

# BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

Vol. 27, No. 30

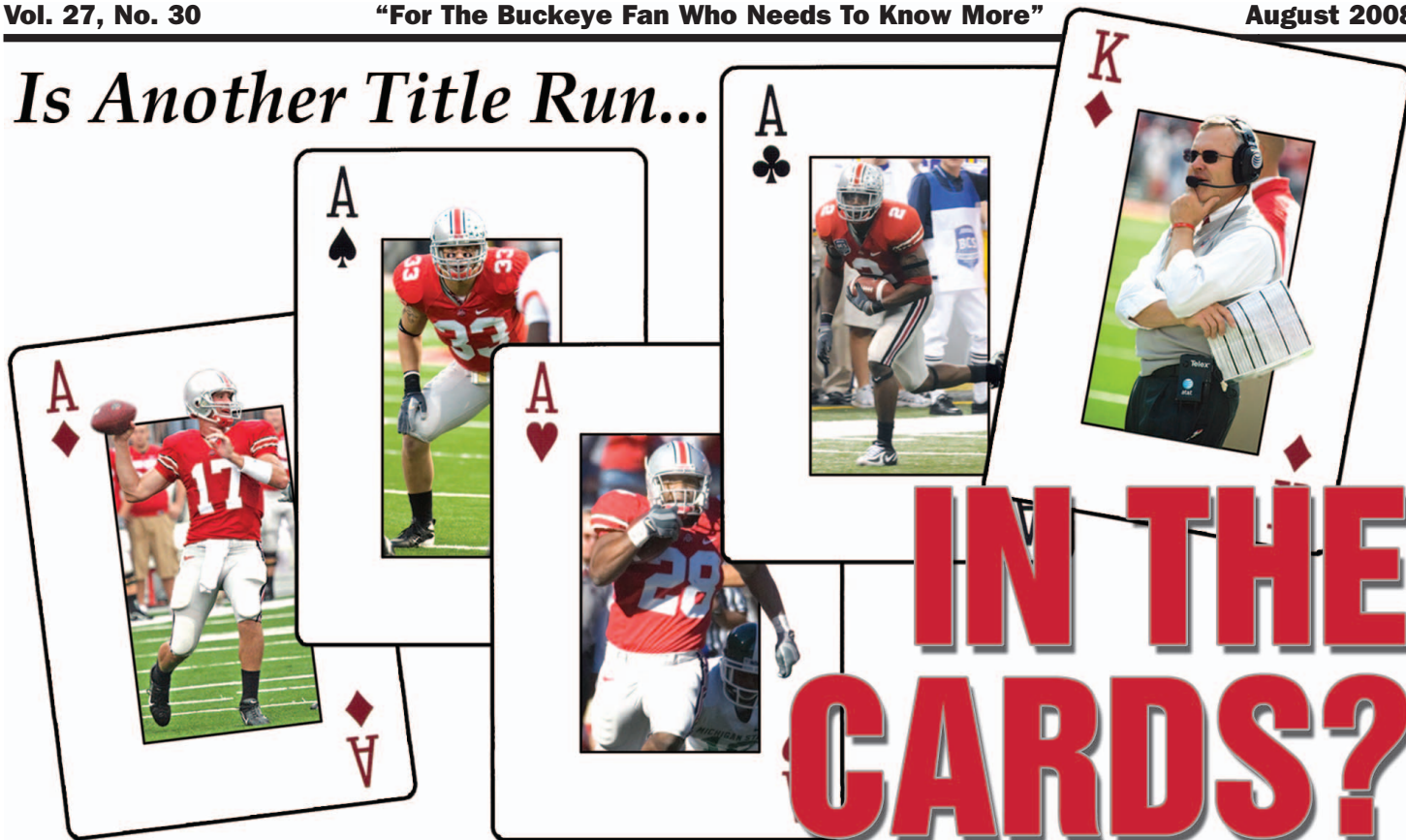
"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

August 2008

**\$2.00**

PERIODICAL NEWSPAPER  
CLASSIFICATION  
DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE RUSH!!

## Is Another Title Run...



**ANOTHER STRONG HAND** – With star players such as Todd Boeckman (17), James Laurinaitis (33), Chris “Beanie” Wells (28) and Malcolm Jenkins (2), Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel has been dealt an extremely strong set of cards in his quest to lead the Buckeyes to an unprecedented third straight outright Big Ten championship as well as another appearance in the BCS National Championship Game.

JENKINS PHOTO BY SONNY BROCKWAY; ALL OTHER PHOTOS BY JOSH WINSLOW

## Tressel Returns Veteran Squad Primed For Success

By MARK REA  
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Managing Editor

Former Ohio State head coach John Cooper was fond of homespun homilies including the following poker-playing analogy: “Whenever you’re feeling pretty good about yourself, better check your hole card.”

If all of the preseason accolades for his team are any indication of what is in store for 2008, Jim Tressel is staring at a handful of aces in the hole.

Any coach in America would likely start a season with 18 returning starters – 20 if you count the kicking specialists – and like his team’s chances to make a championship run. But Tressel begins his eighth campaign as head coach in Columbus with such an embarrassment of riches that his roster reads like a who’s who in college football.

Ten different Buckeyes have been named to the preseason watch list of at least one of the major individual awards, led by defending Butkus Award winner James Laurinaitis, who is in the running for a half-dozen trophies.

The 6-3, 240-pound senior is not only the favorite to repeat as the Butkus winner, awarded to the country’s top linebacker, but he is also contending

for the Walter Camp Award (college player of the year), Lombardi Award (top defensive lineman or linebacker), Lott Award (defensive impact player of the year) and Bednarik Award (top defensive player) as well as the Nagurski Trophy (top defensive player). Laurinaitis won that one as a sophomore following the 2006 season.

He will have competition among teammates for several of those awards. Senior cornerback Malcolm Jenkins is on the preseason watch list for the Camp, Lott, Bednarik and Nagurski awards as well as the Thorpe Award, given out to the nation’s outstanding defensive back. Senior linebacker Marcus Freeman is up for the Butkus, Nagurski and Bednarik awards.

Over on the offense, junior tailback Chris “Beanie” Wells is in the mix for the Camp award, and he joins senior receiver Brian Robiskie and quarterback Todd Boeckman as preseason candidates for the prestigious Maxwell Award, given each year to the best player in college football. Boeckman has also been nominated for the country’s top quarterback honors – the Davey O’Brien Award and the

Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award.

Meanwhile, senior left tackle Alex Boone and senior left guard Steve Rehring are on the Outland Trophy watch list, given annually to the best interior lineman; junior center Jim Cordle is a candidate for the Rimington Award, which goes to college football’s top center; and punter A.J. Trapasso is listed among the preseason favorites for the Ray Guy Award, the top individual prize for college punters.

As the season progresses, Ohio State players will likely be in the running for even more hardware, including the Heisman Trophy. Wells appears to be one of a handful of preseason favorites for college football’s biggest individual prize while a standout season could garner support for Laurinaitis to make a run. No full-time defensive player has ever won the Heisman.

“If anyone could do it, it could be him,” Northwestern quarterback C.J. Bachér told BSB during Big Ten Media Days in late July. “I think he’s the best defensive player in the country, and he could be the best player period.”

**BSB's  
2008  
FOOTBALL  
PREVIEW**

Continued On Page 20

**Your Mailing Label Goes Here  
Call (614) 486-2202  
Today To Subscribe**

# BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

Vol. 27, No. 30

August 2008

www.BuckeyeSports.com

Buckeye Sports Bulletin (USPS 705-690, ISSN 0883-6833.) is published 30 times a year (weekly September through November and January through March, biweekly March through May and monthly June through August and December) by:

Columbus Sports Publications  
1350 W. Fifth Ave., Suite 30  
P.O. Box 12453  
Columbus, Ohio 43212  
(614) 486-2202

Periodical class postage paid at Columbus, Ohio, and additional mailing offices.  
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Buckeye Sports Bulletin, P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio 43212. Subscription rates: \$69.95/year.

## PUBLISHER

Frank Moskowitz

## ASSISTANT PUBLISHER EMERITUS

Karen Wachsman 1944-1999

## MANAGING EDITOR

Mark Rea

## ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Becky Roberts

## DIRECTOR OF SALES AND MARKETING

Bill Armstrong

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Sonny Brockway Terry Gilliam  
Kevin Dye Josh Winslow

## CONTRIBUTORS

David Breithaupt Craig Merz  
Rich Exner Bob Roehm  
Matthew Hager Julie Roy  
Marcus Hartman Mark Schmetzer  
Adam Jardy Steve Siegfried  
Rich Leonardo Stacey Stathulis  
Eric Loughery Jeff Svoboda  
T.R. Massey Mike Wachsman

## DIRECTOR OF GROUP AND CO-OP SALES

Jack Woodworth

## ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

Ron Friedman Jan Jager

## 2007-08 PUBLICATION SCHEDULE (VOL. 27)

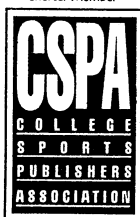
|        |          |        |          |
|--------|----------|--------|----------|
| No. 1  | Sept. 8  | No. 16 | Jan. 26  |
| No. 2  | Sept. 15 | No. 17 | Feb. 2   |
| No. 3  | Sept. 22 | No. 18 | Feb. 9   |
| No. 4  | Sept. 29 | No. 19 | Feb. 16  |
| No. 5  | Oct. 6   | No. 20 | Feb. 23  |
| No. 6  | Oct. 13  | No. 21 | March 1  |
| No. 7  | Oct. 20  | No. 22 | March 8  |
| No. 8  | Oct. 27  | No. 23 | March 15 |
| No. 9  | Nov. 3   | No. 24 | March 29 |
| No. 10 | Nov. 10  | No. 25 | April 12 |
| No. 11 | Nov. 17  | No. 26 | April 26 |
| No. 12 | Nov. 24  | No. 27 | May 10   |
| No. 13 | December | No. 28 | June     |
| No. 14 | Jan. 12  | No. 29 | July     |
| No. 15 | Jan. 19  | No. 30 | August   |

The next issue (Sept. 6 cover date) will be mailed on Sept. 2.

Buckeye Sports Bulletin is a privately owned newspaper and is not affiliated directly or indirectly with The Ohio State University.

BSB e-mail address is: bsb@buckeyesports.com

Charter Member



P.O. Box 13515 • Gainesville, FL 32604  
1-800-782-3216

## OPINION

## Time For OSU To Prove It's The Best

Dear Buckeyes,

This is an open letter to you and your coaching staff, one that I think many members of the Buckeye Nation would write if they had the opportunity.

It will not be a love letter, however. It will contain the cold, hard truth, and hopefully you can use it as some small piece of motivation for the upcoming 2008 season.

Most of the college football world has reduced Ohio State football to something of a water-cooler joke. As difficult as it may seem for a program that has won 32 of its last 35 regular-season games, taken home three Big Ten championship trophies in a row and reached back-to-back BCS National Championship Games, much of the nation at large is laughing at you.

You are seen as big, lumbering plowboys whose coaching staff doesn't have the first clue about how to stop spread offenses or speedy teams from the South.

Is that fair? Absolutely not. The truth of the matter is that it is incredibly unfair.

However, in this day and age of instant gratification where the lines are so blurred between perception and reality that they are often interchangeable, the reality is that you have lost back-to-back title games and didn't look very good either time.

Therefore, the national perception is that what you have accomplished over the past couple of years is nothing more than a fluke and anything less than an undefeated Ohio State team in 2008 is undeserving of another chance to play for the national championship.

It seems to me, therefore, that you have one option and one option only – you need to win all of your games this year.

I know that task is much easier said than done. In the entire history of Ohio State football, there have been but five teams to make it through an entire season without a loss or tie, and there have been only two in the last 40 years.

Consider, however, the alternative of anything less than perfection. There are thousands upon thousands of former Buckeyes who won more than their share of games during their careers. There are only a select few, however, who earned the right to be called national champions. It's a life-altering experience that money can't buy.

And I'm not talking about momentary glory. I'm talking about the pride you will carry until the day you take your last breath. I'm talking about the special place where you will reside – not only today but for all time – in the hearts of fans of the Scarlet and Gray.

By all rights, you should be the latest team in an ongoing Ohio State football dynasty. You should be embarking upon a season for the ages. You should be playing for college football immortality. You should be playing for the school's fifth national championship in seven years.

No one who witnessed the wild championship ride in 2002 would dispute the fact that the Buckeyes of that season over-achieved themselves into a national title. Talent-wise, that team couldn't hold a candle to you. Somehow, though, they kept finding ways to win. Maybe it was because they weren't supposed to. The point is that they did.

The following year could have been just as magical had it not been for the Maurice Claret circus and all of the anguish it caused the program. With a healthy and clearheaded Claret in 2003, there is no doubt in my mind that OSU would have

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

with

Mark Rea

made a run at back-to-back national championships. Even with all of the turmoil on and off the field, the Buckeyes lost only twice – to Wisconsin and Michigan – and both times because they couldn't muster any kind of running attack. The Badgers held them to 69 yards in a 17-10 loss at Madison, and Ohio State managed only 54 on the ground in a 35-21 loss at Ann Arbor.

I will concede that neither 2004 nor 2005 had national championship potential. But you cannot convince me that your team couldn't have and shouldn't have won the title in the 2006 and '07 seasons, campaigns that were totally different in terms of personnel but remarkably similar when it came to wins and losses.

Many of you were around in 2006 when the team featured some of the most explosive players in the history of the program. Yet, somehow, some way, when it came time to step on college football's biggest stage, the team played like some sixth-place finisher from a mid-major conference. If anyone who participated in that lame performance is not ashamed of himself, perhaps organized athletics is not your calling.

I watched Ohio State play every game of that 2006 season and I also had a pretty good working knowledge of the Florida team it played that night in Arizona. Even knowing what I know now, I would have a tough time picking the Gators to win that game if the teams were matched against one another again next week.

To be perfectly blunt, that game should have been a victory for you, that season should have ended with a national championship, and the fact that it didn't still leaves the sourest of tastes some 20 months later.

That 2006 team was seemingly invincible but evidently didn't have the will to finish what could have been a season Buckeye fans would have continued talking about for decades.

Then there is last season. Most of you guys who made up the nucleus of that team overachieved your way to the national championship game – much like the 2002 squad did. As the victories began to pile up, most people quickly forgot all the dark clouds that hung over the program this time last year. No one knew how you were going to replace a Heisman Trophy quarterback, two receivers that were first-round NFL draft picks, a 1,000-yard rusher and eight other starters.

Also, that schedule the so-called experts enjoyed bashing later on didn't seem so easy at the start of the season. You had potential landmines including a road test at Washington, a dangerous team that had beaten OSU each of the previous two times the Buckeyes had visited Husky Stadium.

The Big Ten schedule-makers didn't do you any favors, either. They had given you back-to-back road assignments beginning in late September with contests at Minnesota and Purdue and heaped on the added task of making both of those games nighttime affairs. You also had to make a

trip to Penn State for another prime-time game under the lights, knowing full well that Happy Valley was the site of a 17-10 loss in 2005 that ended any hopes of your rematch with Texas in the national championship game that season.

And there was the season finale in Ann Arbor against a team with a bunch of talented seniors who wanted nothing more than to beat you in the final game of their careers at Michigan Stadium.

Yet even with the one hiccup at home against Illinois, you found yourselves in the championship game again, this time against a two-loss LSU team whose defense had been exposed by the likes of Kentucky and Arkansas. Those were the same Kentucky and Arkansas teams that finished last year with five losses apiece.

You all seemed to talk a good game before the title contest – the requisite indignation about the criticism-filled DVD compiled by the coaching staff, staying away from the party scene on Bourbon Street and insisting that going to New Orleans was nothing but a business trip.

Then adversity popped you in the mouth in the first half and LSU somehow managed to score 31 points in a row against a defense that hadn't allowed more than 28 points in any of its previous games. Not that the offense was much help. While the Tigers were piling up all of those points, the offense was stuck in neutral. And I haven't forgotten special teams. A blocked field goal and a roughing penalty on an LSU punt just poured gas on the fire.

The rest, as they say, is history and there is nothing you can do about it now. The only thing that remains within your control is your future, and despite what the babbling bobbleheads on ESPN may say, your future is an extremely bright one.

No team in college football in 2008 has more talent than you. No team has more experience than you. No team has more returning starters than you. No team has more candidates for postseason awards than you. And no team has the chance to make more history than you.

I know that you have already made the sacrifices necessary to go for a national championship. I know about the countless hours in the weight room since late January, the gallons of sweat you've spent on the practice field during 7-on-7 drills this summer, the hours upon hours of film study.

But listen up, guys. Every young man who plays major college football makes those sacrifices. Those things alone don't make national champions. You have to want it. You can't just talk about wanting it. You have to want it – you have to want it so deep within your bone marrow that you'd walk through hell in a gasoline suit to get it.

If you don't want it that badly, you can resign yourself to personal glory and soothe yourself with a nice, fat NFL contract next year. After all, only two of Ohio State's six Heisman Trophy winners ever won a national championship ring. Most of them came close, of course, but no one gets a trophy for getting close.

If you want it – truly want it – go out and get it. No team on your schedule – not even supposedly mighty USC – is as good as you are.

On paper, you are the best team in college football. All you have to do is go out and prove it.

The Managing Editor



## OHIO STATE FOOTBALL PREVIEW: DEPTH CHART

# Veteran Starters Give Ohio State High Hopes

By MARK REA

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Managing Editor

There are very few times during the career of a college football coach when he can enjoy the kind of opportunity presented to Jim Tressel in 2008.

While roster continuity is often the key to championship seasons in the professional ranks, transition is typically the way of life on the college level – except on rare occasions when the majority of the seniors on your team are returning starters.

Tressel enjoys that luxury to the fullest this season as he welcomes back nine starters on offense, nine more on defense and both kicking specialists from an Ohio State team that went to the national championship game a year ago. At least three of those players would likely have been NFL first-round draft choices, and several more could have opted

to forgo their senior seasons for professional riches.

Instead, they each decided to return for one more shot at college glory, a rarity whose importance is not lost on their head coach.

"It seems like it has become almost expected for many of the great players to skip their senior years," Tressel said. "We certainly have had a few who have made the decision to do that. But we've had many others who have had the opportunity to go and for a variety of reasons chose not to.

"That's always exciting for us as a coaching staff. Experience and senior leadership are always key to achieving the goals you set for yourself as a team, and we have the benefit this year of having a lot of experienced players and an extensive amount of senior leadership. That gets us excited for what's coming."

What's coming is a season that could be historic on many levels.

The Buckeyes are looking for a third consecutive outright Big Ten championship and a fourth straight conference title overall. No team in league history has ever strung together three outright crowns in a row.

Moreover, OSU is angling to become only the third team to make three straight trips to the BCS National Championship Game, and the first ever to make four appearances in the title contest. The ultimate goal, of course, is the school's seventh national championship.

"This team has set its sights pretty high," admitted OSU cornerback Malcolm Jenkins, one of those projected high draft choices who opted to return for their senior year. "At the same time, we're just trying to slow everything down and try not to get ahead of ourselves. We want to make sure we take care of the little things so that they don't turn into big things."

The defense is led by a senior triumvirate of Jenkins, outside linebacker Marcus Freeman and middle linebacker James Laurinaitis.

Between them, they have 113 games of experience under their belts, including 75 starts, as well as 565 total tackles during their careers.

They also know what needs to be done on and off the field without being told.

"When you have guys like Malcolm and Marcus and James, you don't have to spend much of your time teaching technique," OSU defensive coordinator Jim Heacock said. "It's kind of a cliché, but you get to have a group of guys that are really like coaches on the field. That kind of leadership is a luxury for any coach."

The same level of experience exists on the offensive side of the ball, especially on a line that features four players – tackle Alex Boone, guards Steve Rehring and Ben Person, and center Jim Cordle – who have racked up 72 career starts.

"The benefit of having so many experienced players is actually twofold," said Tressel, who is entering his eighth season as head coach of the Buckeyes. "On one hand, you obviously have a talented group of players who have already proved that they can perform to a high level, a group that has already achieved a great deal.

"But secondly, you have a group of players who are constantly challenging themselves. They want to do the little things to get better every day, and they have taken it upon themselves to assume leadership roles in different ways. When you have experienced players, they don't have to be told what to do. They simply go out and do it."

In addition to the trio of seniors that spearheads the defense, the Buckeyes also have an excellent nucleus of younger players who have spent their share of time in the spotlight. Junior defensive end Lawrence Wilson returns from a broken leg that cost him nearly all of the 2007 campaign while sophomore Cameron Heyward had a breakout season last year in Wilson's absence.

The rest of the defense features a similar blend of experience and youth as Heacock – last year's winner of the Frank Broyles Award as college football's top assistant coach – attempts to keep his unit from wearing out down the stretch.

In the team's two losses last year, the Buckeyes surrendered averages of 33.0 points and 363.0 yards. In the other 11 games, the defense allowed only 9.1 points and 209.4 yards per contest.

"I think a lot of people look at those two games and focus their attention on them," Laurinaitis said. "That's only human nature and I'm probably a little guilty of that myself. The best thing we can do is take what we learned from those experiences and try to turn those negatives into positives."

The same holds true for the offense, which chugged through the first 10 games of its 2007 schedule, beating opponents by an average of more than 24 points. But in the final three games, the once-potent attack sputtered along, averaging only 16.0 points per game, giving up seven sacks and committing seven turnovers.

At the center of those problems was quarterback Todd Boeckman, whose performance leveled off in the latter stages of the season. But he, too, will benefit from the year of experience – his first as a starter – and seems primed for a superlative senior season.

"We always say that we want our seniors to go out with the best season of their career," Tressel said. "If that happens for our seniors this year, I think our team will have gone a long way toward achieving the goals it has set for itself by the time the season ends."

# TICKETS!

## We have your seats to the area's hottest events!

OSU • Indians • Reds • Browns • Bengals • Cavs • Blue Jackets • Destroyers

Schottenstein Center • Crew Stadium • Nationwide Arena • LC Pavilion

Final Four • Super Bowl • World Series • And Much More...

## Ohio State Football

Home  
& Away!

All Games  
in Stock!

For Your Ticket Connection Call:

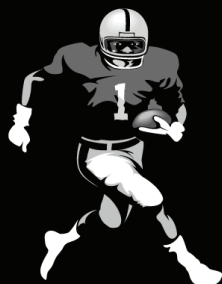
## DREAM SEATS

YOUR TOTAL TICKET SOURCE

1611 W. FIFTH AVE. COLUMBUS, OH 43212

## (614) 340-8989

www.dreamseats.com



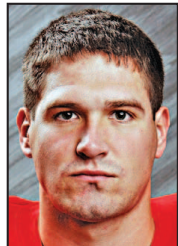
all events ★ all cities ★ all the time ★ all events ★ all cities ★ all the time ★ all events ★ all cities ★ all the time ★ all events

## OHIO STATE FOOTBALL PREVIEW: DEPTH CHART

As the Buckeyes prepare for the 2008 season, here is a look at how the team's depth chart should look for the Aug. 30 opener against Youngstown State:

**OFFENSE****Quarterback**

Todd Boeckman (6-4, 244, Sr.) hopes to take what he learned during his first season as the starter and use it as the cornerstone for a superlative final year. In terms of raw numbers, Boeckman had an excellent 2007 – he completed nearly 64 percent of his attempts, threw for 2,379 yards and totaled 25 touchdown passes. But he clearly peaked in midseason and threw six of his 14 interceptions in the final three games.

**Todd Boeckman**

Boeckman swears he knows what happened at the end of last season and is determined not to let it happen again.

Joe Bauserman (6-2, 220, R-Fr.) arrived on the OSU campus last season as something of an unknown quantity. He redshirted last year but has jumped up the depth chart thanks to the transfers of former backups Robby Schoenhof and Antonio Henton. Bauserman, a former pitcher in the Pittsburgh Pirates organization, has a nice, easy delivery and topped off an excellent spring by completing 7 of 14 passes for 125 yards in the annual Scarlet and Gray Game.

Terrelle Pryor (6-6, 235, Fr.) was the most sought-after high school prospect in the nation last spring after leading his high school team to the Pennsylvania state championship. Pryor has drawn comparisons to everyone from Vince Young to Michael Vick, and there seems little doubt that Tressel will unveil the talented freshman sooner rather than later. Just exactly how much of a role Pryor will play in the Ohio State offense as the season unfolds, however, remains to be seen. The last freshman to see appreciable playing time under center for the Buckeyes was Art Schlichter, and that was 30 years ago.

**Tailback**

Chris Wells (6-1, 237, Jr.) has only one stated goal this season – he wants to remain healthy. A healthy Wells should keep opposing

**Chris Wells**

defensive coordinators up at night, especially since he piled up 1,609 yards and 15 TDs last year despite hand and leg injuries. Those problems appear to be in the past as Wells primes for what could be a historic season. He is already one of the preseason favorites for the Heisman Trophy and figures to be showcased enough to make an assault on the first 2,000-yard season in Ohio State history.

Maurice Wells (5-10, 196, Sr.) reaches his senior season seemingly comfortable with his backup role. The OSU coaching staff has consistently tried to get him the ball in ways that best utilize his talents, and last year he totaled 367 yards and two touchdowns rushing while adding 10 receptions for 47 yards and another score receiving. Wells will also get a chance to showcase his talent by returning kickoffs.

Brandon Saine (6-1, 217, Soph.) is a supremely talented running back, and the Buckeyes envision his versatility as his greatest asset. Last year, he rushed for 267 yards and a pair of touchdowns, and Saine also

emerged late in the season as a pass-catching threat. He finished with 12 receptions for 160 yards and a score, and OSU figures to use him even more in that capacity this season whether at tailback, fullback, H-back or ponyback.

**Fullback**

Ryan Lukens (6-0, 238, Sr.) is a converted linebacker who has settled in at the fullback position in his fifth season with the program. In the mold of most recent OSU fullbacks, Lukens prides himself on his blocking skills and uses leverage techniques learned as a state championship wrestler while at Cincinnati Moeller. The veteran walk-on is also a valuable member of several special teams units.

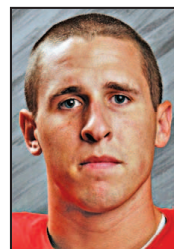
**Ryan Lukens**

Brandon Smith (6-2, 251, Sr.) is another

fifth-year senior who has bounced around several positions. He began his OSU career as a linebacker, moved to tight end and has now found a home at fullback where he can use his attributes as an extremely physical player who loves to initiate contact. Like Lukens, Smith is an outstanding contributor on several of the Buckeyes' special teams units.

**Wide Receiver**

Brian Hartline (6-2, 186, Jr.) turned in one of the most underrated performances in college football last season, catching 52 balls for 694 yards and scoring six touchdowns. The former high school state hurdles champion features

**Brian Hartline**

a blend of good size, great speed and excellent balance coupled with precision route-running. Hartline was also the team's top punt return man a year ago, averaging 11.4 yards and breaking a 57-year-old school record with a 90-yard touchdown return.

Dane Sanzenbacher (5-11, 175, Soph.) was seen as a throw-in member of the 2007 recruiting class, but his deceptive speed and instincts for the game allowed him to shoot up the depth chart last fall. He tallied his first career touchdown on his first career reception, an 8-yard catch in the season opener against Youngstown State, and went on to record 12 receptions for the season for 89 yards.

Continued On Page 12



**National Kidney Foundation<sup>®</sup>**  
of OHIO

## Sixth Annual Pro-Athletes For Life Luncheon

**Wednesday  
November 19, 2008**

**Corporate Sponsorships  
& Corporate Tables Available**  
**Contact Peggy Frey • (614) 481-4030, ext. 229**  
**PFrey@nkfohio.org**



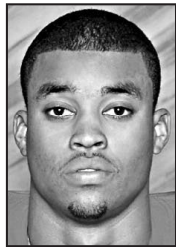
## OHIO STATE FOOTBALL PREVIEW: DEPTH CHART

## Boone, Rehring Anchor Left Side Of Line

Continued From Page 11

## Wide Receiver

Brian Robiskie (6-3, 199, Sr.) will begin his second season as the go-to receiver in the Buckeyes' passing attack. Last year, he led the team in receptions (55), yardage (935), average per catch (17.0) and touchdowns (11). Robiskie is also the team's most reliable long-range threat. Five of his touchdowns a year ago went for 30 yards or more. He needs 15



Brian Robiskie

receptions this year to become only the 13th Buckeye with at least 100 career catches and another yardage figure similar to last season would place him among the school's all-time top six in that category. Ray Small (5-11, 180, Jr.) begins the 2008 season as somewhat of an enigma. He is coming off a 2007 campaign during which he was the Buckeyes' third-leading receiver with 20 catches for 267 yards and two scores. But he ran afoul of team rules during the off-season, and part of the disciplinary action against him was removal of his familiar jersey No. 4. By all accounts, Small has atoned for his past mistakes. He caught five passes for 70 yards in the spring game and made several standout plays during fall camp.

## Tight End

Rory Nicol (6-5, 252, Sr.) enters his third season as a starter with hopes that he will be used more in the passing game. He remains an excellent blocker, and the Buckeyes often prefer to tilt their running attack to his side of the

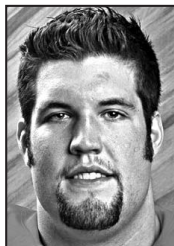
field. But Nicol also features the kind of deceptive speed that allows him to get open on the boundary for potential big plays. Throughout his OSU career, Nicol has proved to be a reliable receiver when called upon — he has 32 catches for 269 yards and four touchdowns.

Jake Ballard (6-6, 256, Jr.) is perhaps even more of a threat in the passing game than Nicol. He had 13 receptions last season for 149 yards and two touchdowns — one for 14 yards against Michigan State and the other covering 15 yards the following week at Penn State. Unfortunately for both Nicol and Ballard, the Buckeyes stopped looking for the tight end down the stretch last season. Combined, they had only six catches for 37 yards in the final four contests of 2007.

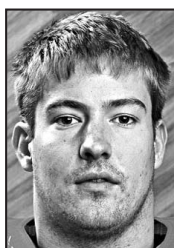
## Left Tackle

Alex Boone (6-8, 312, Sr.) is gearing up for his fourth season in the starting lineup, in charge of protecting Boeckman's blind side. His combination of good footwork and excellent balance for a big man allow him to excel at pass protection while his size, strength and aggressiveness serve him well as a run blocker. Boone is the acknowledged leader of the offensive line and could parlay an excellent season into contention for the Outland Trophy.

Andrew Miller (6-6, 279, Soph.) came to the Buckeyes in 2006 as a tight end and has since moved to the tackle posi-



Alex Boone



Rory Nicol

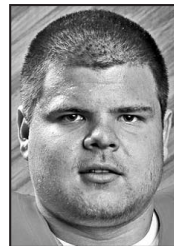
tion. That transition has gone so smoothly that he jumped up the depth chart and is considered the primary backup to Boone. It is likely because of Miller's excellent blocking technique, culled from years as a tight end when he learned how to neutralize opposing defensive ends and linebackers.

Mike Adams (6-8, 322, Fr.) has already made a name for himself by coming back quickly from shoulder surgery just last spring. His upside seems to be limitless after a high school career at Dublin (Ohio) Coffman that earned him back-to-back All-Ohio honors as well as consensus prep All-America plaudits.

## Left Guard

Steve Rehring (6-7, 335, Sr.) has settled into the left guard position the past couple of years, teaming with Boone to give the Buckeyes a potent one-two punch on that side of the line. Rehring has reportedly struggled with weight and conditioning problems at different times in the past, and he missed spring practice following shoulder surgery. Those setbacks, however, have never seemed to prevent him from becoming the team's most adept lineman at getting out in front of ball carriers and delivering downfield blocks.

Mike Brewster (6-5, 296, Fr.) is another talented first-year offensive lineman whose stock is on the rise. The OSU coaching staff already envisions Brewster as a starter at one of the guard



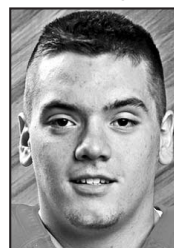
Steve Rehring

spots next year, and he has even seen time at center during fall camp so that he can further become accustomed to the line calls. Despite playing behind veteran starters, Brewster figures to get plenty of playing time this season.

## Center

Jim Cordle (6-4, 297, Jr.) displayed his toughness and adaptability last season when he continued to play despite a broken right wrist, simply switching to his left hand to deliver snaps. He provides excellent leadership at center and is a vastly underrated blocker, often going low against opposing linemen and then powering up through them.

Andrew Moses (6-3, 280, Jr.) begins his second season as Cordle's backup. The walk-on from Bishop Watterson in Columbus helped the Eagles to the Ohio high school playoffs three times and the state title in 2002. Moses got valuable experience last year by appearing in seven games, including a career-high 17 minutes against Kent State.

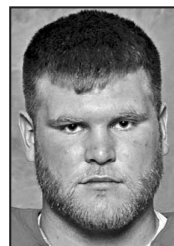


Jim Cordle

## Right Guard

Ben Person (6-3, 323, Sr.) returns for his second season as the starter after missing all of spring practice following foot surgery. He got off to a slow start in fall camp, but by the third week he appeared to be rounding into regular-season form. Person seems to excel when the Buckeyes call for stunts and twists, and he combines his power and quickness to pick off linebackers and safeties in the middle of the field.

Connor Smith (6-4, 321, Soph.) has the kind of attitude that would have made Woody Hayes proud. He loves to man up against the guy across from him on the line of scrimmage, a mentality he obviously came by naturally as the son of former OSU starting offensive lineman Joe Smith, who lettered for the Buckeyes from 1979-82. Seen as Person's heir apparent next year, Smith will likely get his share of playing time this season.

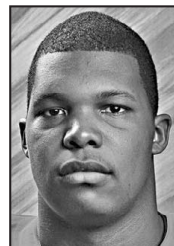


Ben Person

## Right Tackle

Bryant Browning (6-4, 312, Soph.) is the lone new starter on the OSU offensive line, taking over for the immensely popular Kirk Barton. Browning has come a long way in his two seasons with the Buckeyes, dropping more than 50 pounds in the weight room and making a meteoric rise up the depth chart. He is steadily improving in pass protection while his strength is clearly run blocking. Big, strong and smart, he is a likely candidate for most improved player on the team.

Josh Kerr (6-4, 286, Soph.) has always had the eye of the coaching staff because of a



Bryant Browning

## GET YOUR GAME FACE ON!

**GameDayColors.com**  
HELPING YOU SHOW YOUR TRUE COLORS ON GAME DAY

- ◆ SPIRIT WIGS ◆ SPORTS FANATIC WIGS ◆ SPORT BEADS
- ◆ SPIRIT BEADS ◆ FEATHER BOAS, NECKLACES & HAIR CLIPS
- ◆ PETAL NECKLACE ◆ NOISEMAKERS ◆ FACE PAINT
- ◆ TEMPORARY TATTOOS ◆ GAMEDAY GEAR
- ◆ GAMEDAY ESSENTIALS ◆ HATS
- ◆ FLAGS & BANNERS ◆ & MORE

SEE US ONLINE AT  
**www.GameDayColors.com**

for all of our products

**FUNDRAISING**  
EARN \$\$\$ FOR YOUR SCHOOL  
OR ORGANIZATION

Come See Us at  
**COSTUME**  
**Holiday House!**

**1510 Bethel Road**  
**Columbus, Ohio 43220**  
**(614) 451-0715**

**Toledo**  
**(419) 843-5693**

**Fremont**  
**(419) 334-3236**

**GAMEDAYCOLORS.COM**  
IS A DIVISION  
OF COSTUME  
HOLIDAY  
HOUSE

GET YOUR  
OSU COLORS

**Support Your Favorite Team!**

- High School
- College
- Professional
- ◆ Football
- ◆ Basketball
- ◆ Baseball
- ◆ Hockey
- ◆ Soccer
- ◆ & More



TEMPORARY  
TATTOOS



## OHIO STATE FOOTBALL PREVIEW: DEPTH CHART

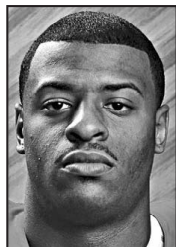
tremendous upside. Unfortunately, his progress has been hampered by injuries. Last year, Kerr made it to the depth chart in fall camp but missed the entire season after a severe ankle sprain. This year, he returned but was quickly sidelined again, reportedly by another ankle problem. It was not expected to be as severe, however, and it was hoped he would be available to start the regular season.

J.B. Shugarts (6-8, 298, Fr.) is another of the highly touted freshmen who was heavily recruited by nearly every major college program in the nation. Shugarts has always displayed excellent technique, and he delivered 121 pancake blocks as a senior last year for Klein (Texas) High School in suburban Houston. Better still, he allowed no sacks.

## DEFENSE

### Defensive End

Lawrence Wilson (6-4, 274, Jr.) was set for big things last year before breaking a bone in his leg in the season opener against Youngstown State. He spent several months rehabbing the injury and signaled his healthy return in the spring game with a sack of Boeckman in the first quarter. As they did last season, the Ohio State coaches expect Wilson to use his size, quickness and long arms to become one of the top defensive ends in college football.



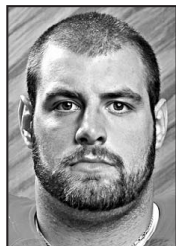
Lawrence Wilson

Rob Rose (6-5, 285, Jr.) somehow managed to play in 11 games last season and make two starts despite injuries to both shoulders. He had offseason surgery on both, and a return to full health would benefit the Buckeyes greatly from a depth standpoint. When he's right, Rose is an excellent run-stopper and also loves to rush the passer. He has 11 career tackles as a Buckeye, and 4½ of them are sacks.

### Defensive Tackle

Todd Denlinger (6-2, 292, Jr.) needs only to avoid the injury bug to have a breakout season. He missed three games last year with a knee problem, and that hurt his productivity. Still, the Buckeyes like his game of explosiveness and power at the line of scrimmage. Denlinger bench presses 400 pounds, his motor is running constantly and he is considered one of the team's best hole-fillers when he's healthy.

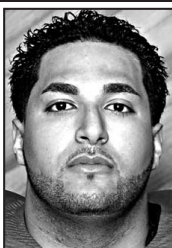
Doug Worthington (6-6, 276, Jr.) started 11 games for the Buckeyes in 2007, but a OVI charge against him just before fall camp began put him squarely in Tressell's doghouse. He was bumped down to the second-team line early in camp, but that status figures to change once the season begins. Worthington, who can play all four defensive line positions, had 24 tackles last year, recorded one sack and nabbed his first career interception.



Todd Denlinger

### Defensive Tackle

Nader Abdallah (6-4, 300, Sr.) was finally able to shed myriad off-the-field problems last year to put together his most productive season to date. He established new career-high totals by appearing in all 13 games and totaling 19 tackles, including three for loss. Abdallah also



Nader Abdallah

recorded his first career sack in the 38-17 win over Wisconsin and registered another one in the spring game.

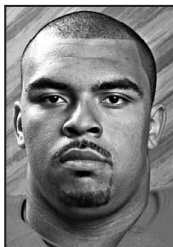
Dexter Larimore (6-2, 300, Soph.) is one of those lunch-bucket guys that defensive line coaches love to have on their team. He is a former nationally ranked wrestler who is extremely disciplined in technique and brings toughness and physicality to new levels. Last season, Larimore played mostly a backup role and managed to fill the

stat sheet with 16 total tackles, including 5½ for loss and two sacks, and also added a fumble recovery.

### Defensive End

Cameron Heyward (6-6, 287, Soph.) broke through with an excellent rookie season last year, finishing second only to Vernon Gholston in tackles for loss with 10. Heyward, who was pressed into service after Wilson's injury, will seek to improve those numbers after gaining experience in 2007. His teaming with Wilson should give the Buckeyes one of the best defensive end tandems in the nation – and that is high praise for a team that lost Gholston, the sixth overall pick in April's NFL draft.

Thaddeus Gibson (6-2, 240, Soph.) has been like a caged animal for the past two seasons. You can tell by the scowl on his face in the team's media guide that Gibson is ready to explode after redshirting in 2006 and playing mostly on special teams last year. Heacock is ready to turn Gibson loose on opposing quarterbacks, playing in special packages that take advantage of his pass-rushing skills. His first career sack last year near the end of the Wisconsin game forced a fumble that was recovered by Larimore.

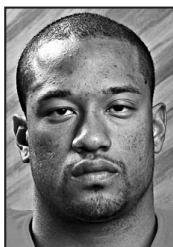


Cameron Heyward

### Strong-Side (Sam) Linebacker

Marcus Freeman (6-1, 239, Sr.) gets to experience life on the other side of the field this season, making the switch from the weak-side position. The change should help the Buckeyes take advantage of Freeman's skill in corralling opposing ball carriers, something he did 109 times last year. It may also allow him to come free more often in blitz packages. One thing that won't change is Freeman's pass coverage skills. He broke up five attempts last year, tying for second on the team.

Tyler Moeller (6-0, 216, Soph.) has bounced back and forth between safety and linebacker during his first two seasons at Ohio State but seems to have settled in behind Freeman on the strong side. The former Division I defensive player of the year at Cincinnati Colerain, Moeller seems to have a knack for knowing where the football is at all times. And he has that one characteristic that all good linebackers possess – he loves to hit.



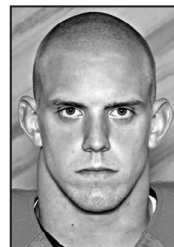
Marcus Freeman

### Middle (Mike) Linebacker

James Laurinaitis (6-3, 240, Sr.) is unquestionably the heart and soul of the Ohio State defense, and perhaps of the entire team. A workhorse who makes his teammates want to perform to the best of their abilities, Laurinaitis won the Butkus Award last season and was

named the Big Ten defensive player of the year after leading the Buckeyes in tackles with 121 while adding five sacks, two interceptions and a fumble recovery. Simply put, he is one of the best players – regardless of position – in college football.

Austin Spitler (6-3, 234, Jr.) would likely be a starter for any other program in the nation, but he is locked behind Laurinaitis. Still, the coaching staff makes use of Spitler's talents as best they can. He is a member of four of the Buckeyes' special teams units, and he recorded 26 tackles last season. When Laurinaitis does take a rare trip to the sideline, Spitler provides for a seamless transition. He recorded his first career sack last year against Youngstown State, good for a whopping 12-yard loss.

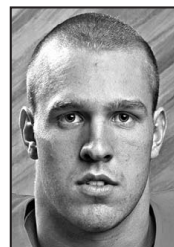


James Laurinaitis

### Weak-Side (Will) Linebacker

Ross Homan (6-0, 229, Soph.) appeared in four games last season before succumbing to a painful foot injury and taking a medical redshirt year. He returned to full health in the spring and had such an outstanding early fall camp that Freeman was moved to the strong side in order to get Homan in the starting lineup. So far, he has barely scratched the surface of the vast potential seen coming out of Coldwater (Ohio) High School. As a senior, he had 204 tackles and rushed for 1,412 yards and 26 TDs to lead the Cavaliers to the Division IV state title.

Brian Rolle (5-11, 221, Soph.) had on-the-job training last season as a member of special teams, and his teeth-rattling tackles quickly made him a fan favorite. He battled some nagging injuries during the offseason but seemed to be none the worse for wear during fall camp as he brought his bring-the-house attitude to the weak-side position.

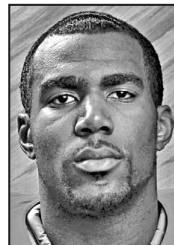


Ross Homan

### Cornerback

Malcolm Jenkins (6-1, 201, Sr.) has become one of the top cover men in college football. Now in his third season as a starter, Jenkins typically draws the opposing team's toughest receiver and more often than not shuts them down. He was sixth on the team in tackles last season and has recorded four interceptions in each of the last two years. Jenkins also knows what to do with a turnover. He has used his 4.3 speed to return eight career picks for an average of 19.0 yards with two touchdowns.

Andre Amos (6-1, 183, Jr.) returned last year in midseason from knee surgery and eased his way back into the lineup. This year, Amos has fully recovered and is eyeing increased playing time, either at one of the corner spots or as the Buckeyes' fifth defensive back in the nickel package. One thing the coaching staff has remarked about so far has been how Amos has gotten a lot more physical with his play, and it expects big things from him in 2008.

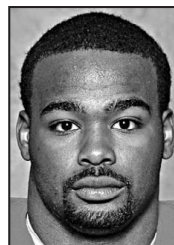


Malcolm Jenkins

### Free Safety

Anderson Russell (6-0, 205, Jr.) came back last year from a devastating knee injury of his own to put together a solid season. He finished fourth on the team with 63 tackles, including seven for loss and three sacks, and was remarkably consistent – seven times last year Russell recorded between five and eight stops. Perhaps the only drawback to an otherwise excellent season was the fact he dropped at least five potential interceptions, something Russell has promised to correct this year.

Aaron Gant (6-0, 194, Jr.) is the prototypical Ohio State safety – strong, compact, physical, aggressive and with the ability to deliver big hits. All he needs is more experience. Gant has been limited to mostly special teams play and mop-up duty during his first two seasons as a Buckeye, and a foot injury hampered his advancement last year. But he appears healthy this year and figures to get more and more playing time, both at safety and in the team's nickel and dime packages.



Anderson Russell

### Strong Safety

Kurt Coleman (5-11, 188, Jr.) spent most of his offseason focused on two things – getting stronger and creating more turnovers. Not that his 2007 campaign was a bad one. After all, Coleman finished third on the team with 64 tackles. But he finished with only five pass breakups and no interceptions, two categories in which he wants to see marked improvement this year. He has also reportedly added about 10 pounds of muscle to help him mix it up better with some of the Big Ten's bigger receivers.

Nate Oliver (6-0, 215, R-Fr.) began last spring as the backup to Coleman and has

Continued On Page 14

## Join the BUCKEYE BOOSTERS

and travel to the USC game!

Sept. 10-14, 2008

- Charter flight from Rickenbacker
- Stay at the Buckeyes' team hotel, The Wilshire Grand, LA
- Game ticket and much more
- \$1960 per person double occupancy, \$2360 single occupancy

Membership is only \$50.00 per year! For information check us out at [www.buckeyeboosters.com](http://www.buckeyeboosters.com) or call 614-326-3300. JOIN TODAY!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Check to: Buckeye Boosters, 921 Chatham Ln., #105 Columbus, Ohio 43221



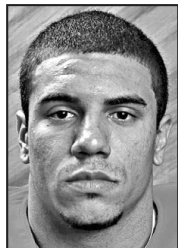


## OHIO STATE FOOTBALL PREVIEW: DEPTH CHART

# Pretorius, Trapasso Return For Senior Campaigns

Continued From Page 13

remained there throughout the fall. He has a nose for the football and isn't afraid of contact. During his senior season at Lakewood (Ohio) St. Edward, Oliver racked up 80 tackles, including 13 for loss and



Kurt Coleman

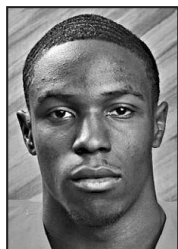
four sacks, while grabbing three interceptions and forcing four fumbles. He is also ticketed for play on the OSU special teams this season.

Jamario O'Neal (6-0, 205, Sr.) is a versatile athlete who will be in the mix for playing time when he returns from a two-game suspension. Over the past three seasons, O'Neal has appeared in all 38 of the Buckeyes' games, including eight starts at strong safety in 2006. During that time, he has totaled 46 tackles, including 2½ for loss and one sack as well as one interception.

## Cornerback

Chimdi Chekwa (6-0, 188, Soph.) was already pushing for the starting position based on an excellent redshirt freshman season in 2007. With excellent speed and underrated cover skills, Chekwa proved adept at man-to-man coverage at cornerback after beginning the season in the nickel package. Before the year was over, he had grabbed his first career interception and knocked down a team-high nine passes. And he proved himself to be a sure-handed tackler as well – 27 of his 30 total stops were solos.

Shaun Lane (5-10, 175, Sr.) has been getting plenty of recognition from the coaching staff this fall as he takes the experience of a fifth-year senior and applies it in a leadership role. Lane, who became a special teams star last season, has come all the way back from knee surgery in 2005 to become a viable alternative in the secondary for the Buckeyes.



Chimdi Chekwa

Donald Washington (6-0, 194, Jr.) will serve a two-game suspension at the beginning of the season and then likely ease back into the defensive back rotation. That makes for a good situation for the Buckeyes especially since Washington has been a steady performer since cracking the lineup two years ago. Last season, he finished seventh on the team with 39 tackles and added his first career interception, taking that pick back 70 yards for a touchdown against Kent State.

## SPECIALISTS

### Kicker

Ryan Pretorius (5-9, 169, Sr.) won the kicking job last year in fall camp and went on to enjoy pretty good success. He made 48 of 49 PATs and connected on 18 of 23 field-goal attempts – normally good numbers until you factor in that four of his five misses on three-pointers were blocked. That included an especially crucial one in the national championship game that was one of the turning points in the game. Pretorius has worked during the offseason to get more immediate loft on his kicks and has said last year's problems

will not carry over to 2008.

Aaron Pettrey (6-2, 199, Jr.) handled the team's placekicking in 2006, but a painful groin tear set him behind last year and he was forced to cede the field goal and PAT duties to Pretorius. Now healthy, Pettrey will likely be counted on to kick off for the Buckeyes this season and could also be called upon for long-range three-pointers. His career best is a 51-yarder against Indiana in '06.



Ryan Pretorius

## Punter

A.J. Trapasso (6-0, 229, Sr.) returns for his fourth season as punter, and he has been as steady as a rock. He established career highs last year, averaging 41.5 yards on 53 kicks, 21 of which were dropped inside the opponent's 20-yard line. Trapasso has a big leg – he also kicked off 26 times last season and had nine touchbacks – and also brings the added dimension of being a former high school running back.



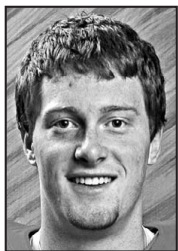
A.J. Trapasso

He is not afraid to tuck the ball and take off on a fake punt.

Jon Thoma (6-2, 201, Jr.) is in his fourth season as Trapasso's backup after walking on with the team out of Louisville (Ohio) St. Thomas Aquinas. During his prep career for the Knights, he was a soccer and basketball star, not even going out for football until his senior year. That season, he averaged 42.8 yards per punt and earned second-team all-state honors.

## Long Snapper

Jake McQuaide (6-2, 219, Soph.) is a walk-on who shared some of the long snapping duties with Dimitrios Makridis and Jackson Haas last season after recovering from a preseason back injury. Now that Makridis and Haas are gone, McQuaide would appear to have the job all to himself. The Cincinnati Elder product handled long snaps for his high school team and also played tight end for the Panthers.



Jake McQuaide

## COACHING STAFF

### Head Coach

Jim Tressel, 55, begins his eighth season at Ohio State with 73 victories, more than any coach in school history in their first seven seasons. Since taking over the Buckeyes in 2001, his résumé includes four Big Ten championships, an undisputed national title, a 20-game conference winning streak, three appearances in the BCS National Championship Game, national coach of the year honors and a 6-1 record against archival Michigan.

It is merely a continuation of what has been an extremely successful career. In his 15 years as the head coach at Youngstown State,

he led the Penguins to four Division I-AA national championships as well as two other title game appearances. He built a 135-57-2 record there and his teams made 10 playoff appearances.

Including his 73-16 record with OSU, Tressel's career mark is 208-73-2, good for a .739 winning percentage.

A native of Berea, Ohio, he played quarterback for his father, legendary head coach Lee Tressel, at Baldwin-Wallace. He served 10 years as an assistant at Akron, Miami (Ohio), Syracuse and Ohio State before landing the Youngstown State job. Between 1983 and '85, he coached OSU quarterbacks, receivers and running backs at different times under Earle Bruce.



Jim Tressel

## Offensive Coaching Staff

Jim Bollman, 53, is in his eighth season as OSU's offensive coordinator and line coach. He is a native of Ashtabula, Ohio, and was a four-year letterman and football captain at Ohio University. Bollman has served as an assistant at Miami (Ohio), North Carolina State, Youngstown State, Virginia and Michigan State. Prior to coming to OSU, he spent three years in the NFL with the Philadelphia Eagles and Chicago Bears.

Darrell Hazell, 46, begins his fifth year on staff as receivers coach and his fourth as assistant head coach. A native of Cinnaminson, N.J., Hazell is beginning his 23rd season as a coach on the college level with previous stops at Oberlin, Eastern Illinois, Penn. Western Michigan, the U.S. Military Academy, West Virginia and Rutgers. He was a three-time all-conference wide receiver at Muskingum College and earned All-America honors as a senior.

Joe Daniels, 65, is in his eighth season on the staff and begins his fifth as passing game coordinator. The native of Bethel Park, Pa., was a running back at Slippery Rock, where he graduated in 1964 before embarking upon a coaching career that led him to stops as an assistant at Boston College, West Virginia, Pittsburgh and Akron. He also spent time with the NFL's Cleveland Browns, Buffalo Bills and New York Jets. He came to OSU after spending the preceding four years at the University of Cincinnati.

Dick Tressel, 60, is in his eighth season as a member of the Ohio State football program and his fifth as a member of his younger brother's staff. He spent the first three years of his tenure as associate director of football operations. Tressel spent 23 seasons as head coach at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minn., compiling a record of 124-102-2 and was Division III Coach of the Year in 1984. He also served 21 years as athletic director at Hamline. Tressel was born in Columbus but grew up in Berea, Ohio, and graduated from Baldwin-Wallace in 1970. He also has a master's degree from Florida State and a doctorate from Minnesota.

John Peterson, 40, is back for a fifth year as tight ends coach and recruiting coordinator. He is a native Ohioan – a high school All-American from Middletown and a four-year letterman at OSU from 1987-90. He began his coaching career at Cincinnati as a graduate assistant and also spent two seasons at OSU in 1993 and '94 in the same capacity. He moved on to a full-time position at Akron in 1995 and has also served time on staffs at Miami (Ohio) and Arizona.

## Defensive Coaching Staff

Jim Heacock, 60, returns for his 13th

year with the Buckeyes. He begins his fourth season as defensive coordinator and his ninth as the defensive line coach after spending his first four years in charge of defensive tackles. Before coming to Columbus,

Heacock spent eight years as head coach at Illinois State and also served stints on staffs at Bowling Green, Muskingum College and Washington. He is an Alliance, Ohio, native and Muskingum College graduate. Heacock's brother, Jon, is the head coach at Youngstown State.

Luke Fickell, 33, begins his seventh season on Tressel's staff and his fourth as co-defensive coordinator. He also continues to be in charge of linebackers. A native of Westerville, Ohio, Fickell started 50 consecutive games as a nose guard for the Buckeyes from 1993-96 and then spent a year in the NFL with the New Orleans Saints. He returned to OSU as a graduate assistant in 1999 and then spent two seasons as a full-time assistant at Akron before returning to Columbus.

Paul Haynes, 39, enters his fourth season on staff in charge of the Ohio State safeties. He spent three years as an assistant under John L. Smith, first at Louisville and then at Michigan State, from 2002-04. A Columbus native and graduate of DeSales High School, Haynes has had collegiate coaching stops at Ferris State, Northern Iowa and his alma matter of Kent State as well as one season as an NFL assistant with Jacksonville.

Taver Johnson, 36, begins his second season as cornerbacks coach. Johnson came to the Buckeyes after a brief stint with the Oakland Raiders. From 2005-06, he was assistant head coach and defensive coordinator at Miami (Ohio), and before that he spent time on staffs at Notre Dame, Millikin University, Wittenberg and the Cleveland Browns. A native of Cincinnati, Johnson was a two-time Division III All-America linebacker at Wittenberg in 1992 and '93.

## Support Staff

Dr. Chris Kaeding begins his 17th year on the Ohio State athletic staff and fifth as the team's head physician and director of the OSU Sports Medicine Center. Other members of the medical staff include Doug Calland, head trainer; Bob Sweeney, assistant trainer; and Dr. Ray Pongonis and Dr. Jim Borchers, team physicians.

Bob Tucker is in his eighth year as the director of football operations, and Stan Jefferson begins his fifth as director of player development.

Other support personnel include graduate assistant coaches Chad Rogosheske and Fred Pagac Jr.; assistant recruiting coordinator Greg Gillum; video coordinator Mark Quisenberry; head equipment manager Rob Lachey; football equipment manager Lewis VanHoose; director of football performance Eric Lichter; assistant strength coaches Doug Davis and Troy Sutton; strength coordinator Jeff Uhlenhake; and administrative assistant Betty Affeldt. Amy Burgess supervises internal operations, Larry Romanoff is the director of external relations, Dave Adolph is program assistant and Deb Broeker serves as administrative office associate.

Nick Siciliano and Chris Hauser also serve the OSU staff, in charge of offensive and defensive quality control, respectively, as well as assisting in the compiling and breaking down of the previous games' films.

## OHIO STATE FOOTBALL PREVIEW: QUARTERBACKS

## Veteran, Newcomer Set To Guide Offense

By CRAIG MERZ

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Contributor

Chris "Beanie" Wells, running back and Heisman Trophy hopeful, is also a pretty good satirist.

How else to explain his answer when asked about changes in the Ohio State offense for 2008 – one that has multiyear veteran Todd Boeckman back for another season, the No. 1-ranked quarterback recruit in multitalented Terrelle Pryor and a leaner, meaner experienced offensive line.

"I don't really think it will look different because it will be the same old traditional Ohio State football," said Wells, who could barely conceal a smile.

Right. And Michael Phelps is a pretty good swimmer.

Let's try Alex Boone, left tackle extraordinaire and one of several high-profile Buckeyes who eschewed the NFL draft for another run at the national championship. The effusive Boone was a little more enlightening if not just as sardonic.

"It will be a little bit different but at the same time we're going to play smash-mouth football," he said. "We've got Beanie back there. He's going to go for 2,000 (yards). We've got Todd and the sky's the limit for him."

Now we're getting somewhere.

At this time a year ago, the question surrounding the offense was how could the Buckeyes replace Heisman Trophy winner Troy Smith?

There were four unproven candidates with Boeckman the favorite despite throwing 10 career passes; sophomore Robby Schoenhof, who had even less experience; redshirt freshman Antonio Henton, whose mobility reminded many of a young Troy Smith; and former pro baseball player Joe Bauserman.

Fast-forward to August 2008 and the quarterback landscape has changed radically. Only Boeckman and Bauserman remain as the Buckeyes have said goodbye to Schoenhof and Henton, who transferred to Delaware and Georgia Southern, respectively, and hello to Pryor, the next college superstar according to many.

Boeckman, who at age 24 is one of the elder statesmen on the team, is entrenched in the No. 1 spot after leading the Buckeyes to the BCS National Championship Game last season. He threw 299 passes last season

Photos by Josh Winslow

and completed 191 (63.9 percent) with 25 touchdowns.

Several of Boeckman's teammates expect those numbers to get even better this season.

"Last year, he had one of the highest quarterback ratings (in the nation)," junior safety Kurt Coleman said. "He's going to have a Heisman-type season."

Meanwhile, Bauserman, who will be 23 in October, is the current understudy in his second season on the gridiron after leaving the Pittsburgh Pirates' organization after three minor league seasons. He certainly has maturity on his side but has yet to play in a regular-season game.

That leaves Pryor as the third-string QB, right? Maybe on the depth chart but not in reality. OSU didn't win an elongated recruiting battle over Michigan and Penn State to have Pryor carrying a clipboard and acting as signal

decoy throughout the game. The plan is for him to play this season although his role early will be limited until he picks up the offensive schemes. Once he gets comfortable, his running and ability to throw on the fly in the spread offense will likely be used to counter Boeckman's traditional drop-back style in the same manner Florida used Chris Leak and Tim Tebow on its way to the 2006 national championship.

"The fact is that if you (play the spread offense), there is more banging on the quarterback," OSU head coach Jim Tressel said. "Would you like to share the banging a little bit? Yeah."

"I'm sure Chris Leak could have done those things. He ran the option a little bit against us in the championship game. I'm sure (Todd) could do those things. But to share the wear of the position, you'd love to have the luxury of more than one quarterback. But it has to be demonstrated more than one quarterback can handle it to be warranted."

Pryor (6-6, 235) reminds many of former Texas standout Vince Young and is a bigger, faster – albeit less polished – version of Smith in his final season at Ohio State.

"Right now he's learning the system, and sometimes he tries to make too much out of plays," senior offensive lineman Steve Rehring said of Pryor. "It's like Troy during his sophomore year. There were times he would take a sack when he could have thrown the ball away. There have been times when Terrelle has taken a long sack and you wonder what he was doing."

Relax, Buckeye fans. That's nothing that a little repetition won't mend.

"As soon as I get the package down on offense, my technique will come with it," Pryor said Aug. 7 during OSU Media Day. "I

just need to learn the offense more."

So far, he has handled the attention with aplomb and without wearing on his teammates.

They looked on in amusement and bewilderment during Media Day as reporters crowded around to hear his every word. Pryor is already recognized when he walks around campus and Columbus but seems perplexed by all the fuss.

"They recognize everyone – if you play football here, you're known," he said. "There's all these great players and I'm the one getting hounded. It's a little different. No matter where you're ranked, though, you have to come in and prove yourself. If you are going to be who you are, you have to prove yourself to your teammates. I'm not a celebrity. I'm just another person."

Try telling that to legions of OSU fans who were held captive for weeks after February's national signing day while the Jeannette, Pa., native made a decision.

"His comfort level, quite honestly, with our players gave him a little more comfort with our coaches," Tressel said. "I know when he was over for our senior camp he really loved the way the strength guys pushed and challenged him. He loves to be challenged. He wants to do well."

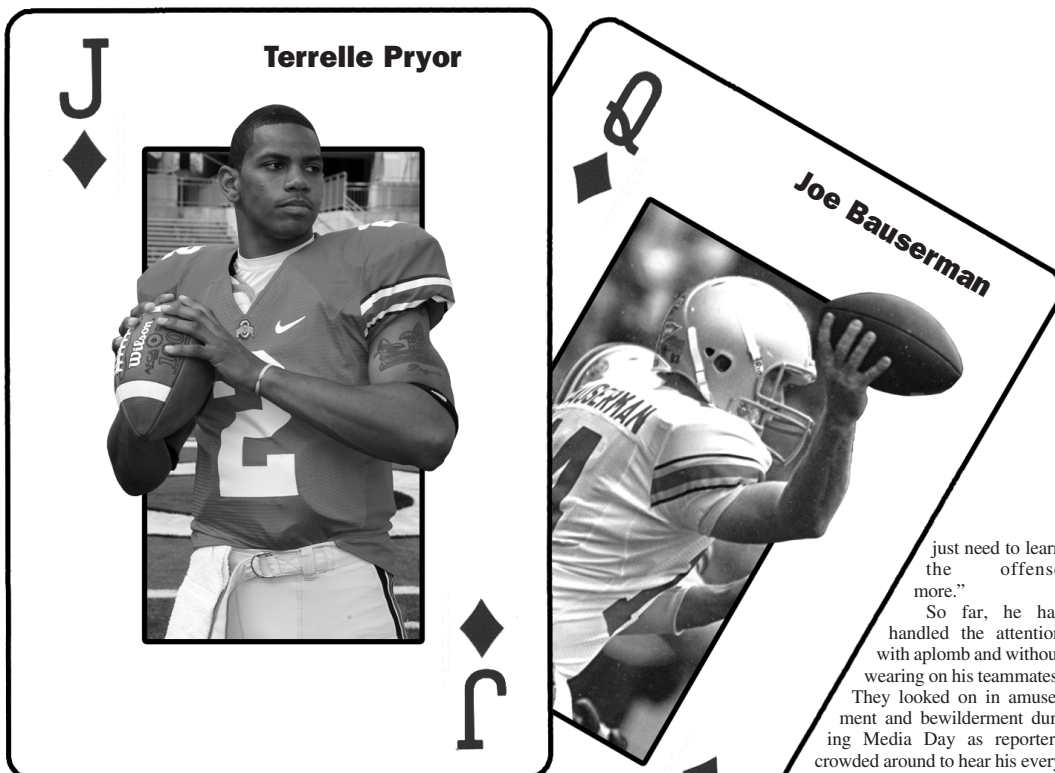
Pryor rushed for 4,238 yards and passed for another 4,340 in his prep career and was USA Today's high school player of the year for 2007. He also led Jeannette to the state football and basketball championships.

"He's so passionate about becoming a great quarterback and reaching goals that he loves to talk about it," Tressel said. "He constantly wants to be evaluated."

Senior All-America cornerback Malcolm Jenkins has prodded and pushed Pryor – who has been referred to by his teammates as "Prime Time" – during drills and likes what he sees.

"He's been looking real good in practice," Jenkins said. "He's been a real competitive kid this summer. He's not going to back down. As long as he keeps his mind straight and stays out of trouble, he has a chance to be a legend here."

Coleman said Pryor can give the Buckeyes' offense an added dimension few other teams can match.



**NOW THE LOVE STORY HAS A DARK SIDE.**  
ROMEO Y JULIETA RESERVE MADURO

**HOUSE of CIGAR**

**Largest Humidor in Ohio!**  
Lowest Prices Guaranteed  
Large Selection of Pipe Tobacco  
Largest Selection of Handmade Imported Cigars in Ohio

For Grand Opening Events Visit Our Website [www.houseofcigar.net](http://www.houseofcigar.net)  
Mon-Fri 10-7 • Sat-Sun 10-5  
**614-848-6764**  
7099 Huntley Rd. • Suite 105  
Columbus, Ohio 43229

SURGEON GENERAL WARNING: Tobacco Smoke Increases The Risk Of Lung Cancer And Heart Disease, Even In Nonsmokers



## OHIO STATE FOOTBALL PREVIEW: QUARTERBACKS

"He's an athlete - he can make anything happen at any given time," the OSU safety said. "He has a really good arm and he can throw the ball deep. If they expand the offense like Florida's done, that would be awesome to see.

"But we have so many weapons on offense it's unreal. It's really hard to defend because you can't specialize on one person. You study each and every person because it's always a different package."

Just don't make expectations too high for Pryor during his first year, said senior tight end Rory Nicol.

"Todd's our QB," Nicol said. "I'm not saying Terrelle's not going to get on the field, but to think that kid could come in here and run our offense - you're out of your mind. No freshman can do that. Not here, not with the way we run the offense.

"Anybody that has that much hype I almost feel bad for him. You're coming here - especially the way the media and the fans have expectations for him - and the only ones who are realistic are the coaches and probably some of the players.

"You're naive to think he can learn the offense in the month of August then go play in front of 110,000 people. He'll complement Todd. The coaches probably have some things where they want to get him on the field. Then it's up to him to perform."

## Making Up For Lost Time

Between Boeckman and Pryor on the depth chart is Bauserman, who spent last season learning the offense and refining his football throwing motion after years of throwing a baseball.

"Last year, it was rough there for a while just trying to throw the ball," he said. "One day, I got fed up and tried to throw as hard as I could and that started working out for me."

Tressel loves his desire for the game.

"Joe is tough and he's competitive," the OSU head coach said. "I know you didn't get to watch our team basketball tournament but he took the thing over and his team won it. They say nobody can beat him in pingpong up there (in the players' lounge) and if you happen to get a point against him, he gets mad.

"He's that kind of competitive guy. I think he also led the team in the number of deer shot this year. He's got a good aim."

As Bauserman enters his second season, Tressel said he is finally seeing the player he recruited five years ago out of Tallahassee (Fla.) Lincoln.

"You saw him shaking the rust off technique-wise for about a year," Tressel said. "This spring, I was a little disappointed at the beginning but all of a sudden about midway through things started clicking."

The 6-2, 220-pound redshirt freshman said he is trying to make up for lost time and often goes to Boeckman with questions.

"I'm coming out in camp this year and focusing on running the offense the way they want me to," Bauserman said. "I work on my drops, my arm, all aspects of the game to get better. I'm still learning, obviously.

## In Todd They Trust: Buckeyes Rally Behind QB

Many years ago in the post-Joe Namath era, the New York Jets had another Alabama quarterback who was unable to live up to the legend "Broadway Joe" had created.

That didn't stop the fans from wanting success for Richard Todd, and more than one banner read, "In Todd we trust."

The players on the Ohio State football team won't be carrying any placards or wearing headbands this year, but the sentiment is the same for their senior quarterback who came under scrutiny at the end of last season despite helping the Buckeyes to the BCS National Championship Game.

Todd Boeckman, who became a starter for the first time last season at the age of 23, struggled down the stretch and then had to endure an offseason of speculation that he should be replaced by freshman whiz kid Terrelle Pryor.

But to those in the know, there's only one starting quarterback and it would be wise not to argue with 6-8, 312-pound offensive lineman Alex Boone.

"The media is being very unfair and the people are, too," Boone said. "They're like 'I don't trust him.' Well, I'll tell you what: I'm the left tackle and I trust Todd more than anybody so everybody else can trust him.

"When the guys on the team start coming out and saying they don't trust him, then the people should get worried. He's going to be fine. He's going to be great. I'm excited to see what he can do."

Boeckman passed for 2,379 yards and 25 touchdowns while completing 63.9 percent of his passes last season as the replacement for Heisman Trophy winner Troy Smith. However, six of his 14 interceptions came in the final three games - two of which were losses to Illinois and LSU.

He was also sacked five times by the Tigers and went 15 of 26 for 208 yards with two TDs and two interceptions in the 38-24 title game defeat.

"I look at the whole big picture," Boeckman said. "It's not just one game that defines the season, it's the whole season. We got better each and every week, and there were a lot of times we did great things and there were some times we needed to work

on things. You need to get better at your weaknesses and turn them into strengths."

Two of his apparent flaws were holding onto the ball too long and not zipping his passes, especially to the flanks.

The coaches are hoping to alleviate some of that problem by employing the so-called "Pony" formation. The idea is to have Chris Wells and Brandon Saine as split backs to give Boeckman more receiving options out of the backfield.

As for his lack of velocity on some throws, Boeckman admits he was at fault.

"It was definitely my footwork - I had a lot of trouble with that," he said. "My drop wasn't as smooth. I wasn't getting back as quickly. I opened up a little too much throwing to my left. If you don't have your feet right, you're not going to be as accurate. I threw some great deep balls but there were also some passes I would like to have back.

"We all watched the film. The eye in the sky doesn't lie. I sat down with coaches in the offseason, and we knew I wasn't completing as many passes to the left and things like that. You've got to keep working at things like that. I had all winter, spring and now summer to work on it. I'm still working on it. It's a long process because once you get comfortable, it's a hard habit to break."

Going against Boeckman in practice gives junior safety Kurt Coleman a unique perspective.

"Todd is so efficient with every throw," Coleman said. "Even if he lacks a little (velocity), it's always going to be there on time. Todd is such a smart quarterback. Even though he made a couple of mistakes, he's developed his game. He's so efficient.

"I don't think anyone ever picked him off during 7-on-7 this summer. We tried to distract him as much as possible. If I give him any space, he's going to be able to make it in there. It's really frustrating at times. I'll be in a lockdown coverage and he'll still make the plays."

That comes with the maturity from being around the program for so long. He was a member of the 2003 recruiting class out of St. Henry (Ohio) High School but agreed

to delay his enrollment a year so he would have two years between himself and 2002 recruits Troy Smith and Justin Zwick.

After that grayshirt year, Boeckman redshirted during the fall of 2004 before apprenticing behind Zwick and Smith for the next two seasons.

The closest he came to being a starter was in the latter stages of the 2005 camp when Smith was ineligible for the opener and Zwick was out briefly with a sprained ankle.

"You can't teach experience," Boeckman said. "Being out there working with those guys really helped me out a lot. I'm trying to be a more vocal leader and trying to step up in that area."

One of his responsibilities is teaching the offensive playbook to Pryor, his training camp roommate.

"He's an older guy and I can learn a lot from him," Pryor said. "He knows everything. His technique is on point. His throws are all accurate. He knows the game. He knows defenses and is a very talented quarterback."

Boeckman has embraced the role of being Pryor's tutor and swears he doesn't look at the freshman as someone who could potentially take his job.

"Terrelle's still young but he's getting better each and every day," Boeckman said. "He's got all the skills. If he needs some work, if he messes up something, I'm going to tell him. But if he can help us out in any way, I'm all for it."

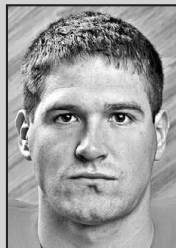
Boone is not surprised by Boeckman's willingness to help his teammates.

"Todd has developed into a tremendous leader," the offensive lineman said. "He was always a leader in my eyes, but to see him this summer with a year under his belt of starting is tremendous.

"I'm extremely confident in Todd. I've seen a leader grow. Every time you're around him he comes across as the leadership guy. He's always there for you. He's always there to talk. He's funny but at the same time he's serious when he needs to be serious.

"People are always like, 'What's Todd going to do? He's not that good.' That's rubbish. He's one of the best quarterbacks out there."

- Craig Merz



Todd Boeckman

Todd knows so much about the offense that I can ask him rather than ask the coaches all the time."

Boeckman could be an honorary coach since it seems like he has been at Ohio State forever. After graduating from St. Henry (Ohio) High School in 2003, he practiced with the Buckeyes on a limited basis during a grayshirt year and then redshirted in 2004 before becoming a third-team quarterback behind Justin Zwick and Smith for two seasons.

Last year in his first season as a starter, he led the Big Ten in passing efficiency and even garnered some Heisman talk until the late-season loss to Illinois, a trying game in bad conditions during the win at Michigan and a subpar result in the national championship game loss to LSU. Six of his 14 interceptions for the season came in those final three contests.

Now, everything has come full circle for Boeckman. Whereas the question last season centered on his ability to be a starter, now

fans wonder if he can hold onto the spot for the entire 2008 season.

"You can be bouncing off the walls here thinking about everything, but what you need to do is perform well," said offensive coordinator Jim Bollman. "You've got to learn how to focus on the proper things."

Boone is not concerned about Boeckman, saying, "This year, there's no more excuses - but there won't be any reason for excuses. It's not like it's his first year. He'll be fine. He's a great player and a great person."

**BlueChip** **O.S.U. FOOTBALL TICKETS**  
**SEASON - INDIVIDUAL**  
**HOME - AWAY**

2941 Kenny Rd. • Suite 205 • Columbus, OH 43221

**614-457-1122 • 800-933-7773**

**www.osutix.com**



**BEXLEY MONK**  
RESTAURANT & BAR

**We serve red or white**  
(but we bleed scarlet & gray)

614-239-6665

www.bexleysmonk.com

2232 E. Main Street, Bexley, Ohio 43209

## COVER STORY: IS ANOTHER TITLE RUN IN THE CARDS?

# More To Be Done Despite Big Ten Successes

Continued From Page 1

Of course, Laurinaitis downplays such comments, shaking his head and laughing when his name and the Heisman Trophy are mentioned in the same sentence.

"Oh, man, where does that even come from?" he said. "I look at myself on film and see all of the things I did wrong. I guess it's nice that other people think of you that way, but honestly, I haven't thought about those kinds of things at all. I've got one thing on my mind – being with my teammates and trying to get better each and every day."

The thought of Laurinaitis and his teammates getting much better has already made for some sleepless nights throughout the Big Ten.

"You look at that roster and it's pretty darn impressive," second-year Indiana head coach Bill Lynch said. "You've got guys like Laurinaitis and Robiskie and Wells and Boone and Jenkins, and you're just getting started. The list just goes on and on and on."

"You don't win this league three years in a row – the last two outright – unless you have talented players, and one thing Ohio State has always had is talented players. I guess the best thing about the whole thing is that we don't have to play them this year."

That the Buckeyes have more than their share of talented players is not up for debate. But is it in the cards for all of that talent to come together and become only the second team ever to pull off three straight trips to the BCS National Championship Game? (Florida State appeared in the title game following the 1998, '99 and 2000 seasons and lost two of the three.)

It won't be an easy road, even with the kind of star power Tressel has at his disposal.

Most college football observers, analysts and fans have Sept. 13 circled on their calendars. That is when Ohio State embarks upon a crucial trip to meet Southern California. The Trojans are working on a five-game winning streak in the all-time series with the Buckeyes, and OSU hasn't beaten them in the Los Angeles Coliseum since 1946.

But the teams are so evenly matched that they occupy the Nos. 2 and 3 spots in both

major preseason polls. The Associated Press has Ohio State at No. 2 while the USA Today coaches' poll has the Buckeyes third. USC is No. 2 according to the coaches and No. 3 in the AP rankings.

Should Ohio State come home from that nationally televised prime-time affair with a victory, it will enter into a potent Big Ten schedule that features three key road tests – always-tough Wisconsin (another night game), resurgent Michigan State and Illinois, the team that ended Ohio State's record 20-game league winning streak last season.

Add in a rare night game at home against Penn State in late October and the traditional season finale against Michigan, and the Buckeyes would appear to have their work cut out trying to make Big Ten history and become the first team ever to win three consecutive outright conference championships.

"That is certainly one of our goals, but we realize just how difficult that is going to be," Laurinaitis said. "When you start talking about three outright championships in a row, and then consider that nobody has ever done that in the Big Ten, it lets you know what kind of a league we're playing in. Nobody's ever done it because it's hard. It's hard to get one much less three in a row."

## Slowing Things Down

Despite working on a fourth straight Big Ten championship and a third consecutive trip to the national title game, Ohio State has a tarnished reputation in the eyes of most of the country.

Naturally, that stems from the beatings the Buckeyes absorbed from Southeastern Conference teams in their previous trips to the title game – a 41-14 wipeout by Florida in the 2007 contest and last season's 38-24 loss to LSU. Not only were the final scores of those games ugly, OSU's high-powered offense was throttled and its nationally ranked defense was shredded.

Media members and others who vote in the various polls that make up the BCS standings are not likely to give the Buckeyes any wiggle room this year when considering them for a third trip in a row to play on college football's biggest stage.

Jenkins, who turned his back on a poten-

tial multimillion-dollar NFL contract to return for his final season at Ohio State, said he had no problem with those who believe the Buckeyes must win all of their games this season to earn another shot at playing for the national championship.

"I think that's fair," Jenkins said. "To be honest, if I was a fan, I wouldn't vote Ohio State into the national championship unless they won all their games. Who wants to see us go again? I would like it, of course, but I don't blame people for saying that."

"I mean, I can see where they're coming from. They've seen us get embarrassed two years in a row, and although we know we can compete with the best, we know what people are saying. It's just an us-against-the-rest-of-the-world type of thing. We have to prove ourselves, and proving ourselves probably means we have to win all of our games."

For some teams, that might mean undue pressure from within before the season even begins. But Jenkins insists he and his teammates aren't setting any unrealistic goals for themselves.

"That's because we're not thinking about the national championship," he said. "We have a lot of seniors on this team and we just want to take things one day at a time – not one game at a time. One day at a time."

That kind of thought process came about as the Buckeyes visited during the offseason with several former members of the San Francisco 49ers, who won four Super Bowls in nine years during the 1980s.

"We had an opportunity to listen to guys like Joe Montana, Ronnie Lott, Jerry Rice and Roger Craig speak," Laurinaitis said. "Those individuals really were unbelievable. They made a great point – you have to focus on the here and now. If you think about what's going to happen in January and what's way on down the road, you won't be able to accomplish things in the here and now."

"For me, I'm wondering about what I can do tomorrow to get better. If you think too far ahead, you're not thinking about everything you need to do for today. That's the most important thing."

Getting too far ahead of themselves is something that may have come back to bite the Buckeyes the past two seasons, and something they desperately want to guard against in 2008.

"I think all we thought about the last two years was the national championship and those seasons just kind of flew by," Jenkins said. "We really didn't get a chance to enjoy it, and before we knew it, those years were gone. This year, we want to take everything slow, soak up everything we can and try to make it last. We want to try and enjoy every last little thing."

That would include playing a conference that traces its roots back to 1896 and in Michigan and Ohio State features two of the

five winningest programs in college football history.

Still, the national perception remains that the Big Ten has not kept up with the times. OSU's back-to-back losses to teams from the fleet-footed SEC coupled with the 49-17 spanking Illinois suffered at the hands of USC in last year's Rose Bowl helped to fuel that perception.

"I guess it's hard to back up the talk because of how we played in our bowl games," said Illinois quarterback Juice Williams. "To really appreciate the Big Ten, I guess you have to play in it. It's one of the toughest, most hard-hitting conferences in America."

"I always hear talk about other conferences and how they beat each other up from week to week. Come to the Big Ten and you'll see the same thing. We've got Ohio State-Michigan, Illinois-Ohio State, Illinois-Michigan, Michigan-Wisconsin, Wisconsin-Minnesota ... there are so many big games in the Big Ten where any team could win. It's so hard to win our conference outright, and Ohio State has done it the last couple of years. You have to take your hat off to them. They're where we all want to be."

Bachér agreed with his Illinois counterpart, going so far as to issue a challenge to anyone who thought differently.

"I know I've probably got a personal bias because I play in the Big Ten," he said, "but I think it's the best conference in college football. Let me put it to you this way. Anyone who thinks the Big Ten is a weak conference should have to stand back there in the pocket with a guy like James Laurinaitis steaming down on you like a freight train."

"Survive that little test and then you can talk about how much better the players are in other conferences."

As far as Laurinaitis is concerned, the perception of the Big Ten in general and his own team in particular is the least of his worries.

"We can't control what other people say or what they think," he said. "We have the chance to do some things this year that no Ohio State team has ever done, and if we start listening to our critics, it will take our focus away from the important things."

"For example, right there on the white board in our locker room is a big banner that says that no team in the 100-some-year history of the Big Ten has won three straight outright Big Ten titles. That's huge. So is the fact that Ohio State has never won five straight games over Michigan."

"But that's all stuff that's on paper. Right now, Ohio State looks good on paper but we haven't proven one thing to back that up yet. There are always surprises throughout the year. The challenges make it exciting. You want to go down in history, but you have to control the things now to get to that point."

"This year, we have all the potential in the world, and it's going to be fun to find out if we can live up to that."

**You support your Buckeyes... isn't it time a buckeye supported you?**



**Buckeye Toughits®**  
Ottoman  
FROM FORTNER, INC.

- Ideal extra seating on game day
- Perfect for your OSU Fan
- Tough, durable and stylish
- Quality wood frame construction
- Detailed embroidery

Only **\$199** Plus Shipping

2629 Johnstown Road • Columbus, OH 43219  
To order call 614.475.8282 or 1.800.630.6295  
Order online at [www.fortnerinc.com/toughit.html](http://www.fortnerinc.com/toughit.html)



**golden sunrise**  
**BREAKFAST BUFFET**

FEATURING:  
MADE-TO-ORDER OMELETTES  
NEW! BLUEBERRY PANCAKES  
NEW! EGG CASSEROLE & APPLE TURNOVER

**\$100 OFF**

Mention This Ad

3710 W. Dublin-Granville Rd.  
(Sawmill & Rt. 161 Sun Center)  
**799-9579**

Saturday & Sunday  
'til 11 a.m.





# 2008 Ohio State Football Roster

| No. | Name                 | Pos. | Ht.  | Wt. | Cl. | Eli. | Hometown/High School or Jr. College |
|-----|----------------------|------|------|-----|-----|------|-------------------------------------|
| 1   | Marcus Freeman***    | LB   | 6-1  | 239 | 5th | Sr.  | Huber Heights, Ohio/Wayne           |
| 2   | Daniel Herron        | RB   | 5-10 | 193 | So. | Fr.  | Warren, Ohio/Harding                |
| 2   | Malcolm Jenkins***   | DB   | 6-1  | 201 | Sr. | Sr.  | Piscataway, N.J./Piscataway         |
| 2   | Terrelle Pryor       | QB   | 6-6  | 235 | Fr. | Fr.  | Jeanette, Pa./Jeanette              |
| 3   | Jamario O'Neal***    | DB   | 6-0  | 205 | Sr. | Sr.  | Cleveland, Ohio/Glenville           |
| 3   | Brandon Saine*       | RB   | 6-1  | 217 | So. | So.  | Piqua, Ohio/Piqua                   |
| 4   | Kurt Coleman**       | CB   | 5-11 | 188 | Jr. | Jr.  | Dayton, Ohio/Northmont              |
| 5   | Chimdi Chekwa*       | DB   | 6-0  | 188 | Jr. | So.  | Clermont, Fla./East Ridge           |
| 5   | Taurian Washington   | WR   | 6-2  | 179 | So. | So.  | Orchard Lake, Mich./St. Mary's      |
| 6   | Etienne Sabino       | LB   | 6-3  | 232 | Fr. | Fr.  | Sunny Isles, Fla./Dr. Krop          |
| 6   | Grant Schwartz*      | WR   | 6-0  | 194 | Jr. | Jr.  | Dana Hills, Calif./Dana Hills       |
| 7   | Jermale Hines*       | DB   | 6-2  | 210 | So. | So.  | Cleveland, Ohio/Glenville           |
| 7   | Lamaar Thomas        | WR   | 5-11 | 186 | Fr. | Fr.  | Ft. Washington, Md./Friendly        |
| 8   | Aaron Gant**         | DB   | 6-0  | 194 | Jr. | Jr.  | Detroit, Mich./St. Mary's           |
| 8   | DeVier Posey         | WR   | 6-3  | 205 | Fr. | Fr.  | Cincinnati, Ohio/LaSalle            |
| 9   | Brian Hartline**     | WR   | 6-2  | 186 | Sr. | Jr.  | North Canton, Ohio/GlenOak          |
| 9   | Robert Rose**        | DL   | 6-5  | 285 | Jr. | Jr.  | Cleveland, Ohio/Glenville           |
| 10  | Devon Torrence       | CB   | 6-1  | 193 | So. | So.  | Canton, Ohio/South                  |
| 11  | James Scott*         | DB   | 5-10 | 170 | So. | So.  | Daytona Beach, Fla./Seabreeze       |
| 11  | Jake Stoneburner     | WR   | 6-5  | 230 | Fr. | Fr.  | Dublin, Ohio/Coffman                |
| 12  | Devin Barclay        | K    | 5-11 | 195 | Jr. | So.  | Annapolis, Md./McDonogh             |
| 12  | Dane Sanzenbacher*   | WR   | 5-11 | 175 | So. | So.  | Toledo, Ohio/Central Catholic       |
| 13  | Andre Amos**         | DB   | 6-1  | 183 | Sr. | Jr.  | Middletown, Ohio/Middletown         |
| 13  | Ben Kacsandi         | WR   | 6-1  | 209 | 5th | Sr.  | Wooster, Ohio/Wooster               |
| 14  | Joe Bauserman        | QB   | 6-2  | 220 | So. | Fr.  | Strasburg, Va./Lincoln              |
| 14  | Nate Oliver          | DB   | 6-0  | 215 | So. | Fr.  | Cleveland, Ohio/St. Edwards         |
| 15  | Kyle Ruhl            | WR   | 6-1  | 164 | 5th | Sr.  | Powell, Ohio/Dubin Coffman          |
| 15  | A.J. Trapasso**      | P    | 6-0  | 229 | 5th | Sr.  | Pickerington, Ohio/Pickerington     |
| 16  | Zach Domicone        | DB   | 6-3  | 215 | Fr. | Fr.  | Xenia, Ohio/Beavercreek             |
| 16  | Ross Oltorik         | QB   | 6-2  | 210 | Fr. | Fr.  | Cincinnati, Ohio/Moeller            |
| 16  | Ryan Schuck          | WR   | 6-0  | 204 | Sr. | Jr.  | Selinsgrove, Pa./Selinsgrove Area   |
| 17  | Todd Boeckman*       | QB   | 6-4  | 244 | 5th | Sr.  | St. Henry, Ohio/St. Henry           |
| 17  | Ben Buchanan         | P/K  | 6-0  | 200 | Fr. | Fr.  | Westerville, Ohio/Central           |
| 18  | Travis Howard        | DB   | 6-1  | 180 | Fr. | Fr.  | Miami, Fla./Dr. Krop                |
| 19  | Orhian Johnson       | DB   | 6-2  | 178 | Fr. | Fr.  | Gulfport, Fla./Boca Ciega           |
| 20  | Aaron Pettrey**      | K    | 6-2  | 199 | Sr. | Jr.  | Raceland, Ky./Raceland-Worthington  |
| 20  | Donald Washington**  | DB   | 6-0  | 194 | Sr. | Jr.  | Indianapolis, Ind./Franklin Central |
| 21  | Anderson Russell**   | DB   | 6-0  | 205 | Sr. | Jr.  | Atlanta, Ga./Marist                 |
| 23  | Nick Patterson***    | DB   | 6-1  | 209 | 5th | Sr.  | St. Louis, Mo./Hazelwood Central    |
| 24  | Tyson Gentry         | P    | 6-2  | 165 | 5th | Sr.  | Sandusky, Ohio/Perkins              |
| 24  | Marcus Williams*     | RB   | 5-10 | 202 | Sr. | Jr.  | Ironton, Ohio/Ironton               |
| 25  | Rocco Pentoello      | DB   | 6-0  | 194 | So. | Fr.  | Westerville, Ohio/South             |
| 26  | Tyler Moeller*       | LB   | 6-0  | 216 | Jr. | Fr.  | Cincinnati, Ohio/Colerain           |
| 28  | Chris Wells**        | RB   | 6-1  | 237 | Jr. | Jr.  | Akron, Ohio/Garfield                |
| 29  | Shaun Lane***        | DB   | 5-10 | 175 | 5th | Sr.  | Hubbard, Ohio/Hubbard               |
| 30  | Donnie Evege         | DB   | 5-11 | 189 | So. | Fr.  | Huber Heights, Ohio/Wayne           |
| 32  | Taylor Rice          | DB   | 5-11 | 171 | Fr. | Fr.  | Dublin, Ohio/Scioto                 |
| 33  | Joe Gantz            | RB   | 6-0  | 199 | Sr. | Jr.  | Wooster, Ohio/Wooster               |
| 33  | James Laurinaitis*** | LB   | 6-3  | 240 | Sr. | Sr.  | Hamel, Minn./Wayzata                |
| 34  | Maurice Wells***     | RB   | 5-10 | 196 | Sr. | Sr.  | Jacksonville, Fla./Sandalwood       |
| 35  | Bo DeLande           | RB   | 6-0  | 184 | So. | Fr.  | Hilliard, Ohio/Davidson             |
| 36  | Brian Rolle*         | LB   | 5-11 | 221 | So. | So.  | Immokalee, Fla./Immokalee           |
| 37  | James Georgiades     | RB   | 6-1  | 240 | Fr. | Fr.  | North Canton, Ohio/Hoover           |
| 38  | Austin Spittler**    | LB   | 6-3  | 234 | Sr. | Jr.  | Bellbrook, Ohio/Bellbrook           |
| 41  | Tony Jackson         | LB   | 5-11 | 227 | So. | Fr.  | Columbus, Ohio/Westland             |
| 41  | Jermil Martin        | RB   | 6-0  | 227 | Fr. | Fr.  | Cleveland, Ohio/Glenville           |
| 42  | Andrew Sweat         | LB   | 6-2  | 220 | Fr. | Fr.  | Washington, Pa./Trinity             |
| 43  | Nathan Williams      | DL   | 6-3  | 245 | Fr. | Fr.  | Washington C.H., Ohio/Miami Trace   |
| 44  | Mark Johnson         | DL   | 6-3  | 250 | Jr. | So.  | Los Angeles, Calif./Dorsey          |
| 46  | K.C. Christian       | RB   | 5-11 | 209 | Jr. | So.  | Kitts Hill, Ohio/Rock Hill</        |

## 2008 Big Ten Schedule

|          | ILLINOIS                  | INDIANA          | IOWA                  | MICHIGAN       | MICHIGAN STATE   | MINNESOTA         | N'WESTERN         | OHIO STATE             | PENN STATE       | PURDUE            | WISCONSIN         |
|----------|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| AUG. 30  | vs. Missouri @ St. Louis  | WESTERN KENTUCKY | MAINE                 | UTAH           | at California    | NORTHERN ILLINOIS | SYRACUSE          | YOUNGSTOWN STATE       | COASTAL CAROLINA |                   | AKRON             |
| SEPT. 6  | EASTERN ILLINOIS          | MURRAY STATE     | FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL | MIAMI (OHIO)   | EASTERN MICHIGAN | at Bowling Green  | at Duke           | OHIO                   | OREGON STATE     | NORTHERN COLORADO | MARSHAL           |
| SEPT. 13 | LOUISIANA LAFAYETTE       |                  | IOWA STATE            | at Notre Dame  | FLORIDA ATLANTIC | MONTANA STATE     | SOUTHERN ILLINOIS | at Southern California | at Syracuse      | OREGON            | at Fresno State   |
| SEPT. 20 |                           | BALL STATE       | at Pittsburgh         |                | NOTRE DAME       | FLORIDA ATLANTIC  | OHIO              | TROY                   | TEMPLE           | CENTRAL MICHIGAN  |                   |
| SEPT. 27 | at Penn State             | MICHIGAN STATE   | N'WESTERN             | WISCONSIN      | at Indiana       | at Ohio State     | at Iowa           | MINNESOTA              | ILLINOIS         | at Notre Dame     | at Michigan       |
| OCT. 4   | at Michigan               | at Minnesota     | at Michigan State     | ILLINOIS       | IOWA             | INDIANA           |                   | at Wisconsin           | at Purdue        | PENN STATE        | OHIO STATE        |
| OCT. 11  | MINNESOTA                 | IOWA             | at Indiana            | TOLEDO         | at N'western     | at Illinois       | MICHIGAN STATE    | PURDUE                 | at Wisconsin     | at Ohio State     | PENN STATE        |
| OCT. 18  | INDIANA                   | at Illinois      | WISCONSIN             | at Penn State  | OHIO STATE       |                   | PURDUE            | at Michigan State      | MICHIGAN         | at N'western      | at Iowa           |
| OCT. 25  | at Wisconsin              | N'WESTERN        |                       | MICHIGAN STATE | at Michigan      | at Purdue         | at Indiana        | PENN STATE             | at Ohio State    | MINNESOTA         | ILLINOIS          |
| NOV. 1   | IOWA                      | CENTRAL MICHIGAN | at Illinois           | at Purdue      | WISCONSIN        | N'WESTERN         | at Minnesota      |                        |                  | MICHIGAN          | at Michigan State |
| NOV. 8   | vs. W. Michigan @ Detroit | WISCONSIN        | PENN STATE            | at Minnesota   | PURDUE           | MICHIGAN          | OHIO STATE        | at N'western           | at Iowa          | at Michigan State | at Indiana        |
| NOV. 15  | OHIO STATE                | at Penn State    | PURDUE                | N'WESTERN      |                  | at Wisconsin      | at Michigan       | at Illinois            | INDIANA          | at Iowa           | MINNESOTA         |
| NOV. 22  | at N'western              | at Purdue        | at Minnesota          | at Ohio State  | at Penn State    | IOWA              | ILLINOIS          | MICHIGAN               | MICHIGAN STATE   | INDIANA           | CAL POLY          |

# The Numbers Game

## Final 2007 Football Statistics

| Date     | 2007-08 Game-By-Game Opponent | Result/Time | Crowd   |
|----------|-------------------------------|-------------|---------|
| Sept. 1  | (11) YOUNG. ST.               | W, 38-6     | 105,038 |
| Sept. 8  | (12) AKRON                    | W, 20-2     | 104,317 |
| Sept. 15 | (10) at Washington            | W, 33-14    | 74,927  |
| Sept. 22 | (8) N'WESTERN                 | W, 58-7     | 105,178 |
| Sept. 29 | (8) at Minnesota              | W, 30-7     | 51,611  |
| Oct. 6   | (4) at Purdue (23)            | W, 23-7     | 65,497  |
| Oct. 13  | (3) KENT STATE                | W, 48-3     | 105,051 |
| Oct. 20  | (1) MICHIGAN STATE            | W, 24-17    | 105,287 |
| Oct. 27  | (1) at Penn State (24)        | W, 37-17    | 110,134 |
| Nov. 3   | (1) WISCONSIN                 | W, 38-17    | 105,449 |
| Nov. 10  | (1) ILLINOIS                  | L, 28-21    | 105,453 |
| Nov. 17  | (7) at Michigan (23)          | W, 14-3     | 111,941 |
| Jan. 7   | (1) #LSU (2)                  | L, 38-24    | 79,651  |

\* OSU's gameday AP ranking is in parentheses before the opponent, while the opponent's ranking is after the name.

# BCS National Championship Game (Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans)

| Team Statistics                |  | OSU    | Opp    |
|--------------------------------|--|--------|--------|
| <b>First Downs</b>             |  | 268    | 180    |
| <b>Rushing</b>                 |  | 137    | 80     |
| <b>Passing</b>                 |  | 114    | 86     |
| <b>Penalty</b>                 |  | 17     | 14     |
| <b>Average Per Game/Rush</b>   |  | 196.4  | 82.8   |
| <b>Average Per Game/Pass</b>   |  | 197.3  | 150.2  |
| <b>Total Offense</b>           |  | 5,118  | 3,029  |
| <b>Total Plays</b>             |  | 883    | 832    |
| <b>Average Per Game</b>        |  | 393.7  | 223.0  |
| <b>Average Per Play</b>        |  | 5.8    | 3.6    |
| <b>Penalties-Yards</b>         |  | 72-574 | 53-483 |
| <b>Fumbles-Lost</b>            |  | 20-8   | 18-8   |
| <b>3rd Down Efficiency</b>     |  | 84-183 | 69-207 |
| <b>Percentage</b>              |  | 46%    | 33%    |
| <b>4th Down Efficiency</b>     |  | 9-14   | 9-15   |
| <b>Percentage</b>              |  | 64%    | 60%    |
| <b>Sacks-Yards</b>             |  | 43-285 | 19-136 |
| <b>Time of Possession Avg.</b> |  | 31:50  | 28:10  |

| Score By Quarters |  | 1   | 2  | 3  | 4  | OT | Tot. | Avg. |
|-------------------|--|-----|----|----|----|----|------|------|
| <b>Ohio State</b> |  | 121 | 98 | 98 | 91 | —  | 408  | 31.4 |
| <b>Opponents</b>  |  | 32  | 45 | 55 | 34 | —  | 166  | 12.8 |

| Attendance     | Games | Total     | Avg.    |
|----------------|-------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Home</b>    | 7     | 735,773   | 105,110 |
| <b>Away</b>    | 5     | 414,110   | 82,822  |
| <b>Neutral</b> | 1     | 79,651    | 79,651  |
| <b>Total</b>   | 13    | 1,229,534 | 94,580  |

| Individual Statistics |            |              |            |              |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Rushing               | Att.       | Net          | Avg.       | TD Long      |
| Chris Wells           | 274        | 1,609        | 5.9        | 15 65        |
| Maurice Wells         | 103        | 367          | 3.6        | 3 26         |
| Brandon Saine         | 60         | 267          | 4.4        | 2 37         |
| Todd Boeckman         | 56         | 63           | 1.1        | 0 35         |
| Ray Small             | 4          | 49           | 12.2       | 0 37         |
| Brian Hartline        | 6          | 46           | 7.7        | 0 9          |
| Antonio Henton        | 9          | 41           | 4.6        | 0 10         |
| Marcus Williams       | 14         | 38           | 2.7        | 0 6          |
| Rob Schoenhof         | 10         | 32           | 3.2        | 1 16         |
| K.C. Christian        | 5          | 31           | 6.2        | 0 13         |
| A.J. Trapasso         | 1          | 18           | 18.0       | 0 18         |
| Joe Gantz             | 3          | 3            | 1.0        | 0 2          |
| Dionte Johnson        | 1          | -1           | -1.0       | 0 -1         |
| TEAM                  | 7          | -10          | -1.4       | 0 0          |
| <b>OSU Totals</b>     | <b>553</b> | <b>2,553</b> | <b>4.6</b> | <b>21 65</b> |
| <b>OPP Totals</b>     | <b>426</b> | <b>1,077</b> | <b>2.5</b> | <b>3 80</b>  |

| Receiving          | Rec.       | Net          | Avg.        | TD Long      |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Brian Robiskie     | 55         | 935          | 17.0        | 11 68        |
| Brian Hartline     | 52         | 694          | 13.3        | 6 65         |
| Ray Small          | 20         | 267          | 13.4        | 2 60         |
| Rory King          | 16         | 84           | 5.2         | 0 11         |
| Jake Ballard       | 13         | 149          | 11.5        | 2 22         |
| Brandon Saine      | 12         | 160          | 13.3        | 1 44         |
| D. Sanzenbacher    | 12         | 89           | 7.4         | 1 15         |
| Maurice Wells      | 10         | 47           | 4.7         | 1 20         |
| Chris Wells        | 5          | 21           | 4.2         | 0 8          |
| Devon Torrence     | 4          | 31           | 7.8         | 0 17         |
| Taurian Washington | 3          | 46           | 15.3        | 1 37         |
| Brandon Smith      | 3          | 30           | 10.0        | 0 11         |
| Trevor Robinson    | 3          | 10           | 3.3         | 1 9          |
| Marcus Williams    | 1          | 11           | 11.0        | 0 11         |
| Tyler Whaley       | 1          | 4            | 4.0         | 0 4          |
| Todd Boeckman      | 1          | -13          | -13.0       | 0 13         |
| <b>OSU Totals</b>  | <b>211</b> | <b>2,565</b> | <b>12.2</b> | <b>26 68</b> |
| <b>OPP Totals</b>  | <b>216</b> | <b>1,952</b> | <b>9.0</b>  | <b>13 50</b> |

| Scoring           | TD        | EPK          | EPR        | EPP | FG | PTS              |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|------------|-----|----|------------------|
| Ryan Pretorius    | —         | 48-49        | —          | —   | —  | 18-23 102        |
| Chris Wells       | 15        | —            | —          | —   | —  | 90               |
| Brian Robiskie    | 11        | —            | —          | —   | —  | 66               |
| Brian Hartline    | 7         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 42               |
| Maurice Wells     | 4         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 24               |
| Brandon Saine     | 3         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 18               |
| Jake Ballard      | 2         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 12               |
| Ray Small         | 2         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 12               |
| T. Washington     | 1         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 6                |
| D. Sanzenbacher   | 1         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 6                |
| Malcolm Jenkins   | 1         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 6                |
| Trevor Robinson   | 1         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 6                |
| Vernon Gholston   | 1         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 6                |
| Donald Washington | 1         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 6                |
| Rob Schoenhof     | 1         | —            | —          | —   | —  | 6                |
| TEAM              | —         | —            | —          | 0-1 | —  | —                |
| <b>OSU Totals</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>48-49</b> | <b>0-1</b> | —   | —  | <b>18-23 408</b> |
| <b>OPP Totals</b> | <b>20</b> | <b>20-20</b> | <b>0-1</b> | —   | —  | <b>8-11 166</b>  |

\* Akron recorded a safety.

| Passing           | Comp.      | Att.       | Pct.        | Yds.         | TD           | INT           | Rating |
|-------------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------|
| T. Boeckman       | 191        | 299        | 63.9        | 2,379        | 25-14        | 148.94        |        |
| R. Schoenhof      | 17         | 25         | 68.0        | 129          | 0-0          | 111.34        |        |
| Antonio Henton    | 3          | 6          | 50.0        | 57           | 1-0          | 184.80        |        |
| <b>OSU Totals</b> | <b>211</b> | <b>330</b> | <b>63.9</b> | <b>2,565</b> | <b>26-14</b> | <b>146.75</b> |        |
| <b>OPP Totals</b> | <b>216</b> | <b>406</b> | <b>53.2</b> | <b>1,952</b> | <b>13-11</b> | <b>98.74</b>  |        |

| FG Distance       | 0-29       | 30-39      | 40-49      | 50+        | Total        |
|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Ryan Pretorius    | 6-7        | 6-9        | 5-6        | 1-1        | 18-23        |
| <b>OSU Totals</b> | <b>6-7</b> | <b>6-9</b> | <b>5-6</b> | <b>1-1</b> | <b>18-23</b> |
| <b>OPP Totals</b> | <b>3-3</b> | <b>3-3</b> | <b>2-5</b> | <b>0-0</b> | <b>8-11</b>  |

| Punting           | No.        | Yds.         | Avg.        | Bk       | Long      |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|----------|-----------|
| A.J. Trapasso     | 53         | 2,199        | 41.5        | 0        | 63        |
| Jon Thoma         | 1          | 13           | 13.0        | 0        | 13        |
| <b>OSU Totals</b> | <b>54</b>  | <b>2,212</b> | <b>41.0</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>63</b> |
| <b>OPP Totals</b> | <b>103</b> | <b>4,085</b> | <b>39.7</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>68</b> |

| Interceptions     | No.       | Yds.       | Avg.        | TD       | Long      |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Malcolm Jenkins   | 4         | 53         | 13.2        | 1        | 24        |
| James Laurinaitis | 2         | 16         | 8.0         | 0        | 14        |
| Donald Washington | 1         | 70         | 70.0        | 1        | 70        |
| Nick Patterson    | 1         | 34         | 34.0        | 0        | 34        |
| Larry Grant       | 1         | 19         | 19.0        | 0        | 19        |
| Chimdi Chekwa     | 1         | 9          | 9.0         | 0        | 9         |
| Doug Worthington  | 1         | 0          | 0.0         | 0        | 0         |
| <b>OSU Totals</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>201</b> | <b>18.3</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>70</b> |
| <b>OPP Totals</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>127</b> | <b>9.1</b>  | <b>1</b> | <b>54</b> |

| Punt Returns      | No.       | Yds.       | Avg.       | TD       | Long      |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|-----------|
| Ray Small         | 21        | 153        | 7.3        | 0        | 21        |
| Brian Hartline    | 20        | 229        | 11.4       | 1        | 90        |
| Brian Robiskie    | 7         | 60         | 8.6        | 0        | 14        |
| Malcolm Jenkins   | 3         | 16         | 5.3        | 0        | 21        |
| Larry Grant       | 1         | 8          | 8.0        | 0        | 8         |
| Devon Torrence    | 1         | 6          | 6.0        | 0        | 6         |
| <b>OSU Totals</b> | <b>53</b> | <b>472</b> | <b>8.9</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>90</b> |
| <b>OPP Totals</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>90</b>  | <b>4.7</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>16</b> |

| Kickoff Returns   | No.       | Yds.         | Avg.        | TD       | Long      |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Ray Small         | 22        | 391          | 17.8        | 0        | 35        |
| Maurice Wells     | 4         | 81           | 20.2        | 0        | 22        |
| Brandon Saine     | 3         | 60           | 20.0        | 0        | 39        |
| Anderson Russell  | 2         | 47           | 23.5        | 0        | 29        |
| Jamario O'Neal    | 1         | 10           | 10.0        | 0        | 10        |
| Tyler Whaley      | 1         | 10           | 10.0        | 0        | 10        |
| Rob Schoenhof     | 1         | 1            | 1.0         | 0        | 1         |
| <b>OSU Totals</b> | <b>34</b> | <b>600</b>   | <b>17.6</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>39</b> |
| <b>OPP Totals</b> | <b>60</b> | <b>1,266</b> | <b>21.1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>99</b> |

| Def. Leaders      | Solo       | Ast.       | Tot.       | TFL-Yds.       | Sacks         |
|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| James Laurinaitis | 51         | 70         | 121        | 8-5-34         | 5-0-29        |
| Marcus Freeman    | 66         | 43         | 109        | 9-5-23         | 1-5-9         |
| Kurt Coleman      | 29         | 35         | 64         | 3-5-5          | 1-0-2         |
| Anderson Russell  | 38         | 25         | 63         | 7-0-29         | 3-0-23        |
| <b>OSU Totals</b> | <b>490</b> | <b>360</b> | <b>850</b> | <b>103-410</b> | <b>43-285</b> |
| <b>OPP Totals</b> | <b>561</b> | <b>418</b> | <b>979</b> | <b>86-287</b>  | <b>19-136</b> |

**Fumbles Forced:** 2 — Marcus Freeman, Shaun Lane; 1 — Kurt Coleman, Cameron Heyward, Jamario O'Neal, Anderson Russell, TEAM, Doug Worthington, Thaddeus Gibson.

**Fumbles Recovered:** 1 — Aaron Gant, Vernon Gholston, Jamario O'Neal, James Scott, Shaun Lane, Donald Washington, James Laurinaitis, Dexter Larimore.

**Blocked Kicks:** 2 — Larry Grant.

## 2008 Preseason Polls

| The Associated Press Top 25 |                          |      |               |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------|---------------|
| Rank                        | School                   | 2007 | Pts. '07 Rank |
| 1.                          | Georgia (22)             | 11-2 | 1,528 2       |
| 2.                          | Ohio State (21)          | 11-2 | 1,506 5       |
| 3.                          | Southern California (12) | 11-2 | 1,490 3       |
| 4.                          | Oklahoma (4)             | 11-3 | 1,444 8       |
| 5.                          | Florida (6)              | 9-4  | 1,415 13      |
| 6.                          | Missouri                 | 12-2 | 1,266 4       |
| 7.                          | LSU                      | 12-2 | 1,135 1       |
| 8.                          | West Virginia            | 11-2 | 1,116 6       |
| 9.                          | Clemson                  | 9-4  | 1,105 21      |
| 10.                         | Auburn                   | 9-4  | 968 10        |
| 11.                         | Texas                    | 10-3 | 966 15        |
| 12.                         | Texas Tech               | 9-4  | 786 22        |
| 13.                         | Wisconsin                | 9-4  | 771 24        |
| 14.                         | Kansas                   | 12-1 | 707 7         |
| 15.                         | Arizona State            | 10-3 | 631 16        |
| 16.                         | BYU                      | 11-2 | 590 14        |
| 17.                         | Virginia Tech            | 11-3 | 578 9         |
| 18.                         | Tennessee                | 10-4 | 509 12        |
| 19.                         | South Florida            | 9-4  | 496 NR        |
| 20.                         | Illinois                 | 9-4  | 483 20        |
| 21.                         | Oregon                   | 9-4  | 366 23        |
| 22.                         | Penn State               | 9-4  | 293 NR        |
| 23.                         | Wake Forest              | 9-4  | 227 NR        |
| 24.                         | Alabama                  | 7-6  | 89 NR         |
| 25.                         | Pittsburgh               | 5-7  | 85 NR         |

(First place votes in parentheses)

**Others receiving votes:** South Carolina 84, Fresno St. 83, California 59, Utah 53, Cincinnati 44, Florida State 41, Michigan 36, Boston College 32, Rutgers 32, Michigan State 21, Boise St. 17, Arkansas 14, North Carolina 14, Connecticut 10, Tulsa 7, UCLA 6, Oregon State 5, Mississippi State 4, Virginia 4, Arizona 3, Nebraska 2, Notre Dame 2, Hawaii 1, Washington 1.

| USA Today Coaches' Top 25 |                          |      |               |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------|---------------|
| Rank                      | School                   | 2007 | Pts. '07 Rank |
| 1.                        | Georgia (22)             | 11-2 | 1,438 3       |
| 2.                        | Southern California (14) | 11-2 | 1,430 2       |
| 3.                        | Ohio State (14)          | 11-2 | 1,392 4       |
| 4.                        | Oklahoma (3)             | 11-3 | 1,329 8       |
| 5.                        | Florida (5)              | 9-4  | 1,293 16      |
| 6.                        | LSU (3)                  | 12-2 | 1,163 1       |
| 7.                        | Missouri                 | 12-2 | 1,143 5       |
| 8.                        | West Virginia            | 11-2 | 1,008 6       |
| 9.                        | Clemson                  | 9-4  | 999 22        |
| 10.                       | Texas                    | 10-3 | 979 10        |
| 11.                       | Auburn                   | 9-4  | 888 T14       |
| 12.                       | Wisconsin                | 9-4  | 747 21        |
| 13.                       | Kansas                   | 12-1 | 714 7         |
| 14.                       | Texas Tech               | 9-4  | 644 23        |
| 15.                       | Virginia Tech            | 11-3 | 568 9         |
| 16.                       | Arizona State            | 10-3 | 560 13        |
| 17.                       | BYU                      | 11-2 | 547 T14       |
| 18.                       | Tennessee                | 10-4 | 506 12        |
| 19.                       | Illinois                 | 9-4  | 422 18        |
| 20.                       | Oregon                   | 9-4  | 399 24        |
| 21.                       | South Florida            | 9-4  | 350 NR        |
| 22.                       | Penn State               | 9-4  | 313 25        |
| 23.                       | Wake Forest              | 9-4  | 203 NR        |
| 24.                       | Michigan                 | 9-4  | 112 19        |
| 25.                       | Fresno State             | 9-4  | 91 NR         |

(First place votes in parentheses)

**Others receiving votes:** Alabama 83, South Carolina 64, Utah 60, Florida State 53, Rutgers 53, Boston College 47, California 41, Pittsburgh 34, Boise State 25, Oregon State 23, Nebraska 17, Cincinnati 13, Virginia 12, Connecticut 9, Michigan State 9, Mississippi State 6, Kentucky 5, Notre Dame 5, TCU 5, Maryland 4, North Carolina 3, Texas A&M 3, UCLA 3, Central Florida 2, Georgia Tech 2, Louisville 2, Arizona 1, Colorado 1, Oklahoma State 1, Tulsa 1.

## 2007 Big Ten Year In Review

| Final Standings |       |   |      |     |    |      |
|-----------------|-------|---|------|-----|----|------|
|                 | Conf. |   |      | All |    |      |
|                 | W     | L | Pct. | W   | L  | Pct. |
| Ohio State      | 7     | 1 | .875 | 11  | 2  | .846 |
| Illinois        | 6     | 2 | .750 | 9   | 4  | .692 |
| Michigan        | 6     | 2 | .750 | 9   | 4  | .692 |
| Wisconsin       | 5     | 3 | .625 | 9   | 4  | .692 |
| Penn State      | 4     | 4 | .500 | 9   | 4  | .692 |
| Iowa            | 4     | 4 | .500 | 6   | 6  | .500 |
| Purdue          | 3     | 5 | .375 | 8   | 5  | .615 |
| Indiana         | 3     | 5 | .375 | 7   | 6  | .538 |
| Michigan State  | 3     | 5 | .375 | 7   | 6  | .538 |
| Northwestern    | 3     | 5 | .375 | 6   | 6  | .500 |
| Minnesota       | 0     | 8 | .000 | 1   | 11 | .083 |

**2007 All-Big Ten Teams**  
Here is a look at the All-Big Ten football teams as selected by the coaches and media. (Players in ALL CAPS indicate players returning for the 2008 season).



## OPINION

# Remember To Cherish This Era Of OSU Football

Ranked third in the preseason coaches poll. Second in the Associated Press writers and broadcasters poll. Consensus favorite to win the Big Ten title.

A win over USC in an early-season battle of titans is all that separates Ohio State from moving into a favorite's spot to return to the national championship game.

Buckeye fans, savor the moment.

This is a special time in the history of Ohio State football.

We're talking year-after-year success at the national level.

It's not just the national title of 2002 and trips to the title game in 2006 and 2007. It's finishing the season ranked in the top four nationally five of the last six years. (The other year – 2004 – OSU wound up 19th.)

It's something that couldn't have been imagined in the 1990s, despite a couple of really powerful teams under John Cooper.

It's something that remained only a dream in the 1980s under Earle Bruce, just a decade removed from the last Ohio State dynasty of the mid-1970s.

Ever since 2002, Ohio State has been a dominant power to an extent rarely seen in college football. There's no reason to think 2008 should be any different.

And, should Ohio State fulfill expectations this year, it would be a fabulous seven-year run of success with no sight of a downturn in the near future.

To get a handle on just how successful Ohio State has been, I looked up the final USA Today rankings (as voted by the coaches) the last six years and plugged the rankings into the computer to come up with a six-year top 25. I used the same point system used to determine the weekly rankings. First place got 25 points, second place 24 points and so on.

I figured Ohio State would be No. 1. But, like a lot of things lately, the Buckeyes came out in second place. Certainly, however, that's an elite place to be.

USC tops the field with 141 points, followed by Ohio State with 122, Texas with 110 and Oklahoma and LSU with 104 each. Rounding out the top 10 are Georgia (102), Auburn (75.5), Michigan (74), Virginia Tech (72) and Miami (68).

Consider the dropoff from Georgia to the rest of the field, and it becomes evident that there have been six elite teams far above the others during this era.

Among those missing: Florida, Florida State, Notre Dame, Nebraska and Alabama. Powerhouses like Ohio State over time, but not lately.

Florida is an interesting case. The Gators, of course, throttled the Buckeyes for the 2006 national title. Take nothing away from that. But the rest of the last six years have been lean times in Gator Country. Florida ranked 24th in 2002, 25th in 2003, 25th in 2004, 16th in 2005 and 16th in 2007.

## Select Company

Only 14 different schools have finished a season ranked in the top five over that six years. USC, with its incredible run, has been in the top five each year. Second best is Ohio State, with five top-five rankings in six seasons. LSU has done it four times.

No other school in the country has been there more than three times. Not even any other schools from that Southeastern Conference Ohio State fans keep hearing too much about.

That's impressive company to keep. Over six years, there are only 30 top-five spots available. USC, OSU and LSU combined to claim exactly half of them. The rest of the country – more than

100 schools – combined for the other 15.

Furthermore, Ohio State is one of just five schools to make the final top 25 each of the last six seasons. The others are USC, Texas, Oklahoma and Florida. Only five others made the top 25 five times. They were LSU, Georgia, Auburn, Michigan and Virginia Tech.

Among those traditional powerhouses we're not mentioning is Florida State, which cracked the top 25 only four times in the final poll. Notre Dame? Three times. Nebraska did so only twice.

Alabama? That great school of football glory, the team that made Bear Bryant famous – or perhaps the other way around – has appeared in the top 25 only once in the last six seasons.

The point here is that Ohio State is in pretty select company. And the era should be enjoyed.

And who knows? With the talent on the 2008 roster, maybe the Buckeyes will run the table and win the national title. That would be two titles and four title-game appearances in seven years.

That really would be something.

## Long Time Coming

The last really strong Ohio State run came from 1972 through 1976. Four of those teams included two-time Heisman winner Archie Griffin, and those teams never lost more than two games in a season. Incredibly, they finished the seasons ranked third, third, third, fourth and fifth in the coaches poll then run by United Press International.

Ohio State's five-season record from 1972-76 was 49-7-2, a winning percentage of .862. By comparison, the team's winning percentage over the last six seasons is .857 based on a combined 66-11 record. The Buckeyes' end-of-the-year ranking the last six seasons: first, fourth, 19th, fourth, second, fourth.

The Rex Kern-led Buckeyes of 1968-70 also had quite a run, finishing their seasons ranked first, fifth and second with a combined record of 27-2. That translates into a lofty .931 winning percentage.

That's pretty amazing over a short span. OSU

## THE EXNER POINT

### Rich Exner

fell out of the national rankings in 1971 before returning to glory with Griffin and company beginning in 1972.

Combined over nine seasons from 1968 to 1976, those groups were really strong. After the Kern cast left following the 1970 season, Woody Hayes quickly reloaded with another group of stars that started a string of four straight Rose Bowl trips in the 1972 season.

The same type of reloading is occurring under Tressel. The 8-4 team in 2004 could be compared to the team of 1971 that finished 6-4. But the other teams were tremendous.

Separately, I would argue that it's tougher now to stay on top with so many teams getting so much TV exposure to draw players to their campuses, and so many fewer scholarships permitted for any one school.

How long can the current trend of winning continue?

The answer may lie in just how long Jim Tressel decides he wants to coach.

## Relax & Refuel



**CROWNE PLAZA**  
COLUMBUS - ARENA DISTRICT  
the fun place to meet.

Located in downtown Columbus' vibrant Arena District, The Crowne Plaza Hotel is waiting for you in Columbus' most exciting location.

Park your car and walk to:

- Fantastic dining and entertainment right outside our door
- Nationwide Arena, home of the Columbus Blue Jackets and exciting live entertainment
- Short North Arts District and The North Market

## RELAX & REFUEL Package Includes:

A room for 2 consecutive nights,  
A FREE \$50 GAS CARD  
and complimentary valet parking\*

Call **614-461-4100**  
to reserve this  
package today!

[www.crowneplaza.com/cmhcrowneplaza](http://www.crowneplaza.com/cmhcrowneplaza) or 614-461-4100

\*Offer good through December, 31, 2008

## Eddie's Glass & Mirror Service

4355 East Main Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43213

**(614) 231-5612**

Fax: (614) 338-0808

## WINDOW REPAIR SERVICE

### Residential:

single pane, insulated, patio doors, screens, wrap-arounds, tempered, plexi glass, window glass tinting

### Commercial:

store fronts, doors, plate glass, tempered, laminate, security film & tinting

## GLASS & MIRROR SERVICE

circles, shapes cut to pattern, pencil polished edging, bevels. Have our custom designer come to you and design your mirror walls.

## CUSTOMER SHOWER DOORS & ENCLOSERS

to fit your imagination.

Leaded & Stain Glass Repair. We make them & repair them - no matter how big or small.

**Mention this ad for a Special Discount.**

[eddiesglassandmirror.com](http://eddiesglassandmirror.com)

## THE VIEW FROM 15TH AND HIGH

# Returning Starters Could Provide Magic

It's hard to believe that football season is almost here. The summer has flown by so fast. Now it's time for the Ohio State football team to mount an assault on a third straight BCS National Championship Game appearance.

On paper, it would appear that this year's Buckeye team is even better than the one that made it all the way to New Orleans last season. Virtually every starter returns from that squad, presumably stronger and wiser than they were a year ago.

The offense will feature a veteran quarterback who statistically had a pretty good season last year with a Heisman Trophy-caliber running back behind him, an experienced line in front of him and a couple of experienced, talented receivers to throw to. There's even the added spice of the nation's top incoming freshman ready to add a little potential pizzazz to the Ohio State offensive proceedings.

The key thing to watch on offense, in my opinion, is the progress of quarterback Todd Boeckman. There is no denying that he tailed off toward the end of last season after an impressive beginning for a first-year starter. With that season under his belt and an outstanding supporting cast, Boeckman should be ready to cap his lengthy career with a bang.

However, if the Boeckman of the last few games of 2007 comes out of the tunnel to start this year, that could spell problems for Ohio State. With the highly touted Terrelle Pryor waiting in the wings, fans will surely start to clamor for a change, which will only make the situation worse.

Boeckman needs to be sharp – and in command – from the first snap.

A wealth of talent returns on defense as well, including all-everything linebacker James Laurinaitis. Aside from nine returning starters, there seems to be plenty of talent in reserve as well – important over the grueling season.

The key on defense for me is how well the Buckeyes are able to replace defensive end Vernon Gholston – good enough to be the sixth overall pick in this spring's NFL draft – and his ferocious pass rush. With Cameron Heyward coming off a breakout freshman year last season and Lawrence Wilson returning after suffering a broken leg, the cupboard is hardly bare at Gholston's defensive end position. There also seems to be talent and depth along the interior of the defensive line.

But when you lose a talent of Gholston's caliber along with his ability to disrupt an opposing offense, the situation merits monitoring.

Sadly, despite this juggernaut on paper, there are no guarantees that the Buckeyes will make an incredible third straight trip to the national championship game. It's an old cliché, but like many clichés it is also true – football games are not played on paper.

The talent is there in August. Let's see where the team is in January.

One last thought: I have always believed that one of the first steps toward Ohio State winning the national championship in 2002 came when Mike Doss decided to return for his senior season rather than turning pro.

It's funny, but at the time Doss said that he wanted one last shot at winning a Big Ten championship. A national championship wasn't even within his realm of comprehension. (It should also be noted that he wanted to meet his mother's desire that he get an education, and Doss should be congratulated

## THE VIEW FROM 15TH AND HIGH

Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

for his recent graduation from Ohio State.)

This year, such stars as Laurinaitis, Marcus Freeman, Alex Boone and Malcolm Jenkins all passed up NFL riches for another year in Columbus. Will the return of these senior stars serve as a launching pad to national championship success?

Of course, Michigan stars Jake Long, Chad Henne and Mike Hart all made the very same decision last season, hoping to beat their archrival Buckeyes and make a run at the national title. The Wolverines' season instead ended up being a disaster, with the lowlight being a humiliating loss to Appalachian State in the team's home opener.

Let the season begin!

## Tale Of Two Questions

Buckeye fans have pretty much asked me the same two questions over the last several months. They want to know if Ohio State can beat USC and they want to know how much Pryor is going to play this season.

Let me admit that I don't know that much about the USC team. I know that the program is a recruiting machine, so I'm sure there is plenty of talent there. I also know that the Trojans are in the national championship chase virtually every season. For proof of USC's success, check out the data in Rich Exner's column on page 69 of this issue, where he ranks teams' success over the last six seasons.

I think it's safe to say the Trojans should be national contenders again this season.

Can the Buckeyes beat them? Of course they can.

Ohio State obviously has the talent. And contrary to national public perception, the Buckeyes actually have done fairly well in big games under Jim Tressel. Right off there is that 6-1 record against Michigan. The Buckeyes played Texas pretty much even-up in a game for the ages in Ohio Stadium in 2005 and went to Austin and beat the Longhorns the next season. There have also been impressive bowl wins against Kansas State, Oklahoma State and Notre Dame.

And, of course, there was that little victory over the invincible Miami Hurricanes to win it all in January 2003.

Unfortunately, football fans and so-called experts from across the nation seem to base their opinion of Ohio State – and the rest of the Big Ten for that matter – on the play of the Buckeyes in the past two national championship games.

The disaster with Florida following the 2006 season is still impossible for me to explain, and the Buckeyes deserved any criticism they got after that debacle (a word frequently associated with that game). But anyone who saw the game with LSU last season knows that if Ohio State had eliminated a critical penalty here, a blocked kick there and a dropped pass in the end zone by one of the team's most reliable players at a key juncture, the team would have been right in that game.

If someone says that there was some huge talent gap between the Buckeyes and Tigers, it means they bought into the hype rather than watching the game.

Which brings us back to USC.

For the sake of the suffering Buckeye fans

as well as all of the belittled Big Ten, Ohio State needs to beat the Trojans. Otherwise, brace yourself for even more criticism from around the country. You can also forget another trip to the national championship game if the Buckeyes lose – biased pollsters are going to try their hardest to keep OSU from making the championship trip.

The only way the Buckeyes can guarantee their ticket to Miami is to run the table, and with all due respect to Youngstown State and Ohio University, that run starts in Los Angeles.

As for Pryor, there is no question that he is one of the most unique talents to arrive in Columbus in quite some time. But the Buckeyes have a proven, veteran quarterback under center already and there is absolutely no need to rush Pryor.

Senior tight end Rory Nicol said it better than I can.

"Todd's our QB," Nicol said. "I'm not saying Terrelle's not going to get on the field, but to think that kid could come in here and run our offense – you're out of your mind. No freshman can do that. Not here, not with the way we run the offense."

"Anybody that has that much hype I almost feel bad for him. You're coming here – especially the way the media and the fans have expectations for him – and the only ones who are realistic are the coaches and probably some of the players."

"You're naive to think he can learn the offense in the month of August then go play in front of 110,000 people. He'll complement Todd. The coaches probably have some things where they want to get him on the field. Then it's up to him to perform."

I look for Pryor to play against the Penguins and Bobcats, as much to give USC something to think about as to get him experience when possible.

But knowing Tressel, when the chips are on the table in the Coliseum, look for the veteran Boeckman to be at the controls.

By the way, this season marks the 30th anniversary of the last time a ballyhooed freshman quarterback was rushed into action for a big nonconference game. Those of you who don't know the results of that game and that season don't know your Ohio State football history.

But check pages 56 and 57 of this issue as well as upcoming issues of BSB. We'll give you all the details.

## Don't Forget First Class

Just a reminder to our out-of-state readers who are not receiving their BSB via first-class mail. If this paper arrives later than Aug. 25, chances are you will not receive your BSB before the next game during football season.

We suggest an upgrade to speedy first-class mail in an envelope for football season for just \$25 or a first-class upgrade through recruiting season for \$39.

Give us a call at (614) 486-2202 and we can handle your upgrade with a credit card. You can also write to us at P.O. Box 12453, Columbus, Ohio 43212, if you prefer paying by check. Be sure to mention the "Football" or "Recruiting" upgrade.

## Publishing Schedule Input

I wanted to thank the many, many readers

who responded to my request for input on the publishing schedule of Buckeye Sports Bulletin.

As you may recall, this request came after I noted in this space in our June issue that The Wolverine, the publication similar to BSB at Michigan, was switching to a monthly format all year, primarily in response to the growth of the Internet. This schedule change included monthly publishing in football season, a bold move that admittedly surprised me.

Almost all Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers who responded were in favor of keeping our current 30-issue format, which includes weekly publishing in football season and from January to mid-March.

A few readers seemed willing to give up some of the weekly issues in the winter, especially if we maintained the weekly publishing schedule through football's national signing day. An even smaller number of you were willing to give up weekly issues for most of the year as long as we continued to publish weekly during football season. No one was willing to go the way of The Wolverine and give up the weekly football issues.

Interestingly, weekly in football season and monthly the rest of the year – 20 issues annually – was our schedule for several years in the early days of BSB. We expanded to 24 and 28 issues before going to the current 30-issue format in 1987. At the time, I was willing to continue expanding the schedule if there was a demand for it, and while there have always been subscribers who have said they wish BSB published 52 times a year – I can see our staff shuddering as they read that – 30 issues seems to be the format with which most readers are comfortable in terms of function and cost.

And with cost lies the question for the future.

While most readers indicated they prefer the current format or some slight variation, it remains to be seen if – in this era of skyrocketing costs – enough subscribers are willing to pay the price necessary to maintain 30 issues a year.

Postage remains our largest expense and when postal rates went up in May and we raised our subscription rates accordingly, one reader from South Carolina deemed our new rates "ridiculous," suggested we "get real" and accused us of "making money off the postal rates" which sent me scrambling to the bank account in search of this supposed windfall – which, of course, I was unable to find.

We are going to do everything we can to maintain the publishing schedule while trying to control subscription prices. So far, unlike most of the print world, we have been able to hold our subscription numbers. We thank our loyal readers for that and also recognize that the great success of the football team has had something to do with our own success.

Also, while other newspapers and magazines have battled the Internet, we have found a new group of subscribers through our presence on the World Wide Web at BuckeyeSports.com, especially since our affiliation with the Scout.com network.

We will, however, continue to watch our subscription trends and will certainly be watching the reaction of readers of The Wolverine as they go through what is bound to be an interesting football season with only one publication per month.