

BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

May 10, 2003

OSU Poised For Repeat After Spring

Team's 'Seriousness Of Approach' Pleases Tressel

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

As the defending national championship team in college football, Ohio State could have rested on its considerable laurels this spring.

But, by all accounts, the Buckeyes did not go through the motions. They took a step forward as they prepare for what figures to be a grueling 2003 schedule.

"I liked the seriousness of their approach," said Jim Tressel, wrapping up his third spring as the OSU head coach. "We only had a limited number of opportunities here this spring, but I think we got a lot done. I thought they carried themselves with more confidence."

Ohio State will be bidding to become just the second team since 1979 to repeat as the national champion — Nebraska did it in 1994-95.

Tressel said he knows that topic will come up in the months that lead up to OSU's Aug. 30 season opener with Washington.

"I think people like to talk about it," Tressel said. "We know everybody will ask, 'Can you do it again?' We understand how much more difficult it will be for us to step on the field in 2003.

"But I have not seen that cloud our thinking, which is



JEFF BREHM

SPRING CELEBRATION — Linebacker Joe Bradley (58) and defensive back Nate Salley (21) congratulate Bam Childress after he returned a kickoff 94 yards for a touchdown in the second quarter of the annual Scarlet and Gray Game April 26 at Ohio Stadium.

good."

The Buckeyes will go into the new season with a large bull's-eye on their back. But they understand that is part of the territory for a defending champion.

"We're comfortable with it and we know it's there," said fullback Brandon Schnittker. "We know we have to practice well because teams are going to come after us with their best.

"We understand that we've got to get ready for next year. People are going to be gunning for us. We're doing our very best, but there are things we need to improve on. I think we did that this spring.

"The coaches have been on us to get better. We're going to work hard in the off-season getting ready for the fall."

Offensively, OSU's 11 returning starters geared up and appeared to make some nice strides during the spring.

"We want to be able to be explosive and pass the ball like we did today," Schnittker said after six touchdown passes were thrown in the spring-ending Scarlet and Gray Game April 26. "We're working our way up to that point."

Defensively, the Buckeyes need to replace as many as five starters. But they know they also need to keep standards high on a unit judged among the nation's best a year ago.

"Complacency, we can't have that," said linebacker A.J. Hawk, who appeared to cement a starting role. "We lost a lot of great players and a lot of great leaders. We need some young guys to step up."

Tressel has experience in defending national titles. At Youngstown State, his Penguins won back-to-back Division I-AA titles in 1993-94. Tressel, whose teams won four national championships, sent teams to four straight title games between 1991-94, winning three of them.

When asked if there is a recipe for building a repeat champion, Tressel smiled and said, "You better have good players."

Answering The Questions

Accordingly, in BSB's March 29 Spring Preview edition, we posed seven pressing questions that needed to be answered this spring.

Here is a look at how some of these issues were resolved over the course of spring football.

BSB's Spring Football Wrap-Up Edition

- Assessing the spring's winners and those, well, not as fortunate (Editor's Notebook, Page 3)
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- Brandon Underwood could follow brother's footsteps at Ohio State (Page 12)
- Crowd in excess of 57,000 shows love affair with national champions (Rea's Say, Pages 14, 38)
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- Chris Gamble first player chosen in Scarlet and Gray Game draft (Page 18)
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- NFL draft coverage, including a draft day timeline with Kenny Peterson (Pages 32-34)



Chris Gamble



Drew Carter

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OPINION

QB Duo Will Be Worth Waiting For

The 57,200 fans who came to Ohio Stadium April 26 for the annual Scarlet and Gray Game got a true glimpse of the future of Ohio State football.

Many of the program's key players — names like Maurice Claret, Craig Krenzler, Will Smith, Darrien Scott and the like — either played sparingly or not at all in the glorified intrasquad scrimmage.

Instead, with the depth finally restored in this football program, those proven hands turned this day over to some of the team's future stars.

Much has been made, for instance, about the battle between Troy Smith and Justin Zwick to replace Krenzler at quarterback after he leaves at season's end.

In this game, those two combined to throw 66 passes for 451 yards with six touchdowns and one interception.

I came away with two distinct impressions:

• One, we may be looking at Stan and Joe revisited next year, and

• Two, I think Ohio State can win one or more Big Ten championships with one, the other or both of these fine redshirt freshmen piloting this offense.

The best scene of the whole day, in my opinion, was witnessed by just a handful of people in the postgame interview room. The two QBs of the future were the last two players left. When the interviews were complete, they shared a high five, wide smiles and a hearty embrace.

On the surface, this looks like a healthy competition between two guys who are playing for the name on the front of their jersey instead of the name on the back of it.

What a refreshing change from some of the things we have witnessed here in the not-too-distant past.

That duel leads me right into my annual assessment of the spring's winners and, well, those not as fortunate.

As you might expect, there were many more winners than those not as fortunate — given the standards of this program at this point in the time/space continuum.

Here were my observations on the spring's winners and, well, those not as fortunate.

The Winners

• **Nate Salley** — Salley came off the basketball hardwood with little participation in the winter conditioning program and promptly locked down a starting safety spot. That job will again be up for grabs in the fall. But Salley passed the tackling test, a must for a safety in this (or any) defense.

• **Donte Whitner and Ashton Youboty** — These two came right in from the high school ranks. They didn't shed any tears or lose any sleep over missing spring track season. They made an impact early and often, pushing their way into the two deep with Whitner at safety and Youboty at corner.

• **A.J. Hawk** — Hawk, as expected, nailed down a starting job at the wide-side linebacker spot. He is a playmaker and will be a leader on this defense. His 14-tackle day in the spring game solidified his spot.

• **Mike D'Andrea** — This was a pivotal spring for the former high school phenom and — as he showed in the spring game with an interception, a sack and several crushing hits — he improved his stock dramatically. It also helps that he got experience playing alongside Fred

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

with
Steve Helwagen

Pagac Jr. at the wide-side spot. That will give the Buckeyes more versatility this fall.

• **Marcus Green** — Green has his weight under control and, with Darrien Scott out this spring, made the most of his opportunity. He could find a way into the regular rotation at defensive tackle like David Thompson did a year ago.

• **Joel Penton** — This rawboned kid brings intensity every day. He reminds some of a young Matt Finkes, though bigger. He has positioned himself to become a regular in 2004, maybe sooner.

• **Jay Richardson** — Richardson brings the athletic component at the end position. He is still in the learning phase, but, like Penton, he has four full years ahead of him to make a dent on opposing passing games.

• **Santonio Holmes** — Holmes' spring bordered on the spectacular at times. He had over 200 yards of reception yardage in the first scrimmage then had an electrifying 79-yard punt return in the spring game. He did put the ball on the ground twice and must take care of that. But his emergence allows OSU to put Chris Gamble on defense and not worry so much about the offense.

• **Bam Childress** — Prior to the spring game, it was revealed that Holmes had slipped past Childress for the backup spot at flanker. But Childress showed he was not taking the demotion lying down. He ripped off a 94-yard kickoff return and had two long touchdown catches among his four grabs. Those plays showed he has plenty to bring to this team as well. He just needs a chance.

• **Troy Smith** — The public got a look at Smith's elusiveness and electrifying ability with his breakout from Pagac and throw to John Hollins. That brought the crowd out of a deep sleep. It is too early, certainly, to anoint Smith as the starter in 2004. But if he plays like he did this spring, he will certainly play — and play a lot.

• **Justin Zwick** — Anytime somebody throws for four touchdowns, he's a winner. He did a nice job of taking what the defense was offering and, obviously, it helped having somebody like Childress to throw to. Plus, I felt he stood in there and took some heavy shots at times. It is too early, certainly, to anoint Zwick as the starter in 2004. But if he plays like he did this spring, he will certainly play — and play a lot. (What a great problem to have.)

• **B.J. Sander** — The punting position was a huge question mark going into the spring. Sander answered the call early and often. He needs to avoid blocks, boom the high ball and everything will be just fine.

• **Stan White Jr.** — The concern was that White would split time between offense and defense and master neither side of the ball. But White seems to have settled into a home at tight end, where he showed he can make difficult catches in traffic.

• **Anthony Schlegel** — This transfer from the Air Force Academy earned high praise for his quick pickup of this defensive scheme — not to mention his physical

play at middle linebacker. He will be a keeper for this defense beginning in 2004.

Those Not So Fortunate

• **Bobby Carpenter** — Carpenter was working hard to solidify a starting linebacker spot when he suffered an eye injury in a scuffle on High Street. He had to watch the rest of spring drills but is certainly not out of the running by any means headed into the fall. He can still give Robert Reynolds, who missed the entire spring, a run for his money at the wide-side linebacker spot.

• **Tyler Everett** — I believed Everett would be the guy at strong safety to replace fellow Canton (Ohio) McKinley alum Mike Doss. He is still in the running, but it looks like Salley has edged ahead.

• **T.J. Downing** — Downing slipped on ice during the winter and missed a good portion of the spring trying to get healthy. This spring would have helped his development as an offensive lineman, but he can still make up some ground before entering the derby for playing time in 2004.

• **Harlen Jacobs and Michael Roberts** — These two missed a good bit of the spring due to injury when defensive backs were being tested on a regular basis. As a result, youngsters like Salley, Whitner and Youboty have stepped past them in a bid for playing time this year.

Wait, There's More

• A year ago, I made a big deal about how WBNS-TV (Ch. 10) allowed its Food Parade coverage to encroach on the telecast of OSU's spring game.

I am happy to report that the station allowed the game to take center stage. They promoted the Food Parade by using a crawl across the bottom of the screen.

(I actually have to take the word of several OSU fans that the broadcast went off without a hitch. I've had a VCR since 1985, but for some reason still can't operate the timer function.)

• I was remiss in the last issue in not congratulating Jim O'Brien on his (re-)hire of Rick Boyages as OSU's men's basketball associate head coach.

Boyages spent the last three years as the head coach at William & Mary.

In some ways, I look at the Boyages hiring as the last piece in the puzzle for O'Brien. He needed a tactician and somebody he could trust in that No. 2 job, and Boyages fills both of those criteria to a T.

Boyages realized his dream as a Division I head coach, something that could help him when another opportunity comes along — which it will if OSU has the kind of success many people believe it will over the next few years.

• Congratulations to the five Buckeyes chosen in the NFL draft.

We especially want to thank Kenny Peterson, who allowed BSB staff member Eric Loughry to join him at his mother's home in Canton on draft day. We think you will enjoy Eric's coverage of that trying day for Peterson (see pages 33-34).

Speaking of the draft, did anybody take note that Miami (Fla.) had four first-round draft choices to OSU's none?

Of course, the Buckeyes figure to have a number of first-rounders off this national championship team in the years ahead. Scott, Will Smith and maybe even Michael Jenkins could go next year.

Gamble and Maurice Claret figure to be up there as well whenever they make themselves available.

OHIO STATE INSIDER



Clarett Rests Shoulder As Precautionary Measure

OSU tailback Maurice Clarett sat out all contact drills this spring and missed the Scarlet and Gray Game April 26 as he rested the left shoulder that caused him problems late last season.

Clarett, viewed by many as a Heisman Trophy candidate this fall after rushing for 1,237 yards last season, told reporters April 22 he felt fine but he understood why he was not taking contact.

"I think it's 100 percent, but the doctors and (OSU coach Jim) Tressel feel it's in my best interest not to play," Clarett said. "That's cool. I'm getting a lot of mental reps and trying to stay focused on winning some more games. Last year was fun, and we want to do that again."

The interview session was the first and only one of the spring for the outspoken Clarett. He was asked what he felt about seeing various web sites as well as USA Today installing him as a favorite for the Heisman Trophy.

"I don't even want to talk about last year anymore," he said. "I want to win games. I don't think about stuff like winning the Heisman or anything because that's individual. I'm looking at team and being more positive in that aspect this year."

Clarett told reporters he no longer has his national championship ring.

"My mom took it from me," he said. "I was supposed to come home two weeks previous but I didn't, and she called me up and yelled at me. I went home and gave her my ring just to shut her up."

A year ago, Clarett played through injuries in the spring to prove himself. This year, OSU took no unnecessary chances with its potential meal ticket. Clarett was asked if that means he is getting special treatment.

"I don't look at it like that," he said. "If you think that then you hold yourself higher than the team."

When a reporter rephrased the ques-

tion, he said, "No, no, no, I told you no, don't ask it again."

Clarett reflected on signing autographs at the Columbus City Center mall in January, when he needed a police escort in and out.

"I wish I had them all the time," he joked. "But it isn't bad. Sometimes, certain places you go, you wish you could be by yourself. You've got people chasing after you."

"But I guess that's better than if nobody cared who you are."

Galloway Gives Back By Endowing New Athletic Scholarship

One spring game tradition the university surely would like to see develop is that of former players making financial contributions to the university.

Last year, former All-America defensive back Shawn Springs donated to the Majority Of One program he had served as a student-athlete in the mid-1990s. This time, Joey Galloway, a former teammate of Springs, was the one handing athletic director Andy Geiger a 4-foot cardboard check on the field.

Nattily clad, as he usually is, and flanked by his family and loved ones, Galloway, a star receiver both at OSU and in the NFL, made a halftime presentation of \$100,000 for the inception of the Galloway Family Athletic Scholarship Fund.

"This is always something I've had in mind and it just came down to the right time," said Galloway, currently a starter for the Dallas Cowboys. "We had to put some things together as far as this fellowship is concerned, so it finally came together and we got everything on both sides right and pulled it off."

Galloway is a native of Bellaire, Ohio. The scholarship is earmarked to help athletes from the Ohio Valley who attend Ohio State.

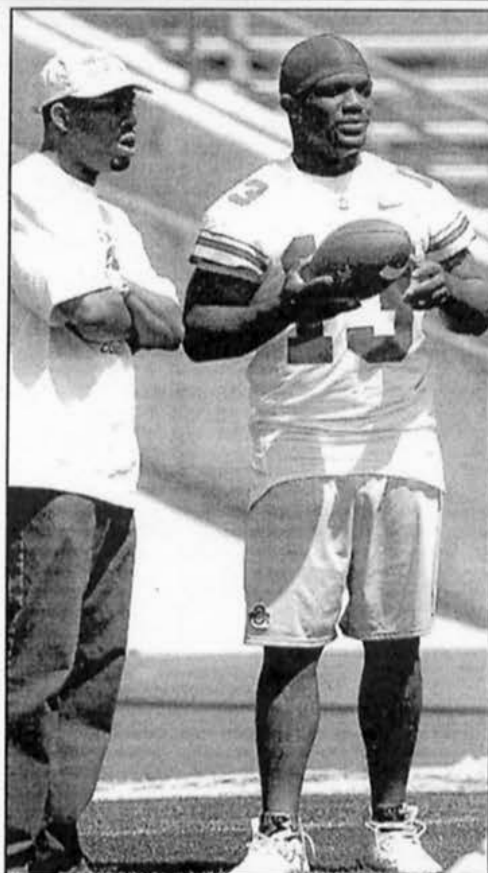
"I was trying to think of a way to help out Ohio State and also help out my area, a young person from my area, and that's the best way to do it," he said.

Galloway, who occasionally joins his former teammate Kirk Herbstreit on WBNS-AM (1460 The Fan), received a warm reception from the fans, who were treated to a video highlight package of the fleet-footed wideout.

"It feels great," Galloway beamed. "It feels great to be a part of Ohio State and to come back to this anyhow, but then to do it on a day like this and give back with my entire family, that just adds to it."

Galloway said there was no place he'd rather be, even on the day of the NFL draft and the inaugural picks by his new coach, Bill Parcells.

"It's funny because I'm checking with people to see who we're picking and I'm out there doing this," he said. "It's been a great day all the way around."



JEFF BREDEN

SIDELINED — Hoping to get his injured shoulder fully healed, Ohio State sophomore tailback Maurice Clarett (right, with former OSU wide receiver Dee Miller) was held out of the spring game.

Former Buckeyes Take In, Add To Spring Game Festivities

Throughout the month of April, Tressel maintained that he wanted his football team to enjoy spring drills almost as much as he wanted them to put in hard work.

There were the usual diversions such as the kick scrimmage, the scarlet jersey bragging rights and the player draft for the spring game. Plus there was the added bonus of ESPN being in town on April 18.

At the end of the month it was time for some former players to have some fun, too. Dozens of them were invited to attend the Scarlet and Gray Game, either to renew acquaintances on the sideline or act as guest members of the coaching staff. The intent, of course, was to keep alumni players involved in the program just as many of them were in supporting the team during the BCS title game in Tempe, Ariz.

Pat Chun of the athletics development office organized the effort and associate AD Archie Griffin drafted a letter to the players. The response was impressive, especially considering many ex-Buckeyes came from out of town.

Those who were down on the sideline and spotted by BSB reporters included Rodney Bailey, Jimmie Bell, Steve Bellisari, Gary Berry, Keith Byars, DeWayne Carter, Derek Combs, James Cotton, Na'il Diggs, Galloway, Roger Harper, Bobby Hoying, John Lumpkin, Dee Miller, Joe Montgomery, Damon

Moore, Tito Paul, Ahmed Plummer, Jerry Rudzinski, Darnell Sanders, Chris Spielman, Dimitrios Stanley, Obie Stillwell, Buster Tillman, Mike Tomczak, Steve Tovar and Jonathan Wells.

That, of course, was in addition to Jim Lachey and Jim Karsatos of the Ohio State Football Radio Network broadcast team, assistant coaches Luke Fickell and Tim Spencer, and Jeff Uhlenhake, who serves on the team's administrative staff.

"I'm having a ball seeing the other guys," said Stillwell, who works for a nonprofit foundation in nearby Pickerington. "This was a great idea."

Wells, who completed his NFL rookie season with the Houston Texans and originally is from Louisiana, said he was intent on attending when he heard of the possible turnout.

"I came down just for this, and we have something else going on where we're going to meet the mayor tonight and some things like that," he said. "I definitely came down to support the program, Coach Tressel and the coaching staff — you know, get back to Ohio. I kind of missed my college days and I wanted to get back here."

Wells was a visible and emotional sideline observer during the Fiesta Bowl, which only strengthened his love of his alma mater.

"That was crazy," he said of the title game experience. "I was so proud of the guys, man. I felt like I was out there playing. They went out there, they represented and we're national champions."

A standout linebacker for the Green Bay Packers, Diggs made sure to find time in his schedule to return to

BSB Now Begins Summer Schedule

This is the last edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin planned for the spring.

BSB now moves to its summer publishing schedule. The next issue, dated June 2003, will be mailed on June 3.

That issue will be followed by the July 2003 issue, which will be mailed July 1.

The third and final summer issue will be the August 2003 edition, which will serve as the Football Preview. It will be mailed in mid-August.

Meet the 2002 National Champions!

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2:30-4:00 — Cie Grant

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OHIO STATE INSIDER



PAYING IT BACKWARD — Former Ohio State wide receiver Joey Galloway (center, with his mother, Carolyn) presents OSU athletic director Andy Geiger with a \$100,000 check that will be used to establish the Galloway Family Athletic Scholarship Fund.

Columbus.

"I told them a couple months ago I was going to come in," Diggs said. "I feel like it was worth it. It was worth the opportunity to get to see a lot of old players and get to meet the guys that are coming back to try to redo that national championship.

"It's fun. We're out here having a good time, it's a nice day, and we're relaxing."

Many of the players were stunned to see a throng of close to 80,000 in Ohio Stadium, which was roughly twice as many or more than some of their spring game crowds. Diggs, however, was not.

"I expected this," he said. "I expected everything that I'm seeing now and some. There are guys out there who need to prove themselves and make a name for themselves, so a lot of these guys are playing hard. And all these people doesn't surprise me. After a national championship season this can only be expected."

According to Chun, Galloway's donation got the ball rolling on the idea of having "honorary" coaches.

"This all began by getting Joey Galloway back on campus," said Chun. "That started the process of getting other guys on campus."

"I think that idea came out of the Fiesta Bowl, when we had a lot of guys on the sideline. They have a good feeling with the program. This will be the most guys we've ever had at a spring game. We're excited."

Tressel said he welcomed the idea to bring the former players back for an "active" role at the spring game.

"I wasn't involved," Tressel said. "We have to give the kudos to our development staff, Pat Chun, Bill Shockley and Larry Romanoff. It all starts with the fact that Joey Galloway is giving back an endowed scholarship. Last spring, Shawn Springs did it."

"Pat and Bill came up with the idea of letting the former players be with the guys. I think some of that came from the Fiesta Bowl, when some of them were down on the sideline with us."

Players Appreciate Record Crowd For Spring Game

Bam Childress seemed to be at home in the spring game, but he admitted

being in awe of his surroundings for the first time in years while leading the Scarlet to a 37-29 win over the Gray. That's because the east and west stands of Ohio Stadium were filled with red-shirted patrons.

"I would say my first home game, it was like that," said Childress, who amassed 109 receiving yards and scored three times. "(Teammates) were like, 'When you first get out there, you're going to be looking around at the crowd saying, 'Oh, my God.'"

"I thought they were just playing, but I was just like, 'Oh, you're right, man. There's too many people out here.' But now I'm used to it."

Still, Childress was not expecting such a turnout, even a few months removed from the national championship.

"It was crazy out there," he said. "It felt like a regular home game. There were way more people than I thought there were going to be. When it's like that, there is nothing you can do but feed off of that. This season is going to be the same way. We're going to feed off the energy the crowd brings."

Several other players admitted being impressed with the crowd, which was announced at 57,200 — a new OSU spring game record, breaking estimates of 55,000 in 1988 and 1997.

When quarterback Justin Zwick was told of that figure he said, "Is that what it was? That's crazy, man. It's awesome. We've got great fans and it's just fun to go out there in front of them and play a game."

Linebacker A.J. Hawk also was impressed by the outpouring of support.

"It's unbelievable," Hawk said. "There is no place in the world like Ohio State. This really says a lot about our fans and how much they support us. This was a spring game. For a lot of teams it's just a scrimmage and not too many people come."

Added receiver Roy Hall, "That just shows you what kind of program we've got going right now."

Continued On Page 6

Walter v. Bentley Reaches Resolution After Three Years

More than three years after a punch at the end of an OSU football team conditioning session, former OSU offensive lineman Tyson Walter got justice — albeit a small bit of justice — from his former teammate LeCharles Bentley.

A Franklin County Common Pleas Court jury returned a verdict in favor of Walter in his civil lawsuit against Bentley, who punched him after a verbal altercation during a Feb. 17, 2000, conditioning session.

But Walter, who was seeking up to \$2 million for pain, suffering, medical expenses and lost wages, received just \$6,000 to cover his medical expenses. That total was \$4,000 less than Bentley had earlier offered Walter in exchange for dropping the suit.

The verdict ended a three-week court battle between the two former OSU linemen. Bentley is now with the NFL's New Orleans Saints, while Walter is with the Dallas Cowboys.

Bentley, speaking on WBNS-AM's "Herbie and Fitz" radio show hours after the verdict was read, shared his side of the sordid story.

According to Bentley, Walter was verbally abusing Bentley because he had just been named OSU's offensive lineman of the year in 1999.

"He made two comments that really pushed it," Bentley said. "He said, 'Which coach did you have to suck off to win that award?' and, 'You couldn't afford that award if you had to buy it from a coach because you're too poor and from the ghetto.' That was it."

Bentley painted a picture of Walter as an unabashed racist.

"This is the same guy in the weight room who referred to the black players as jungle bunnies," Bentley said. "If you would listen to hip-hop in the weight room, which was a common thing, he called it jungle music."

"This is the same guy, when I played offensive guard, I had to listen to him call other players the 'N' word on a common and frequent basis. I had to listen to this stuff. But I never said nothing and did nothing."

"That day, I wasn't going to have it. It was a fight between two people. He started it and I finished it and he's upset about it."

Bentley told show co-host Kirk Herbstreit he gave Walter fair warning that violence was imminent.

"I told him, 'After the breakdown (post workout stretching sessions), I'm going to break you down,'" Bentley said.

"Then he later says, 'I never expected a fight.' If somebody said to me, 'After the breakdown, I'm going to break you down,' I'd keep my head on a swivel. Not him. He says he was walking off the field in his own world, as he puts it."

"Then he says I sucker punched him. No, you don't sucker punch somebody when you're standing in front of them. That's pretty much the gist of it."

Show co-host Ian Fitzsimmons then asked Bentley if the punch was worth "six dimes."

"You know what, it was well worth it," Bentley said.



Tyson Walter



LeCharles Bentley

During testimony, Walter said the punch broke his nose and shattered several of his teeth. Months later, Walter developed a hip infection that caused him to miss the 2000 season.

Bentley, who has filed a countersuit against Walter for defamation of character and ethnic intimidation, went on the offensive during this trial.

He called upon former OSU head coach John Cooper and several of his former teammates to testify against Walter.

Walter filed his lawsuit against Bentley in December 2000, days before OSU's first Outback Bowl loss to South Carolina and, ultimately, Cooper's dismissal as the OSU coach.

Cooper was asked on the stand why he once told Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones that Walter was "a cancer."

"Because he sued one of his teammates," Cooper testified. "I don't think that is very good going back to the chemistry of our offensive line. I would not want to have a guy on my team that would sue a teammate simply because they got into a fight with them. And I would not want him to sue three days before the Super Bowl if he would sue."

Testimony also revealed that Walter, through his attorney, Todd Neuman, sent a letter to OSU officials in November 2001 claiming that Bentley had signed with a sports agent — namely former OSU assistant coach Mike Jacobs — and was receiving financial and legal support in his ongoing battle with Walter.

OSU officials conducted an investigation in the days leading up to the Michigan game but determined that Walter's claims had no basis. But that letter is the basis of Bentley's countersuit.

"For him to do that right before the Michigan game — which is the biggest game of the year for this city and this state, it shows you what he thinks about his teammates and me," Bentley told The Other Paper.

Walter, in testimony, said he used the word "n—" four times in references to black opponents on the gridiron.

"I believe it's inappropriate at all times," Walter said.

Neuman told reporters he was considering an appeal. Bentley's countersuit is scheduled to go to trial in August.

"Sometimes the shoe is on the other foot," Bentley said. "I would like to get some of my money back."

— Steve Helwagen

OHIO STATE INSIDER



Continued From Page 5

Mangold Makes Most Of Chance With First Team

With starting center Alex Stepanovich shelved by a shoulder injury, sophomore Nick Mangold stepped in at center and went toe to toe with defensive tackle Tim Anderson.

This is the same Anderson who won a state heavyweight wrestling title in high school and also was the top point getter in the power group's strength training this winter.

It was not an easy assignment, Mangold admitted.

"He has all that force bottled up for every single play," Mangold said. "Every play is like a game situation. There is so much involved with him and he just brings it. He's tough to stop. He is real intense."

But going against such talent every day can only make you better, Mangold said.

"It is a confidence booster for me to say I've been running with the ones," he said. "That has definitely helped me a lot. I'm getting reps with guys on both sides of the ball who know what they're doing. That helps me to understand the game."

Youboty Glad He Decided To Enroll Early At OSU

When Ashton Youboty decided to graduate early from Klein High School in Houston and enroll at Ohio State for winter quarter, he knew it would mean missing his final scholastic track and field season.

But Youboty got to relive his track days when he capped off his first spring at OSU with a 90-yard sprint after scooping up the ball on a blocked point-after attempt and returning it in the final seconds of the annual Scarlet and Gray Game.

Youboty also had two solo tackles and broke up a pass for the Scarlet in its 37-29 win over the Gray. His performance in the final session of the spring was a fitting end for the 6-2, 187-pound cornerback.

Along with Donte Whitner, another defensive back who graduated from high school early to enroll in the winter, Youboty impressed throughout the spring.

The head start should only help him down the line.

"I just see it as an advantage for me to get on the field, even if it comes down to special teams," Youboty said. "Right now I've been running with the second unit, so hopefully I should be able to travel with the team and play. That's my plan."

Youboty said he missed participating in track and field and graduating with his class but said the early move to college was worth it.

"Just not ending the year with my friends," he said of what he missed most. "But besides that there's not a lot of disadvantages, I don't think."

"I didn't get to go on the senior trip to Cancun, but I am going back for the prom. I'll be going back for graduation, too. My biggest regret is missing track season, but I'm having fun here right now."

Though he's a speedster, the biggest adjustment for Youboty during spring practice was keeping up with the pace.

"Just how intense the practices are because they seemed more relaxed in high school," he said. "The game speed is

just different, but I'm getting used to it and adjusted.

"It's tough going up against a guy like Drew Carter, who runs a 4.2-something 40. You just get ready to backpedal and turn and run with him."

Youboty said the upperclassmen have helped him make the transition.

"They're watching me," he said. "They try to pump me up, get me going. I'm making plays, so they're happy with me so far."

He is expecting to contribute during OSU's title defense in the upcoming season.

"I don't think I'm going to be redshirted," he said. "It's up to the coaches. It's their decision. I'm open."

Miscellaneous Notes

• ESPN.com's John Clayton ranked Ohio State sixth among colleges in producing NFL talent. His top five were Miami (Fla.), Tennessee, Florida, Georgia and Michigan.

Clayton noted that OSU had as many as 35 players on NFL rosters in 1997, but that number dipped to 28 last year.

"Still, their top prospects are instant successes," Clayton wrote. "LeCharles Bentley, a second-round pick

last year, made a big impact on the (New Orleans) Saints offensive line last year as a rookie. Cornerbacks Antoine Winfield and Nate Clements were first-round picks of the (Buffalo) Bills and each have been first-year and long-term successes."

• In NFL news involving former Buckeyes, the Cincinnati Bengals released quarterback Joe Germaine on the eve of the April 26 draft. The move was made to make room for first-round pick Carson Palmer of USC.

Germaine had signed with the Bengals in October. He was activated for the last three games but did not play.

Tight end Rickey Dudley has resigned with Tampa Bay after helping the Buccaneers win the Super Bowl this past year. Dudley, who had 16 catches last year, agreed to a one-year deal.

He has 211 catches for 2,934 yards and 32 touchdowns in 98 games spanning his seven-year career.

Defensive back Derek Combs was acquired by Green Bay from Kansas City in exchange for a conditional draft choice.

Combs, a former OSU tailback, was originally drafted by Oakland in 2001. He moved to defense while playing for Amsterdam in NFL Europe in 2002.

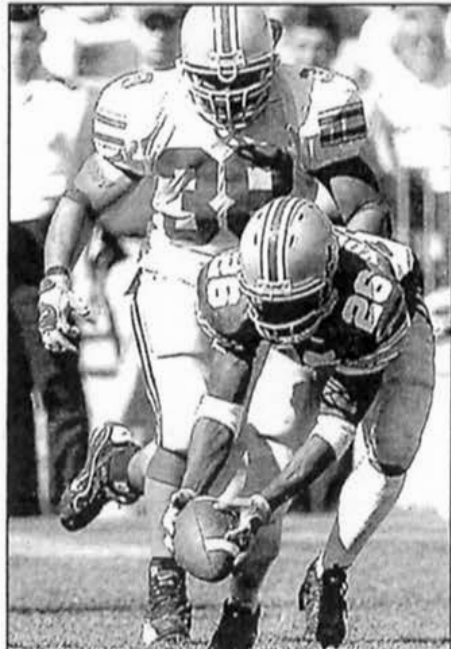
• A judge dismissed claims by Corey Stringer's widow against the Minnesota Vikings but allowed her \$100 million wrongful death lawsuit to go forward against the team's training camp physician and his clinic.

The Vikings asked the judge to dismiss the suit, filed by Kelci Stringer. Her husband, a former OSU All-American, collapsed and died July 31, 2001.

The suit will go to trial against Dr. David Knowles and the Mankato Clinic.

• OSU announced it has sold 14,000 tickets for the 2004 NCAA men's basketball first- and second-round tournament games it will host at Nationwide Arena.

"All six games are sold out," OSU associate athletic director Richelle



JEFF BREHM

ALL THE WAY BACK — Incoming freshman defensive back Ashton Youboty (26) picks up a blocked extra-point attempt in front of Branden Joe during the fourth quarter of the spring game. Youboty returned it the distance for two Scarlet points.

Simonson said. "The remaining tickets are allocated to the participating institutions and the NCAA."

The games are set for March 19 and 21. Simonson said ticket applications were mailed to personal seat license holders in Nationwide Arena as well as to OSU basketball season ticket holders.

By hosting the tournament, OSU is ineligible to play its first- and second-round games in Columbus next year.

• Tressel has been invited to be a head coach in the Hula Bowl all-star game, set for Jan. 17 in Honolulu.

• OSU defensive linemen Tim Anderson and Darrion Scott were among 36 players selected by the Football Writers Association of America for the preseason watch list for the Bronko Nagurski Award, presented annually to the nation's top defensive player.

• OSU defensive end Will Smith and two-way standout Chris Gamble have been selected for the Playboy All-American team. They will fly to Phoenix for a photo shoot in May.

• Members of OSU's national championship football team, as well as cheerleaders and an OSU alumni band, were featured by the Cleveland Indians before and during their May 3 game with Texas at Jacobs Field.

OSU co-captain Donnie Nickey threw out the ceremonial first pitch. The players were introduced before the game and the band performed several OSU favorites. "Hang On Sloopy" replaced "Take Me Out To The Ballgame" during the seventh inning stretch.

• The Indians released former OSU pitcher Dave Burba from a minor league contract May 3, allowing him to sign a similar deal with the Milwaukee Brewers. He was due to report to Triple-A Indianapolis.

• OSU women's basketball coach Jim



STEVE HELWAGEN

NEW GRASS — A new grass field has been installed at Ohio Stadium since the Scarlet and Gray Game. The new field, developed by the OSU horticulture and crop science department, blends five versions of grass. It replaces a Kentucky bluegrass field that was installed when the playing surface was lowered in 2000. The new field is expected to be ready to go for the Aug. 30 season opener against Washington.

OHIO STATE INSIDER



JEFF BIRCHM

STAR-STUDDED SIDELINE — Among the myriad OSU football alumni returning to help coach the Scarlet and Gray Game was former quarterback Mike Tomczak (center, in sunglasses), who had a chat with Jim Tressel.

Foster was named as The Columbus Dispatch Ohio women's basketball coach of the year.

Foster received 16 of the 36 first-place votes to outpoint Wilmington's Jerry Scheve and Cedarville's Kirk Martin.

In his first season at OSU, Foster led the Buckeyes to a 22-10 record, the Big Ten tournament championship game and an NCAA second-round appearance. The Buckeyes made the NCAA for the first time in four years.

National Champs Wrap Up Spring, Look Toward Fall

With spring football over, the focus turns toward recruiting and the various summer camps. Recruiting expert Bill Kurelic and the BSB staff will be on top of all the developments all summer long. Check out the BSB Internet site at:

ohiostate.rivals.com



Recent headlines on the BSB Internet site (ohiostate.rivals.com)

Headline	Date	Group	Author
Big Ten Spring Football Roundup	May 5	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Offers Roll In For Ohio OL	May 5	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Night Game With UW Highlights 2003 State Helwagen Chat: May 2 Archive	May 4	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Flag Around: Can You Feel The Love?	May 3	Football	BSB Staff Reports
Southern Ohio OL Says OSU His Favorite Buckeyes To Rock The Joke	May 2	Football	Jeff Rapp
May 1 Edition Of The War Room Released	May 2	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Bill Favores Buckeyes and Michigan Brandon Underwood gets PSU offer	May 1	Football	BSB Staff Reports
Youboy Scoops Up Attention in Spring	May 1	Football	Steve Helwagen
Rea's Say: My Spring Game Travelogue	May 1	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Hoyer Names His Top Three	Apr 30	Premium Football	Gary Houstean
Crowder Impressed With OSU	Apr 30	Football	Eric Loughry
Spring Game Photo Feature	Apr 30	Premium Football	By Mark Rea
Hawk Cements Job At OLB	Apr 28	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Post Spring Game Chat: April 26 Archive	Apr 28	Football	BSB Staff Reports
Browning Weighs In On OSU Spring Game	Apr 28	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
D'Andrea weighed in during the game and after	Apr 27	Premium Football	Gary Houstean
Better Late Than Never For Peterson	Apr 27	Premium Football	Eric Loughry
Rea's Say: The Upcoming Quarterback Derby	Apr 27	Premium Football	By Mark Rea
Big Plays Prevalent In OSU Spring Game	Apr 26	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Stew's Say: Spring's Winners And, Well ...	Apr 26	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Recruits Attend OSU Spring Game	Apr 26	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Helwagen Chat: April 25 Archive	Apr 26	Football	BSB Staff Reports
Updated Depth Chart Following Spring	Apr 25	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Coleman Drafted In Second Round	Apr 25	Women's Basketball	Mike Wachsman
Buckeyes Close In On Another Commitment	Apr 25	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Record-Breaking Crowd Expected For Spring Game	Apr 24	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Former Players Invited As Honorary Coaches	Apr 24	Football	Steve Helwagen
Doss, Peterson To Lead OSU Draft Parade	Apr 24	Premium Football	Eric Loughry
Rea's Say: Lots To Look For On Saturday	Apr 23	Premium Football	By Mark Rea
What We're Hearing — April 23	Apr 23	OSU Sports News	Mike Wachsman
Michigan WR Says OSU Co-Favorite	Apr 23	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Buckeyes Await Challenge Of Spring Game	Apr 22	Premium Football	Mike Wachsman
Gamble Taken With First Pick in S&G Draft	Apr 22	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Douglas Says This Is His Senior Year	Apr 22	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Michigan LB Interested In OSU	Apr 22	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Seniors Glad To Receive BCS Title Rings	Apr 21	Football	Steve Helwagen
Coaches Named For Spring Game	Apr 21	Football	BSB Staff Reports
Browning Draws Buckeyes' Interest	Apr 21	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Sander Looking Down Job As Punter	Apr 20	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Helwagen Chat: April 18 Archive	Apr 19	Football	BSB Staff Reports
Lewis Again Masterful In OSU Win Over Indiana	Apr 18	Baseball	Mike Wachsman
Scarlet Holds Off Gray In Kick Scrimmage	Apr 18	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
Massay's Impressed With OSU Practice Visit	Apr 18	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Watson Says OSU One Of His Two Favorites	Apr 17	Premium Football	Steve Helwagen
ESPN On Hand For Special Teams Scrimmage	Apr 17	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
FB To Visit OSU Today	Apr 17	Premium Football	By Mark Rea
Rea's Say: OL Holds Key To Title Repeat	Apr 16	Premium Football	Bill Kurelic
Mih LB Visits OSU And Plans Return Trip	Apr 16	Kurelic's Corner	Bill Kurelic
Bucks Wrap Practice No. 8 In Howling Wind	Apr 15	Premium Football	Jeff Rapp

BSB Unveils Premium Packages

BSB's partnership with Rivals.com has allowed us to provide OSU fans two great packages for premium content internet access. They are:

- Ticket B (Team Club Pass, \$6.95/month): You get all of the premium content from the BSB site, including round-the-clock recruiting coverage, plus access to the BSB Premium Scarlet and Gray Message Board. It is on this board where Kurelic and BSB editor Steve Helwagen hold regular Chat sessions every Friday!

- Ticket D (Ultimate Ticket, \$9.95/month): You get access to all premium content on the entire Rivals.com network, plus membership to the BSB Premium Scarlet and Gray Message Board, plus access to ALL of the Rivals.com recruiting experts AND access to Rivals.com's STATE-OF-THE-ART recruiting database!

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COVER STORY: OSU POISED TO REPEAT

Backup Quarterback, Receiver Are Hot Spots

Continued From Page 1

• Which of the young quarterbacks is closer to making a move for the top spot? — Throughout much of the spring, it seemed that athletic redshirt freshman Troy Smith had inched ahead of classmate Justin Zwick in the battle to replace incumbent starter Craig Krenzle in 2004.

But after Zwick threw for four touchdowns in leading the Scarlet to the win in the Scarlet and Gray Game, this derby seems to be dead even.

"I really wouldn't know the answer to who is number three," Tressel said. "They both demonstrated they can make some plays and they have some ability."

"They like to play and they like to compete. We wanted to put those young quarterbacks under pressure. That's why we blitzed so much."

After the game, Smith and Zwick shared a high five and an embrace. They don't seem to view this as a personal confrontation.

"It's not a battle between me and Justin," Smith said. "If you look at how he plays and how I play, it's two totally different styles."

"He had a great day, too. Obviously, with the way I played today and the way he played, it's not a battle. We're not thinking about each other when we're out there playing. We're just thinking about getting the job done."

On several occasions this spring, Smith used his ability to escape pressure and make big plays.

"My confidence has basically been the same as far as knowing I can make plays when I get the opportunity to make plays," he said. "I feel good about learning this playbook and reading defenses. I feel real good."

"It's all on the coaches. They decide when I'm going to play and when I'm not going to play."

Meanwhile, Zwick, a highly touted prep quarterback, admitted it is a big transition to the college game.

"When you come in when you first get here, you don't know what to expect," he said. "Coming into spring ball, you have more of an idea. It's a little more comfortable going out there for practice. You know everything a lot better."

Zwick understands it is still Krenzle's job, so he is working hard on the things he needs to improve on.

"I'm just out here trying to do my best and trying to get better in practice every day," he said. "Craig's the man and I'm just trying to get better and help the team."

• Who will emerge behind Michael Jenkins and Chris Gamble at wide receiver? — Gamble spent most of the spring on defense before reprising his two-way role in the Scarlet and Gray Game.

With Gamble out of the rotation, senior Drew Carter and redshirt freshmen Roy Hall and Santonio Holmes appeared to lock down spots in the two-deep. Likewise, juniors Bam Childress and John Hollins showed enough flashes to say they also could be in the picture this fall.

"Out wide, Roy Hall and Santonio Holmes each had a good spring," Tressel said. "Another guy who caught my eye was John Hollins."

Holmes made a bid to supplant Gamble on punt returns, bringing one



JEFF BREHM

HUSTON HAS A PROBLEM — Gray cornerback E.J. Underwood (right) goes in for a partial block of a punt off the foot of Josh Huston.

back 79 yards for a touchdown in the Scarlet and Gray Game.

"I think a lot of people came out today to see the young guys coming up," said Holmes, who also had a touchdown catch in the game. "I feel I made some big plays and showed what I can do."

The 6-3 Hall showed he could be a tough match for smaller defensive backs. But he knows he must be a complete player to see the field.

"I know I need to work on running routes and reading defenses," Hall said. "I know I need to catch the ball on a consistent basis."

"As far as the team, we need to get back into a rhythm and doing things a little bit faster."

Childress scored three touchdowns in the Scarlet and Gray Game, returning a kick 94 yards and also completing TD catches of 27 and 54 yards.

When asked what he brings to the table, Childress replied, "I think just the ability to get vertical. That's the main thing Coach Tressel and I talked about. It wasn't about making plays or running routes. I can run real good routes and everybody knows I can make plays."

"My thing was get vertical and don't try and make every single guy miss. I just need to get where I need to be as quickly as possible."

Hawk, for one, was taken by Childress' outburst in the Scarlet and Gray Game.

"I thought Bam Childress was impressive today," he said. "A couple of jukes he made ... wow. I always knew he had some great moves, but he had a chance to show it today."

"We had a lot of young guys play well in the secondary today, too."

• Is this offensive line for real? — The veteran offensive line keyed that side of the ball's dominance in the team's jersey scrimmage early in the spring.

A year ago, the defense dominated, including in a 6-3 final in the Scarlet and Gray Game.

In addition to staying healthy, OSU

seemed to bring along a handful of key young linemen in sophomores Nick Mangold and Rob Sims and redshirt freshman Doug Datish.

"I like the way our young offensive linemen came along," Tressel said. "I thought our tight end, Ben Hartssock, really had a good spring as well."

• Who will step up on the defensive line? — OSU missed three of its four starters on the defensive line this spring with Darrion Scott and Simon Fraser out all spring and Will Smith out for a good portion of the drills.

That helped give several of the team's young linemen plenty of reps.

"On that defensive line, Joel Penton, Jay Richardson, Tim Schafer and Quinn Pitcock were all thrown into the fire," Tressel said. "They learned some valuable lessons."

The injured players all figure to return in the fall. But those younger guys will provide much-needed depth and will be in position to move into the lineup in 2004.

• How will the linebacker situation play out? — This question maybe was not answered this spring because returning starter Robert Reynolds and sophomore Bobby Carpenter missed much of the spring.

But Hawk and sophomore Mike D'Andrea seemed to brand themselves as starters after each enjoyed a big showing

in the Scarlet and Gray Game.

"Mike D'Andrea has shown he's certainly going to be a good one, as well as A.J. Hawk," Tressel said.

Fred Pagac Jr., an option in the middle, came off the disabled list midway through the spring to make a bid at a starting job. These five players all figure to play, although there are just three linebacker spots.

Hawk tallied a game-high 14 tackles in the final scrimmage.

"On certain plays, I think I did all right," Hawk said. "But there are always things you need to work on. I missed a couple tackles out there. I just want to watch the film and work on that kind of stuff because no one is perfect out there."

"I'll have plenty of things to work on, just like the rest of the team. I'm just excited to be here this summer and work out and get better."

D'Andrea, a former prep phenom who played sparingly last fall, also had a big day with seven tackles, three tackles for loss, a sack and an interception. Plus he displayed versatility by showing he could man an outside spot.

"I'm glad I can say I've improved since last fall," he said. "I don't think I'm at all where I should be. I just wanted to go out there and play hard."

"It's spring ball and there are 50,000 people here and the coaches are evaluating you. You always want to go out there and do good. I think it worked out all right."

• What will they do in the secondary? — The first shoe(s) fell with the decision that Gamble and Dustin Fox would remain as full-time starters at cornerback.

That put most of the focus on the safety positions, where Mike Doss and Donnie Nickey have departed.

Will Allen appears to have wrapped up the free safety spot, while Nate Salley held an edge at strong safety.


"Those young safeties — Brandon Mitchell, Nate Salley and Tyler Everett — have all done a nice job," Tressel said. "I feel good about what we saw with (early-enrolling freshmen) Donte Whitner and Ashton Youboty."

"And E.J. Underwood has shown he can be a very good cornerback as well for us."

• Who will take over at punter? — Senior B.J. Sander emerged as OSU's first and only option to replace All-American Andy Groom.

He averaged over 47 yards a punt in the special teams scrimmage and over 38 yards a boot on a blustery day at the Scarlet and Gray Game.

"He has been steady with his punt placement and has shown outstanding hang time," Tressel said.



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OHIO STATE SPRING FOOTBALL

3 Quarters Of Fun In The Sun

Scarlet Wins As Teams Combine For 66 Points

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

After a scoreless first quarter, it looked like the 2003 Ohio State Scarlet and Gray Game was going to be the same kind of snoozefest the Buckeyes staged a year ago, when the Gray team prevailed 6-3.

But that assessment could not have been further from the truth.

An eruption of big plays and three lead changes later, the Scarlet had rallied for a 37-29 victory over the Gray.

The game, staged on a perfectly sunny April 26 at Ohio Stadium, was noteworthy on many levels:

- It lasted a robust three hours, easily a spring game record.

- The teams combined for 124 plays, 88 of them passes.

- The crowd of 57,200 eclipsed the previous OSU spring game record of 55,000, set in 1988 and equaled in 1997.

When the dust had settled, OSU head coach Jim Tressel took stock of his team's 15th and final spring practice session.

"We couldn't have had a better day for a spring football game," Tressel said. "The sun was shining and there were a lot of people here. Our guys enjoy it when there are a lot of folks around. There were a lot of good experiences, especially for our younger guys."

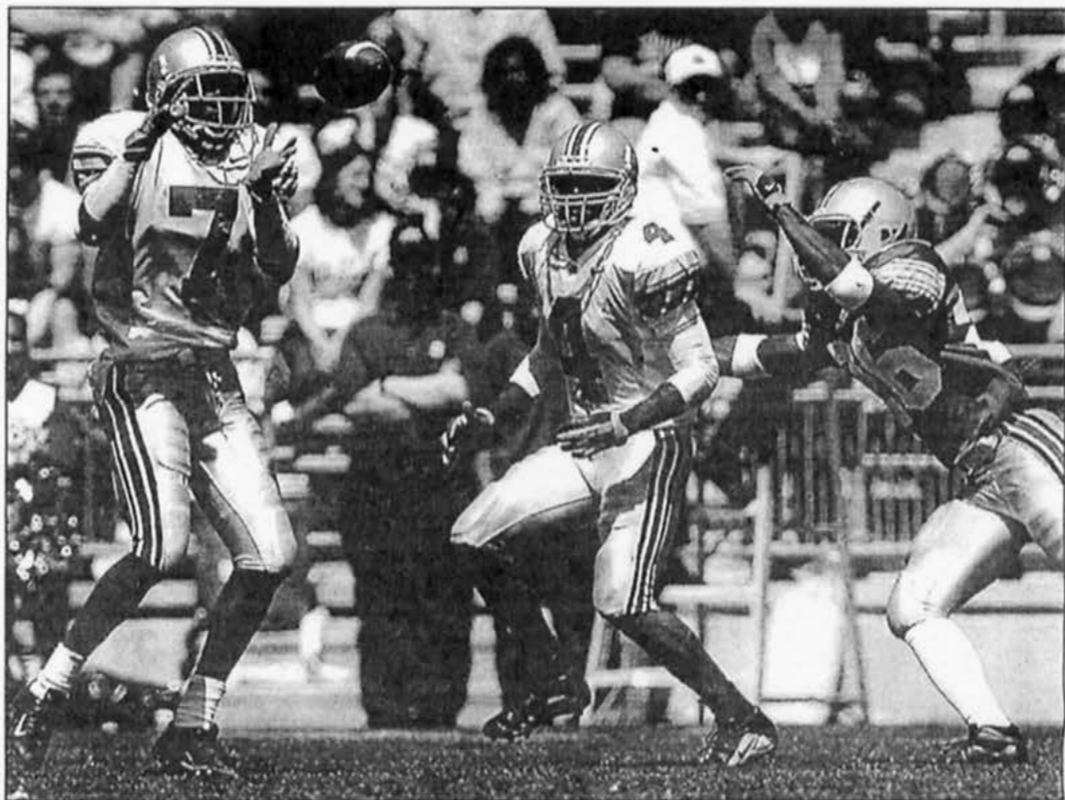
"I don't believe there were any serious injuries. When that occurs, you've had a successful spring game."

The huge crowd saw a game predicated on a handful of key special teams plays with some nifty passing gems thrown in.

The player of the game — if there could be such a thing in the spring game — likely would have been Scarlet wide receiver Bam Childress.

Childress caught four passes for 109 yards and two highlight-reel touchdowns. Plus he returned a kickoff 94 yards for a touchdown.

"Bam won the game for us," noted Scarlet linebacker Mike D'Andrea, who had



JEFF BRIDGM

WIDE OPEN — Chris Gamble (7) looks to haul in a reception for the Gray team, as Scarlet defender Ashton Youboty (26) prepares to lock up Antonio Holmes.

a big game with an interception and a sack of his own.

"Bam did an excellent job," Tressel added. "He had that big kickoff return and a couple of big catches. He has worked extremely hard on stride length and coming off the ball."

Scarlet quarterback Craig Krenzle, OSU's senior returning starter, played three first-quarter possessions before going to the bench. He was 3 of 7 for 30 yards with an interception. Redshirt freshman Justin Zwick relieved him and hit on 17 of 29 passes for 217 yards and four touchdowns.

"I just wanted to come out and help the team win the game," Zwick said. "I know we're just playing against each other, but you still want to win. You just try to be smart and help the team out."

"I felt good. It was just fun being out there with the guys and playing in Ohio Stadium. You can never beat that."

On the Gray, senior Scott McMullen was 7 of 11 for 63 yards with an interception. Redshirt freshman Troy Smith relieved him and was 19 of 37 for 234 yards with two touchdowns and one interception.

Tight end Ryan Hamby added six catch-

es for 77 yards and a score for the Scarlet, while flanker Angelo Chattams had five catches for 39 yards.

On the Gray, redshirt freshman receiver Antonio Holmes had a 79-yard touchdown on a punt return and also had four catches for 65 yards and a TD grab. Drew Carter had six catches for 85 yards. Chris Gamble, who played on both sides of the ball, added three catches for 42 yards and a touchdown.

As It Happened

D'Andrea's interception of a McMullen pass in the red zone highlighted the first quarter. McMullen made a misread and threw the ball right to D'Andrea at the Scarlet's 17-yard line.

"I just dropped back in my area and the ball was there," D'Andrea said.

Gray linebacker Thomas Matthews returned the favor late in the period. Krenzle's pass to Hamby went off the tight end's hands and high in the air, right to Matthews at the Scarlet's 45-yard line.

The Gray opened the scoring midway through the second quarter as Smith led the Gray on an 11-play, 38-yard scoring march. The key play was his 20-yard strike to Gamble on fourth-and-8 at the Scarlet 26. A face mask penalty moved the ball to the 3. But Smith rushed for no gain on first down and threw a pair of incompletions before Josh Huston booted a 21-yard field goal to put the Gray up 3-0 with 5:49 left in the first half.

The lead ballooned to 10-0 with 3:15 left when Holmes returned a punt 79 yards for a touchdown. Holmes took a line drive punt from Bryan Weaver on the run near his left

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OHIO STATE SPRING FOOTBALL

sideline at the 21-yard line. He reversed field and, with a convoy of blockers helping, turned the corner and was gone down the right sideline. He sidestepped Weaver to complete the play.

"That was the play called for a right return," Holmes said. "He kicked it to the left, but I saw an opportunity. I figured the wall would be set up on the back side. That was the whole concept. That was a long way to go, but I give all the credit to my blockers."

The Scarlet wasted no time in answering. Childress fielded the ensuing kickoff at his own 6 and rolled through a perfect wedge down the right sideline. Kicker Josh Huston made a desperate tackle attempt near midfield, but Childress successfully tightroped the sideline and completed the play to cut the Gray lead to 10-7 with 3:04 left in the half.

"That was nothing but my blockers," Childress said. "I just did my part at the end and broke a few tackles. I told them to hold their blocks and we would take it to the house, and that's what happened."

Smith then led the Gray into scoring position with a 13-play, 59-yard march in the two-minute drill. He delivered one of the most electrifying plays of the game, eluding a sack attempt by Fred Pagac Jr. and throwing a 23-yard pass to John Hollins.

"I was in the shotgun," Smith said. "I felt a couple guys coming from my right. I couldn't step up. Then Pagac grabbed me from the side. I stepped out to the back and as soon as I got out of there I saw John Hollins and Chris Gamble open downfield."

"I was just thinking, 'I've got to get this ball off before somebody kills me.' John made a great play. I want to thank my offensive line there again because without them none of that is happening."

The Gray got down to the Scarlet 14 but had to settle for Huston's 34-yard field goal on the final play of the half to extend the lead to 13-7 at halftime.

Childress fumbled the ball on the opening kickoff of the second half. Gray's Rob Harley forced the fumble and Matthews recovered it at the Scarlet 19.

On first down there, McMullen hit Gamble for the 19-yard touchdown, pushing the lead to 20-7 with 11:47 left in the third quarter.

But the Scarlet began its comeback. A.J. Hawk hit Holmes on a punt return and Scarlet's Antonio Smith recovered the fumble at the Gray's 14-yard line. On the third play there, Zwick threw in the left flat to Roy Hall, who made a twisting grab in front of safety Will Allen, for the 14-yard TD, cutting the Gray lead to 20-14 with 5:31 left in the third quarter.

"I told Justin to hit me on the go route," Hall said. "They were in a Cover-2, so once I got past the corner, Will came underneath and the corner dropped back. I just leaped and made the catch."

Scarlet safety Nate Salley came up big on the Gray's next play from scrimmage. Holmes took a pass from Matt Trombitas but was hit and fumbled at the Gray 35. D'Andrea recovered it and the Scarlet was in business again.

The Scarlet needed five plays to find the end zone. Zwick hit a wide-open Hamby down a seam in the middle of the field for a 30-yard touchdown that gave the Scarlet a 21-20 lead with 4:14 left in the third quarter.

"We've got a lot of great tight ends," Zwick said. "They make big plays. He made a great catch on that. The ball wasn't perfectly placed, but Ryan went out and got it and ran for the touchdown. With the tight ends we have, they're going to be a big part of the offense."

The teams then traded turnovers. Smith floated a pass in the red zone, which cornerback Dustin Fox intercepted and returned 36 yards out to the 37. But three plays later, Gray's Jim Otis Jr. threw a similar interception down the middle of the field to Allen, who returned it 33 yards to the Scarlet 14 with 10:17 left in the game.

The Gray moved ahead on Huston's 26-yard field goal, which put them up 23-21 with 8:44 left.

But Zwick and the Scarlet roared back with a 10-play, 80-yard scoring march. Zwick completed 6 of 9 passes for 77 of the yards on the drive, including the 27-yard touchdown to Childress on a go route to put the Scarlet up 28-23 with 6:13 left in the game.

"We read each other on that one," Childress said. "He tapped his helmet and I knew where he was going."

"Bam made a good catch there," Zwick added. "We had him on that earlier and I just overthrew him a little bit. I saw the corner hesitate a little bit, so I was like, 'Hey, we'll go back there again,' and he made a great catch in the back corner of the end zone."

That same connection worked well moments later as Zwick threw quick to Childress near the right sideline. He bobbed the pass, while a pair of defenders converged. Somehow he eluded them as well as a diving Allen, tightroped the sideline again and was gone on a 54-yard touchdown that extended the Scarlet advantage to 35-23 with 3:32 left.

"I was just out there playing," Childress said. "I knew I was close to the sideline. I kept my feet in and tightroped the sideline and that's what I did."

Zwick said he just watched as Childress turned the short pass into a jaw-dropping touchdown.

"That's not something where you think, 'I want to do this or that,'" Zwick said. "Guys make plays. Bam made a play where he went for the touchdown on that 5-yard pass. You don't expect that as a quarterback, but you take it."

"He's slippery as heck. If you give him a chance, he can do big things with the ball."

The Gray tacked on one last touchdown as Smith stepped up and hit Holmes with a 23-yard touchdown pass with 13 seconds left. Holmes believed he had redeemed himself a bit with that late score.

"My coach called me over and said, 'I think I'm going to have to leave you in because I saw how you got down on yourself (after the fumbles). Keep your head up and make a play,'" Holmes said. "My opportunity came at the end there to make a play."

But a blocked PAT attempt allowed Scarlet's Ashton Youboty to scoop up the ball and return it for a two-point conversion to make it 37-29 Scarlet.

Hawk, who had a game-high 14 tackles for the Scarlet, recovered the onside kick to ice the game.

Game Notes

- Tressel revealed that the coaches had scripted a 65/35 mix of pass plays to run plays. The final ratio ended up 71/29.

- "I think the guys who were behind broke the rules," he said. "Chris Gamble was not supposed to play in the second half. But I got up there in the TV booth in the third quarter and there he is out there catching a touchdown pass."

- "I guess I need to have better discipline with my coaches."

- The tailbacks never really got involved. Lydell Ross finished with 5 yards on four carries and one catch for 3 yards for the Scarlet. Maurice Hall had six carries for 6 yards and two catches for minus-3 yards

Scarlet 37, Gray 29

Scarlet and Gray Game

April 26, 2003 — Ohio Stadium, Columbus, Ohio

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F	
SCARLET	0	7	14	16	—	37
GRAY	0	13	7	9	—	29

Second Quarter

Gray — Huston, 21 yard field goal, 5:49; 11 plays, 38 yards, 3:42 TOP.
 Gray — Holmes, 79 yard punt return (Huston kick), 3:15.
 Scarlet — Childress, 94 yard kickoff return (Nugent kick), 3:04.
 Gray — Huston, 34 yard field goal, 0:00; 13 plays, 59 yards, 6:05 TOP.

Third Quarter

Gray — Gamble, 19 yard pass from Smith (Huston kick), 11:47; 1 play, 19 yards, 0:06 TOP.
 Scarlet — R.Hall, 14 yard pass from Zwick, 5:40 (Nugent kick); 3 plays, 14 yards, 1:20 TOP.
 Scarlet — Hamby, 25 yard pass from Zwick, 4:14 (Nugent kick); 5 plays, 35 yards, 1:06 TOP.

Fourth Quarter

Gray — Huston, 26 yard field goal, 8:40; 4 plays, 6 yards, 1:37 TOP.
 Scarlet — Childress, 27 yard pass from Zwick, 6:13 (Nugent kick); 9 plays, 80 yards, 2:27 TOP.
 Scarlet — Childress, 54 yard pass from Zwick, 3:32 (Russell kick); 3 plays 57 yards, 1:00 TOP.
 Gray — Holmes, 23 yard pass from Smith (Huston kick blocked), 0:13; 12 plays, 71 yards, 3:10 TOP.
 Scarlet — Youboty, PAT return, 0:13.

Att. — 57,200

Weather — 62 degrees, clear; wind from the north at 23 MPH

Team Statistics

	Scarlet	Gray
First Downs	12	20
Rushing	1	3
Passing	11	16
Penalty	0	1
Rushes-Yards	12-8	24-28
Passing Yards	269	301
Passes (Att.-Comp.Int.)	39-21-2	49-27-2
Offensive Plays	51	73
Total Net Yards	277	329
Third Down Efficiency	6-13	7-18
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	3-3
Punts-Avg.	6-34.0	5-38.8
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	4-2
Penalties	9-53	5-25
Time of Possession	18:46	41:14

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) — Scarlet: Ross 4-5; Schnittker 1-3; Zwick 3-3; Parker 2-1; Otis 2-4; Gray: Smith 12-21; Hollins 1-11; M.Hall 6-6; Team 2-(-2); McMullen 3-(-8).

PASSING (Att.-Comp.-Int.-Yds.-TD) — Scarlet: Zwick 29-17-0-217-4; Krenzel 7-3-1-300-0; Otis 3-1-22-0. Gray: Smith 37-19-1-234-2; McMullen 11-7-1-63-0; Trombitas 1-1-0-44-0.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) — Scarlet: Hamby 6-77; Chattams 5-39; Childress 4-109; R.Hall 2-16; Jenkins 1-21; Caldwell 1-4; Ross 1-3; Parker 1-0. Gray: Carter 6-85; Hartssock 5-36; Holmes 4-65; Gamble 3-42; Hollins 2-29; White 2-24; M.Hall 2-(-3); Allen 1-21; Bishop 1-7; Staubs 1-(-5).

PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) — Scarlet: Weaver 4-38.8-45; Huston 2-24.5-34. Gray: Sander 5-38.8-51.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — Scarlet: Boone 2-7. Gray: Holmes 3-94; Gamble 2-14.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — Scarlet: Childress 3-133; R.Hall 1-23. Gray: Holmes 2-56; Allen 2-32; Carter 1-8; Whitner 1-4.

FUMBLE RECOVERIES (No.-Yds.) — Scarlet: Chattams 1-11; Team 1-0. Gray: Matthews 1-2.
INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) — Scarlet: Fox 1-33; D'Andrea 1-14. Gray: Allen 1-33; Matthews 1-3.
SACKS (No.-Yds.) — Scarlet: Richardson 1-12; D'Andrea 1-7; Anderson 1-7; Hawk 1-5. Gray: Schafer 1-6; Penton 1-5.

TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) — Scarlet: D'Andrea 3-15; Anderson 3-12; Hawk 3-11; Richardson 1-12. Gray: Schafer 2-8; Penton 1-5; Pitcock 1-1.

TACKLES (Solo-Assst-Tot.) — Scarlet: Hawk 13-1-14; Salley 8-2-10; D'Andrea 5-2-7; Anderson 5-2-7; Boone 5-0-5; Richardson 3-1-4; Britton 2-1-3; Youboty 2-0-2; Pagac 1-1-2; Chattams 1-1-2; Everett 1-1-2; Fox 1-0-1; Jenkins 1-0-1; Datish 1-0-1; Schnittker 1-0-1; Green 0-1-1; Culver 0-1-1. Gray: Mitchell 4-0-4; Whitner 4-0-4; Allen 3-1-4; Schlegel 3-1-4; Harley 3-0-3; Moore 3-0-3; Matthews 2-1-3; Penton 2-0-2; Schafer 2-0-2; Bond 2-0-2; Pitcock 1-0-1; White 1-0-1; Carter 1-0-1; Hollins 1-0-1; Underwood 1-0-1; Andrews 1-0-1; Downing 0-1-1; Holmes 0-1-1; Gamble 0-1-1.

for the Gray. Maurice Claret did not play as he rested his shoulder.

Smith was the leading ground gainer with 21 yards on 12 carries. He was sacked twice.

- Salley added 10 tackles to go with his fumble forced for the Scarlet.

- B.J. Sander averaged 38.8 yards on five punts on a blustery day.
- Hawk, D'Andrea, Jay Richardson and Tim Anderson all had sacks for the Scarlet, while Joel Penton and Tim Schafer had sacks for the Gray.

- D'Andrea, playing mostly at outside linebacker, got into a flow early with the pick as well as the early sack.

"I think whenever any player starts out a game like that, it's easier to keep it going," said D'Andrea, who finished with seven tackles. "When you start out a game bad, it's hard to get going sometimes."

- Roy Hall, listed at 6-3, 228 pounds,

believes he can be a factor near the goal line. He showed good strength on his touchdown grab.

"In the (first) scrimmage, that's where I scored twice," Hall said. "I think I can help out on the goal line. I can get the ball in there (into the end zone)."

"I lift weights a lot and have improved my strength. I didn't come in as a skinny guy. I came in about 210, but I'm 228 right now. I didn't get any slower. They always tease me about playing tight end — don't even mention that."

- Offensive coordinator Jim Bollman missed the game. He was in Ann Arbor, Mich., attending his daughter Courtney's graduation from the University of Michigan.

- The teams played four 12-minute quarters. Unlike previous years when a running clock was used late in the game, standard timing rules applied throughout.

OHIO STATE SPRING DRAFT

Gamble Is Easy First Pick Of S&G Draft

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

When the Gray squad won the toss to initiate the draft for OSU's annual Scarlet and Gray Game underclassman draft April 22, the first pick was a no-brainer.

"We want to open wide receiver," one of the Gray seniors shouted.

Moments later, he corrected himself and said, "No, we want to open cornerback."

The truth was, of course, the Gray had opened the position-by-position draft at both spots by taking do-it-all junior-to-be Chris Gamble with the first selection.

"I think they just have such great respect for his ability and for what he did a year ago," OSU coach Jim Tressel said of the selection. "He never takes a play off."

Tressel, acting as the game commissioner, and his staff split the team's 24 seniors down the middle then had those seniors and assistant coaches assigned to each side to draft sides for the spring-ending scrimmage.

The Scarlet squad, coached by Tim Spencer, was assigned the following seniors: cornerback Bobby Britton, linebacker Fred Pagac Jr., defensive tackle Tim Anderson, offensive guard Adrien Clarke, offensive tackle Ivan Douglas, split end Michael Jenkins, flanker Maurice Lee and quarterbacks Craig Krenzle and Jim Otis Jr. The Scarlet also got dibs on injured players Darrion Scott, Robert Reynolds and Alex Stepanovich.

The Gray squad, coached by Luke Fickell, was assigned these seniors: strong safety Will Allen, linebacker Jason Bond, defensive end Steve Graef, offensive guard Bryce Bishop, tight end Ben Hartscock, split end Michael Young, flanker Drew Carter, flanker Jamal Luke, quarterback Scott McMullen and punter B.J. Sander. The Gray also got injured players Will Smith and Shane Olivea.

The draft was conducted by position. The team with the choice declares a position and takes the first player it would like at that spot. The teams trade picks at that position until all underclassmen at that position have been assigned.

Gamble played on both sides in the Scarlet and Gray Game, which was won by the Scarlet 37-29 (see story, pages 16-17).

"He can do everything," Hartscock said. "He can play corner. If we need somebody with speed to break downfield, he can do that. He can return punts and kicks. He'll be everywhere. That was an easy first pick."

Linebacker A.J. Hawk, selected by the Scarlet, shared his view on Gamble as well.

"That was probably because he can do everything," Hawk said. "You always want to try and get guys who can do more than

one thing. Try and find something he can't do.

"Anyone who has watched him play knows he has such a great attitude. He can play offense and defense and shut people down on the corner. You can tell by the way he plays he has fun."

Spencer revealed that the Scarlet had a plan to stop Gamble.

"I think Chris Gamble was a good first pick," Spencer said. "Somebody will have to control him. We have a pair of shackles to keep him in the locker room. He can do so many things — that's why he was picked first."

Fickell predicted his Gray team would be competitive.

"I think we look good," Fickell said. "Obviously, we have to tie some offensive line stuff up. Special teams, we look good at kicker, punter and long snapper. Those are key spots."

"One other thing we'll need," Fickell jokingly told Tressel, "is a quick whistle on (Scarlet quarterback) Krenzle. If we get to him, he's down. We don't want to hurt him, of course."

When asked about the Gray team's draft plan, Hartscock admitted, "I don't know ... chaos."

"But really, after we secured Gamble, I think we did pretty well. We got Nick Mangold at center and we know he can handle the line calls and the center/quarterback exchanges."

Meanwhile, Jenkins liked the way the Scarlet stacked up top to bottom.

"Our O-line looks pretty solid," he said. "At fullback, we were able to get Roshawn (Parker), who can also play tailback if need be."

"Our kicking game is solid with (Mike) Nugent. Touchbacks and field goals could be big in this game."

"Defensively, our safeties are strong with Nate Salley and Tyler Everett. Our linebacker crew is pretty solid with A.J., Freddie Pagac and Mike D'Andrea. That's a good group. And our defensive line looks pretty good with Tim Anderson, (Jay) Richardson and (Marcus) Green."

As always, Tressel viewed the draft as an educational experience — for him and his staff.

"I thought it was interesting," Tressel said. "I always like seeing how the guys pick them. I think it usually reminds me why the coaches make some decisions."

"But I think it's also good to see how the players feel about the progress some of the players are making. Spring football has got to be fun."

Draft Notes

- Fickell was asked about the possibility



STEVE HELWAGEN

WHO DO WE TAKE? — Ohio State coaches (from left) Mark Dantonio, Bill Conley, Jim Heacock and Tim Spencer and players Craig Krenzle, Alex Stepanovich and Tim Anderson plot their strategy during the spring game draft April 22.

that tailback Maurice Claret, who missed all contact drills during spring football, would play.

"He's a gamer," Fickell said. "With the exception of anybody holding him back, he should be able to help us for a few series."

In fact, Claret did not dress for the game. He stayed on the Gray sideline, although he questioned that team's draft strategy.

"I don't know what the Gray team was doing," he said laughing. "They got Chris Gamble, but he can't get the ball if someone doesn't throw to him, and someone can't throw to him if they don't have protection."

"The Scarlet has the starting offensive line and the starting defensive line, they have the starting quarterback (Krenzle), Mike Jenkins, Lydell Ross. I don't know what the Gray was thinking. I kind of feel sorry for them."

- Of the players listed first team on the

overall team depth chart, the Scarlet had 11 (five offense, five defense and Nugent). The Gray had eight (two offense, five defense and punter B.J. Sander).

Six other projected starters were out with injuries (Scott, Reynolds, Simon Fraser and Stepanovich for the Scarlet and Smith and Olivea for the Gray).

• Fickell's Gray squad was assisted by recent OSU graduates invited back. Plus he had younger assistants Mark Snyder and Mel Tucker on his side.

Veteran assistant Joe Daniels also was placed on the Gray.

"Joe Daniels is the one guy who is not exactly placed right," Tressel said. "He said in one of the meetings he'd have to change diapers on the sideline."

• When the draft was over, Tressel allowed the sides to discuss trades, but none was made.

Anderson suggested, "We'll give you all of our injured players for Chris Gamble."

The Scarlet And Gray Draft: Pick By Pick

- Here is a look at the draft order for the 2003 Scarlet and Gray Game.
- **CB** — Chris Gamble (Gray), Dustin Fox (Scarlet), E.J. Underwood (G), Ashton Youboty (S), Steven Moore (G), Antonio Smith (S), Michael Roberts (G). (Note: Scarlet already had senior Bobby Britton.)
 - **OT** — Rob Sims (S), Mike Kne (G), Ryan Cook (S), Doug Datish (S), Ben Nash (G), John McLaughlin (S). (Note: Scarlet already had senior Ivan Douglas; Gray already had senior Shane Olivea, although he was injured and did not play.)
 - **C** — Nick Mangold (G), Steve Winner (S). (Note: Scarlet already had senior Alex Stepanovich, who was injured and did not play.)
 - **Kicker** — Mike Nugent (S), Josh Huston (G), Matt Russell (S), Christian Soult (G).
 - **OG** — John Conroy (G), Adam Olds (S), R.J. Coleman (G). (Note: Gray already had senior Bryce Bishop; Scarlet already had senior Adrien Clarke.)
 - **WLB** — A.J. Hawk (S), Thomas Matthews (G), Joe Bradley (S), Bill Finissi (G).
 - **Flanker** — Santonio Holmes (G), Bam Childress (S), Brandon Wilson (S). (Note: Gray already had seniors Drew Carter and Jamal Luke; Scarlet already had senior Maurice Lee.)
 - **SLB** — Mike D'Andrea (S), Jason Vera (G). (Note: Gray already had senior Jason Bond; Robert Reynolds was injured and did not play for the Scarlet.)
 - **MLB** — Anthony Schlegel (G), Tucker Allen (S). (Note: Gray already had senior Fred Pagac Jr.)
 - **FB** — Brandon Schnitter (S), Branden Joe (G), Roshawn Parker (S), Colby Staubs (G), John Adams (S).
 - **TB** — Maurice Hail (G), Lydell Ross (S), Maurice Claret (G), Michael DeMaria (S).
 - **DE** — Jay Richardson (S), Joel Penton (G). (Note: Gray already had seniors Will Smith and Steve Graef; Mike Kudla and Smith were injured and did not play.)
 - **QB** — Troy Smith (G), Justin Zwick (S), Matt Trombitas (G). (Note: Scarlet already had seniors Craig Krenzle and Jim Otis Jr.; Gray already had senior Scott McMullen.)
 - **TE** — Ryan Hamby (S), Stan White Jr. (G), Jason Caldwell (S). (Note: Gray already had senior Ben Hartscock.)
 - **Long Snapper** — Kyle Andrews (G), Drew Norman (S).
 - **SE** — Roy Hall (S), John Hollins (G), Angelo Chhattams (S), Mike Holmes (G). (Note: Scarlet already had senior Michael Jenkins; Gray already had senior Michael Young.)
 - **DT (both spots drafted together)** — Quinn Pitcock (G), Marcus Green (S), Tim Schafer (G). (Note: Scarlet already had senior Tim Anderson.)
 - **Safety (both spots drafted together)** — Nate Salley (S), Donte Whitner (G), Tyler Everett (S), Brandon Mitchell (G), LeAndre Boone (S), Rob Harley (G).
 - **Leo DE** — Redgie Arden (S), Bryce Culver (G).
 - **Punter** — Bryan Weaver (S). (Note: Gray already had senior B.J. Sander.)



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OHIO STATE SPRING FOOTBALL

Offensive Weapons Emerge This Spring

For some followers of the Ohio State football team, they may not be sure if it is a blessing or a curse that the Buckeyes return all 11 starters on offense.

But if spring practice was any indication, OSU appears to be well on its way toward a productive 2003 season.

Of course, this is the same unit that averaged a strong 38.0 points in the first seven games. Skeptics, though, can show how the offense generated just 20.6 points in the final seven — which included two overtime games.

Clearly, the Buckeyes want to score more regularly in 2003, especially with roughly half of the defense departed from last year's national championship team. Clearly, the players and coaches think they have the personnel to do so, that it is indeed good news that so many veterans return.

But added to that — and on display this spring — was the fact that OSU also has some very promising talent waiting in the wings of the two-deep.

Injury and attrition seem unavoidable, but the Buckeyes currently boast a lot more musts than busts on the offensive side of the ball.

"The best thing you can have on your football team is depth," said receiver Roy Hall, who would have to be counted among the rising stars. "If you've got that, then when someone gets hurt you don't miss a beat. We're blessed to have so much depth on offense because we can keep things rolling."

One of the most ballyhooed of the youngsters on offense, reserve quarterback Justin Zwick, admits being tantalized by all the ability around him when the lesser-knowns take the field.

"It's really exciting to see all the guys we have, all the athletes," he said. "We've got young receivers stepping up, we've got young linemen stepping up and doing things. A few years down the road if we

INSIDE THE OFFENSE

with
Jeff Rapp

put it all together we'll be awesome."

The reserves did their best to tease the crowd of nearly 60,000 in the Scarlet and Gray Game as skill players such as Zwick, Hall, Troy Smith and Santonio Holmes all had their moments.

Likewise, linemen such as Rob Sims, Nick Mangold and Doug Datish also stood out. During the game and throughout the month of April it was evident that for every Ben Hartsock there was a Ryan Hamby and Stan White Jr. For every Michael Jenkins there was a Drew Carter and John Hollins.

At some spots, the depth is basically interchangeable, as with fullback where Brandon Schnittker could play just as much as Brandon Joe; or at tailback, where Lydell Ross and Maurice Hall are equally likely to spell Maurice Claret.

That is a soothing thought for an offense that returns trusted starting quarterback Craig Krenzel and plans to be more diversified this season.

"It's nice to have that many people back, and I think after last year we've got the comfort of playing together with the same group of guys," Schnittker said. "It's a nice feeling having that and it gives you confidence knowing we can play at the level we want to play at."

Head coach Jim Tressel also is pleased but pointed out that the 37-29 score in the spring game had a lot to do with several regulars missing on defense and the others being split up.

"Plus we only gave them two different defenses on each down to run and it was on paper, so our guys had a good idea



JEFF BREHM

STARSTRUCK — Ohio State redshirt freshman quarterback Justin Zwick said he's agog over all of the quality receivers around him. In fact, he used three of them — Roy Hall, Ryan Hamby and Bam Childress — as targets for second-half touchdowns in the spring game.

what was coming at them," said the coach.

Young QBs Make Their Case

Still, the young quarterbacks were charged with making plays, and that's exactly what they did at times in drills and with regularity in the spring game.

A 6-4, 210-pound pocket passer from Massillon (Ohio) Washington, Zwick was 17 of 29 in the air for 217 yards. He tossed four touchdowns in the winning effort for the Scarlet to go along with no interceptions.

Smith (6-1, 205), an electric athlete with quickness and a very strong arm, threw a whopping 37 times for the Gray in relief of senior backup Scott McMullen. He completed 19 for 234 yards, two TDs and one interception. He also made the play of the game when he eluded several defenders in the backfield and somehow fired a first-down strike to Hollins.

"They've had a lot of opportunities in practice with the last 14 practices leading up to today to have some pressure put on them, plus our defense put pressure on those guys all fall when they played for the scout team," Tressel said afterward. "So it's not like that's the first time they saw fast guys flying at them."

Zwick certainly looked like someone who spent his last fall practicing against OSU's great defensive pursuit. He wasted no time in getting rid of the ball on drop-back passes, sometimes doing so before he was even set in the pocket. Smith, meanwhile, often bought more time with his nimble feet and creativity.

Most of their incomplections were to safe areas and some were the result of drops.

"Intuitively they are both pretty poised and confident guys," Tressel said. "They

will both learn a lot from today, and I think that's a good thing."

While the expectation is that either Zwick or Smith will be tabbed the program's future QB and be slotted in behind McMullen, Tressel sees no reason to rush that kind of assessment.

"No, I don't think you have to worry about that," he said when asked if one would be listed before the other. "In fact, we always talk to every position and the quarterback position especially: You never concern yourself with anything other than how can I get better."

"The minute you start thinking about where am I ranked compared to something else, you've taken your mind off of the task at hand."

Smith was elated to be showcased in the spring game.

"It was a great experience, great experience," repeated the Cleveland Glenville product. "Last year, I sat and I watched the game, wondering how it is to be in there. When I was in there it was everything that I imagined it to be."

Smith said he enjoyed every aspect of the spring, even the 7 a.m. quarterback meetings on school days.

"It was very productive," he said. "This spring has helped me out a whole lot — in ways I couldn't even imagine."

So what does the young quarterback take with him heading into the off-season?

"Excitement. Excitement and humbleness," he said. "You've got to be humble. Through all this you've got to know there's still something bigger than you."

A Tim Couch fan, Zwick donned his new No. 2, which, you may recall, was worn previously by three-time All-American Michael Doss. Zwick would probably settle for No. 3 on the depth chart, which would give him the inside track for next year.

While it will be hard to live up to the recruiting hype, maybe the most important aspect of the spring for Zwick was that he avoided mistakes for the most part.

"That's something that Coach Tressel loves — no interceptions, being smart, checking out of things — and that's just something that you've got to do as a quarterback," he said.

"I've just got to keep continuing with everything that we're doing now — the weight room, the film room, throwing, getting my arm in shape."

Like Smith, Zwick stayed humble despite wowing the crowd in Ohio Stadium.

"I'd say it wasn't bad," he said of his performance. "We had a lot of people stepping up on the offense. When your receivers make good plays like that, it's going to make you look good."

Zwick also kept all the discussion about the perceived battle with Smith in perspective.

"Is too much being made of it? That's really not for me to say," Zwick said. "You guys are just doing your job and whatever comes out of that comes out."

"Everybody is going to look at it as that. This year we're just trying to com-

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OHIO STATE SPRING FOOTBALL



JEFF BREHM

HANG ON TO THE BALL — During the Scarlet and Gray Game, quarterback Troy Smith (10) used his fancy footwork to get out of a number of sticky situations. Here, defensive end Jay Richardson has him under wraps, with Tyler Everett (6) approaching.

pete and become better quarterbacks as we go on."

Added Smith on the subject, "I wouldn't say it's a battle. I'd just say it's two guys competing. There's no type of rivalry between Justin and I. Justin's a great person. He helps me out when I need help. It's not a battle. It's nowhere near a battle."

Much In Reserve At Receiver

Early in the spring with so many wide-outs making athletic receptions and eating up yards afterward, Tressel was asked if he felt he was "loaded" at receiver. While the third-year coach scoffed at the notion, he seemed more enthusiastic at the close of spring.

"We did a lot of zone blitzing, and whenever you zone blitz it's really important that the receivers read which of the seams is available, and I thought the kids did that pretty well," he said after the spring game.

"I think we got some good experience there. I still don't know that we're ready to say we're loaded."

If Tressel isn't, his receivers are. Bam Childress put on what seems to be an annual show in the spring game with four catches for 109 yards and two TDs. Just for fun, he mixed in a 94-yard kickoff return for another score.

Childress' previous spring performances were in front of much smaller crowds. This time he did it for the defending national champions in front of 57,200.

"It was crazy out there," said the junior from Bedford (Ohio) Chanel. "It felt like a regular home game. There were way more people than I thought there were going to be. When it's like that there is nothing you can do but feed off of that. This season is going to be the same way. We're going to feed off the energy the crowd brings."

Childress created the energy on his last TD, in which he turned a simple reception of a Zwick pass on the sideline into a game-clinching 54-yard score.

"Bam is a very electric player," Zwick said. "He's one of the quickest guys I know, and now he's gotten to where he can just make a move and go. Sometimes he was a little jittery here and there, but now he's just making a move and going instead of taking too many steps."

"That play on the sideline was just incredible. I'm expecting 5 yards or maybe 10 yards and he just breaks it and goes to the end zone. That's a quarterback's dream right there."

Angelo Chattams hauled in five passes for the Scarlet and Roy Hall added a pair. Carter had six catches for 85 yards to lead the Gray, Holmes was four for 65 with a TD, and Hollins made two nice grabs.

"My coaches kept telling me all the time, 'Make a big play,' and that's what I had to do," said Holmes.

"Me and Bam knew that we both were competing for that third and fourth receiver spot. Both of us had a pretty good day. Now we have to come back in the fall and work even harder."

The plan beforehand was to throw the ball 65 percent of the time, which, of course, drew no exception from the wide-outs. It ended up being even more than that as Ross played sparingly and Claret was held out because of nagging injuries.

"All the receivers were real excited and seeing how much we ran the ball during the season, it kind of gave us a chance to show what we can do," Hall said. "But we've been doing it all spring. We just came out and acted like it was another practice."

Two-Deep Bulges With Possibility

The members of the offense also have

Charting The OSU Offense

Prior to the spring, BSB identified several OSU offensive players as being "on the spot." Here's how they fared.

• **Drew Carter, wide receiver** — Carter needed a very consistent 15 spring practices to prove he is very much an option at wideout along with returning starters Michael Jenkins and Chris Gamble. Mission accomplished.

Despite a few drops, including a couple in the spring game, Carter was a playmaker throughout drills and looked like someone who belongs on the field. A talented 6-4, 200-pound split end, Carter led all receivers in the spring game with six catches for 85 yards, including a long of 25 yards.

Look for a lot of No. 8 as the Buckeyes have eyes on evolving the passing game.

• **Bryce Bishop and Adrien Clarke, guards** — It's hard to imagine two returning starters and seniors who helped OSU win the national championship being under fire, but it's not a stretch to say Bishop and Clarke entered April with some work to do.

Clarke, who weighed as much as 360 last year, played well down the stretch and in the Fiesta Bowl but still needed to address his conditioning in the off-season. He seemed to do just that, participating in spring drills at a slimmer 330 or so (even though he was still listed 355). If Clarke can stay on that path in the summer there's no reason to believe he won't play significant minutes in the fall, most of them at left guard.

The listed starter at right guard, Bishop also continued to work in the spring and seems to have solidified a major role. However, he's still not fully entrenched. The coaching staff likes Nick Mangold and may entertain more thoughts of playing him at center and shifting Alex Stepanovich to guard.

• **Ivan Douglas, tackle** — It's hard not to like Douglas. He has great size (6-8, 305), athleticism and a solid attitude, especially after the humbling experience of missing the entire 2001 season with a serious blood clot in his lungs. However, Douglas has not exactly been dominant at left tackle and needs to continue to work to hold that spot in the fall.

His spring would have to be characterized as both not harmful and not particularly helpful since Rob Sims, who will battle him, tended to rep at right tackle during spring with Shane Olivea on the mend. Considering head coach Jim Tressel often pines for career-best years out of his seniors, Douglas will get every chance. However, he still exited the spring

somewhat on the spot.

• **Troy Smith and Justin Zwick, quarterbacks** — The two redshirt freshmen may not have distinguished themselves compared to starter Craig Krenzel and backup Scott McMullen, both seniors. But they did enough good things to have hope of being "the quarterback of the future."

The highly athletic Smith chucked 37 passes in the spring game and used the opportunity to make several plays. Zwick had his share of non-descript practices but left the coaches with plenty to consider by tossing four TDs in the spring finale.

While both clearly are still learning their trade, they look capable of making things happen when given more than a passing chance.

— Jeff Rapp

OSU Offense

Here is a look at the depth chart for the OSU offense following spring practice.

Pos.	No.	Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.
SE	12	Michael Jenkins*	6-5	215	Sr.
	82	Roy Hall	6-3	228	Fr.
	84	John Hollins	6-2	205	Jr.
LT	53	Ivan Douglas*	6-8	305	Sr.
OR	77	Rob Sims	6-4	305	So.
LG	63	Adrien Clarke*	6-5	325	Sr.
	64	Adam Olds	6-4	290	So.
C	76	Alex Stepanovich*	6-4	310	Sr.
	55	Nick Mangold	6-4	280	So.
RG	78	Bryce Bishop*	6-3	312	Jr.
	66	R.J. Coleman	6-5	285	Fr.
RT	71	Shane Olivea*	6-5	310	Sr.
	52	Mike Kne	6-4	300	Sr.
	50	Doug Datish	6-5	290	Fr.
TE	88	Ben Hartssock*	6-4	264	Sr.
	80	Ryan Hamby	6-5	240	So.
OR	89	Stan White Jr.	6-3	230	Fr.
QB	16	Craig Krenzel*	6-4	225	Sr.
	15	Scott McMullen	6-3	215	Sr.
	10	Troy Smith	6-1	205	Fr.
OR	2	Justin Zwick	6-4	210	Jr.
FB	38	Branden Joe*	6-0	245	Fr.
OR	43	Brandon Schnitker	6-1	250	So.
TB	13	Maurice Claret*	6-0	230	So.
	30	Lydeil Ross	6-0	210	Jr.
OR	28	Maurice Hall	5-10	200	Jr.
FL	8	Drew Carter	6-4	200	Jr.
	7	Chris Gamble*	6-2	180	Jr.
OR	4	Antonio Holmes	5-11	170	Fr.
	3	Bam Childress	5-10	185	Jr.
K	85	Mike Nugent*	5-10	170	Jr.
	23	Josh Huston	6-1	195	Jr.
KR	28	Maurice Hall	5-10	200	Jr.
	7	Chris Gamble	6-2	180	Jr.

*-Returning starter.

reason for optimism with newfound depth up front and some weaponry in the seldom-used areas of tight end and fullback.

At tight end, for example, Hartssock turned in a fine spring that culminated with five catches in the Scarlet and Gray Game. Also playing for the Gray, White added two grabs of his own. Hamby actually led the Scarlet with six catches for 77 yards and a touchdown.

While such plays may have been mere window dressing in the past, the Buckeyes are anticipating actual increased use of everyone in the offense.

"You want to play to your strengths,"

Schnitker said. "For example, when you've got that many receivers and you've got a quarterback like Craig who can manage the whole field and understand what's going to be good against what defenses, you want to open it up and be multidimensional. That way they can't stack eight, nine guys in the box to keep us from running off tackle and up the middle.

"Yeah, we're still going to feature our power runs and things like that, but having a game like this allows us to work on those aspects of our passing game so we have those tools come fall."

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OHIO STATE SPRING FOOTBALL

Defense Finds Itself Some New Playmakers

Last year's Ohio State defense had enough mileage on it that it really only needed some tinkering to run efficiently.

This year, the thought was that a complete overhaul would be needed to overcome the loss of vital parts. But after the conclusion of spring football, there seemed to be room for optimism.

The Buckeyes need to plug in a pair of starters in the secondary and at line-backer as well as finding one replacement up front.

Though the scoreboard may have shown a total of 66 points scored in the team's Scarlet and Gray Game, the defense actually finished its test drive with anticipation that smoother roads lie ahead.

"We found out we have some guys over there who can make plays," Ohio State coach Jim Tressel said. "It's a group that has a lot of speed, but what we needed them to learn was to play together. I think we got some of that."

One of the principals in that defense believes that the unit took great strides this spring and cannot wait until live action begins Aug. 30.

"I think we showed that we can do some things," sophomore linebacker Mike D'Andrea said. "Our group (of linebackers) improved and the young guys in the back got better, too. This wasn't really a true test because we didn't have Will (Smith) or Darrion (Scott) up front."

"With those guys and everyone else

INSIDE THE DEFENSE

with

Mike Wachsman

and us young guys ready to step up, we should be ready to show that we can be as good as last year."

While the defense as a whole seemed to prosper down the spring stretch, there are still some questions remaining heading into the fall.

The first, and most important, is who will fill the leadership role held so ably by Michael Doss, Donnie Nickey and Matt Wilhelm? Will anyone be able to bring the heat the way Cie Grant did from the outside? And will there be anyone who comes from out of the shadows to stardom the way Kenny Peterson did last season?

For answers to those questions and more, stay tuned for the opening of fall camp.

But for now, the Buckeyes will continue plugging away in an effort to get better — if it's possible to improve on unbeaten and a national title.

"We have some things to work on," defensive coordinator Mark Dantonio said. "We have to find the best 11 guys, and spring goes a long way toward doing



JEFF BACHM

KABOOM! — A strong spring for linebacker A.J. Hawk (47) culminated in the Scarlet and Gray Game, when he made a game-high 14 tackles, including one here against Santonio Holmes.

that. But we also have to find out if certain guys will help us more in certain situations. There are a lot of pieces to the puzzle and we're still trying to put them all together."

Defensive Line

With the absences of Smith and Scott for most of the spring, a few new faces took center stage.

Redshirts Joel Penton and Jay Richardson each had a solid camp, though Penton may have inched ahead with a bang-up spring game and the fact that he bulked up by nearly 25 pounds.

"Joel's a guy who we liked last year and were really close to putting on the field," defensive line coach Jim Heacock said. "Both he and Jay have had good springs and they should be right in the rotation when we get back to practice in the fall."

Also MIA was end Simon Fraser, who was the Buckeyes' most reliable reserve a year ago, and his return should boost the fortunes of an already loaded group.

Mike Kudla also could be a factor at end, although he missed a good portion of drills recovering from an off-season illness and did not play in the spring game.

Tim Anderson anchored the middle of the group and showed signs of taking the next step from being a solid performer to an All-American type.

Next to him will likely be Scott, though Quinn Pitcock and Marcus Green got the bulk of work this spring.

"We like all of those guys," Heacock said. "We should be pretty deep up front."

We've got experience, guys who have been in the system for a while and guys who understand what we want them to do. I'm not too worried about this bunch."

Linebackers

Though the loss of Wilhelm and Grant understandably causes concern, that was lessened by the play of D'Andrea and A.J. Hawk.

D'Andrea began the spring listed as a backup to Fred Pagac Jr. in the middle, but after the conclusion of drills he appeared to have solidified a spot in the lineup — either in the middle or outside.

"I came in confident in my ability after last year," D'Andrea said. "Last year, I was ready physically but didn't have a clue about the mental side. People told me what it was going to be like and I still wasn't prepared. I'm a lot more comfortable this spring and I think that showed."

Pagac battled injuries for a portion of the spring but came back in time for the spring game. He has the best understanding of the defense and will be on the field in the fall.

Hawk got the most playing time of OSU's freshman backers last year, returning an interception for a TD against Kent State and showing the ability to stick to assignments and deliver big hits.

He will be entrenched at one outside spot and believes his first spring was a huge benefit.

"Last year I was kind of just playing,"

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OHIO STATE SPRING FOOTBALL

Hawk said. "I would watch the veterans and see what to do. This spring I really understood more about the defense and the techniques and things like that. I think I'm a better player, and I think we're a very good unit."

Robert Reynolds is the incumbent at the other outside spot, and though he missed substantial time with a shoulder injury this spring, he will be looked upon as something of a leader of the corps.

Charting The OSU Defense

In BSB's Spring Preview, we listed several Players On The Spot for the spring. Here is how they fared.

• **Defensive Secondary** — The lack of experience heading into the spring didn't seem to be a problem as Chris Gamble became more comfortable and Dustin Fox appeared ready to move into the league's elite at corner.

Will Allen was steady at one safety spot while Nate Salley and Donte Whitner fought hard for the other. Though still a work in progress, the secondary appears to have a ton of athleticism and speed. Whether that transfers into a top-notch unit will be known in the fall.

• **Robert Reynolds** — OSU followers didn't get to see much of the Kentucky native because he was sidelined for much of camp with a shoulder injury. As the true veteran of the unit, it would have been good for him to get more practice time, but there was nothing that could have been done about that. Because he knows the system, Reynolds shouldn't be behind when fall rolls around.

• **Kenny Peterson's replacement** — The battle wages on as Marcus Green and Quinn Pitcock continue to make their presence felt inside. However, the coaches may be leaning toward putting established end Darrion Scott inside, which would allow high-motor end Simon Fraser to start.

• **Donte Whitner and Ashton Youboty** — Both reported to camp early and both did a creditable job in their college debuts. Youboty was around the ball a great deal at the corner and could have thrown himself into the rotation, while Whitner elicited enough confidence from the coaches to move to safety, which means he could be in line for the nickel back job. Both have the speed and smarts to get the job done and should be on the field in the fall.

— Mike Wachsman

OSU Defense

Here is a look at the depth chart for the OSU defense following spring practice.

Pos.	No.	Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.
DE	75	Simon Fraser	6-5	250	Jr.
	99	Jay Richardson	6-5	245	Fr.
OR	98	Joel Penton	6-5	255	Fr.
DT	56	Darrion Scott*	6-3	271	Sr.
	94	Marcus Green	6-3	300	So.
	92	Tim Schafer	6-5	250	Fr.
DT	54	Tim Anderson*	6-4	289	Sr.
	90	Quinn Pitcock	6-4	285	Fr.
DE	93	Will Smith*	6-4	250	Sr.
	57	Mike Kudla	6-3	255	So.
OR	83	Redgie Arden	6-4	240	So.
BLB	44	Robert Reynolds*	6-3	234	Sr.
	42	Bobby Carpenter	6-3	240	So.
MLB	46	Fred Pagac Jr.	6-1	225	Sr.
OR	5	Mike D'Andrea	6-3	240	So.
WLB	47	A.J. Hawk	6-2	230	So.
	41	Thomas Matthews	6-2	210	Jr.
CB	7	Chris Gamble*	6-2	180	Jr.
	25	E.J. Underwood	6-1	175	So.
	13	Harlen Jacobs	6-1	197	Jr.
SS	4	Will Allen	6-2	190	Sr.
	9	Donte Whitner	5-11	185	Fr.
	19	LeAndre Boone	6-1	215	So.
FS	21	Nate Salley	6-3	180	So.
	33	Tyler Everett	6-1	185	So.
OR	32	Brandon Mitchell	6-3	190	Fr.
CB	37	Dustin Fox*	6-0	190	Jr.
	26	Ashton Youboty	6-2	187	Fr.
	1	Bobby Britton	5-11	194	Sr.
P	21	B.J. Sander	6-3	212	Sr.
PR	7	Chris Gamble	6-2	180	Jr.
	4	Santonio Holmes	5-11	170	Fr.
	19	LeAndre Boone	6-1	215	So.

*.Returning starter.

Sophomore Bobby Carpenter was tooling right along and looked ready to explode before a late spring off-campus altercation led to an eye injury and the end of his practice. He still will be relied on heavily when the curtain rises on fall camp.

Also making strides were Jason Bond and Air Force transfer Anthony Schlegel, who is ineligible to play this year but who whetted the coaches' appetites with a standout spring game performance. He was credited with just four tackles, although he showed great pursuit on pass plays.

Secondary

Even though they are both going into just their second seasons on the corners, Dustin Fox and Chris Gamble are truly the grizzled veterans of the secondary.

Gamble became a two-way performer against Penn State last season and seldom left the field after that. He relied almost purely on athleticism last year but came into the spring intent on learning the nuances of the position.

"I spent a lot more time with the defense," said Gamble, who could potentially spend less time on offense this fall. "I want to learn all the techniques and how to play with good technique and things like that. I don't want to just be out there to be out there. I want to be the best."

Fox showed late in the year that the faith the coaching staff showed in moving him from safety to corner was justified as he became a solid cover man by season's end.

"Dustin makes plays," Dantonio said. "He's got a knack for being around the ball, he's hard-nosed and he understands our defense very well. We expect a lot out of him this fall."

Senior Will Allen and sophomore Nate Salley were leading the way at the vacant safety spots, with sophomore Tyler Everett, redshirt freshman Brandon Mitchell and early-enrolling freshman Donte Whitner close behind. Whitner has played well enough to have likely nailed down the nickel back position.

Sophomore E.J. Underwood and early-enrolling freshman Ashton

Youboty made waves at corner throughout the spring and the coaches haven't expressed any reservations about playing them if the need arises.

"It's a good group," Dantonio said. "We just have to figure out what we're going to do with so many bodies. A lot of these kids are good but they haven't played much. We'll probably go into the fall making some determinations about some players. But you like to have depth rather than the alternative."

Special Teams

Kicker Mike Nugent, a junior, was slightly erratic this spring, though some of that can be traced to having a new holder. Gone is Andy Groom and in his

place is punter B.J. Sander. There were some exchanges that weren't entirely smooth, and the holder derby could continue into the fall.

Sander, a senior, seems poised to pick up where Groom left off, routinely booming kicks with height and distance. He averaged nearly 38 yards per boot in the spring game.

The punt return chores are in the able hands of Gamble and Santonio Holmes, who brought back a punt in the spring game, while kickoffs will be handled by Maurice Hall and Bam Childress. The latter returned one 94 yards for a score in the spring game, and both should have a major impact on OSU's field position.

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THE VIEW FROM 15TH AND HIGH

Receiving Depth Could Keep Gamble Crisp On D

I missed Ohio State's annual spring game, as I was in the Twin Cities area to speak to the OSU alumni club in Minnesota. But I still have some thoughts on the goings-on this spring.

One of the things that strikes me most is the emergence of several receivers during the 15 practices. Such players as Drew Carter, Antonio Holmes, Roy Hall and Bam Childress all had big springs, giving hope for plenty of depth at the wideouts, where only Chris Vance has departed.

Filling the depth chart at wide receiver is not as big an issue to me as providing other options than Chris Gamble. Gamble is far too valuable at cornerback to burn unnecessary energy by playing every down of 12 games plus a bowl game. He'll get his plays in on offense, where he can be a game-breaker. But it is on defense that he really makes a difference.

The case can easily be made that Gamble was the final piece of last year's championship puzzle. Once he was sent over to play on defense, everything seemed to fall into place. And as good as Gamble was on defense, he was doing that pretty much on athletic ability alone.

All that game experience last season, spring drills spent primarily on defense and more reps in fall practice should make the junior-to-be from Sunrise, Fla., one of the nation's best cornerbacks. Michael Jenkins already gives the Buckeyes a big-play guy at receiver. Gamble offers another. But so, too, might some of the newcomers.

There is no need to have a big game come down to the opposition's top receiver — fresh from a stay on the bench while the Buckeyes with Gamble at receiver mount a long drive — beat the Buckeye cornerback one on one because Gamble is tired.

Holmes, due to a number of explosive plays throughout the spring, was perhaps the most talked about young receiver. However, he also showed a penchant for losing the football. Somehow, I don't think a coach like Jim Tressel, who has five national championships to his credit, is going to rely on a receiver who can't hang on to the ball when there are so many other options. Holmes needs to work on that.

In fact, knowing Tressel's modus operandi, I look for Drew Carter — who tied with Ryan Hamby for spring game reception honors with six — to see plenty of action come fall. The coach seems to favor playing seniors and this will be Carter's last chance to put his blazing speed to good use.

One of the other things that struck me about spring practice was the fan fascination with the battle between quarterbacks Justin Zwick and Troy Smith.

After the tumult of the Steve Bellisari years, fans seem to take comfort in the fact that the Buckeyes have a proven quarterback returning in Fiesta Bowl MVP Craig Krenzel, a proven reserve in Scott McMullen, who completed 80.6 percent of his passes last season, and two extremely talented young quarterbacks waging a spirited battle in the wings.

At a school noted for tailbacks, not quarterbacks, it's refreshing to see the signal-calling shelf well stocked and, apparently, well stocked for years to come.

Tressel and his offensive brain trust are going to have to decide how they will rotate the QBs behind Krenzel this season. Do you give McMullen the most work if the Buckeyes are in a blowout because he is the one Tressel would most likely turn to if Krenzel went down in a big game? Or do you give the work to Zwick and/or Smith because you don't want to head into 2004 with a

THE VIEW FROM 15TH AND HIGH
Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

quarterback who has little game experience?

Isn't it nice to have the luxury of worrying about who should play in reserve, rather than who should be starting?

While the balls were flying all over the place at Ohio Stadium during the spring game, I wouldn't make the assumption that we will see Air Tressel come fall. The Buckeyes' air show was the story coming out of Tressel's first spring game in 2001 and it didn't translate into a wide-open attack come fall.

The coaches know what running backs Maurice Clarett, if he is healthy, Lydell Ross and Maurice Hall can do. The spring was a time to look at the young quarterbacks and receivers and test some of the young players in the secondary.

One thing I did notice about the Buckeyes' spring passing game, however, was the fact that the tight ends were more involved in the action. (Here's a trivia question for you: Who was the last Ohio State tight end to lead the team in receiving? The answer to follow.)

OSU tight ends caught 14 passes in the spring game, with Hamby's six, Ben Hartscock pulling in five, Stan White Jr. two and Jason Caldwell one. That's better than half the 23 total passes the tight ends caught in a 14-game season last year.

I truly believe that Ohio State will always be a school that runs the ball first. And with backs like Clarett, Ross and Hall, why not? But the way to make runners most effective is to keep defenses honest. Looking to the tight end upon occasion certainly helps to do that. (If you are wondering about the fullback, Brandon Schnittker got the lone carry from that spot in the spring game, gaining 3 yards.)

The last Buckeye tight end to lead the team in receptions was Jeff Ellis, who had 40 receptions for 492 yards in 1988, John Cooper's first year at Ohio State. John Frank, who had 45 catches for 641 yards in 1983, is the only other tight end to lead the Buckeyes since 1978, which I consider — with the arrival of Art Schlichter — the start of the modern era in Ohio State offense.

Tailback Ron Springs led the Buckeyes in receiving with 16 catches for 90 yards the year before Schlichter's arrival. Doug Donley led the team with 24 catches, but for 510 yards, in Schlichter's freshman campaign.

Fun In Minnesota

I wanted to thank the OSU alumni in Minnesota for being such good hosts when I spoke up there. There is a lively and extremely informed bunch, many admittedly getting their OSU sports news from Buckeye Sports Bulletin. (Note to some of you out-of-state BSB readers: The Minnesota alums rave about the first-class delivery of their BSB. If you haven't already, you might want to consider upgrading.)

I had the special treat of having longtime friends Paul and Pete Hurtubise, who moved to the Twin Cities area several years ago, present. It was good to catch up with them and meet Pete's fiancée, Bonnie. Bonnie, I hope you know what you are getting into.

In a lively question-and-answer session after my talk, conversation turned to players leaving college early and also the dangers of basketball players such as LeBron James jumping right from high school to the pros. I was asked a good question — which I unfor-

tunately misunderstood at the time — about players such as Clarett, Donte Whitner and Ashton Youbouty leaving high school to enroll early at OSU.

A player who arrives early in college has shown a certain amount of maturity already. This is a person who is organized enough to graduate and qualify several months ahead of his classmates, so he has shown an ability to make the step to college right there.

The players who come early tend to talk about getting a jump on the other arriving freshmen by being able to participate in spring drills. We tend to forget that they also get a chance to become acclimated to college life in a much more relaxed atmosphere than it is come fall, when many freshmen have been in several weeks of camp and already played in (or practiced for) several games before school even starts.

To be thrown into the rigors of academic life and face the challenges of living on campus for the first time all in the middle of football season is tough. So there is an upside to kids arriving early other than just on the gridiron.

The last few months of high school are special, though, so it's too bad those players miss that. I guess life is often about trade-offs.

Other Spring Notes

• I always find Tressel's spring game draft interesting. Players are with each other at practice, in the weight room and on the field in games. They know a lot about the abilities of their teammates.

Sometimes you can get a feel for who's progressing and who isn't by where they are drafted by their teammates. A recap of the spring game draft is on page 18.

• The emergence of linebacker Mike D'Andrea in the spring will give the defensive coaches more flexibility at linebacker come fall.

D'Andrea came to Columbus loaded with prep accolades last year and some fans may have been disappointed that he did not make an impact as a freshman, a la Andy Katzenmoyer. The jump from high school to college football is a tough one and some players make that jump more quickly than others.

• Coaches are sometimes a little casual with the clock in spring games. Not so this time around.

The Buckeyes ran 124 plays from scrimmage this spring game. In Tressel's first year they ran 89 and last season the Buckeyes ran 83 plays from scrimmage.

Spring Preview Set

It's not too early to mark your calendars for the 2004 Spring Preview featuring Tressel, to benefit the Alzheimer's Association of Central Ohio. Next year's event will be held Wed., April 7.

Watch your BSB for more details.

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