319	Irvine (NJ)	Miami-FL
16	Joe Cohen	DE	6-2	240	Palm Bay (FL)	Florida
17	Chad Jackson	WR	6-1	200	Hoover (AL)	Florida
18	Ofa Mohetau	OL	6-3	335	Euless (TX) Trinity	Brigham Young
19	Kregg Lumpkin	RB	6-0	190	Stone Mountain (GA) Stephens	Georgia
20	Robert Meachem	WR	6-3	200	Tulsa (OK) Booker T. Washington	Tennessee
21	Demetris Summers	RB	6-1	200	Lexington (SC)	South Carolina
22	Justin Ostrowski	DE	6-5	255	Portage (WI)	Wisconsin
23	Victor Abiamiri	DE	6-5	245	Baltimore (MD) Gilman	Notre Dame
24	Quinton Culbertson	DB	6-2	205	Jackson (MS) Province	Mississippi State
25	Jarvis Moss	DE	6-7	220	Denton (TX) Ryan	Florida
26	Chris Leak	QB	6-1	205	Charlotte (NC) Independence	Florida
27	Donte Whitner*	DB	5-11	175	Cleveland (OH) Glenview	Ohio State
28	Michael Bush*	ATH	6-3	225	Louisville (KY) Male	Louisville
29	Lawrence Dampier*	DT	6-5	275	Decatur (IL) Decatur MacArthur	Oklahoma
30	Steve Smith	ATH	5-11	190	Woodland Hills (CA) Taft	Southern Cal
31	Daniel Brooks	LB	6-3	230	Jackson (TH) Central Merry	Tennessee
32	Robert Lane	QB	6-3	210	Monroe (LA) Neville	Ole Miss
33	Sean Bailey	WR	6-0	165	Alpharetta (GA) Milton	Georgia
34	Justin Warren	LB	6-3	220	Tyler (TX) Lee	Texas A&M
35	Tarell Brown*	DB	5-11	178	Mesquite (TX) North Mesquite	Texas
36	Adarius Bowman	WR	6-3	210	Chattanooga (TN) Notre Dame	North Carolina
37	Kenny Scott	DB	6-1	176	Daytona Beach (FL) Seabreeze	Georgia Tech
38	Louis Irizarry*	TE	6-5	235	Youngstown (OH) Ursuline	Ohio State
39	Shawn Crable*	DE	6-6	230	Massillon (OH) Washington	Michigan
40	Antonio Cromartie	DB	6-3	200	Tallahassee (FL) Lincoln	Florida State
41	Nick Child	DB	6-1	170	Mettairie (LA) Rummel	LSU
42	Alley Broussard	RB	6-1	228	Lafayette (LA) Acadiana	LSU
43	Sean Merrill	DE	6-5	292	O'berville (MS)	LSU
44	Tyrene Moss	RB	5-10	210	Pompano Beach (FL) Ey	Miami-FL
45	Mark Bradford	WR	6-1	185	Los Angeles (CA) Fremont	Stanford
46	Darrell Blackman	RB	6-1	185	Williamsport (PA) Williamsport	NC State
47	Ryan Poles	OL	6-5	290	Canandaigua (NY) Academy	Boston College
48	Vernon Davis	TE	6-4	220	Washington (D.C.) Dunbar	Maryland
49	Brian Daniels	OL	6-4	280	Denver (CO) Mullen	Colorado
50	Doug Van Dyke	DE	6-6	245	Marshall (MI)	Purdue
51	Tony Cade	DB	6-2	200	Lewisville (TX)	Oklahoma
52	Tim Crowder	DE	6-4	227	Tyler (TX) John Tyler	Texas
53	Kyle Caldwell	DE	6-4	255	Scottsdale (AZ) Saguaro	Arizona State
54	Maurice Drew	RB	5-9	190	Concord (CA) De La Salle	UCLA
55	Jayson Swain	WR	6-2	200	Huntsville (AL) Grissom	Tennessee
56	Phillip Brown	DB	5-11	185	Hampton (VA) Phoebus	Virginia
57	Dennis Dixon	QB	6-4	180	San Leandro (CA) San Leandro	Oregon
58	Drew Radovich	OL	6-5	275	Mission Viejo (CA)	Southern Cal
59	Andrew Bain	OL	6-4	320	Lauderdale (FL) Ely	Miami-FL
60	Michael Griffin	DB	6-1	180	Austin (TX) Bowie	Texas
61	Reggie Nelson	DB	6-0	175	Palm Bay (FL)	Florida
62	Joel Holler*	OL	6-6	330	Lancaster (PA) JP McCaskey	Penn State
63	Junior Lemau'u	DE	6-5	240	Long Beach (CA) Poly	UCLA
64	Rashaun Grant	RB	5-11	190	Tampa (FL) Jefferson	Georgia Tech
65	Alonso Dotson	DE	6-5	225	Alief (TX) Hastings	Oklahoma
66	Carnell Stewart	DT	6-6	297	River Ridge (LA) John Curtis	LSU
67	Xavier Lawson-Kennedy	DT	6-3	305	Duncanville (TX)	Oklahoma State
68	Sedrick Ellis	DT	6-3	260	Chino (CA) Chino	Southern Cal
69	Lawrence Jackson	DE	6-5	245	Inglewood (CA) Inglewood	Southern Cal
70	Tommy Grady	QB	6-6	215	Huntington Beach (CA) Edison	Oklahoma
71	Clayton Richard	QB	6-5	225	Lafayette (IN) McCutcheon	Michigan
72	Freddie Parish	DB	6-1	195	Long Beach (CA) Poly	Notre Dame
73	Marcus Thomas	DT	6-4	285	Jacksonville (FL) Mandarin	Florida
74	Anthony Hill	WR	6-2	195	Jacksonville (FL) First Coast	LSU
75	Dorien Bryant	WR	5-10	165	Swedesboro (NJ) Kingsway Regional	Boston College
76	Mike Mason	WR	6-0	175	Rocky Mount (NC) Senior	North Carolina
77	Chris Barrett	TE	6-5	250	Tustin (CA) Tustin	Southern Cal
78	Vince McCabe	QB	6-4	205	Wexford (PA) Pine-Richland	Virginia
79	JaMarcus Russell	QB	6-5	225	Mobile (AL) Williamson	LSU
80	Claude McBride	DE	6-4	235	Camden (NJ) Woodrow Wilson	Tennessee
81	Tavares Gooden*	LB	6-1	220	FL Lauderdale (FL) St. Thos. Aquinas	Miami-FL
82	Demario Pleasant	LB	6-3	215	Lewisville (TX)	Oklahoma
83	David Patterson*	DT	6-3	260	Warrens Heights (OH)	Ohio State
84	Marcus Stone	QB	6-4	230	Harrisburg (PA) Bishop McDevitt	NC State
85	Tim Castille	ATH	5-11	220	Birmingham (AL) Briarwood Christian	Alabama
86	Jonathan Stupar	TE	6-5	245	State College (PA) State College Area	Virginia
87	LaRon Landry	ATH	6-3	185	Hahnville (LA) Hahnville	LSU
88	Jordy Upsey	OL	6-4	267	Altamonte Springs (FL) Lake Brantley	Virginia
89	Jim Presley	LB	6-3	225	Highland (MI) Millford	Michigan
90	Thomas Williams	LB	6-3	225	Vacaville (CA) Vacaville	Southern Cal
91	Sam Baker	OL	6-5	305	Tustin (CA) Tustin	Southern Cal
92	Emeka Nnoli	RB	6-1	225	Sacramento (CA) Natomas	Stanford
93	Jimmie Sutton III	ATH	6-1	170	Boca Raton (FL) Boca Raton	NC State
94	Donovan Davis	OL	6-7	330	Jackson (MS) Callaway	Mississippi State
95	Aubrey McPhadden	OL	6-6	320	Jacksonville (FL) First Coast	Florida State
96	Ryan Murdy	DB	6-2	200	Pittsburgh (PA) Woodland Hills	Michigan
97	Desmond Williams	LB	6-2	238	Dacula (GA)	Georgia
98	Jason Jack	DE	6-3	250	Humble (TX)	Texas A&M
99	Craig Chambers	WR	6-5	190	Mill Creek (WA) Jackson	Washington
100	Tim Washington	DE	6-4	235	Sugar Land (TX) Dulles	LSU



## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: THE BUCKEYE STATE

## OSU's New Group Has NE Ohio Flavor To It

By STEVE HELWAGEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

In large part, Ohio State's 2003 football recruiting class was built in the Buckeye State.

Twelve of the 14 high school players who signed with the Buckeyes on national signing day hail from the state of Ohio. Looking closer at the map, 11 of those 12 players come from northeast Ohio — one of the nation's true hotbeds of high school football.

"When we had our pro timing day here recently, one of the pro scouts told us something extraordinary," OSU coach Jim Tressel said. "He said that northeast Ohio has a higher percentage of the players in the National Football League than any place in the country except for the southern tip of Florida."

"When you think about it, you see the excellence of football in that area. It is a traditional part of the culture there. Looking at history, we know we have to do a good job in northeast Ohio."

"Fortunately, I think we did a good job there this year. (Assistants) Mel Tucker and Jim Bollman did a good job recruiting up in those areas and Bill Conley was able to help us land a tight end (Louis Irizarry) up there."

It was not a perfect year for the Buckeyes in Ohio, however.

Ohio State ended up signing six of the state's top 10 players, as ranked by The

Ohio Football Recruiting News. If St. Henry quarterback Todd Boeckman (ranked 13th), who plans to enroll at OSU full time in January 2004, is factored in, the Buckeyes got 12 of the state's top 17 players in the same survey.

The Buckeyes came up short, though, on as many as four key Ohio prospects they had made scholarship offers to. That group includes the state's No. 1-ranked player, Warren Harding safety Prescott Burgess, who signed with Michigan.

Others the Buckeyes coveted who got away included Massillon Washington defensive end Shawn Crable (No. 5) to Michigan, Dublin Coffman quarterback Brady Quinn (No. 7) to Notre Dame and Cincinnati Woodward defensive end Ray Edwards (No. 10) to Purdue.

Bill Kurelic, who edits TOFRN and contributes to the BSB Internet site (ohiostate.rivals.com), noted it was probably impossible for OSU — with limited scholarships available — to dominate Ohio completely this year.

"Overall, I think Ohio State did pretty well in Ohio," Kurelic said. "They got six of the top 10 prospects in the state."



Ray Edwards

"I think with a couple of the players they did not get, particularly Quinn and Crable, they were in an uphill battle all the way. They were to a lesser extent with Burgess."

With OSU down on scholarships, a number of major conference schools came into the state and found some players. Most notable among them were Boston College and Pittsburgh from the Big East. Pitt took eight top-50 prospects, while BC got five.

Unlike past years, when MAC teams have been able to grab some higher-rated Ohio players, that conference was shut out of the top 30.

Big Ten schools ended up signing 19 of Ohio's top 40 prospects, three ahead of last year's total.

"It was not a spectacular year in the state, like it was a year ago," Kurelic said. "But certainly it was a good year with a lot of depth when you see that even some guys near the bottom of the top 50 were going to Big Ten schools."

OSU's haul inside the state was headlined by No. 2-ranked Donte Whitner, a defensive back from Cleveland Glenville.

## Getting Ohio's Best

Here is a look at how Ohio State has done at recruiting within the state of Ohio, including a look at the number of The Ohio Football Recruiting News' top-10 Ohio prospects who have signed with OSU over the last six years.

Year	Total Signees	Ohio Signees	Ohio Top-10 Signees
2003	14	12	6
2002	25	18	8
2001	17	10	5
2000	25	13	5
1999	24	17	8
1998	14	6	3
1997	22	12	5
1996	25	15	7

Whitner has already enrolled at OSU, following in the footsteps of top Ohio prospect Maurice Clarett a year ago.

In the top 10, the Buckeyes also got Warrensville Heights defensive tackle David Patterson (No. 3), Youngstown Ursuline's Irizarry (No. 4), Cleveland Glenville defensive back Darius Hiley (No. 6), Cleveland St. Ignatius defensive back Tony Gonzalez (No. 8) and Massillon Washington wide receiver Devin Jordan (No. 10).

In addition to Boeckman, OSU also grabbed West Chester Lakota West defensive lineman Brandon Maupin (No. 11), Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary defensive tackle Sian Cotton (No. 14), North



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## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: THE BUCKEYE STATE

Canton Hoover defensive back Curt Lukens (No. 15), Lyndhurst Brush tight end/defensive end Marcel Frost (No. 16), East Cleveland Shaw linebacker Reggie Smith (No. 17) and Massillon Perry offensive lineman Kirk Barton (No. 29).

## Headed Up North

Burgess ended the suspense early by committing to Michigan during the live broadcast Jan. 5 of the U.S. Army All-American Bowl in San Antonio.

Crabbe, however, made everybody wait until signing day before he picked UM over OSU.

Burgess is the highest-ranked Ohio prospect to go to Michigan since top-ranked Charles Woodson signed with UM in 1995. Woodson, a defensive back from Fremont Ross, went on to win the 1997 Heisman Trophy for the Wolverines.

Burgess and Crabbe are the seventh and eighth Ohio top-10 players to go to Michigan since 1996. The others were:

- 1997 — Offensive linemen Jason Brooks (No. 2) and Ben Mast (No. 5).
- 1998 — Tight end Dave Petruzzello (No. 4).
- 1999 — Quarterback Andy Mignery (No. 10).
- 2001 — Defensive ends Pat Massey (No. 2) and Pierre Woods (No. 6).

## Headed Elsewhere

Meanwhile, Quinn told reporters he was a lifelong Notre Dame fan. OSU offered him during the summer camp, but Quinn committed early to the Irish.

He is the first Ohio top-10 prospect to sign with Notre Dame since three of them signed with the Irish in 1998 — fullback Tom Lopienski (No. 2), tailback Tony Fisher (No. 5) and safety Rocky Boiman (No. 9).

Quinn will be joined in South Bend by his

Dublin Coffman teammate, wide receiver Chinedum Ndukwe (No. 12).

Edwards gives Purdue its highest-rated Ohio prospect in at least eight years. He originally committed to Purdue in early January, only to switch to Tennessee at mid-month. Then he changed back to Purdue on signing day.

"Purdue's a better academic school (than Tennessee)," Edwards said upon signing with the Boilermakers.

None of Pittsburgh's eight top-50 signees was ranked above 18th, where Warren Harding defensive back Mike Phillips was slotted.

Other notables to go with the Panthers

included Chardon Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin offensive lineman Mike DeLuca (No. 22), Cleveland Glenview defensive end Michael Hearn (No. 24), Cincinnati Moeller defensive back Eric Thatcher (No. 33) and Massillon Perry offensive lineman Zach Slates (No. 39).

Cincinnati Anderson offensive lineman Ty Hall (No. 19) headlined BC's foray into Ohio. The Golden Eagles hit Cincinnati hard, also getting North College Hill defensive back DeJuan Tribble (No. 23) and St. Xavier defensive lineman Nick Larkin (No. 26).

In the Big Ten, Minnesota scored with a pair of top-50 players from Columbus' east side. The Golden Gophers got Eastmoor Academy tailback Justin Valentine (No. 27) and Walnut Ridge wide receiver Ernie Wheelwright (No. 48).

Wisconsin snagged Bedford linebacker Brandon Kelly (No. 28), Northwestern signed Dublin Coffman linebacker Adam Kadela (No. 34) and Illinois took Cincinnati Anderson offensive lineman Chris Norwell (No. 35).

For a complete look at where Ohio's top 50 are headed as well as Ohio signees with Big Ten schools, check out the accompanying chart.

## Mr. Football

Kenton quarterback Ben Mauk rewrote the national career passing record book during his four-year prep career.

Mauk, fittingly named Ohio's 2002 Mr. Football award winner by The Associated Press, ended his career with 17,524 passing yards, beating J.R. House's old career mark of 14,457 yards by more than 3,000. He also threw for 184 touchdowns in his career.

Mauk, who threw for 6,530 yards and 76 touchdowns as a senior while leading Kenton to a second straight state title, committed to Wake Forest during the season.

At 6-2, 180 pounds, Mauk was downgraded by some services. He was ranked the state's 36th-best prospect by TOFRN.

Mauk is the first Ohio Mr. Football award winner to sign with an ACC school.

Since the Mr. Football award was instituted in 1987, OSU has signed seven players who won a combined eight Mr. Football awards. They were Buster Howe (1987), Robert Smith (1988-89), Bobby Hoying (1990), Andy Katzenmoyer (1995), Derek Combs (1996), Brandon "Bam" Childress (1999) and Claret (2001).

Other Mr. Football award winners who went elsewhere included Derek Kidwell (1991, Bowling Green), Marc Edwards (1992, Notre Dame), Curtis Enis (1993, Penn State), Charles Woodson (1994, Michigan), Tony Fisher (1997, Notre Dame), Ryan Brewer (1998, South Carolina) and Jeff Backes (2000, Northwestern).

## Ohio Football Signees Elsewhere

The following is a list of Ohio football players who have signed letters of intent to play college football at schools besides Ohio State, with rankings as overall prospects by The Ohio Football Recruiting News.

TOFRN Rank	Player	Pos.	High School	College
1	Prescott Burgess	DB	Warren Harding	Michigan
5	Shawn Crabbe	LB	Massillon Washington	Michigan
7	Brady Quinn	QB	Dublin Coffman	Notre Dame
9	Ray Edwards	DE	Cincinnati Woodward	Purdue
12	Chinedum Ndukwe	WR	Dublin Coffman	Notre Dame
18	Mike Phillips	DB	Warren Harding	Pittsburgh
19	Ty Hall	OL	Cincinnati Anderson	Boston College
20	Andrew Crumme	OL	Van Wert	Maryland
21	Dan Pribula	OL	Strongsville	Syracuse (track)
22	Mike DeLuca	OL	Chardon ND-CL	Pittsburgh
23	DeJuan Tribble	DB	Cinti. N. College Hill	Boston College
24	Michael Hearn	DE	Cleveland Glenview	Pittsburgh
25	Kellen Dykes	DE	Youngstown Chaney	West Virginia
26	Nick Larkin	DL	Cincinnati St. Xavier	Boston College
27	Justin Valentine	RB	Columbus Eastmoor	Minnesota
28	Brandon Kelly	LB	Bedford	Wisconsin
30	Joey Razzano	FB	Milford	Virginia Tech
31	George Anderson	LB	Columbus Milflin	Unsigne
32	Scooter McDougale	RB	East Cleveland Shaw	Toledo
33	Eric Thatcher	DB	Cincinnati Moeller	Pittsburgh
34	Adam Kadela	LB	Dublin Coffman	Pittsburgh
35	Chris Norwell	OL	Cincinnati Anderson	Illinois
36	Ben Mauk	QB	Kenton	Wake Forest
37	Tom Aneviski	OL	Cincinnati Elder	Boston College
38	Ryan Thompson	DE	Akron Hoban	Boston College
39	Zach Slates	OL	Massillon Perry	Pittsburgh
40	Brian Jones	DB	Avon Lake	Unsigne
41	Adam Graessle	K/P	Dublin Coffman	Pittsburgh
42	Mike McGlynn	OL	Austintown Fitch	Pittsburgh
43	Terrence Graves	RB	Youngstown Ursuline	Unsigne
44	Chris Vangas	OL	Dayton Cham-Julienne	Pittsburgh
45	Mike Villagrana	DE	Youngstown Boardman	West Virginia
46	John Ferguson	QB	Reynoldsburg	Akron
47	Charlie Norden	OL	Dublin Scioto	Miami (Ohio)
48	Ernie Wheelwright	WR	Columbus Walnut Ridge	Minnesota
49	Markeys Scott	DB	Massillon Washington	Toledo
50	Darren Paige	WR	Rossford	Miami (Ohio)

## OTHER OHIOANS WITH BIG TEN SCHOOLS

—	Arthur Boyd	DL	Shaker Heights	Illinois
—	Joe Kremer	DT	Urbana	Indiana
—	Sean Clayton	QB	Poland Seminary	Michigan State
—	Maurice Smith	DB	Warren Howland	Michigan State
—	Paul Long	DB	Dayton Meadowdale	Purdue



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## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: OSU'S 2003 CLASS

## Tressel's Latest Class Boasts Talent, Versatility

By STEVE HELWAGEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

It will go into the books as a small recruiting class, but OSU coach Jim Tressel said the school's 2003 collection of signees is not short in two key areas.

"This is an extraordinarily talented and versatile group," Tressel said on national signing day Feb. 5. "It is a class with excellent maturity and an obvious passion to be a part of the proud tradition of Ohio State football."

"It is also a class that is very solid academically, and that is very important to us."

Ohio State signed 14 high school prospects on signing day. The school is also welcoming a transfer from Air Force in linebacker Anthony Schlegel (see story, page 32).

Plus at least two other high school prospects will be enrolling with the idea they will go on scholarship in 2004. Those players include St. Henry, Ohio, quarterback Todd Boeckman and Charleston (W.Va.) Capital fullback/linebacker Cedric Scott.

Of the 14 players OSU signed, 12 are from Ohio. New Jersey and Texas each sent one player to OSU this year.

Two OSU signees, defensive backs Donte Whitner and Ashton Youboty, have already enrolled and will participate in spring football.

Here are bios on OSU's 14 high school signees in the class of 2003.

• **Kirk Barton, offensive lineman** — Massillon (Ohio) Perry — Barton (6-6, 275, 4.81) was a two-way starter at tight end and defensive end at Perry.

He impressed the OSU coaches with his agility and footwork at last year's summer camp. He projects as an offensive tackle at the college level.

As a senior, he was named to a first-team berth on the All-Federal League team and was a member of the Akron Beacon Journal's all-star team.

Barton is ranked Ohio's 29th-best prospect by The Ohio Football Recruiting News and the nation's 60th-best offensive tackle by Rivals100.com. He picked OSU over Northwestern, Purdue, Stanford and Pittsburgh in December. He holds a 3.5 GPA and scored a 26 on the ACT.

• **Sian Cotton, defensive lineman**, Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary — Cotton (6-4, 295, 4.8) had 67 tackles and nine sacks as a junior. He then tallied 84 tackles and 13 sacks as a senior. He also plays basketball for the Irish's nationally ranked team.

As a senior, he was named first-team All-Ohio in Division IV by The Associated Press. He played in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl.

Cotton is ranked Ohio's 14th-best

prospect by TOFRN and the Midwest's 35th-best prospect by SuperPrep. He is ranked the Midwest's 26th-best prospect and an All-American by Tom Lemming's Prep Football Report.

Cotton, who benches 300 pounds, picked OSU over Florida and Pittsburgh in January. He holds a 2.6 GPA and scored a 19 on the ACT.

• **Marcel Frost, tight end/defensive end**, Lyndhurst (Ohio) Brush — Frost (6-5, 245, 4.6) had 36 catches for 538 yards and eight TDs on offense and 65 tackles and eight sacks on defense as a junior. As a senior, he had 32 catches for 550 yards and seven TDs on offense and 80 tackles and 12 sacks on defense.

As a senior, Frost was named first-team All-Northeast Lakes District and special mention All-Ohio by the AP in Division I.

Frost is ranked Ohio's 16th-best prospect by TOFRN and the nation's 31st-best tight end by Rivals100.com. SuperPrep considers him the Midwest's 56th-best prospect.

Frost comes from the same school that sent Roy Hall to OSU. He originally committed to Iowa before switching to OSU in late January. He also considered Pittsburgh and Boston College. He holds a 2.7 GPA and scored a 920 on the SAT.

• **Tony Gonzalez, defensive back/wide receiver**, Cleveland St. Ignace — Gonzalez (6-0, 187, 4.37) helped lead St. Ignace to the Division I state title as a junior. He had 53 tackles and six interceptions on defense and 42 catches for 1,012 yards and 10 TDs on offense.

As a senior, he had 50 tackles, four interceptions and 13 pass breakups on defense and caught 33 passes for over 900 yards and 11 TDs on offense. He also won a regional 400-meter track championship as a junior.

He was named first-team All-Ohio in Division I, according to the AP. He was also named co-defensive player of the year in Division I.

Gonzalez is ranked Ohio's eighth-best prospect by TOFRN and the nation's 16th-best cornerback by Rivals100.com. He is rated the Midwest's 22nd-best prospect and the nation's 29th-best defensive back (All-American) by SuperPrep. Gonzalez is ranked the Midwest's 23rd-best prospect and an All-American by Lemming.

He was OSU's first verbal in this class, picking the Buckeyes over Notre Dame, Michigan and others last April. His brother, Joe, will be a senior defensive back at Indiana. Tony Gonzalez holds a 3.4 GPA and scored a 1240 on the SAT.

• **Ira Guilford, defensive back/running back**, Hoboken, N.J. — Guilford (6-0, 190, 4.45) had 2,261 yards rushing and scored 29 TDs on offense and had 87 tackles, four fumbles caused and

three sacks on defense as a senior. As a junior, he had 824 yards rushing and 86 tackles.

As a senior, he earned first-team all-state honors on both offense and defense and was named to the All-Tri-State team.

He is ranked New Jersey's ninth-best prospect and the nation's eighth-best safety by Rivals100.com. He also is rated New Jersey's ninth-best prospect and the nation's fourth-best skilled athlete (All-American) by SuperPrep. Guilford is ranked the nation's 48th-best defensive back by Rivals100.com and the 28th-best prospect in the East by Lemming.

This superb athlete bench presses 360 pounds and has a 40-inch vertical. He picked OSU over Notre Dame, Penn State, Syracuse and Rutgers in late January. He holds a 2.3 GPA and scored an 1100 on the SAT.

• **Dareus Hiley, defensive back**, Cleveland Glenview — Hiley (6-1, 195, 4.41) was a four-year starter at Glenview with experience at quarterback, wide receiver, defensive back and kick returner. As a senior, he split time between quarterback and receiver. He had 1,900 yards and 22 TDs passing and also rushed for 600 yards and six TDs. He also intercepted five passes on defense.

In his career, he amassed 4,282 all-purpose yards and 58 touchdowns on offense and 18 interceptions on defense.

He earned first-team All-Northeast Lakes District and special mention All-Ohio by The Associated Press in Division I. Hiley is ranked the 12th-best player in the Midwest by the Detroit Free Press.

He is ranked Ohio's sixth-best prospect by TOFRN and the nation's 14th-best cornerback by Rivals100.com. SuperPrep rates him the 19th-best prospect in the Midwest and the nation's 16th-best defensive back (All-American). He is ranked the 35th-best prospect in the Midwest by Tom Lemming's Prep Football Report.

Hiley picked OSU over USC, Michigan, Wisconsin and Miami (Fla.) in December. He holds a 2.6 GPA but must improve on a 16 on the ACT. He was to retake the test Feb. 8.

• **Louis Irizarry, tight end**, Youngstown (Ohio) Ursuline — In 3-1/2 years as a varsity starter, Irizarry (6-5, 235, 4.6) caught 127 passes for 2,559 yards (20.1 average) and 25 TDs. As a sophomore, he had 46 catches for 962 yards and eight TDs for the 14-1 Division IV state championship team. As a senior, he had 35 catches for 789 yards and nine TDs.

He earned first-team All-Ohio in Division IV by the AP. The Detroit Free Press ranks him the fifth-best player in the Midwest.

Irizarry is ranked Ohio's fourth-best prospect by TOFRN and the nation's 38th-



Ira Guilford



Marcel Frost



Dareus Hiley



Tony Gonzalez



Louis Irizarry

best prospect overall and third-best tight end by Rivals100.com. SuperPrep rates him the Midwest's seventh-best prospect overall, the nation's No. 3 tight end (All-American) and the nation's 49th-best prospect overall. He is ranked the Midwest's 13th-best prospect and an All-American by Lemming.

Irizarry originally committed to OSU last July. But he changed his verbal to Miami (Fla.) in early January, only to return to the Buckeyes later in the month. He also visited Florida. He holds a 3.9 GPA and scored a 24 on the ACT.

• **Devin Jordan, wide receiver**, Massillon (Ohio) Washington — As a junior, Jordan (6-3, 190, 4.47) had 98 catches for 1,492 yards (15.2 average) and 18 TDs playing alongside quarterback Justin Zwick, now an OSU freshman. As a senior, he had 43 catches for 867 yards (20.2) and 12 TDs.

He was named first-team All-Ohio in Division I by the AP as a junior and as a senior.

Jordan is rated Ohio's 10th-best prospect by TOFRN and the nation's 29th-best wide receiver by Rivals100.com. He is rated the Midwest's 26th-best prospect and the nation's 32nd-best wide receiver (All-American) by SuperPrep. Lemming ranks him the Midwest's 19th-best receiver and an All-American.

He picked OSU over Pittsburgh, Michigan State and Kentucky last July. He holds a 3.65 GPA and scored a 19 on the ACT.

• **Curt Lukens, defensive back**, North Canton (Ohio) Hoover — As a senior, Lukens (6-3, 200, 4.5) led Hoover to an 8-3 season by making over 100 tackles (80 solos) and intercepting two passes as a linebacker. As a junior, he had 125 tackles and 40 receptions for 970 yards. He projects as either a safety or linebacker at OSU.

He earned first-team All-Ohio in Division I, according to the AP, as a junior and senior. He also was named co-defensive player of the year in Division I as a senior.

Lukens is ranked Ohio's 15th-best prospect by TOFRN and the nation's 35th-best safety prospect by Rivals100.com. He was rated the Midwest's 49th-best prospect by SuperPrep and the Midwest's 52nd-best prospect by Tom Lemming's Prep Football Report.



Devin Jordan



Curt Lukens



## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: OSU'S 2003 CLASS

Lukens was a 100- and 200-meter district champion in track as a junior. He picked OSU over Penn State and Florida after receiving an offer at the summer camp. He holds a 2.9 GPA and scored a 19 on the ACT.

• **Brandon Maupin, defensive line, West Chester (Ohio) Lakota West** — As a senior, Maupin (6-6, 290, 5.0) tallied 76 tackles, including 43 solos, and had 12 tackles for loss and six sacks.

He earned first-team All-Southwest District and special mention All-Ohio by the AP in Division I.

The Ohio Football Recruiting News ranks Maupin Ohio's 11th-best prospect and Rivals100.com considers him the nation's 21st-best strongside defensive end prospect. He was ranked the Midwest's 29th-best prospect and the 39th-best defensive line prospect nationally (All-American) by SuperPrep. Maupin is rated the Midwest's 22nd-best prospect and an All-American by Lemming.

He picked OSU over Boston College and Pittsburgh in December. He holds a 2.7 GPA to go with a 16 on the ACT and an 880 on the SAT.

• **David Patterson, defensive lineman, Warrensville Heights, Ohio** — Patterson (6-3, 285, 4.8) was a two-way starter for three seasons at Warrensville Heights. As a junior, he had 120 tackles and 16 sacks. As a senior, he had 98 tackles, 17 sacks, 25 tackles for loss and three blocked kicks.

He earned first-team All-Ohio and Northeast Lakes District defensive player of the year honors in Division III by the AP. The Detroit Free Press rates him the 15th-best player in the Midwest.

Patterson is ranked Ohio's third-best prospect by TOFRN, and Rivals100.com considers him the nation's seventh-best defensive tackle and 78th-best prospect overall. He was rated the Midwest's sixth-best prospect overall, the nation's 12th-best defensive lineman and the nation's 45th-best prospect overall (All-American) by SuperPrep. Lemming rates Patterson the Midwest's 34th-best prospect.

Patterson picked OSU over Miami (Fla.) and Boston College in December. He holds a 2.7 GPA and scored an 870 on the SAT.

• **Reggie Smith, linebacker, East Cleveland (Ohio) Shaw** — Smith (6-2, 225, 4.67) had 120 tackles, 17 sacks and five fumbles forced as a senior. He was a three-year starter at defensive end at Shaw, although he projects as a linebacker at OSU.

He earned first-team All-Northeast Lakes District and second-team All-Ohio

in Division II by The Associated Press.

The Ohio Football Recruiting News ranks Smith Ohio's 17th-best prospect, and Rivals100.com tabs him as the nation's 27th-best outside linebacker. Smith is ranked the Midwest's 57th-best prospect by SuperPrep and 49th in the Midwest overall by Tom Lemming's Prep Football Report.

Smith is averaging 20 points a game in basketball. He picked OSU over Iowa, Boston College, Virginia, Maryland and Michigan State. He must improve academically as his reported marks were a 2.4 GPA with a 16 on the ACT.

• **Donte Whitner, defensive back, Cleveland Glenville** — As a junior, Whitner (5-11, 185, 4.3) had 87 tackles and three interceptions on defense and 692 yards rushing and 14 TDs on offense. As a senior, he had 60 tackles, 10 tackles for loss, three interceptions and four fumbles forced on defense and nine TD catches on offense for an 8-2 team. Whitner tallied 13 interceptions in his career.

He earned first-team All-Northeast Lakes District and special mention All-Ohio by the AP in Division I. The Detroit Free Press ranks him the seventh-best player in the Midwest.

Whitner is ranked Ohio's No. 2 overall prospect by TOFRN and the nation's third-best cornerback and 27th-best prospect overall by Rivals100.com. SuperPrep rates him the No. 1 overall prospect in the Midwest, the nation's third-best defensive back (All-American) and the nation's seventh-best prospect overall. Whitner is ranked the sixth-best prospect in the Midwest and an All-American by Lemming.

He picked OSU over USC, Michigan, Notre Dame and Miami (Fla.) in December then played in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl before enrolling at OSU in January. He graduated with a 3.7 GPA and scored a 17 on the ACT.

• **Ashton Youboty, defensive back, Houston Klein** — As a senior, Youboty (6-1, 180, 4.45) had 60 tackles and three interceptions. He was named to the Texas Football All-Texas second team (all divisions). He worked mostly at safety but projects as a cornerback at OSU.

Youboty was born in Liberia in West Africa. He moved with his family to the United States and the Philadelphia area as a youngster before the family settled in Texas.

Rivals100.com tabs Youboty as the 28th-best prospect in Texas and the 14th-best safety prospect nationally. He is ranked the 40th-best prospect in the Southwest by Tom Lemming's Prep Football Report.

As a junior, Youboty jumped 22 feet in the long jump. He finished second in the 100- and 200-meter runs at the district track meet. He picked OSU over Penn State in December before enrolling in January. He graduated with a 3.67 GPA and scored an 870 on the SAT.



Brandon Maupin



Donte Whitner



David Patterson



Ashton Youboty



Reggie Smith

## Boeckman, C. Scott Will Come In As 'Grayshirts'

Ohio State plans to bring in at least two 2003 high school graduates as scholarship players beginning in January 2004.

As it stands, St. Henry, Ohio, quarterback Todd Boeckman plans to enroll part-time this fall then go on scholarship in January. That will allow him to conserve a year of eligibility. Likewise, Charleston (W.Va.) Capital fullback/linebacker Cedric Scott, the younger brother of OSU defensive end Darrien Scott, plans to walk on this fall before going on scholarship in January.

Here are bios on OSU's two "grayshirt" players.

• **Todd Boeckman, quarterback, St. Henry, Ohio** — Boeckman (6-5, 215, 4.77) was a four-year starting quarterback.

He led St. Henry to the Division V state title game as a freshman. He threw for 7,021 yards and 64 touchdowns in his high school career. That included 2,520 yards and 23 TDs as a freshman. He suffered a sprained medial collateral ligament as a senior, when he completed 95 of 177 passes for 1,415 yards and 15 TDs against seven interceptions in limited action.

He is ranked Ohio's 13th-best prospect by The Ohio Football Recruiting News and the nation's 19th-best quarterback by Rivals100.com. He is rated the 33rd-best prospect in the Midwest by SuperPrep and the 51st-best prospect in the Midwest by Tom Lemming's Prep Football Report.

Boeckman, who holds a 3.0 GPA and scored a 19 on the ACT, picked OSU over Pittsburgh and Maryland.

• **Cedric Scott, fullback/linebacker, Charleston (W.Va.) Capital** — Scott (6-1, 230, 4.6) had a team-high 80 tackles as a senior. But he could be ticketed as a fullback at OSU.

He had an offer from in-state West Virginia but chose to walk on at OSU with the idea of going on scholarship later.

He holds a 2.7 GPA but must raise his ACT score from 15 to 17 before he enrolls to be certified as a qualifier.



Cedric Scott

— Steve Helwag

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## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: MEL TUCKER

# Tucker Helps Deliver Cleveland For OSU

By ERIC LOUGHRY

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Mel Tucker made a name for himself as a prep standout at Cleveland Heights High School in the late 1980s. The name of the Ohio State defensive backs coach still carries a lot of weight in high school circles of the Cleveland area as he recruits Cuyahoga County for top prospects.

Of the Buckeyes' 14 signees to the 2003 recruiting class, six hail from the Cleveland area.

Tucker will directly oversee the progression of three of the players he helped land — defensive back/wide receiver Tony Gonzalez of Cleveland St. Ignace and defensive backs Dareus Hiley and Donte Whitner, who were teammates at Cleveland Glenville.

Other signees from the Cleveland area include David Patterson, a defensive lineman from Warrensville Heights High School; Reggie Smith, a linebacker from East Cleveland Shaw; and Marcel Frost, a defensive end/outside linebacker/tight end from Lyndhurst Brush who originally committed to Iowa.

OSU coach Jim Tressel lauded Tucker for his efforts in the talent-rich area of northeast Ohio, where it is vital to have success, he said.

"Look at the history of Ohio State with guys from northeast Ohio," Tressel said. "Look at the history of some schools that aren't Ohio State that have done pretty good with some northeast Ohio guys."

"So we were fortunate that we did a good job there and we're fortunate to have a guy like Mel Tucker and a guy like (offensive coordinator/offensive line coach) Jim Bollman recruit up in those areas that have good familiarity."

That Tressel is a native of Berea, a suburb of Cleveland, also is a major plus when recruiting in that area.

"With Coach Tressel here, he's from Cleveland, west side," Tucker said. "I'm from the east side. He's got a good name behind him. He's done a great job."

"It kind of helps a little bit when you have all those things working for you and you're able to identify the players early. That gives you a chance to get the guys. Coach Tressel knows every person, pretty much, up there. If I don't know somebody, he makes sure that he introduces me to those people that he knows and tries to expand my base a little bit."

Tucker has a pretty broad base of his own, though. He still calls on relationships he forged as a high school athlete and during a brief stint as a high school coach.

"I grew up there," he said. "My dad played football there, and I've been there all my life. Some of those coaches up there I've coached with. I coached one year of high school ball. Some of the coaches that, when I played there, they were coaching, that type of thing. I played against them."

Tucker, who played defensive back at Wisconsin, is actually in his third tour of duty recruiting the Cleveland area. Prior to taking a job at OSU shortly after Tressel took over the program, he was a defensive backs coach first at Miami (Ohio) and then at LSU. At both stops, Tucker went home when he hit the recruiting trail.

His time at Miami, in particular, helped him expand his ties just because of the

sheer volume of recruits he looked at.

"When I was at Miami, I recruited that area heavily and when you recruit at Miami you can't afford to just recruit the best guys like we can do," Tucker said. "You have to recruit everybody — some guys that maybe they could play but maybe you weren't sure."

"Some guys that Ohio State was recruiting you might wait until they slip through the cracks down to you. Then the guys you know could play for you. So you had to recruit everybody."

"That period of time, I was able to still get around, meet those coaches, sit in with them, talk football with them, go to the clinics, spend time with them and recruit their players."

Tucker is not solely responsible for the players in the Cleveland area. He did a lot of the legwork there, but there is some cross-recruiting by position.

He had the best of both worlds, though, in recruiting Whitner, Hiley and Gonzalez, players he would potentially coach who were from the area he was responsible for.

As is the case with most in-state top prospects as they head into their senior seasons, all three attended OSU's camp, where Tucker had a chance to instruct them. The few days of camp helped the players and coach get a closer look at each other.

"I think it makes it a little easier in the recruiting process when you feel like you know them a little bit," Tucker said. "They're not strangers. You know the parents. You know the coaches. You know their brothers and sisters and all that and it becomes fun."

"Obviously, I can kill two birds with one stone. I'm recruiting a guy in my area who actually plays defensive back. So that kind of takes care of itself."

Frost was the last of the six to commit. He had originally stated he would attend Iowa, but just six days before signing day he opted for OSU.

A longstanding relationship with Tucker might have been a factor in that decision.

Tucker has been tracking Frost since recruiting his former Brush teammate Roy Hall, who signed with OSU in 2002.

"We recruited Roy Hall from that school a year ago, so we've actually been evaluating Frost for a year and a half," Tucker said. "I saw him play basketball three times as a junior. He was probably at half a dozen football games last season, so we knew about him and he knew about us."

Tucker was pleased but not surprised by Frost's late change of plans.

"Recruiting is a thing that is liquid and it changes hourly," Tucker said. "We only have 85 scholarships available. We try to fill a need and it became apparent that we needed a guy in the big speed position. And he was a guy that we felt could be that guy, that could fill that need for us."



Mel Tucker

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## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: UNDERCLASSMEN TO WATCH

## Expect A Much Bigger Buckeye Class In '04

By STEVE HELWAGEN  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

One positive effect of OSU's signing only 14 high school players in 2003 is the fact the school will likely be able to sign a full 25-man class next year.

Of course, at least two 2003 high school graduates have already staked a claim to scholarships in the 2004 class. St. Henry, Ohio, quarterback Todd Boeckman and Charleston (W.Va.) Capital fullback/linebacker Cedric Scott each figure to go on scholarship in January 2004.

But even with those two "grayshirts" factored in, BSB's unofficial count shows that OSU should have at least 21 additional spots to fill in next year's class. More holes figure to open due to

the usual attrition factors.

"Next year, we should have a larger class," said OSU head coach Jim Tressel. "We will have 20 or 21 seniors we will need to replace. But no matter what the size of the class, we have to make sure we get the right guys."

Tressel said the groundwork has already been laid for next year's class.

"As our coaches have been stopping to see people now, they have been talking to high school coaches about juniors and sophomores," Tressel said.

"As I always say, recruiting is like shaving — if you miss a day, you look like a bum. We recruit constantly."

OSU is expected to stage a junior recruiting day in the next several weeks. Plus prep underclassmen will be welcomed for spring practice and invited to participate in the school's summer

football camps.

Just a glance at OSU's projected roster shows that the Buckeyes will have several needs to fill. After going heavily on defense with the 2003 class, OSU will be looking to fill several areas on offense, most notably the running back, wide receiver and line positions.

Defensively, OSU will always look for impact players on the defensive line. Linebacker also is a key area of need.

For the sixth year, Ohio's Future Stars will take a look at the top underclassmen in the state of Ohio. OFS editor Duane Long has already identified many of the state's top prospects.

"A lot of juniors in the state have stepped up and shown some talent," Long said. "I think this will end up being a pretty good class."

Long has named Cleveland Glenville

defensive back Ted Ginn Jr. as the number one player in the junior class. Toledo Rogers wide receiver Fred Davis and Warren Harding running back Delbert Ferguson, who just transferred from Youngstown Ursuline, also are in the top three.

"Ted Ginn Jr. is the number one player in the state, no question about that," Long said. "The choice at number two is between Davis and Ferguson. Davis has had a heck of an off-season."

Ginn and Davis have reportedly already been offered by OSU.

Another key area with the class of 2004 is the offensive line crop.

"This is a great offensive line class," Long said. "This is the one Ohio State fans have been waiting on. There are a bunch of great athletes. There is no (Michael) Munoz or (Antonio) Hall or (Orlando) Pace."

A number of key prospects, including Ginn, participated in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl underclassman combine in San Antonio Jan. 4-5.

The following is a list of players being considered for the publication's early Ohio top 15.

That list is followed by a position-by-position look at prospects in Ohio and around the Midwest as well as top sophomores and freshmen to watch.

#### Top 15 Contenders

Listed alphabetically, here are 15 players being considered among the state's top juniors (40-yard dash times are included as available).

• **Michael Bell**, wide receiver, Shaker Heights — Bell (6-1, 180) already lists OSU, Michigan, Notre Dame and Penn State as his top college choices. He had 31 catches for 413 yards as a junior.

"He's smooth, fluid, highly athletic and a great character kid," Long said.

• **Brandon Braxton**, offensive lineman, Youngstown Ursuline — Braxton (6-8, 300) could be a prototype left tackle prospect. He was a first-team All-Ohio pick in Division IV as a junior.

"Brandon is just a gigantic kid," Long said. "With his frame, he probably couldn't weigh under 290 if he tried. Plus he runs well."

• **Chase Clowser**, offensive lineman, LaGrange Keystone — Clowser (6-8, 320) was a fixture at OSU games last year.

"We are real high on him," Long said. "He's a huge kid that carries his weight well."

• **Fred Davis**, wide receiver, Toledo Rogers — Davis (6-4, 205) has spent a good portion of his prep career at running back, but he projects as a receiver.

He had over 1,000 yards rushing, 500

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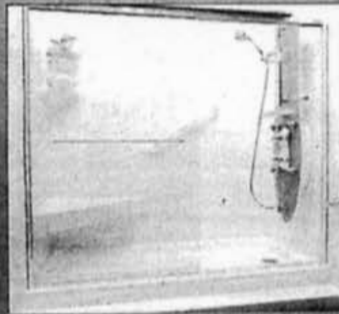
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Brandon  
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Chase Clowser



## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: UNDERCLASSMEN TO WATCH

yards receiving and 25 touchdowns as a junior. He was a special mention All-Ohio pick in Division II.

"Receiver is going to be his spot," Long said. "(Rogers coach Ric) Rios found they weren't throwing the ball well enough. They weren't getting the ball into his hands enough. They put him at running back and he averaged 8 or 9 yards a carry."

"At the combine in Texas, he was the MVP among the receivers. He ran a 4.6 40. Last year at Ohio State, he ran a 4.52."

• **Delbert Ferguson, running back, Warren Harding** — Ferguson (6-3, 215) burst on the scene as a freshman when he rushed for 280 yards and scored five touchdowns in Ursuline's 2000 state title game win.

As a junior, Ferguson had 1,717 yards as Ursuline advanced to the state semifinals. He was a teammate of OSU signee Louis Irizarry at Ursuline and has moved to Harding to follow in the footsteps of current Buckeye Maurice Clarett.

"He has a great combination of size and speed," Long said. "He is running with the kind of power we thought he would. He resembles (NFL Seattle Seahawk) Chris Warren with the kind of look he has now. He has speed and is running with authority."

"But he has got to work on his hands. He doesn't catch the ball well and he has fumbled it a bit."

OSU was the only school Ferguson listed in a recent survey.

• **Marcus Freeman, linebacker, Huber Heights Wayne** — Freeman (6-2, 225, 4.66) tallied 152 tackles and eight sacks while earning second-team All-Ohio honors in Division I as a junior.

"Marcus makes a lot of plays, but he is not an explosive kind of guy," Long said. "He won't make the crowd go 'ooh,' but he makes plays."

"He would be an outside linebacker at the college level. He has great speed along with great strength. He can find the football. He would be an ideal weakside linebacker, although he could also maybe play in the middle."

Freeman did 28 reps of the 185-pound bench press at the Texas combine — more than any other linebacker. His early favorites include OSU, Michigan and Michigan State.

• **Ted Ginn Jr., defensive back, Cleveland Glenville** — Ginn (6-1, 175, 4.4) starred alongside OSU signees Dareus Hiley and Donte Whitner at Glenville. He joined those two

on an unofficial visit when they visited Miami (Fla.) in December.

"He has the complete package," Long said. "He has good size and great feet. He has great athleticism. He has what you want in a cornerback prospect."

"The Miami people told (Glenville coach) Ted Ginn Sr. that he may be a better prospect than Donte Whitner. He has a great attitude and works hard."

Ginn reportedly has offers from Miami (Fla.), OSU and Iowa. He will play strictly quarterback as a senior.

He finished second in the 110-meter high hurdles (14.13 seconds) and second in the 300 hurdles (37.1) at the Division I state track meet. He also joined Whitner as a member of the state champion 4x100 meter relay team.

• **Chad Hoobler, tight end/linebacker, Carrollton** — Hoobler (6-4, 220) could be a standout on either side of the ball. As a sophomore, he had 115 tackles on defense and 11 catches on offense. This past year, he had 81 tackles, five pass breakups and seven sacks. He was a first-team All-Ohio player on defense in Division II.

"Hoobler is real explosive," Long said. "He is just a nasty kid on the field. He really gets after it. He plays linebacker, but he projects as either a defensive end or a tight end."

"He is a big hitter. He reads well and attacks the hole."

• **Brian Hoyer, quarterback, Cleveland St. Ignatius** — Hoyer (6-4, 195, 4.7) threw for 2,100 yards and 18 touchdowns in his first season as a starter at St. Ignatius.

"Brian has better physical skills, some believe, than Justin Zwick," Long said. "He just has a huge arm. The problem was he was under pressure most of the year. He was sacked 27 times in one three-game stretch."

"He is one of the few juniors to start at quarterback at St. Ignatius."

Hoyer lists OSU and Michigan among his early favorites.

• **Mike Massey, defensive end, Cleveland St. Ignatius** — Massey (6-5, 235) tallied 81 tackles and nine sacks as a junior.

"He did not have the kind of junior year he was expected to have, but I would still put him up there," Long said.

Massey is the younger brother of former OSU offensive lineman Jim Massey and current Michigan defensive lineman Pat Massey.

• **Ben Person, offensive lineman, Xenia** — Person (6-4, 295, 5.4) joins Braxton as one of the top two line prospects in the state.

"Ben may be a guard even though he has played tackle in high school," Long said.

Illinois, Michigan State, OSU and Michigan are among his early favorites.

• **Gary Russell, running back, Columbus Walnut Ridge** — Russell (5-11, 200) rushed for 1,800 yards for Walnut Ridge's playoff squad in 2002.

"I like him," Long said. "He has great balance and quick feet."

• **Anthony Turner, quarterback, Dayton Chaminade-Julienne** — Turner (6-3, 190) is a fine run-pass quarterback prospect. He threw for 1,405 yards and 16 touchdowns against

six interceptions during the regular season.

"He has a good arm and is a great athlete," Long said. "I like his command of the offense. He doesn't need a lot of help. He is well on his way toward being a pretty good quarterback."

Michigan State has already offered. He also is interested in OSU.

• **Brandon Underwood, defensive back, Hamilton** — Underwood (6-0, 160) is the younger brother of OSU cornerback E.J. Underwood. He has reportedly already been offered by Arizona State, Penn State and Virginia also have shown some interest.

"He is that big corner everybody is looking for," Long said. "He may fill out into a safety, actually."

• **Ray Williams, running back, Cleveland Benedictine** — Williams (6-0, 180) became just the sixth player in Ohio prep history to eclipse the 3,000-yard mark in a season when he went for 3,250 yards in 2002. He was the state offensive player of the year in Division III.

"Ray has great quickness," Long said. "He has a whole other level of quickness. He is a slasher. He cuts on a dime. He is beautiful to watch. I think he will fill out into a pretty good running back."

## Seniors: Position-By-Position

Here is a position-by-position rundown of the other top prospects in Ohio and the region (all players from Ohio unless noted).

## Quarterbacks

• **Darryl Clark, Youngstown Ursuline** — Clark (6-1, 195) is another run-pass specialist.

• **Brian Brohm, Louisville (Ky.) Trinity** — Brohm (6-4, 195) led Trinity to the state title and a win over Louisville Male (and quarterback Michael Bush) in the Class 4-A finals. In that victory, Brohm completed 19 of 25 passes for an astounding 552 yards and seven touchdowns. He also ran for 52 yards and a score.

As a junior, he completed 226 of 335 passes for 3,777 yards and 47 touchdowns with just one interception. As a

sophomore, he threw for 3,082 yards and 39 TDs against five interceptions in 273 attempts.

His early favorites include Kentucky, Notre Dame and Louisville, where his father (Oscar) and brother (Jeff) played quarterback.

• **Alex Engram, Warren Harding** — Engram (6-2, 190) transferred to Harding from Port Arthur, Texas. He reportedly has offers from USC and two Big 12 schools already.

"His mother is originally from Warren, so I think that's why they moved back there," Long said. "He seems to be a special athlete."

• **Michael Flowers, Madison (Wis.) La Follette** — Flowers (6-2, 170) already has committed to Wisconsin in basketball, where he plays guard.

• **Mike Maciejowski, Upper Arlington** —

Maciejowski (6-3, 190) continued to progress as a junior at UA. He threw for 1,592 yards as a junior.

"He needs to be on the field more," Long said. "For now, his rating is incomplete."

He is the son of former OSU quarterback Ron Maciejowski.



Mike Maciejowski

## Running Backs

• **Jamell Benjamin, Cleveland Glenville** — Benjamin (6-2, 210) is a two-way star for Glenville.

"Jamell is a good linebacker," Long said. "But I think he will make a good fullback at the college level."

• **Brook Bolen, Germantown Valley View** — Bolen (6-0, 230) is a fine fullback prospect who also can carry the ball. He had 34 touchdowns during the regular season as a junior.

• **Mark Bonds, Indianapolis Warren Central** — Bonds (6-0, 208,

Continued On Page 30

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## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: UNDERCLASSMEN TO WATCH

# Another Strong Crop Of RBs Is Out There

Continued From Page 27

4.4) is the top junior prospect in Indiana this year. He had 1,506 yards as a sophomore then had 1,300 yards and 17 touchdowns as a junior.

His early list includes Miami (Fla.), Michigan, Nebraska, OSU, Penn State and Tennessee.

• **Jimmy Calhoun, Middletown** — Calhoun (6-0, 190, 4.48) has played a number of positions for the Middies but returned to tailback late last year.

His early list includes OSU, Penn State, Northwestern and Stanford.

• **Kyle Clark, Sullivan Black River** — Clark (6-3, 220) is a two-way standout at fullback and linebacker.

"Fullback is probably where Kyle will end up," Long said.

• **Greg Coleman, Iowa City (Iowa) West Senior** — Coleman (6-0, 205, 4.5) will be a four-year starter in 2003. As a junior, he had 2,105 yards and 25 touchdowns on offense and 92 tackles and 16 sacks on defense.

His early list includes OSU, Iowa, Kansas State, Oklahoma and Michigan.

• **Ray Jones, Columbus Academy** — Jones (6-0, 190) has had success at tailback. He could project as a tailback

or safety at the college level.

• **Antonio Pittman, Akron Buchtel** — Pittman (5-11, 195) had 2,316 yards and 25 touchdowns in 13 games for playoff contender Buchtel. Pittsburgh has already offered.

• **Pernell Williams, Dayton Jefferson** — Williams (5-11, 185) transferred from Dayton Chaminade-Julienne. As a sophomore at C-J, he had 1,047 yards and scored 13 TDs on 134 carries. As a junior, he had 837 yards rushing and nine TDs.

Michigan State has offered. He also lists Michigan, OSU and Penn State.

## Wide Receivers

• **Steph'von Haynes, West Chester Lakota West** — Haynes (6-4, 180, 4.6) caught 26 passes for 293 yards and five TDs as a junior.

• **Trumaine Smith, Warrensville Heights** — Smith (6-4, 200, 4.42) was a regular at OSU games alongside teammate and eventual signee David Patterson this past year.

"Trumaine is an impressive athlete," Long said. "They did not throw the ball well there this past year. But Trumaine has been timed at 4.42 in the 40. He is a great-looking athlete. He has a lot of raw potential."

• **Miles Williams, Austintown Fitch** — Williams (6-3, 205, 4.47) could be a player to watch in 2003.

"Miles reminds me a lot of an Isaac Curtis-type receiver," Long said. "He is a smooth kid."

He lists Louisville, Maryland, Michigan, Penn State and Pittsburgh.

## Tight End

• **David DiFranco, Grafton Midview** — DiFranco (6-5, 255) is a strong blocking tight end in a wing-T offense.

## Offensive Linemen

• **Brandon Armstrong, offensive lineman, Clayton Northmont** — Armstrong (6-7, 255) is a strong pass blocker.

"Brandon has a great frame with long arms and great feet," Long said.

• **Steve Rehling, West Chester (Ohio) Lakota West** — Rehling (6-8, 320, 5.4) comes from the same school that sent Brandon Maupin to OSU.

"Steve had a real good showing at the combine in Texas," Long said. "He didn't put up a great 40 time, but he handled a lot of the drills well."

He lists OSU, Michigan, Pittsburgh, Penn State, Iowa, Boston College, Colorado, Oklahoma and Nebraska.

• **Ryan Stanchek, Cincinnati LaSalle** — Stanchek (6-5, 250) could play offensive guard or defensive tackle at the college level.

"He is a good-looking kid," Long said. "I think he would be a good guard prospect. He runs well."

## Defensive Linemen

• **Rhyan Anderson, Oak Creek, Wis.** — Anderson (6-6, 265) is one of the top three prospects in Wisconsin.

• **Ted Bentler, Davenport (Iowa) Assumption** — Bentler (6-4, 240, 4.65) already has committed to Iowa.

• **Nick Hayden, Hartland (Wis.) Arrowhead** — Hayden (6-5, 255) also is among Wisconsin's top prospects.

• **A.Q. Shipley, Coraopolis (Pa.) Moon** — Shipley (6-2, 272, 5.1) has a long list of schools already, including OSU, Michigan, Penn State, Pittsburgh and Notre Dame.

• **Pat Sims, Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) Dillard** — Sims (6-4, 280, 5.0) is not in the Midwest by any means. But OSU has made Dillard a regular stop, and the Buckeyes figure to be in the running for Sims, who already lists OSU, Auburn, Florida and Florida State.

• **Nick Smith, Canton GlenOak** — Smith (6-6, 285) was a regular at OSU games this past fall.

"He looks like he should be a great player," Long said. "But he hasn't gotten it done yet. He is a diamond in the rough."

## Linebackers

• **Kevin Looman, Canton GlenOak** — Looman (6-3, 225) joined his teammate Smith at several OSU games this past year.

• **Bob Miller, Willoughby South** — Miller (6-2, 240) enjoyed a fine junior campaign.

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## RECRUITING WRAP-UP: UNDERCLASSMEN TO WATCH

## Defensive Backs

• **Shaun Lane, Hubbard** — Lane (5-10, 170) is a two-way standout at Hubbard. Lane, who rushed for 2,200 yards as a junior, is the son of former OSU defensive back Garcia Lane.

• **Zach Logan, Trotwood (Ohio) Trotwood-Madison** — Logan (6-0, 173, 4.4) is a standout safety prospect. He already lists OSU, Tennessee and Michigan.

• **Nick Schubert, Dayton Oakwood** — Schubert (5-11, 196, 4.6) plays linebacker but projects as a strong safety. Notre Dame, OSU and Penn State are among his early favorites.

• **Steve Walker, Akron Buchtel** — Walker (5-8, 175) earned an early offer from Pittsburgh, which has taken a number of Buchtel players in recent years.

• **Brandon Wamsley, Cincinnati Anderson** — Wamsley (6-3, 196, 4.49) is one of the state's fastest rising prospects. He had four interceptions during the regular season as a junior.

"Brandon may be the best safety prospect I've seen in Ohio since Dustin Fox," Long said. "He hits and he tackles. He has tremendous ball skills."

## Sophomores To Consider

Here are several Ohio sophomores to remember.

• **Ryan Brinson, running back, Canton McKinley** — Brinson (5-9, 175) could get a look at tailback or at corner. He was a first-team All-Northeast Inland District pick as a sophomore.

• **Troy Denlinger, defensive lineman, Troy** — Denlinger (6-3, 265) "is a disruptive, aggressive force," Long said.

• **A.J. Haas, offensive lineman, Copley** — Haas (6-5, 250) may be the top line prospect in the sophomore class.

• **Freddie Lennix, defensive back, Cleveland Glenville** — Lennix (5-11, 190, 4.47) was one of the top five overall athletes at the Texas combine. He has experience at linebacker but seems to be a safety prospect.

• **Mario Manningham, wide receiver, Warren Harding** — Manningham (5-11, 160) emerged as a game breaker as a sophomore. He had a 73-yard TD grab in Harding's Division I state title game loss.

"Mario just blows you away on tape," Long said. "He's got the kind of speed that grabs your attention."

• **Adam Myers, defensive back, Hamilton** — Myers (6-3, 185) is a standout safety prospect. He attended at least one OSU game last season.

• **Jamarion O'Neal, defensive back, Mansfield Senior** — O'Neal (6-0, 170) is considered the state's top sophomore prospect. He earned second-team All-Ohio honors in Division I this past year.

Reportedly, OSU, Oklahoma and Florida State have offered already.

"Ohio State has been in and hit him up early," Long said. "They had him at cornerback but nobody was throwing at him. They moved him to safety so he could make some plays. But as a corner, he is a unique athlete."

• **Craig Orton, wide receiver, Huber Heights Wayne** — Orton (6-4, 175) has already shown great athletic ability.

• **Javon Ringer, running back, Dayton Chaminade-Julienne** — Ringer (5-9, 180) rushed for 2,028 yards and scored 30 touchdowns in 2002.

• **Dane Romero, defensive back, West Chester Lakota West** — Romero

(6-2, 180) had 1,100 yards rushing and 14 TDs as a sophomore but safety could be his ultimate position. He also is a 3.7 GPA student.

• **Cedric Tolbert, running back, Xenia** — Tolbert (6-0, 185) had over 1,700 yards and 19 TDs as a sophomore.

## Freshmen To Watch

Here is an early look at several Ohio freshmen to keep an eye on.

• **David Lighty, wide receiver/defensive back, Cleveland Villa Angela-St. Joseph** — Lighty (6-3, 170) is OSU's early choice as the top

player in the Class of 2006.

"David is the best freshman I've seen in this state since Dareus Hiley," Long said. "He is special."

• **Josh Chichester, wide receiver/defensive back, West Chester Lakota West** — Chichester (6-6, 190) should develop into an impact player at Lakota West.

• **Miles Schlichter, quarterback, Washington Court House Miami Trace** — Schlichter (6-2, 185), the nephew of former OSU quarterback Art Schlichter, played with the varsity as a freshman.

• **Chris Wells, tailback/linebacker, Akron Garfield** — Wells (6-1, 190) figures to be a two-way standout at Garfield.

Ohio's Future Stars will again be published in a three-issue set this year. The three issues will be published in March, late spring and December. The cost is \$15 for all three issues.

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# Top Prep Running Back Agrees To Take Shot In Bucks' Receiving Corps

By JOHN REDD

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Ohio State has successfully recruited one of the top running backs in central Ohio, but it is likely that he will not see much action in the Buckeye backfield.

Dimitrios Stanley, an all-state running back from Worthington, Ohio, has decided he will attend college close to home at Ohio State, choosing the Buckeyes over Purdue and Kansas.

Despite rushing for over 2,500 yards as a junior and senior, Stanley plans to move out of the backfield and into the flat as he accepted an invitation to join the Buckeyes as a wide receiver.

One has to wonder why a strong prep tailback would opt for wide receiver in college, especially at a school more known for churning out outstanding running backs. But Stanley believes it is a good opportunity for him.

"Wide receiver is my best position," he said. "I have good hands and speed. Plus, it's the position I want to play."

Stanley, whose father, Wayne, was an assistant under former Buckeye head coach Earle Bruce from 1979-83, ultimately chose Ohio State because he

felt most comfortable with the Buckeyes, adding that his father's former connections had little bearing on his decision to come to OSU.

"We've had ties to Ohio State for as long as I can remember," said Stanley. "But I didn't let that affect my decision. When I visited all of the players, it seemed like that they've known me a long time. I felt like they really liked me and it wasn't an act."

"I also got to know the coaches better, although I've known some of them for a while. Coach (Mike) Stock seems like a really honest guy. He kept in touch and made me feel comfortable at Ohio State."

Stock not only recruits central Ohio for the Buckeyes, but he will also be Stanley's position coach at OSU. It was Stock that convinced him he could play wide receiver at the college level.

It is a position not completely unfamiliar to Stanley, who played wide receiver as a freshman for the Cardinals. But over the past two seasons, he has not seen the ball come his way through the air too many times.

"I was usually a decoy for the pass this season," said Stanley. "I can catch

them, though, when I get the chance. I expect I'll have a lot more chances at Ohio State."

Terry Lichtenberg, head coach at Thomas Worthington High School, thinks Stanley will be able to adjust to the position well despite a lack of experience.

"He has great hands and if he gets the ball in the open field, he'll do very well," said Lichtenberg. "You only have to look at how he did as a defensive back to know that."

Stanley had nine interceptions as the Cardinals' free safety and said he feels he can use some of the tricks he learned as a defensive back to his advantage as a wide receiver.

An all-around athlete, Stanley is a starting guard on the Worthington basketball team, and he also runs several events on the track team.

According to Lichtenberg, Stanley is one of those very few gifted athletes.

"He's a very special athlete with a good combination of strength, speed and agility," the Worthington head coach said. "Ohio State recruited him as a wide receiver, and he will have to learn to run precision routes and learn complex college coverages."

"But the athletic ability is going to be there. He's a good kid and I'm sure he can do the job. He's very bright. It's a matter of how quickly he picks up Ohio State's offense. He could contribute right away, but a lot will depend on his confidence. If he maintains it, he will be really good."

Stanley has no shortage of confidence.

"I think I can play as a freshman and I think I'll be able to help the team next season," said Stanley. "I don't think they want me to redshirt next year. So I want to be ready when I report in the fall."

"But I'm not going there just to play football. I have some academic goals, and one of them is to graduate with a GPA of at least 3.20. Then, as an



Dimitrios Stanley

athlete, I'd like to win the Heisman Trophy and then go on to play professional football."

Stanley said he knows that his goals sound cocky to some, but he added that he is simply confident about his abilities.

"I don't want to sound conceited," he said, "but I do think I'm a pretty good talent."

There is a possibility the Buckeyes could ultimately switch Stanley to defensive back, but he is certain he will have ample opportunity to prove himself as a pass catcher first.

"The coaches told me to come and play where I want to," said Stanley. "Right now, that's as a wide receiver. Maybe down the line it would be somewhere else. But I think there's a chance for me at wide receiver and I plan on making the most of that chance."

About the only hurdle left in his path is the one involving Proposition 48. Despite carrying a 2.60 grade-point average, Stanley has yet to achieve the minimum score of 17 on the ACT.

After narrowly missing the passing score by a single point, Stanley is positive the second time will be the charm when he takes the test again in early February.

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## THE STANLEY FILE

NAME — Dimitrios Stanley

HIGH SCHOOL — Worthington (Ohio) Thomas Worthington

POSITION — Wide receiver

HEIGHT, WEIGHT — 5-11, 195 pounds

BENCH PRESS — 250 pounds

40-YARD DASH TIME — 4.5 seconds

GRADE-POINT AVERAGE — 2.60

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS — Scheduled to retake ACT Feb. 2

VITAL STATISTICS — Earned first-team All-Ohio honors in Division I as a running back in 1992 from *The Associated Press*. Rushed for 1,534 yards and 16 TDs, averaging 6.2 yards per carry. Also totaled 46 tackles and eight interceptions as a cornerback. Caught only a handful of passes as a senior, but will play wide receiver at Ohio State. Son of former O&U assistant coach Wayne Stanley, who was on former head coach Earle Bruce's staff from 1979-83.

COACH'S COMMENT — "Dimitrios is an extremely gifted athlete who is strong and can run, two things that every major college receiver must have. He also has a lot of confidence. He didn't play much receiver in high school, but he has the confidence that he can go to Ohio State, work hard, and become an outstanding receiver. If he does the things he did here, I have no doubt he will succeed on the next level." — Thomas Worthington High School head coach Terry Lichtenberg.

HOBBIES — Listening to music, spending time with friends

SCHOOLS INTERESTED IN — Verbally committed to Ohio State, choosing the Buckeyes over Kansas, Wisconsin and Purdue



## NOTRE DAME MEMORIES - DIMITRIOS STANLEY

## Stanley's Twisting TD Catch Turned The Tide

By JEFF RAPP

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Dimitrios Stanley would love to tell you he can still hear the roar of the crowd when he made the most important play of his Ohio State football career — a momentous touchdown catch against Notre Dame last season.

But, truth be told, Stanley still hasn't heard it.

"I blanked out," he recalled. "When I realized I caught it, I just looked at my teammates and started celebrating with them."

"The whole play seemed like it was in slow motion. I turned, saw the ball coming behind, so I turned again, and it seemed like it took forever to get there."

While life was passing with a sundial for Stanley, Notre Dame was left wondering what the name of the freight train was. An unknown player like Stanley isn't supposed to turn a game with this kind of importance. But when he hauled in the Bobby Hoving lob near the end of the first half, that's exactly what he did.

With less than a minute to play in the half and OSU trailing 17-7, Hoving called play "2-47" in the huddle. Stanley, a 5-10, 181-pound flanker, ran a flag route and made his twisting catch against single coverage. While Ohio Stadium rocked, Stanley jumped into the arms of tight end Rickey Dudley, still not realizing all that he had done.

"I was just trying to execute the play and when I did, I really couldn't think about anything except that I just caught a touchdown against Notre Dame," said the Worthington, Ohio, native.

"(Hoving) usually reads strong side first on that play and I was on the strong side. Bob told me after on the sideline that he didn't even see me. He was hoping I could make a play. He came up to me and said, 'Thanks for saving my butt.' I was just glad to have the opportunity to make the catch."

The fact that Stanley not only made the play but made it look easy cannot be overlooked when reviewing the importance — and history behind — OSU's 45-26 win over the Irish. The contest was built as yet another Game of the Century, mostly because the last meeting between the two powerhouses in Ohio Stadium, in 1935, is still considered by many as one of the greatest games in the annals of college football.

Add in the fact that ND stole the '35 game with a great comeback and subsequent references to "The Luck of the Irish" and there was thought that the football gods owed one to the Scarlet and Gray.

It was Stanley who endorsed the check when he turned, saw a shadow in the sky, and grabbed it.

"When I turned, I really couldn't see anything except the sun and a black dot in the middle of the sun. I put my hands up and there it was," he said.

Adding to Stanley's amazement, the ball nestled comfortably in his hands without a bobble.

For Stanley, now a senior hoping to end his career as an impact player, it is an eternally vivid moment.

"That will stand out in my mind forever," he said. "I can see it like it just



**STANLEY STANDS OUT** — OSU senior Dimitrios Stanley has bided his time behind the likes of Joey Galloway, Chris Sanders and Terry Glenn. Now it's his turn to start.

happened. I don't know how it happened or why it happened. The Lord was just with me, I guess."

Stanley should have plenty more chances to exhibit his blessed big-play ability in the upcoming Big Ten season.

After catching 13 passes for 177 yards and four touchdowns last year, he has been one of the hardest-working members of the team. The one-time tailback earned a starting role at flanker prior to this season, and he'll have the daunting task of trying to replace record setter Terry Glenn while holding off first-year talents Michael Wiley and David Boston.

Classmate Buster Tillman lines up at split end, giving OSU an experienced yet hungry tandem of starters since Glenn took the spotlight in '95.

"We knew what everybody could do last year because Terry, Buster and I all came in together and you could tell Terry had something going. I knew he

was going to be a standout," Stanley said.

Stanley now hopes it's his turn to lead OSU in receiving. He believes his experience will keep him ahead of the newcomers and that he has the best package of a group of veterans that also includes Dee Miller and Mike Furrey.

The following are Stanley's assessments of three basic facets of receiving:

- Open-field moves — "Buster has that little spin move and Dee's got some shakes, but I would have to say I'm the best at running after the catch."

- Route running — "That's hard because Dee has really come on, but I would go with me."

- Going up for the ball — "Buster is still a little banged up, so it's hard to tell, but I'm going to go with myself on that, too."

Stanley may have yet another advantage — coaching. He has improved his quickness, route-running and pass-catching under former receivers coach Mike Stock and current boss Chuck Stobart. He also learned much about the college game from his father, Wayne Stanley, who was an assistant coach under Earle Bruce at OSU from 1979-83 after starring for Bruce as an Iowa State quarterback in the mid-1970s.

Wayne learned firsthand that football can pass like a sports car on the Autobahn.

"My dad and I were talking about that the other day," Stanley said. "He told me to just go out and do the best I can — every day. I can't believe I'm a senior already."

Stanley actually arrived from Thomas Worthington High School in 1993 and, like Wiley, played immediately as a reserve receiver after a stellar career as a tailback. He shifted back to his natural position the following year to provide depth but took just a dozen handoffs. Last year, Stanley played in all 13 games and started one in place of the injured Glenn, but few still know his value.

His biggest on-field contribution — other than the beauty against ND, of course — has come in the form of kick returns.

"I love doing punt returns," said Stanley, who averaged 8.0 yards on his 33 punt returns and added 18.0 per tote on kickoff returns last year.

Who knows? Maybe Stanley will steal the show in the Sept. 28 rematch with Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind.

"It's going to be hard to top it," Stanley said of his momentum-builder last year, "but I'm going to do my best to do greater things."

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