

# BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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Vol. 32, No. 3

"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

Sept. 22, 2012

# Buckeyes Bear Down

## OSU Turns Back Upset-Minded Cal

 By MARCUS HARTMAN  
 Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

California already had 505 yards on the day, and Jeff Tedford decided that was enough for the time being.

Rather than ask his team to try to convert a fourth-and-1 at the Ohio State 25-yard line, the head coach of the Golden Bears sent his field-goal unit onto the field with 4:25 remaining in the game.

Vincenzo D'Amato's kick sailed wide left – as did his previous two attempts on the day – and a majority of the 105,232 fans at Ohio Stadium exhaled.

Then the fans of the Scarlet and Gray watched their team respond with a 72-yard touchdown pass from Braxton Miller to Devin Smith, the kind of spontaneous playground play the two have connected on before, that would turn out to be the decisive score in a 35-28 win for the home team.

After Christian Bryant intercepted Cal's Zach Maynard near midfield with a little more than a minute left to go, the win was secured.

That began the talk about the state of the Buckeyes at the quarter pole in their first season under head coach Urban Meyer. Much like the two that preceded it, the victory came with plenty of questions about what this Ohio State squad is about and where it might be headed.

The Buckeyes scored 35 points and gained 412 yards from scrimmage, but they were alarmingly sporadic, doing most of their damage in the first and fourth quarters.

On defense, they recorded another interception and posted six sacks but allowed more yards than any Ohio State defense had in nearly seven years.

There was a lot to like but more to squirm about for Meyer and his assistants.

Meyer left little doubt about that as he addressed reporters after the game, but he also made



KEVIN DYE

**NOT GONNA GET HIM** – Ohio State sophomore wide receiver Devin Smith (15) races down the sidelines en route to a 72-yard touchdown reception in the final minutes of the Buckeyes' 35-28 win over visiting California.

a point to highlight the fact it is always preferable to win a game in which lessons are learned than to let it slip into the loss column.

He also sounded grateful for a message one of his seniors delivered after the game, one that inspired the coaches and players alike.

### Senior's Message Resonates

John Simon sat straight up on the Ohio Stadium turf with a little more than two minutes left in the fourth quarter, his palms turned upwards as he looked back at the game referee. The senior defensive end's pose was easy enough to interpret. He was wondering why the official had not thrown a flag after a Bears offensive lineman took him to the ground as he began to slip into the backfield in pursuit of Maynard.

Simon is not generally one to lose control of his emotions or show up officials, but the moment was a big one as a flag had been dropped downfield after an Ohio State defensive back and Maynard's intended receiver became entangled. The Buckeyes were called for pass interference, giving the Bears a first down at their own 30 instead of facing fourth-and-20 at the 15 or another third-and-20 if the California holding had been called and the penalties offset.

The day had already been a frustrating one for Simon, but few knew exactly to what degree until after the last seconds had ticked off the clock and the players went back to the locker room.

The coaches called some of the game's standouts – Simon included – to the front of the room to have their performance acknowledged, but more than that ensued.

The 6-2, 263-pound veteran gave an impassioned speech that still had Meyer buzzing when he went upstairs to the postgame interview room.

"Boy, he just lost it in the locker room as far as just sharing, opening up his soul for this team," Meyer said. "And I've done this a long time, man, and he's as good – you mark that down there, can you put a jersey up there or something that says John Simon, because that's a grown-ass man. Excuse my language. That's a guy."

Simon had played the game, his 41st as a Buckeye, with a painful shoulder injury that limited him in practice and nearly kept him on the sidelines for the visit from the Bears of the Pac-12.

"I won't say it was news to me because he had a sore shoulder, but the whole week they said, 'He'll be fine, he'll be fine, he'll be fine,'" Meyer said. "But the thing about John, he doesn't say much to you, other than, 'I'll be ready, I'll be ready, my shoulder is far away from my heart.' I say, 'I gotcha, John.'"

"When you say sore – for most human beings they're probably laid up in the Ohio State Medical Center because that's how tough he is – and he almost didn't play this game. And he goes so hard."

The severity of the ailment caught Meyer by surprise, as did the message Simon delivered to his teammates, but Simon predictably downplayed it.

"It was just I was very excited to be out there," Simon said. "For the players to trust that I could go out there and perform my job and the coaches to give me that opportunity, I just told them it meant the world to me."

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## OPINION

## Trying To Make Sense Of Enigmatic Buckeyes



Vol. 32, No. 3

Sept. 22, 2012

www.BuckeyeSports.com

Buckeye Sports Bulletin (USPS 705-690, ISSN 0883-6833) is published 24 times a year (weekly September through November, biweekly mid-March through May and January through early March 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: \$77.95/year.

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## 2012-13 PUBLICATION SCHEDULE (VOL. 32)

No. 1	Sept. 8	No. 13	December
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No. 10	Nov. 17	No. 22	June
No. 11	Nov. 24	No. 23	July
No. 12	Nov. 30	No. 24	August

The next issue (Sept. 29 cover date) will be mailed on Sept. 25.

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

BSB email address is: bsb@buckeyesports.com



Charter Member

Winston Churchill famously once described Russia as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma."

The legendary British statesman might just as well have been talking about the 2012 Ohio State football team.

What are we to make of this enigmatic team after three games?

On one hand, it features one of the most electrifying players in college football. On the other, its defense displays an almost maddening penchant for giving up big plays. Offensively, the team has strung together three consecutive games in which it has gained 400 total yards or more for the first time since 2010. But defensively, the Buckeyes gave up more yards to California than the unit had surrendered to any single opponent since October 2005.

Is Ohio State a good team, a bad team or somewhere in between?

For the answer, let's examine what we've learned these first three weeks.

No one needs to be reminded that Braxton Miller provides the fuel that makes the offense go. The talented sophomore showcased his running ability during the team's first two victories, and then when it was deemed he was running too much, he beat the Golden Bears with his arm.

Unfortunately, Miller remains inconsistent with his throwing, an inconsistency that has nothing whatsoever to do with the young man's talent. Name virtually any throw that defines a great quarterback and Miller can make them. On back-to-back plays vs. Cal, he hit a well-covered Jake Stoneburner in stride with a perfectly executed rainbow for 40 yards and then zipped a 25-yard laser to Devin Smith for a touchdown.

Too often, however, Miller gets sloppy with his technique. He throws some balls flatfooted, which causes the pass to sail high, and he sometimes throws off his front foot, which usually causes the football to nose-dive. There are other times when Miller simply puts too much or too little on his throws as was the case against the Bears when he tried to get a deep ball to a wide-open Corey "Philly" Brown but blew an easy touchdown because the ball was severely underthrown.

There is little doubt Miller needs to become more consistent with his throwing. Likewise, there is little doubt he wasn't getting much coaching in that area until this year. But now he is, which means he's going to get better – something that should scare the living daylights out of opposing defensive coordinators.

Another facet of the Ohio State offensive attack that should keep opponents up at night is the emerging receiving corps. Like Miller, they remain an inconsistent bunch but they exude off-the-charts talent.

Smith is rapidly becoming a human highlight reel although he has to realize he must concentrate on every play. He has made the impossible catch look routine but has also made some routine catches look impossible.

Meanwhile, Brown is a vastly underrated receiver who is just now getting the number of touches a player of his talent should receive. And Stoneburner gives Miller a huge target who is adept at stretching the middle of the field as well as slipping away from the line of scrimmage in short-yardage situations.

As the receiving corps continues to build upon its burgeoning reputation, future opponents will likely not be so generous with its coverage, however. That means the receivers cannot afford to become complacent.

They're good, but they're not *that* good. Not yet.

While the OSU passing game continues to improve, the team's rushing attack is sometimes confounding.

EDITOR'S  
NOTEBOOK  
Mark Rea

Against Miami (Ohio), Central Florida and Cal – teams not generally known as run-stuffers – the Buckeyes have gained 713 yards on the ground. That computes to an average of 237.7 yards per game, and just about any head coach in the nation would gladly take that.

A little closer scrutiny of the rushing attack, however, reveals that Miller has been responsible for more than half of that average. Ohio State tailbacks, once the toast of college football, have combined for 282 yards through three games. What's worse is that OSU tailbacks are working on a streak of six consecutive games without cracking the 100-yard barrier.

Many fans believe Jordan Hall's return will signal a quick end to that streak. Hall made his season debut with 87 yards on 17 carries against the Golden Bears, but the senior tailback still appeared a little tentative after missing all of fall camp and the first two games following foot surgery. Hall averaged 5.1 yards per carry in the game, but his longest gain was a modest 15 yards. He ran several times between the tackles, and there didn't seem to be many large openings for Hall to navigate through. Seven of his carries went for 3 yards or less.

Add in the fact that many of Miller's runs during the first three games have been the quarterback either escaping a collapsing pocket or simply running for his life, and you wonder about the offensive line. Jim Bollman is long gone to Boston College, and this year's unit still doesn't seem to have control of the line of scrimmage.

Perhaps the untrained eye is unable to properly gauge the offensive line's performance. After all, the O-line allowed no sacks against Cal, and that's the first time that has happened since Miller became a starter early last season. And the team leads the Big Ten with a gaudy 40.7-point scoring average.

Still, you get the feeling the offensive line really hasn't been tested yet and wonder how it will respond when that happens.

## Fundamentally Lacking

The Ohio State defense isn't playing very well right now, and that is putting it generously. When is the last time the Buckeyes ranked as low as ninth in the Big Ten in total defense?

Yes, the team totaled six sacks against Cal, the highest total since 2009. But half of those sacks came on blitzes, and most of them were recorded when Bears QB Zach Maynard dropped straight back. Whenever Cal provided a floating pocket for its quarterback, or whenever Maynard rolled out, the pressure simply wasn't there.

In three games, Ohio State opponents have now attempted 132 passes, completing 83 of them (that's 62.9 percent) for 842 yards and four touchdowns. As a result, the Buckeyes rank 11th in the conference and 101st nationally in pass defense.

As bad as that sounds, it pales in comparison to the fact that the defense is get-

ting gashed repeatedly by big plays. That was never more evident than against the Golden Bears, who ripped off six plays that gained 25 yards or more. Chief among those were touchdown runs of 81 and 59 yards by backup tailback Brendan Bigelow. Ohio State had a three-year run between 2008 and 2010 when its defense didn't allow a run longer than 42 yards.

Playing fundamental defense isn't exactly rocket science. It doesn't take a genius to realize taking bad angles to the ball carrier and poor technique once you do get there are often the conspirators that result in huge gains for the opponent.

Injuries have forced Ohio State to play a lot of young players on defense, and young players often forget technique in the heat of battle. But that is not a reason the Buckeyes have given up so many big plays. It is an excuse. The team simply has too much talent on the defensive side of the ball to put up the kind of performances we have seen so far.

Some may deem criticism of the Buckeyes a bit harsh especially in light of the fact they are one of only 31 remaining undefeated Football Bowl Subdivision teams after three weeks. A hypercritical view of where the team is and where most fans thought it would be is likely because Urban Meyer was supposed to walk into Columbus and instantly turn what was a 6-7 team last year into a national championship-caliber squad.

No one wants to hear that it takes a little time to decipher riddles, solve mysteries and explain enigmas. The cold, hard truth is that this is a team still struggling to determine its identity under the tutelage of a new coach not completely familiar or comfortable with his personnel.

Until that identity is determined and a certain comfort zone is reached, fasten your seat belts. The ride's going to be a little bumpy.

## Should He Or Shouldn't He?

Ohio State will commemorate the 10th anniversary of the 2002 national championship team by recognizing the squad Nov. 24 during the OSU-Michigan game. Event organizers have invited all members of the 2002 team to the event, a list that includes former head coach Jim Tressel.

By all accounts, most team members are planning to attend while Tressel has yet to RSVP.

Despite a five-year show cause penalty from the NCAA that ostensibly prevents him from coaching at the college level, Tressel is not banned from attending Ohio State football games. He is now vice president of strategic engagement at the University of Akron, but remember what Tressel said to a group of supporters who gathered at his home in June 2011: "What's that old saying? Buckeye born and bred, a Buckeye 'til I'm dead."

It is likely the coach will show up at a private dinner honoring the 2002 team scheduled the night before the game. But if Tressel decides to attend the gameday activities, what would happen?

My own opinion is that if Tressel is introduced to an Ohio Stadium crowd at halftime of any OSU-Michigan game, the ovation the former coach receives could trigger an earthquake alert from the Ohio Seismic Network. Then again, some fans continue to harbor resentment toward Tressel for the events that led to his ouster and the NCAA sanctions currently in place at Ohio State.

What do you think?



## COVER STORY

# Simon's Speech Stirs Buckeyes

Continued From Page 1

"I try to say things that are important, and if I don't have anything that I feel is very important I probably won't say it. That makes it so when you speak, everyone listens. I didn't mean it to come out like that probably so much, but in the spur of the moment with all of the emotion that went into that game, I just wanted to tell them how I felt."

Simon was credited with only one tackle – a third-quarter sack on a third down that brought an end to a Bear drive – but he had a major impact on the contest.

He also pressured the California quarterback a couple of times, and his presence on the field drew extra attention that helped give teammates more favorable matchups throughout the afternoon.

They appreciated that, and they were happy to hear from him after the contest.

"It's great to see our leader be emotional," said fellow senior and defensive end Nathan Williams. "He played his butt off today. We all saw it. We're going to have to watch film and see what we can correct."

"I just saw a great leader giving us his heart and letting us know that he's always going to be there for us, which is the same

as everybody that plays. We've got to count on each other throughout this whole entire season. Every snap that goes by, we all have to stick together. We know that John is going to be that guy that's first in line no matter what, no matter what condition he's in."

The message particularly hit home for Williams, who missed 12 games last season and one already this season because of knee surgery.

"Absolutely. Missing all of last year and then missing last week, it's heartbreaking at times," Williams said. "You just have to be resilient and know that God's with you. You've got to take your chance every day."

Williams had a pair of tackles and provided pressure at times, but the defensive line's biggest standout – literally and figuratively – was Johnathan Hankins. The 6-3, 322-pound junior was credited with 10 tackles, including a sack when he beat a single blocker inside in the fourth quarter as Simon worked on the edge.

Hankins is one of seven non-seniors who started for the Buckeyes on defense against the Bears. While they can look forward to playing for a national championship before their Ohio State careers are over, Simon and Williams cannot.



JOSH WINSLOW

**ALMOST THERE** – Ohio State senior John Simon (54) recorded only one tackle – and narrowly missed sacking Cal quarterback Zach Maynard (15) here – vs. Cal, but the talk after the game centered around the senior co-captain's passionate postgame speech.

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## COVER STORY

That knowledge helped drive home Simon's message even more for younger players such as cornerback Bradley Roby, who had nine tackles and broke up a pair of passes.

"It just shows that football is a team sport, and when you have one of your teammates putting his all out there on the field for you, it makes you say, 'Why wouldn't I be doing that?'" said Roby, who played through his own shoulder injury late in the game. "He just let us know how much this team means to him."

"I wasn't surprised at all. That's the type of person he is. He's a high character guy. He'd do anything for us. We saw the real him come out. It was just a crazy moment."

Bryant, a junior in his second season as a starter, agreed with that sentiment.

"Like Coach Meyer said, he opened his heart and he poured it out to us," said Bryant. "John Simon is the heart and soul of the defense right now. He's a senior. He knows what type of year it should be, that we can't compete for a bowl game or anything, so he just strives to go in each and every week and play his heart out for us. He gives us everything he has each and every week. In practice each and every day, he's one of those guys that never stops."

Meyer's affection for Simon has been well known since at least January. He turned some heads when he compared the defensive lineman's attitude, demeanor and character to those of Tim Tebow, a Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback for Meyer at Florida, but the coach might have gone even a step further after Simon's locker room speech.

"If we have another child I want to name him after him," Meyer said. "What is it, Urban John Simon Meyer or something like that?"

That statement was met with laughter, and Meyer couldn't help but smile.

"I can't wait for that headline, but that's how much I love that guy," Meyer said. "I'm not ashamed to say I love him. Love that guy. Man."

#### Work Yet To Do

The Buckeyes have had to be opportunistic because they have not executed at a high level on a consistent basis so far this season.

That goes for both sides of the ball.

The offense has put up big points and big yards in all three games of the campaign, but it has suffered through lapses of ineffectiveness in every one.



JOSH WINSLOW

**IMPROVEMENT NEEDED – Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer is happy his team is 3-0 but knows there are still several facets of the game in which the Buckeyes can improve.**

The Buckeyes staggered through the start of their 56-10 season-opening win against Miami (Ohio) before erupting for 297 yards and 21 points in the second quarter. They finished with 538 yards on the day despite only 48 in the first 15 minutes.

A week later, they jumped on Central Florida 31-10 before trailing off in the final stanza and winning 31-16.

California yielded 157 yards and 13 points in the first quarter then 102 in the next two.

Needing to rally from a 21-20 deficit in the fourth quarter, the Buckeyes put together an 11-play, 75-yard touchdown to go ahead 28-21. They answered California's tying score with another 75-yard drive, but this one was only three plays. Smith's touchdown grab came after an incomplete pass and a 3-yard run by Jordan Hall.

"I think the one thing we did learn today was that when it comes down to it we might need a kick in the butt but when we get that we can get going," center Corey Linsley said. "If we take how we were the last two drives and just figure out how to emotionally get ourselves into every drive like that then I think we're going to be one heck of an offense."

The Buckeye defense forced a pair of three-and-outs and a four-and-out and turned the Bears over on downs twice in Ohio State territory, but missed tackles and blown assignments plagued the home team.

California piled up 512 yards – the most Ohio State has allowed since giving up 578 at Minnesota in 2005 – and repeatedly ripped off large chunks of real estate.

The Bears scored on plays of 1, 19, 81 and 59 yards. A 15-yard screen pass got them going on the drive that ended with the shortest scoring play. That drive was also kept alive by a penalty on freshman defensive lineman Adolphus Washington, who lined up in the neutral zone on a third-down play that saw Cal wide receiver Chris Harper brought down well short of the line to gain on third-and-8. The Bears converted the third-and-3 as a result and scored on a Maynard quarterback sneak three plays later.

"We've got to do a much better job," defensive coordinator Luke Fickell said. "We know that. That's where it starts. It all comes down to big plays. We've lost leverage on the football and when that happens you've got to give them some credit. They made some plays. The last run is inexcusable. We've got to clear that up."

Fickell, a four-year starter at nose tackle for Ohio State in the mid-1990s and in his 11th year on the coaching staff at his alma mater, also admired Simon's speech.

"He's a great leader," Fickell said. "He's a great kid. What he is is what it is to be a Buckeye. For a lot of young guys, for a lot of new coaches and even old coaches, it was something special to see what it means to him."

Meyer hopes the moment can have a lasting effect as the Buckeyes take one last shot at improving on the field before starting Big Ten conference play.

Ohio State plays host to UAB on Sept. 22 then goes to Michigan State a week later.

"(Simon) makes all of us look in the mirror and say, 'Are we doing enough for our team?'" Meyer said. "That guy, what he just did in there, not to give you too much of what went on in there, but am I doing enough? When I say I, as our coaching staff, are we doing enough? Are we doing as much as he's doing? No. We've got to do more. Got to do more. Got to get you fired up."

"And that's what this great game teaches you. With that said, I have great respect for the team we just played and the coach (Jeff Tedford) I know and respect. The best thing about 3-0 is a chance to go 4-0 and get better."

## Ohio State Fans!

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## OHIO STATE VS. CALIFORNIA

## Ohio State Barely Avoids Grisly Result

By MARK REA

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Managing Editor

What had been a game featuring all the consistency of a sloppy joe sandwich transformed into an old-fashioned barn burner in the fourth quarter before 12th-ranked Ohio State pulled out a 35-28 victory over upset-minded California on Sept. 15 in front of 105,232 sun-drenched fans at Ohio Stadium.

The Golden Bears turned a 20-7 halftime deficit into a 21-20 lead at the 12:26 mark of the fourth quarter, triggering a wild back-and-forth finish that wasn't cemented until OSU junior safety Christian Bryant grabbed his first career interception with 1:09 remaining.

The Buckeyes moved to 3-0 for the first time since the vacated season of 2010 and only the second time in the past five seasons, but the undefeated record seemed of little consequence to a frustrated Urban Meyer.

"The best thing about 3-0 is the chance to go 4-0 – and that's about it," the first-year Ohio State head coach said. "We've enjoyed a win over a very quality opponent ... and our guys found a way. I have been in games before where I thought we were going to lose, where I just kept waiting (but) I thought someone would make a play (today). I really did."

But while Meyer lauded his team's ability to make game-altering plays, he lamented some poor tackling by his defense and was downright critical of several major penalties among the 11 infractions for 101 yards committed by the Buckeyes.

"Stupid penalties," the coach said matter-of-factly. "We had some personal fouls, 15-yard penalties. We'd better get that cleaned up or we're going to lose a game. Once again, I don't have a magic answer for you. Are we going to do 10 pushups after we commit a penalty? I don't know. We'll get better, though. I promise you we're going to get better."

The Buckeyes perhaps need the most improvement on defense after Cal accounted for 512 total yards, the most by an OSU opponent since Minnesota had 578 during a 45-31 loss to the Buckeyes in the Metrodome in Minneapolis in October 2005. A lot of those yards came in chunks as the Bears enjoyed six different plays in the game that gained 25 yards or more.

Two of those big plays were turned in by sophomore tailback Brendan Bigelow, who carried only four times but finished with 160 yards and touchdown runs of 81 and 59 yards. Backfield mate Isi Sofele, a senior tailback, added 86 yards on a game-high 21 carries as Cal rushed for 224 yards.

Meanwhile, senior quarterback Zach Maynard distributed the ball to eight different receivers on his way to completing



JOSH WINSLOW

**THAT'LL DO IT – A late fourth-quarter interception by Ohio State junior safety Christian Bryant (2), the first of his career, helped the Buckeyes ice a 35-28 win over Cal, much to the chagrin of Bears center Brian Schwenke (57).**

26 of 37 attempts for 280 yards and one score.

Sophomore quarterback Braxton Miller was once again the main cog in the Ohio State offense, having a hand in all five of his team's touchdowns. Miller completed 16 of 30 passes for a career-best 249 yards and four touchdowns, and he added 75 yards and one TD on 12 rushes.

Miller's classmate, sophomore wideout Devin Smith had a breakout game, grabbing five passes for a career-high 145 yards and two touchdowns. Senior receiver Jake Stoneburner added three catches for 44 yards and two scores.

OSU didn't exactly stay in first gear offensively, topping the 400-yard mark for the third straight game. The Buckeyes wound up with 412 total yards, including 163 on the ground. The rushing attack was led by senior tailback Jordan Hall, who was making his 2012 season debut. Hall, who missed the first two games after offseason foot surgery, picked up a team-high 87 yards on 17 carries.

Despite giving up so many yards, the Ohio State defense recorded a season-high six sacks. Sophomore linebacker Ryan Shazier led the charge with a game-high

13 tackles while junior tackle Johnathan Hankins added a career-high 10. Both players also had a sack.

Junior safety C.J. Barnett joined the tackle parade with 10 while sophomore cornerback Bradley Roby recorded a career-best nine stops, one of which was his first sack as a Buckeye. A trio of seniors – linebacker Etienne Sabino, nose tackle Garrett Goebel and lineman John Simon – also had sacks.

Bryant had five tackles and two pass breakups to go with his interception.

#### Lead Early, Then Hang On

Neither team got much out of its first two possessions although Cal won the early field-position battle. Ohio State's second possession started at its own 4 and gained only 8 yards before senior Ben Buchanan was called upon to punt.

The kick traveled only 38 yards to mid-field, and an illegal formation penalty called against the Buckeyes allowed the Bears to set up at the OSU 45. But Cal wasted the opportunity and turned the ball over on downs when Maynard misfired on a fourth-and-4 play.

That's when Miller struck and struck quickly. On the third play of the ensuing possession, the QB turned a simple read-option play into an electrifying score.

Miller faked a handoff to junior receiver Corey "Philly" Brown, got a seal block on the outside from senior fullback Zach Boren and then did the rest himself. He faked Bears safety Alex Logan nearly out of his shoes near the line of scrimmage, broke toward the home sideline and outraced linebacker Nick Forbes and safety Josh Hill – who seemingly had the angle on Miller – to the end zone.

The 55-yard sprint made it 6-0 Buckeyes with 5:11 remaining in the first quarter, and it stayed that way after OSU junior kicker Drew Basil pushed his PAT try outside the right upright.

Cal, which had gained only 25 yards the first two times it had the ball, answered on its next possession with a six-play, 75-yard drive that included three big gainers. Sofele broke off a 26-yard run on the first play followed two plays later by an 18-yard completion between Maynard and wide receiver Keenan Allen. Allen had a game-best nine receptions for 80 yards.

That pushed the ball to the Ohio State 26, and three plays after that, Maynard found freshman wideout Chris Harper on a throw-back bubble screen for a 19-yard touchdown. Junior kicker Vincenzo D'Amato came on to add the extra point, and the Bears had a 7-6 lead at the 2:38 mark of the opening period.

That advantage didn't last long, however, as Miller brought the Buckeyes right back with a 75-yard scoring march of their own that took only four plays and 71 seconds.

The sophomore QB connected with Smith for a 9-yard gain and then squeezed out a first down with a 1-yard keeper. On the following play, Miller dropped a beautiful pass into Stoneburner's hands for a 40-yard gain down the middle of the field. Then the OSU quarterback rifled a tight spiral that Smith snatched out of the air and away from Cal junior cornerback Steve Williams for a 25-yard touchdown.

This time, Basil converted the PAT to give Ohio State a 13-7 lead with 1:27 remaining in the first quarter.

Another Miller-to-Smith connection set up the Buckeyes' next touchdown. On a third-and-10 play at the Cal 45, Smith beat Williams' coverage again and Miller hit his receiver in stride for a 35-yard pickup. Two plays later, Miller flipped a 1-yard touchdown pass to Stoneburner, and after Basil added the extra point, Ohio State looked to be firmly in control at 20-7 with 13:30 to go in the second quarter.

But the remainder of the first half was extremely sloppy on the part of both teams, so much so that one California possession saw the teams combine for eight penalties – five personal fouls, two holds and an illegal block. The start-and-stop drive covered only 37 yards in 10 plays and ate up nearly five minutes, but it came to nothing when D'Amato yanked his 40-yard field-goal attempt wide to the left.

Ohio State took its 20-7 lead into the locker room at halftime, and the game remained that way until Cal struck early in the third quarter. Bigelow eluded OSU defensive end Nathan Williams, spun out of the grasp of safety Orhian Johnson and somehow maintained his balance after a hit from Shazier before outrunning everyone down the east sideline for an 81-yard touchdown.

The play, which represented the longest TD run from scrimmage by an opponent in Ohio Stadium history, was followed by an extra point from D'Amato and pulled the Bears within six at 20-14 with 9:34 left in the third quarter.

Cal had a chance to draw closer late in the third quarter. After forcing the Buckeyes to go three-and-out on successive possessions, the Bears managed to drive as far as the OSU 25. But Maynard threw incomplete on second and third downs, and D'Amato pulled another field-goal try to the left, this one from 42 yards out.

But the California defense forced a third straight three-and-out and took advantage of a personal foul penalty on the Ohio State punt that gave the Bears a short field. Setting up at the OSU 46, Maynard led his team

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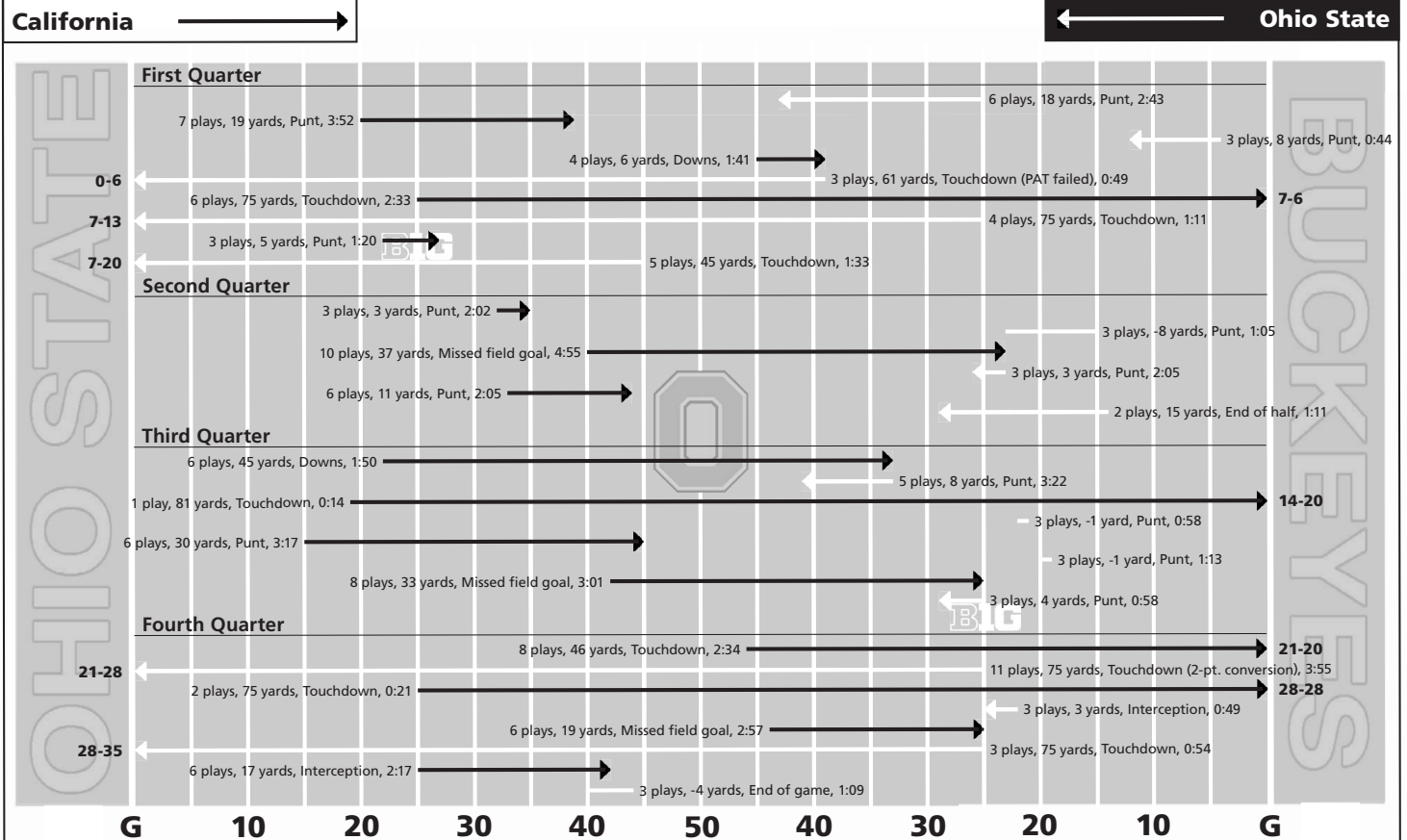
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## OHIO STATE VS. CALIFORNIA

## Drive Chart



to the end zone in a little more than 2½ minutes, scoring himself on a 1-yard quarterback sneak.

D'Amato followed with the PAT to give Cal a 21-20 lead with 12:26 remaining in the game, triggering a wild fourth-quarter finish.

Miller answered on the Buckeyes' next drive, moving his team 75 yards in 11 plays. The big plays during the drive were a 21-yard pass to Brown and a 10-yard completion to sophomore Evan Spencer that the receiver stabbed out of the air as he was falling to the ground.

That pushed Ohio State to the Cal 5, and three plays later, Meyer tore a page from his Florida playbook. Miller took a shotgun snap and made one short stutter-step forward before straightening up and flipping a 3-yard pass to a wide-open Stoneburner in the end zone. It was reminiscent of a jump pass thrown by former Florida quarterback Tim Tebow in the Gators' 2006 national championship game win over the Buckeyes.

Stoneburner's touchdown made it 26-21, and then Miller took care of the two-point conversion himself, cutting inside on a quarterback sweep to give the Buckeyes a 28-21 lead with 8:31 to go in the game.

But that lead was extremely short-lived. After a touchback on the ensuing kickoff, Bigelow broke off a 16-yard run on first down and followed with a 59-yard bolt to the end zone. The two-play possession covered 75 yards and took exactly 21 seconds, and after the PAT, the score was knotted at 28 with 8:10 remaining.

California had the next scoring opportunity after Miller pitched his first interception of the year. On third-and-7, he threw a deep ball

across the field, but Williams got between a pair of Ohio State receivers and made the pick at the OSU 44 with 7:17 to go.

But the Bears got only to the OSU 25 where Cal head coach Jeff Tedford decided to go for a 42-yard field goal on fourth-and-1. Unfortunately for him, D'Amato missed again wide to the left to leave the game tied at the 4:20 mark.

"It's a tight football game, so we were looking to go ahead," Tedford later explained. "The defense had been playing great in the second half. At that point in the game, you're there to go ahead."

The Buckeyes took over on downs at their own 25 and managed to gain only 3 yards on the next two plays combined. But on third-and-7, Smith took full advantage of a coverage breakdown in the Cal secondary. Senior cornerback Marc Anthony let Smith go just past the line of scrimmage, believing Logan would pick up coverage from his safety position. Instead, Logan moved toward another potential target, allowing Smith to get loose down the sideline.

Miller heaved a rainbow to his sophomore receiver that Smith gathered in about the Cal 45, and then he galloped his way into the end zone with a 72-yard touchdown reception. Basil's PAT pushed the Buckeyes back into the driver's seat at 35-28 with 3:26 remaining.

The game was far from over, though.

The Bears went right back to work on their ensuing possession and moved out to their own 42 with a first down at the 1:37 mark. But then Maynard got too greedy, overthrowing his intended target and allowing Bryant to make the game-clinching interception at the OSU 37.

## The Bottom Line

**The game was over when ...** Christian Bryant intercepted a pass from Cal quarterback Zach Maynard at the Ohio State 37. By the time Bryant had finished returning his first career pick into Cal territory, there was only 1:09 remaining in the game and the Buckeyes had averted disaster.

**Game ball goes to ...** Braxton Miller. In addition to another 75 yards rushing, a total that included a nifty 55-yard touchdown burst, Miller continued his maturation as a passer by completing 16 of 30 attempts for 249 yards and four touchdowns. The attempts, yardage and touchdown totals each represented new career highs.

**Stat of the game ...** 512. Ohio State was gashed by the Cal offense for 512 total yards, the most by any opponent since 2005. The Buckeyes are now surrendering an average of 395.0 total yards per game; they allowed only 323.5 during last year's 6-7 campaign.

— Mark Rea

Bryant returned the pick 38 yards to the California 25, and even though the Buckeyes were whistled for another personal foul penalty on the play, the turnover stood and the Ohio State offense took three consecutive kneel-downs to kill the rest of the clock.

## Game Notes

- Ohio State and California were meeting for the first time since a 35-18 victory by the Buckeyes in Berkeley in 1972. The Golden Bears hadn't played in Ohio Stadium since a 35-3 loss in 1971.

- OSU now holds a 6-1 advantage in the series with the Bears' lone victory coming in the 1921 Rose Bowl. That marked the

Buckeyes' first-ever trip to Pasadena, and they came home 28-0 losers.

- Ohio State is off to a 3-0 start for only the second time since 2007. The only time during the past four seasons when the Buckeyes started a season with three straight victories was 2010. They won their first six in a row that year before a 31-18 loss at Wisconsin in week seven.

- Meyer became only the sixth Ohio State head coach ever to win his first three games with the Buckeyes. The others are Perry Hale (1902), E.R. Sweetland (1904), Howard Jones (1910), Carroll Widdoes (1944) and Earle Bruce (1979).

Continued On Page 12



## OHIO STATE VS. CALIFORNIA

# Bigelow Makes History With 81-Yard Score

Continued From Page 11

• Tedford lost to a Big Ten team for the first time in his career. The Cal head coach had previously been 6-0 against current members of the conference, including two victories each against Michigan State, Minnesota and Illinois.

• Meyer is now 2-0 lifetime against Cal and 4-0 for his career against current members of the Pac-12. His Utah team defeated Tedford's Bears by a 31-24 final in the third game of the 2003 season. Meyer claimed his other two wins over Pac-12 schools during his tenure with the Utes – a 17-13 decision over Oregon in 2003 and a 23-6 victory at Arizona in 2004.

• The Buckeyes are now 57-26-2 all-time against current members of the Pac-12. In addition to being 6-1 against the Bears, Ohio State is 9-13-1 vs. USC; 8-0 against Oregon and Washington State; 8-3 vs. Washington; 4-1 against Colorado; 4-4-1 against UCLA; 3-1 against Arizona; 2-0 vs. Arizona State and Oregon State; 1-0 against Utah; and 2-3 vs. Stanford.

• California fell to 22-35 all-time against current members of the Big Ten. In addition to their 1-6 mark against OSU, the Bears are 5-1 against Wisconsin; 4-2 vs. Minnesota; 3-7 vs. Illinois; 2-0 against Indiana; 2-2 vs. Michigan State; 2-6 against Michigan; 1-1 vs. Purdue; 1-3 against Iowa and Penn State; 0-1 vs. Northwestern; and 0-3 against Nebraska.

• Cal dropped to 13-21 against ranked opponents during the Tedford era, a record that now includes seven straight

losses. The team's most recent victory over a ranked team was a 34-28 decision over No. 14 Stanford in November 2009. The Bears haven't beaten a ranked non-conference opponent since a 45-31 win over No. 15 Tennessee in the 2007 season opener.

• Miller rushed for 75 yards against the Bears, moving his career total to 1,092. That allowed him to crack the top 50 on Ohio State's all-time rushing list. He needs 77 more to move past Troy Smith (1,168, 2003-06) and into 49th place.

• Miller's four touchdown passes represented a career high and were just one shy of the OSU single-game record of five. John Borton established that mark during a 35-7 win over Washington State in 1952, and Bobby Hoying equaled it twice. Hoying tossed five TD passes during a 48-14 victory over Purdue in 1994 and matched that total at Pittsburgh in 1995 during the Buckeyes' 54-14 win.

• Ohio State's defense surrendered 500 or more yards to an opponent for only the seventh time in the past 29 seasons. The previous six were Illinois (509 in 1984), Alabama (521 in the 1994 Citrus Bowl), Cincinnati (525 in 1999), Penn State (531 in 2001), Penn State (572 in 1994) and Minnesota (578 in 2005).

• Bigelow's 81-yard touchdown wiped out the record for longest run by an OSU opponent in Ohio Stadium. That was an 80-yard TD run by Daniel Dufrene of Illinois during the Fighting Illini's 28-21 upset win over the Buckeyes in 2007.

• OSU has given up only two runs



JOSH WINSLOW

**UP AND OVER** – Ohio State sophomore linebacker Ryan Shazier (right) levied a big hit on Cal quarterback Zach Maynard (15), but the Golden Bears finished with 512 yards of total offense.

longer than Bigelow's during program history. Larry Ferguson of Iowa ran 91 yards during a 35-12 win by the Hawkeyes in Iowa City in 1960, and Levi Jackson of Michigan State broke off an 88-yarder during a 16-13 Spartans win in East Lansing in 1974.

• The Golden Bears have no native-born Ohioans on their roster, but they do have a

couple of connections to Ohio professional teams. Freshman QB Joey Mahalic spent five seasons as a pitcher in the Cleveland Indians organization before returning to football this year, and wide receivers coach Wes Chandler was an assistant on Romeo Crennel's Cleveland Browns staff in 2007 and '08.

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## OHIO STATE VS. CALIFORNIA

# Miller Once Again Leads Buckeyes In Victory

Tom Herman spent a generous portion of his week designing a scheme to take as much pressure off Braxton Miller as possible. When the dust settled from Ohio State's 35-28 win over California on Sept. 15, it was clear that Miller didn't need the help.

The sophomore quarterback accounted for all five of the Buckeyes' touchdowns – four of which came through the air – and lifted Ohio State from a near-upset in Ohio Stadium when he found sophomore wide receiver Devin Smith on a 72-yard touchdown pass with 3:26 remaining in the game.

## INSIDE THE OFFENSE

Ari Wasserman

"It's my job as a coordinator and play caller to get us into some manageable plays and manageable down and distances and keep some of the pressure off of him," said Herman, the Buckeyes' offensive coordinator. "But (Miller) had a career day. He really stepped up to the plate when some of those drives really mattered for us."

Ohio State was left looking for answers all week as it tried to identify playmakers in the backfield when Carlos Hyde was ruled out with a sprained knee.

Finding a replacement for Hyde became increasingly important to the Buckeyes staff because the coaches have been concerned with how many times Miller has carried the football after he had 27 rushing attempts in the previous week's win over Central Florida.

Luckily for the Buckeyes, senior running back Jordan Hall returned from offseason foot surgery to reclaim his starting spot at tailback. The senior certainly helped Ohio State's cause by pitching in for 17 carries and 87 rushing yards.

Still, the game was about Miller.

That was clearest when the quarterback scrambled out of the pocket on the crucial third-and-7 play in a tie game with less than four minutes remaining.

California's defense, trained to track Miller's every move, allowed Smith to find daylight behind its secondary when safety Alex Logan moved out of his zone after spotting Miller running toward the line of scrimmage. Miller kept his eyes downfield and found the wide-open Smith, putting an exclamation point on yet another impressive statistical output.

"You see somebody wide open like that, you at least have to put some air under it so they can run under it and get position," said Miller, who was 16 of 30 passing for a career-high 249 yards and an interception. "You have to be careful with those types of throws."

In the first quarter when he broke the pocket, put a quick key move on Logan and burst down the Buckeyes' sideline for a 55-yard touchdown run, all indications were that Miller's performance was going to be a repeat of the previous week's.

Miller, though, accounted for only 20 more net rushing yards during the game – finishing with 75 total yards on the ground – and carried the ball only 12 times. Instead, he was most devastating to the Bears defense using his arm.

That had to please Urban Meyer, who has commented relentlessly about the team's need to improve in the passing game. Miller

put his coach at ease for at least another week, finding both Smith and senior Jake Stoneburner for two touchdown strikes.

But as Cal demonstrated for much of the game, the continued trend in defending Ohio State will be taking Miller out of the run game. That puts much more emphasis on Miller's ability to continue to post similar outputs through the air as the season progresses.

"What is going to happen is we're going to have to (be able to) throw the ball, become efficient throwing," Meyer said. "We've gotten better. You can take a look at the evolution in the past, what's it been 12 months, or 24 months, whatever it's been."

"Since Braxton became our quarterback, he's much better. But we've got a long way to go. It's kind of turning into that kind of a world for us right now that there's a lot of players, people and numbers committed to stopping the run."

Perhaps that's the reason Miller was able to get the passing attack going after Cal responded to his touchdown run with a touchdown of its own to take a 7-6 lead with 2:38 remaining in the first quarter.

Miller had the Buckeyes back in the end zone a little more than a minute later when he found Smith on the first of the two touchdown connections, this one coming from 25 yards out. That score was set up by a 9-yard connection to Smith and a 40-yard pass to Stoneburner on a seam route down the middle of the Cal defense.

Ohio State's next drive culminated in Stoneburner's first touchdown of the game, a 1-yard reception for the score. The Buckeyes found their positioning deep in the Cal red zone after Miller recognized Smith had one-on-one coverage on a fly route and hit the receiver over the top for a 35-yard gain.

"The good thing is we are developing some receivers," said Meyer, who has expressed apprehension about the position group since the day he took the job.

After taking a 20-7 lead into the locker room at halftime, Ohio State's offense sputtered the entire third quarter, allowing the Bears to claw their way back into the game. The Buckeyes didn't score any points during the quarter, which was in large part because the team couldn't sustain a rushing attack.

Though Hall's return happened right in time to fill in for the injured Hyde, the senior admitted to being rusty in his first action back. Hall had a productive game, but both he and Meyer noticed that some yardage was left on the field.

"It was my first time basically having contact since the spring," Hall said. "I feel like I am fully healthy and my foot is fine, but I was a little rusty. I just need more time going against our first-team defense in practice to get back into the flow."

Hall accounted for Ohio State's biggest play in the third quarter – an 11-yard rush for a first down on the team's first possession of the frame – but the Buckeyes couldn't get into an offensive flow on the ground. That run for Hall was OSU's only first down in the third quarter, as the team went three-and-out on its final three possessions of the period.

Herman said Ohio State ran into trouble out of the gates in the second half because Cal varied its look on the defensive front. After using a scheme that used only two down linemen for large parts of the first half, California reverted to its "bear" defense in the second half, which sported three defensive linemen including one lined up over the



KEVIN DYE

**LEADING OSU – Ohio State sophomore quarterback Braxton Miller (5) had a hand in all five of his team's touchdowns, throwing for four and running for another. He also rushed for a two-point conversion in the fourth quarter.**

center. It also routinely rotated in sets that had four down linemen.

"The entire third quarter is what I was most disappointed with," Herman said. "I have to point the finger at myself and go back to work and figure out where we went wrong and see how I can do a better job. When we're good, we're pretty dang good, but we're not good consistently enough yet."

While Ohio State's offense was sputtering in the third quarter, Cal added another touchdown to its score and entered the fourth quarter down by only six. The Bears then became a real upset threat early in the final quarter when quarterback Zach Maynard scored on a 1-yard sneak to give his team a one-point advantage with 12:26 remaining in the contest.

At that point, it was now or never for Miller if he wanted to lead his team to its third victory in as many games, and Miller chose now.

Ohio State responded to Maynard's score with a sharp 11-play, 75-yard touchdown drive to regain the lead. Hall started the drive with a 15-yard run on an option pitch before Miller hit Corey "Philly" Brown on a 21-yard gain to get into Cal territory.

The drive kept moving until the Buckeyes faced a third-and-goal from the Bears' 3. Miller took a snap, faked a quarterback dive and then threw a quick pass to a wide-open Stoneburner in the back of the end zone. Though Miller didn't jump on the play, it was evocative of the jump pass touchdowns Tim Tebow threw a few times under Meyer in 2006 including one in the national title game against Ohio State.

"It was a jump pass," Meyer said. "They had the world to stop Braxton. And they came up – really good execution by Jake Stoneburner, blocking and releasing in the back of the end zone. If you're pounding the quarterback, that's a hard one to stop."

Added Stoneburner: "We've been working on that play since Coach Meyer got here, and he said he was going to use it this week. It's obviously a great play and it came at the perfect time."

After diving into the end zone on the two-point conversion attempt to give the Buckeyes the 28-21 advantage, Miller probably thought he was done. Cal, however, responded quickly when tailback Brendan Bigelow scored his second touchdown run of the game, this one coming from 59 yards out to tie it.

With California possessing all the momentum, Miller took the field again and made an error that could have cost the Buckeyes the game when he threw an interception to Cal's Steve Williams at the OSU 44 with 7:17 remaining.

Looking for the game-winning points, Cal instead missed a field goal on that possession, and it set up Miller's final strike to Smith, the game winner.

"I love coaching Braxton," Meyer said. "There's not a whole lot of panic with him. The one (thing is), we take care of the ball. He forced a play on that interception. That's not like him. We can't do that. He's fine. It's just maturation as a quarterback. And it's happening right in front of Ohio State's eyes."

## Hall Carries Load

Early in the week, Meyer wasn't sure if Hall would be physically ready to play against the Bears. With the uncertainty of Hall's status and Hyde out, the head coach stressed the importance of getting Bri'onte Dunn and Rod Smith ready for game action.

However, neither ended up playing a snap of offensive football once Hall was cleared for action.

That happened for a combination of reasons, Meyer said. The head coach wanted to get Hall on the field as much as possible and also wasn't quite satisfied with the readiness of Dunn or Smith.

"They're just young and still learning the game," Meyer said. "When that game got tight you want your (go-to) dudes in there, your guys. And to say Rod Smith and Bri'onte Dunn, I don't have faith in them, that's too harsh, because I do. One common denominator about most of those guys, they're still young and green. We have to get them ungreen here real quick because we need them."

Hall carried the ball a little more than most would have anticipated in his first game back, as his 17 carries came as he played basically the entire game. Meyer could have given the senior a break at various points in the game, but he admitted he had more confidence in the older back to make a big play over youngsters like the freshman Dunn and Smith, a sophomore.

"Obviously they're not in there," Meyer said of youthful running backs. "We have more confidence in the other guys."



## OHIO STATE VS. CALIFORNIA

# Buckeye Game Analysis

## Play Of The Game

Braxton Miller's game-winning touchdown pass to Devin Smith with 3:26 to play might have been the more impactful play, but the more important play, long-term, might have come just a few minutes later.

The Ohio State football secondary has talked about how some of the big plays hit against it this year have been a result of poor communication between players, but the game-clinching interception by Christian Bryant with 1:09 to go was the byproduct of two players being on the same page.

Needing a touchdown and having reached their own 42-yard line with a first down after a pass interference penalty, the Golden Bears lined up in the shotgun with two receivers to either side of the formation. On the left side of the field, Cal put tight end Jacob Wark on the outside with the team's best receiver, Keenan Allen, in the slot.

That formation signaled to Ohio State what was about to happen. Cornerback Bradley Roby was the first to notice and got the attention of Bryant.

"I actually told Christian right before the play, I was like, 'Christian, watch the bender,' " he said, referring to the skinny post Allen might run. "That's like their go-to route to Keenan Allen. I said, 'Christian, they're about to throw this bender.' He just believed it. He played where he was supposed to play, the quarterback threw it high like he normally does and he was right there for the pick. It was teamwork."

That's exactly what happened, but there was one other element to the play that helped put Bryant in position to make the play. Ryan Shazier was running nearly step for step with Allen as the wideout – a potential high NFL draft pick – went through his zone, and the linebacker's presence forced quarterback Zach Maynard to try to fit the ball into a small window.

"Ryan Shazier got a great reroute on him," Bryant said. "He sank underneath of him and forced the quarterback to throw deep."

Bryant was able to haul in his first career interception at the OSU 37-yard line, and by the time he was tackled at the Cal 25, the Buckeye victory was assured even though true freshman lineman Adolphus Washington was charged with a personal foul penalty on the return.

"My teammates were just jumping all over me," Bryant said of the post-play celebration. "It's a great feeling to have as a whole defense, just playing hard and coming out with the victory as a team."

## Hidden Play Of The Game

Cal had a touchdown taken off the board in the second quarter, and had that TD counted, perhaps the result of the game would have been a bit different.

Ohio State held a 20-7 lead near the midway point of the second quarter when Cal faced a third-and-7 at the OSU 47-yard line. The Buckeyes sent a blitz on the play, rushing five, and it looked like they would pay for it when running back C.J. Anderson slipped out of the backfield, made a one-handed catch of a pass from Maynard and was off to the races.

Anderson had plenty of green in front of him after linebacker Etienne Sabino slipped and Roby's momentum took him out of the play. The Cal tailback ran diagonally left to right up the field, went outside the block of tight end Wark near the 20-yard line and coasted into the end zone.

The only issue was a flag on the field. The referees determined Wark held safety C.J. Barnett as the Buckeye tried to shake free to chase down Anderson, pushing the ball back to the OSU 29-yard line and taking the TD off the board.

Afterward, Cal head coach Jeff Tedford wasn't pleased with the call.

"They said as the guy tried to get away that he was holding him," Tedford said. "I thought Jake was doing a great job of running his feet. Typically, holding is called when guys don't run their feet and guys try to get off and they grab them and yank him. He kept his feet running, but it was a call that was made."

The Golden Bears got as far as the OSU 10, but penalties pushed the team back and kicker Vincenzo D'Amato eventually missed a 40-yard field goal.



JOSH WINSLOW

**UNDER PRESSURE** – Cal quarterback Zach Maynard (right) threw for 280 yards but was sacked six times, including once by Ohio State junior defensive lineman Johnathan Hankins (left).

## What Worked Well

- **Challenging Devin Smith:** The Ohio State sophomore wideout said before the game the coaching staff had gotten in his ear during the week, and their message was simple: Cal's propensity for playing man coverage without deep safety help was a challenge to his manhood. It's fair to say Smith responded, catching two long touchdown passes and setting up another score with a long snag on the way to a 145-yard day. Smith won a fair number of one-on-one battles with Cal cornerback Steve Williams.

- **Staying fresh:** Cal had the time of possession edge in every quarter, finishing with a 10-minute advantage. It also felt like the Golden Bears had the ball for the entire third quarter as the Buckeyes had a string of three-and-outs. It didn't matter, though, as Ohio State's defenders were able to stay fresh enough to make a pair of crucial stops in the fourth quarter. Afterward, the players credited the new offseason training regimen for their ability to be ready to play at the end.

## What Didn't Work

- **Eliminating big plays:** Over the past two seasons, Ohio State's usually stout run defense has given up far too many long runs. For example, the Buckeyes didn't give up a run longer than 42 yards from 2008-10, but Cal had TD jaunts of 81 and 59 yards on the day. The culprits when that happens aren't all that surprising – the back seven players take bad angles or make poor tackling attempts, allowing teams to go the distance. For a while, it looked like youth was to blame, but the Buckeyes are getting more and more experience among the linebackers and safeties, so it's frustrating to see it continuing to happen.

- **Maintaining offensive intensity:** After the game, Miller said a few times that Ohio State just didn't have any jump coming out of the locker room for the second half. After piling up 20 points in the first half on three impressive drives, the Buckeyes had only one first down in the third quarter, and Miller said the team might have been satisfied with its early performance. That kind of complacency nearly sank the team.

## Reviewing The Matchups

**Ohio State rush offense vs. Cal rush defense:** After some record-setting performances in the first two games of the year, this was more of a workmanlike day. Jordan Hall averaged 5.1 yards per carry and had 87 yards in his return from a foot injury and Miller had 75 yards on 12

carries, but other than the quarterback's 55-yarder in the first half, the Cal defense did a good job of keeping the Buckeyes in front of them. **EDGE: Even**

**Cal rush offense vs. Ohio State rush defense:** The numbers are stark: Cal finished with 224 yards and three touchdowns on the ground, while third-stringer Brendan Bigelow had four rushes for 160 yards and two TDs. The Buckeyes did a good job shutting down the run on the majority of plays, but the mistakes that led to the two long touchdowns runs are the kinds that just cannot be made because they sully an otherwise solid day. **EDGE: Cal**

**Ohio State pass offense vs. Cal pass defense:** There are two ways to be successful in a passing offense. One way is to be efficient, complete a lot of short passes and move up the field steadily. The other way is to try to pick up chunks of yards at a time. Given Cal's aggressive defense, the chunks were there for the taking if OSU executed, and the Buckeyes did that enough to win. The result was a career day for Miller, who threw for 249 yards and four scores. **EDGE: Ohio State**

**Cal pass offense vs. Ohio State pass defense:** Cal tried to keep Ohio State off-balance with rollout passes and quick screens, and those plays were effective for much of the afternoon. On the other hand, when Cal tried a drop-back pass, Maynard was often snowed under an aggressive pass rush. He hung in well, though, throwing for 280 yards, but his inability to cap off drives maybe took some points off the board. **EDGE: Even**

**Special teams:** It's fair to say it could have been a much different game had Cal kicker D'Amato been on target with any of his three field goals. Instead, he finished 0 for 3, taking nine potential points off the board that could have made the difference. Just about everything else was even in this area, as both teams controlled the other's return games, but D'Amato's struggles loomed large. **EDGE: Ohio State**

**Intangibles:** For teams that haven't played each other in 40 years, there sure seemed to be some bad blood between the two squads. Things got a bit chippy as both squads were flagged for multiple personal fouls. Cal also looked more like a team than Ohio State at times. The Buckeyes are still trying to figure out the new coaching staff and its systems at times – natural given recent turbulence – but the Golden Bears stuck to their game plan and nearly pulled off what would have been an ursine-like upset. **EDGE: Cal**

– Jeff Svoboda

## OHIO STATE VS. CALIFORNIA

# Defense Far From Dominant Against Cal

Ohio State made some history during a 35-28 win Sept. 15 against California, but it wasn't the kind media guides will trumpet and scarlet-and-gray clad fans will tell their children about in the years down the road.

Cal's Brendan Bigelow had an 81-yard touchdown run in the third quarter, the longest run against Ohio State ever in Ohio Stadium and the third longest given up in school history.

## INSIDE THE DEFENSE

Jeff Svoboda

The Golden Bears also put up 512 yards of total offense, the most by a Buckeye opponent in the venerable Horseshoe since Cincinnati, of all teams, had 525 in the teams' 1999 meeting. It was also the first time since Minnesota racked up 578 yards of offense in 2005 in Minneapolis that a team topped the 500-yard barrier at all.

"Terrible," said head coach Urban Meyer, whose "Plan to Win" lists playing great defense as the team's No. 1 goal each game. "It's time to play Ohio State defense and that wasn't Ohio State defense at all. We've got to get that thing worked out. I know it won't be from a shortage of effort."

Meyer started his assessment of what went wrong with an issue that has plagued the Buckeyes continually for the past season and a half – poor tackling.

Nowhere was that issue more apparent than on the Bears' two long touchdown runs by Bigelow. On the first one, he appeared to be wrapped up by nickel back Orhian Johnson after a short gain as he went over the left side, but Bigelow got out of the senior's grasp and kept his balance with a spin move that included putting his right hand on the ground.

He was then met by OSU linebacker Ryan Shazier, but the sophomore simply hit Bigelow instead of wrapping him up. Bigelow stayed alive on the play with another spin and he was off to the races, going down the east sideline of the stadium for the historic jaunt.

In the fourth quarter, Ohio State had just taken a 28-21 lead when Bigelow changed the game again. After motoring for 16 yards over the left side on the first play of the drive, Bigelow took another handoff left, cut inside the over-pursuing Shazier and ran right by the diving tackle attempt of safety Christian Bryant before hitting the jets and finishing off a 59-yard touchdown scamper.

Those two big gainers helped Cal finish with 224 yards on the ground, making the Golden Bears the fifth team in the past two seasons to top the 200-yard barrier in the rushing game. That total was reached despite the fact Ohio State kept the visitors to 34 yards rushing in the first half.

"It's bad giving up that many yards," defensive tackle Johnathan Hankins said after making a career-high 10 tackles. "We never want to give up that many yards, especially rushing. I remember when we had them at 35 yards rushing and they broke a long one. We just have to play sound and keep leverage."

Ohio State will also have to find an answer at middle linebacker. Curtis Grant started the day as the Mike but struggled on Cal's first touchdown drive, leading the Buckeyes to put senior Storm Klein in the game. The two rotated the rest of the day but finished with only three tackles combined.

With all of those factors combined, the defense wasn't able to post the performance fans have come to expect. That was shown in the fact that the Buckeyes forced Cal into only two three-and-outs as well as a four-and-out in the Golden Bears' 15 possessions.

"I just think we have a lot to fix right now," Bryant said. "Just going into tomorrow, we'll watch the film, talk to the coaches and see what corrections we can make."

### Pass Rush Turned Up

Throughout the week leading up to the game, Meyer seemed to be on the warpath when it came to the team's pass rush – or lack thereof.

He told the media a few times that his team needed to be better at getting to the quarterback after the Buckeyes had only three sacks while opposing teams had thrown 95 passes in the first two weeks of the season.

It's fair to say that message got through. "We were just hearing people, hearing from Coach Meyer saying we have to get to the quarterback because we haven't hit the quarterback as much," Hankins said. "We took that into account and did that this game."

The Buckeyes finished with six sacks on the day, the most since posting the same total against Wisconsin when the teams met in 2009.

When it came to what changed, there were a few answers. The Buckeyes chose to go with more blitzes than they had in the first two games, which resulted in linebackers Etienne Sabino and Ryan Shazier along with cornerback Bradley Roby getting sacks.

However, the blitz also had a negative impact a few times, as the Bears were able to use Ohio State's aggressiveness against it and hit some plays in the passing game. For example, the Buckeyes called a blitz on a third-and-3 play at the OSU 19-yard line in the first quarter, but Cal ran a screen pass and receiver Chris Harper was able to turn the play into a touchdown.

"We dialed up some more," defensive



JOSH WINSLOW PHOTOS

**MIXED BAG** – Ohio State allowed a pair of long touchdown runs by Cal tailback Brendan Bigelow (5, above), but the Buckeyes did sack Golden Bears quarterback Zach Maynard (15, right) six times. One of those came on a corner blitz from sophomore Bradley Roby (1, right).

coordinator Luke Fickell said. "At times it was really good, and at times it really hurt us, too."

Ohio State blitzed less as the game went on as a result, but it was still able to put pressure on the quarterback thanks to some standout play by the defensive linemen. Hankins, John Simon and Garrett Goebel each won one-on-one battles against the offensive linemen blocking them to get to quarterback Zach Maynard.

After the game, Hankins credited the team's increased pass rush to the challenge the linemen received from Meyer and defensive line coach Mike Vrabel.

"I felt like in practice we just focused on getting after the ball," Hankins said. "I feel like with Coach Vrabel staying on us, we just got off the ball and that helps with our pass rush. It was a focus because Coach Vrabel put us up to the challenge to hit the quarterback."

Despite Ohio State's lack of sacks in the first two games, Cal appeared to respect what the OSU front brought to the table. The Golden Bears called a number of screens and rollout passes to try to combat the rush, most of which had a fair amount of success.

For that, Cal head coach Jeff Tedford credited his senior quarterback, who finished 26 of 37 for 280 yards.

"Zach played very well today," Tedford said. "That's a very good defense, a very good front four. They bring a very strong pass rush, so he was under duress a lot today, but I thought he stayed in there and played really well."

### Making Some Stops

While the Buckeyes gave up more yards than they have in more than half a decade, there were some positives to take home from the game.



At the top of the list was the team's bend-but-don't-break mentality. Cal started five possessions in the game at its 40-yard line or better, but the Bears were able to turn those drives into only seven points.


On its second drive of the game, Cal got the ball at Ohio State's 45-yard line, but the Bears couldn't get a first down and turned the ball over on downs. The other three missed opportunities were undone by missed field goals, while Cal did score a touchdown in the fourth quarter after taking over at the OSU 46.

On the year, Ohio State has allowed opposing teams to start 11 drives at its 40-yard line or better, but Miami, UCF and Cal turned those possessions into only 10 points.

"That's what we pride ourselves in," Roby said. "When it gets hard, when it gets tough and our backs are against the wall, we stop them. For us to force them to miss three field goals is big. That's something we like to see."

Ohio State's ability to stop teams in the red zone goes hand-in-hand with that stat. Teams have gotten into the Buckeyes' red zone 10 times but have only four touchdowns and two field goals.

"That's our mentality," Bryant said. "If they're in the red zone, they either get three or they don't get anything. That's how we try to go about that in the red zone."



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## OHIO STATE VS. CALIFORNIA

## BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 35, California 28

**Ohio State head coach Urban Meyer on his team's final touchdown, a 72-yard connection between sophomore quarterback Braxton Miller and classmate Devin Smith in the fourth quarter:** "That was a scramble drill – short go deep, deep go short. That's one thing that you hear people in the NFL, I heard it the other day on the TV, the quarterback that can extend the play. (Miller) extended the play and made one."

**Miller on the gamewinner:** "The play was really designed for Philly (Brown). All the (defenders), they just automatically went to Philly because I was looking at him. Devin (Smith) seeped through in the back and I found him."

**Smith on the reaction to his game-winning touchdown:** "After I scored that touchdown, I ran back to the sideline and I heard someone in the stands yell, 'That was just like Wisconsin!' I thought that was pretty funny."

**Senior tight end Jake Stoneburner on the game-winning TD:** "It was Braxton being Braxton. He scrambled and threw the ball up. I thought, 'Man, where are you throwing that? It's third down.' All the sudden, Devin's wide open. It was déjà vu from Wisconsin all over. That's the little thing they like to do. I'll take it."

**Stoneburner on Miller's performance:** "When we need someone to make a play, Braxton's the guy. He's been doing it since he's been here. Coach Meyer counts on him. When the game's in the clutch, give it to No. 5. He'll do something with the ball."

**Junior left tackle Jack Mewhort on the same subject:** "When you've got No. 5 back there, anything can happen. He's just so dynamic, especially with guys like Devin Smith making a name for himself doing acrobatic type of stuff week in and week out. With our athletes that we have, you never know what can happen. As an offensive lineman, you just have to go out there and block as long as you can and be confident that those guys are going to make plays. They did it. We have all the confidence in the world. It gave us a little bit of a springboard going into the next couple of weeks to know we can fight back."

**California head coach Jeff Tedford on Miller:** "Braxton is a hard guy to contain because he is so big and physical. For most of the day, he made great decisions and threw some great passes. When he threw that long ball down the left side of the field, it was a perfect pass. He is fast, accurate and a great athlete."

**Cal cornerback Marc Anthony on the final TD:** "I was on the opposite side of the field, but we (as a defense) all take responsibility. It was a crucial point in the game. We had a simple cover-2 and got caught getting nosy. We need to minimize those mental errors."

**Cal tailback Brendan Bigelow on his 81-yard TD run in the third quarter:** "I initially took the handoff and thought, 'Don't slow down.' I spun off a few people and just tried to stay on my feet, keep pumping and keep running. My eyes got big when I turned the corner. I just try to take what I learn in practice and apply it to the game."

**Fifth-year defensive end Nathan Williams on Bigelow's pair of long touchdown runs:** "When you know you've stuffed the run the whole game, and they get a couple of huge runs in a row, it's crazy. We pride ourselves in stopping the run around here like we always have. Then when you give up (those runs), it's a backbreaker.

We've got to get it corrected fast. I think it's due to missed tackling, but that's me."

**Senior defensive lineman John Simon on the defense giving up four touchdowns:** "Twenty-eight points is a lot of points to give up. We want to get a shutout every game. That's our goal. Three-and-out anytime we're on the field. That's what we're striving for. We're striving for perfection on defense. Obviously we didn't have that today, but we're going to enjoy the win."

**Williams on OSU's six-sack performance:** "I think we just stressed more about getting to the quarterback a little bit and taking it to the offensive line. I know when I was out there, I was just trying to fight as many times as I could, just to weaken them. I think we did a good job of affecting him."

**Simon on if more blitzing leads to more sacks:** "It definitely could because then the offensive linemen may be thinking someone else is coming and give that defensive lineman a split-second. There's a lot of things that go into anyone playing great. Disguising a defense can help get pressure. The defensive line getting pressure helps interceptions. There are so many things that go into everything, which makes football the best sport because it's a total team effort."

**Meyer on whether he expected senior tailback Jordan Hall to carry the ball as much as he did in his season debut:** "No, I did not think that was going to happen. He just kept going. I think he was rusty. I think there were more yards there. But I love Jordan Hall. He's given a lot for us and our staff, so we've got to give back to him. He had a good day. That was the first time he went hard since he got hurt."

**Williams on the pair of touchdown drives by the Ohio State offense in the second half:** "It was amazing. It's a great relief for the defense to have an offense that moves the ball and gives us some rest. The offense was clutch today. They were awesome. Coach Meyer has brought in an offense that can move the ball up and down the field. When we needed our offense more than any time so far this season, they came through."

**Stoneburner on his fourth-quarter touchdown catch:** "I knew it was going to work. They were probably thinking power right up the middle. I assume (Miller) had a good fake because everyone bit up and I was wide open."

**Miller on his fourth-quarter TD connection with Stoneburner:** "It's called a pop. Guys don't ever pay attention to the tight end. The quarterback runs a lot on the goal line, so they expect a quarterback run so you put that little pop pass in there."

**Stoneburner on OSU's offensive success in the fourth quarter after a difficult third quarter:** "Everything clicked. It was like that all game. We'd have three terrible plays and then come out and score within two minutes. That's kind of how our offense has been through the (season). We have to make sure we do it for four quarters straight."

**Mewhort on the third-quarter struggles on offense:** "It was really frustrating. Stuff just wasn't working for us. We weren't running it like I know we can. We were putting a lot of pressure on the defense to go in there and play well, which they did and we really appreciated them for that. It was frustrating to say the least. We got it going in the fourth quarter when we had to, which was good. We came out with the 'W,' so we're happy."

**Miller on the same subject:** "I think we just got complacent with what we did in the first half. I think we were satisfied with what we did in the first half and we became too slow, sluggish. We have to work hard at times. We have to come back in the second half and do what we did in the first half."

**Smith on his first touchdown, a 25-yard strike from Miller in the first quarter:** "I went up and snatched it from (the Cal defender), made a play for our team. Every ball that's up there we've got to have. That's what we're told every day – fight for the ball when it's in the air."

**Williams on his performance after missing the Central Florida game:** "Hopefully I just keep improving. I'm still not the same player as I used to be. I'm trying to overcome that. I'm trying to be the best I can for the defense."

**Miller on if Ohio State can move the ball if defenses key on him:** "I love it when they do that. It opens up for all the guys on the outside and they just key on me and they forget about people on the outside."

**Williams on the passionate postgame speech made by Simon:** "John's our leader. He's emotional. He gives everything he has every week, and we all respect him for that. To see him the way he was at the end of the game, it was a characteristic that he has that not a lot of guys have."

**Mewhort on Simon:** "John's the type of dude that's stone-faced, a real stoic guy. He's not real excitable, but he's a guy that leads by example. He keeps his mouth shut. That's what we love about him. Then today after the game, he kind of broke down and really opened up. It was really cool to see from a guy like him, a leader, a captain, a guy we all look up to and admire. It was a really cool couple of seconds when he was up there talking to us. That's something I know I'll remember for a really long time."

**Simon on playing despite a painful shoulder injury:** "If it's up to me, I'm going to be out there all of the time. It was a tough thing all week, just dealing with it. I tried to get as much rehab as I could, living in there and doing everything possible to make sure I was good enough to go. With the players trusting in me and the coaches trusting in me that I could get my job done, I was blessed enough to be put out on the field today."

**Williams on the penalty-filled, sometimes chippy contest:** "I like that kind of game, actually. They were a good offensive line. Their center was their anchor, and you could tell from the field he was a great player. They ran a great offense and kept us on our toes. The way the game evolved was just how it evolved. You have to roll with the punches and adapt with what was happening. I think we did toward the end."

**Sophomore cornerback Bradley Roby on his in-game chatting with Cal standout receiver Keenan Allen:** "We joked back and forth, me and him, and he was like, 'I'm not getting any man. I'm trying to get you man-to-man.' I said, 'I've been waiting for that.' It was a cool back and forth. I respect him and he respects me, so it was all cool."

**Tedford on the loss:** "It is very discouraging because we came here to win and we played well enough to win, but the scoreboard just doesn't say that. No matter what the stats are, what the scoreboard says or what happened today, we proved we can play with the best of them."

# The Numbers Game

## Ohio State 35, California 28

Sept. 15, 2012 — Ohio Stadium; Columbus, Ohio

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4		F
CALIFORNIA	7	0	7	14	—	28
OHIO STATE	13	7	0	15	—	35

### First Quarter

**OSU** — B. Miller, 55 yard run (Basil kick failed), 5:11; 3 plays, 61 yards, 0:49 TOP.

**CAL** — Harper, 19 yard pass from Maynard (D'Amato kick), 2:38; 6 plays, 75 yards, 2:33 TOP.

**OSU** — D. Smith, 25 yard pass from Meyer (Basil kick), 1:27; 4 plays, 75 yards, 1:11 TOP.

### Second Quarter

**OSU** — Stoneburner, 1 yard pass from B. Miller (Basil kick), 13:30; 5 plays, 45 yards, 1:33 TOP.

### Third Quarter

**CAL** — Bigelow, 81 yard run (D'Amato kick), 9:34; 1 play, 81 yards, 0:14 TOP.

### Fourth Quarter

**CAL** — Maynard, 1 yard run (D'Amato kick), 12:26; 8 plays, 46 yards, 2:34 TOP.

**OSU** — Stoneburner, 3 yard pass from B. Miller (B. Miller rush), 8:31; 11 plays, 75 yards, 3:55 TOP.

**CAL** — Bigelow, 59 yard run (D'Amato kick), 8:10; 2 plays, 75 yards, 0:21 TOP.

**OSU** — D. Smith, 72 yard pass from B. Miller (Basil kick), 3:26; 3 plays, 75 yards, 0:54 TOP.

**Att.** — 105,232.

**Weather** — 65 degrees, partly cloudy; wind, N 1 mph.

### Team Statistics

	CAL	OSU
First Downs	22	14
Rushing	9	7
Passing	11	7
Penalty	2	0
Rushes-Yards	41-224	33-163
Passing Yards	288	249
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	27-38-1	16-30-1
Offensive Plays	79	63
Total Net Yards	512	412
Third Down Efficiency	6-15	5-15
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-2	0-0
Punts-Avg.	5-43.2	8-40.9
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	1-0
Penalties	4-40	11-101
Time of Possession	35:10	24:50

### Individual Statistics

**RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.)** — **CAL**: Bigelow 4-160; Sofele 21-86; C.J. Anderson 4-13; Stevens 2-11; Maynard 10-(-46). **OSU**: J. Hall 17-87; B. Miller 12-75; P. Brown 1-5; TEAM 3-(-4).

**PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD)** — **CAL**: Maynard 26-37-1-280-1; Allen 1-1-0-8-0.

**OSU**: B. Miller 16-30-1-249-4.

**RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.)** — **CAL**: Allen 9-80; C.J. Anderson 4-65; Harper 3-32; Treggs 3-28; Powe 2-44; Stevens 2-13; Wark 2-12; Maynard 1-8; Sofele 1-6. **OSU**: D. Smith 5-145; Stoneburner 3-44; P. Brown 3-31; Vannett 2-6; Spencer 1-10; Heuerman 1-9; Z. Boren 1-4.

**PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long)** — **CAL**: Leininger 3-47.0-55; Mos 2-37.5-57. **OSU**: Be. Buchanan 8-40.9-55.

**PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.)** — **CAL**: Allen 1-(-9). **OSU**: P. Brown 1-2.

**KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.)** — **CAL**: Bigelow 3-74. **OSU**: Dunn 1-22; D. Smith 1-20.

**FUMBLE RECOVERIES (No.-Yds.)** — **CAL**: None. **OSU**: None.

**INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.)** — **CAL**: S. Williams 1-0. **OSU**: Bryant 1-38.

**SACKS (No.-Yds.)** — **CAL**: None. **OSU**: Roby 1-0-11; Hankins 1-0-10; Sabino 1-0-10; Shazier 1-0-9; Simon 1-0-7; Goebel 1-0-3.

**TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.)** — **CAL**: Barr 1-0-5; Kaufusi 1-0-5; Scarlett 1-0-1. **OSU**: Roby 2-0-13; Shazier 2-0-10; Hankins 1-0-10; Sabino 1-0-10; Simon 1-0-7; Goebel 1-0-3; Barnett 1-0-2.

**TACKLES (Solo-Assst.-Tot.)** — **CAL**: Logan 4-3-7; S. Williams 5-1-6; McCain 4-2-6; Scarlett 2-4-6; Lowe 2-3-5; Forbes 1-3-4; Jefferson 1-3-4; Mullins 2-1-3; Anthony 1-2-3; Hill 1-2-3; Ervin 2-0-2; Coleman 0-2-2; Harper 1-0-1; Barr 1-0-1; Tipoti 1-0-1; Kaufusi 1-0-1; Sebastian 1-0-1. **OSU**: Shazier 10-3-13; Hankins 6-4-10; Barnett 6-4-10; Roby 7-2-9; Sabino 3-4-7; Goebel 3-3-6; Bryant 3-2-5; Howard 2-1-3; Johnson 1-2-3; N. Williams 2-0-2; Klein 1-1-2; Simon 1-0-1; Griffin 1-0-1; C. Grant 1-0-1; Basil 1-0-1; Marcus 1-0-1; D. Smith 1-0-1.

**PLAYERS IN THE GAME** — **CALIFORNIA**: Offense, Allen, T. Riggsbee, J. Riggsbee, Schwenke, Adcock, Tyndall, Wark, Maynard, Treggs, Stevens, Sofele, D'Amato. Defense, Tipoti, Coleman, McCain, Forbes, Jefferson, Scarlett, Anthony, Hill, Bigelow, Logan, S. Williams, Leininger. Reserves, Lasco, Jackson, Sebastian, Lowe, Harper, C.J. Anderson, L. King, Powe, Manuel, Lee, Bridgford, Willis, Espitia, Broussard, Yarnway, Bouza, Ervin, Ellison, Hurrell, Agu, Mullins, Mos, Barr, Camporeale, Clark, Moala, Kaufusi, Sheperdson, Crosthwaite, Tagaloa, Wilfley, Grison, Hagan, Jalil, Payne. **OHIO STATE**: Offense, Mewhort, Norwell, Linsley, M. Hall, Fragel, Heuerman, Stoneburner, B. Miller, J. Hall, D. Smith, P. Brown, Basil. Defense, Simon, Hankins, Goebel, Moore, Shazier, C. Grant, Sabino, Bryant, Barnett, Roby, Howard, Be. Buchanan. Reserves, C. Brown, Spence, Griffin, Reed, D. Grant, Guiton, Spencer, Murray, Domicone, Johnson, Wood, Perkins, Dunn, Rice, Bogard, Klein, Marcus, Perry, Haynes, N. Williams, Z. Boren, Makridis, Decker, C. Carter, Baldwin, Vannett, M. Thomas, Schutt, Washington.

## Season Statistics

### 2012 Game-By-Game

Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd
Sept. 1	(18) MIAMI (OHIO)	W, 56-10	105,036
Sept. 8	(14) C. FLORIDA	W, 31-16	104,745
Sept. 15	(12) CALIFORNIA	W, 35-28	105,232
Sept. 22	UAB	Noon	
Sept. 29	at Michigan State	TBA	
Oct. 6	NEBRASKA	8 p.m.	
Oct. 13	at Indiana	8 p.m.	
Oct. 20	PURDUE	TBA	
Oct. 27	at Penn State	6 p.m.	
Nov. 3	ILLINOIS	TBA	
Nov. 17	at Wisconsin	TBA	
Nov. 24	MICHIGAN	Noon	

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

### Team Statistics

	OSU	Opp
First Downs	66	50
Rushing	39	15
Passing	25	31
Penalty	2	4
Average Per Game/Rush	237.7	108.7
Average Per Game/Pass	216.0	283.3
Total Offense	1,361	1,176
Total Plays	224	217
Average Per Game	453.7	392.0
Average Per Play	6.1	5.4
Penalties-Yards	24-200	16-118
Fumbles-Lost	5-2	2-1
3rd Down Efficiency	20-44	18-49
Percentage	45%	37%
4th Down Efficiency	2-3	1-7
Percentage	67%	14%
Sacks-Yards	9-88	4-28
Times Of Possession Avg.	29:51	30:09

### Score

By Quarters	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	20	38	28	36	—	122	40.7
Opponents	13	7	20	14	—	54	18.0

### Individual Statistics

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Braxton Miller	56	377	6.7	5	65
Carlos Hyde	24	109	4.5	2	16
Jordan Hall	17	87	5.1	0	15
Bri'onte Dunn	12	60	5.0	1	13
Philly Brown	3	38	12.7	0	19
Rod Smith	6	26	4.3	0	11
Zach Boren	9	26	2.9	1	8
Kenny Guiton	5	14	2.8	0	11
Devin Smith	1	2	2.0	0	2
TEAM	3	-26	-6.5	0	0
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>81</b>

Passing	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT	Effic.
Braxton Miller	48	78	61.5	611	7-2	151.83
Kenny Guiton	5	9	55.6	37	0-0	90.09
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>60.9</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>7-2</b>	<b>145.44</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>63.2</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>117.74</b>

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Philly Brown	16	166	10.4	1	38
Devin Smith	13	233	17.9	3	72
Jake Stoneburner	7	92	13.1	3	40
Evan Spencer	5	70	14.0	0	44
Zach Boren	4	35	8.8	0	14
Nick Vannett	4	19	4.8	0	7
Jeff Heuerman	2	18	9.0	0	9
Verlon Reed	1	13	13.0	0	13
Carlos Hyde	1	2	2.0	0	2
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>58</b>

Scoring	TD	EPK	EPR	EPP	FG	PTS
Braxton Miller	5	—	1-1	—	—	32
Jake Stoneburner	3	—	—	—	—	18
Devin Smith	3	—	—	—	—	18
Drew Basil	—	15-16	—	—	1-1	18
Carlos Hyde	2	—	—	—	—	12
Zach Boren	1	—	—	—	—	6
Philly Brown	1	—	—	—	—	6
Bri'onte Dunn	1	—	—	—	—	6
Bradley Roby	1	—	—	—	—	6
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15-16</b>	<b>1-1</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1-1</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6-7</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>2-6</b>	<b>54</b>

FG Distance	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Drew Basil	1-1	0-0	0-0	0-0	1-1
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>1-1</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>1-1</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>2-3</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0-3</b>	<b>0-0</b>	<b>2-6</b>

Punting	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Ben Buchanan	17	695	40.9	0	55
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>40.9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>39.2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>57</b>

Interceptions	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Travis Howard	3	26	8.7	0	17
Christian Bryant	1	38	38.0	0	38
Orhian Johnson	1	3	3.0	0	3
Etienne Sabino	1	2	2.0	0	2
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

Punt Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Philly Brown	3	12	4.0	0	10
Devin Smith	1	-2	-2.0	0	0
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Devin Smith	3	70	23.3	0	26
Armani Reeves	2	45	22.5	0	26
Bri'onte Dunn	1	22	22.0	0	22
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>19.1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33</b>

Def. Leaders	Solo	Asst.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Ryan Shazier	19	8	27	2.0-10	1-0-9
Bradley Roby	14	5	19	2.0-13	1.0-11
Christian Bryant	10	7	17	—	—
Etienne Sabino	8	9	17	1.0-10	1.0-10
C.J. Barnett	9	8	17	1.0-2	—
Johnathan Hankins	6	9	15	1.5-11	1.0-10
Garrett Goebel	4	6	10	2.0-8	1.0-3
Orhian Johnson	6	4	10	—	—
John Simon	4	5	9	1.5-7	1.0-7
Curtis Grant	2	5	7	—	—
Travis Howard	4	1	5	—	—
Doran Grant	5	0	5	—	—
Jamal Marcus	4	0	4	—	—
Nathan Williams	4	0	4	—	—
Adam Griffin	3	0	3	—	—
Corey Brown	2	1	3	—	—
Tommy Schutt	2	1	3	—	—
David Perkins	2	0	2	—	—
Steve Miller	2	0	2	1.0-10	1.0-10
A. Washington	2	0	2	1.0-8	1.0-8
Noah Spence	2	0	2	1.0-20	1.0-20
Najee Murray	2	0	2	—	—
Drew Basil	1	1	2	—	—
Storm Klein	1	1	2	—	—
Joshua Perry	1	1	2	—	—
Devin Smith	1	0	1	—	—
Bryce Haynes	1	0	1	—	—
Conner Crowell	1	0	1	—	—
Craig Cataline	1	0	1	—	—
Philly Brown	1	0	1	—	—
J.T. Moore	1	0	1	—	—
<b>OSU Totals</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>14-99</b>	<b>9-88</b>
<b>OPP Totals</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>16-64</b>	<b>4-28</b>

**Fumbles Forced:** 1 — Ryan Shazier.

**Fumbles Recovered:** 1 — Bradley Roby.