

MICHIGAN MEMORIES

Years Later, Brockington Still Can't Stand Michigan

By GARRETT STEPIEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

When he hears the word, his mood swings 180 degrees.

It's been nearly half a century – 47 years, to be exact – since John Brockington last played as much as a snap in The Game.

Since then, the three-year varsity running back (1968-70) graduated from Ohio State. Brockington became a first-round pick in the 1971 NFL draft for the Green Bay Packers, where he starred as the NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year and earned three Pro Bowl selections.

Following his seven-year professional football career in the league, he opened an entirely new chapter on his journey in 2002.

He started the John Brockington Foundation, aiding people impacted by diseases that require organ donations, inspired by his own experience after he received a life-saving kidney transplant from his wife, Diane Scott. But no matter how much changed in his life throughout the past few decades, regardless of how minor or how drastic, one constant always remained.

There's nothing he despises more than Michigan.

"I'm just as rabid as somebody who's been in Ohio the last 75 years – because I know what it means," Brockington said. "I can look at the 'M' on their hat and get upset. It just annoys me."

Outside of a doctor based in his foundation who is originally from Michigan,



FILE PHOTO

BRUISING BACK – John Brockington (42) helped power Ohio State to wins over Michigan in 1968 as a sophomore and again in 1970.

Brockington sums up his feelings for the state and the school in one word.

"Hatred," he said with a laugh. "It's funny – I mean, I'm in my 60s now and it still annoys me. It really does."

Brockington isn't the first Buckeye to have strong feelings for The School Up North, and he certainly won't be the last.

From the moment he arrived on campus in Columbus from New York City by way of Brooklyn, Brockington had the mentality permanently drilled into his head.

Woody Hayes, the legendary OSU head coach from 1951-78, wanted nothing more than to beat up on the Wolverines at the end

of every season. The fiery mentality from Hayes trickled down to the players, including Brockington.

"I had no idea what it was like until the week of that game," he said, remembering his first varsity season in 1968. "Everything changed. When we were freshmen, we had to get the varsity ready. So we were working really close with Woody. We could hear how everything was just amped up – everything was just amped up. By the time I got to the varsity, it was worse because we were with him."

However crazy Hayes was that week, it worked.

Then-No. 2 Ohio State wacked then-No. 4 Michigan in a 50-14 demolition Nov. 23, 1968, at Ohio Stadium, improving to 9-0 overall and 7-0 in Big Ten play. It locked up a Rose Bowl berth and a crack at the national championship.

The Buckeyes secured the title after their 27-16 victory over Southern California, but Brockington knew which win mattered more.

"Michigan is our national championship game, for the most part, because you could win every game that year and nothing wrong in the season, but you've got to beat Michigan," he said. "We just can't take it. We can't stomach it."

"It sounds stupid with some of the other things that are going on in the world, but that week, there's nothing more important."

Brockington realized that truth once and for all when he experienced the bitter, sour taste of defeat that came with being on the losing side of the rivalry.

The very next fall of 1969, OSU's high from the 36-point blowout and the national title ended in Ann Arbor when the Wolverines pulled out a 24-12 win Nov. 22 at Michigan Stadium.

The upset for then-No. 12 Michigan spoiled the season for Ohio State, which was the top-ranked team in the country at the time. The Buckeyes were all but bound for a repeat until the stunning loss, which snapped a 22-game win streak.

The pain of defeat lingered with the team into the spring. Hayes made sure it haunted Brockington and his teammates, coming up

Brockington Vs. Michigan

Yr./Class	Location	Result
1968/Sr.	Columbus	W, 50-14
1969/Jr.	Ann Arbor	L, 24-12
1970/Sr.	Columbus	W, 20-9

with an outside-the-box reminder of the loss to motivate OSU all year long leading up to the rematch.

"When we lost as juniors – we were No. 1 in the nation, we had a great football team – we went to Ann Arbor, and we lost," Brockington said. "It was horrible. It was horrible coming back on the plane."

"Well, that spring, (Hayes) had a rug made – Michigan 24, Ohio State 12. We walked across that rug – I think it was 15-20 yards into the spring – then when we came back in the summer (for training camp), it was back, clean. I mean, that was right out of the locker room door, we had that Michigan score."

Ohio State answered, blitzing through its regular-season slate in 1970. Then the Buckeyes hit a roadblock Nov. 14, eventually squeezing past Purdue with a 10-7 edge.

Normally, Brockington said, Hayes would chew the team out with hours of studying the tape in the film room coupled with double the amount of time correcting those mistakes on the practice field.

Not this time.

"The perfect example of (how much focus goes into The Game) was my senior year," Brockington said. "We played Purdue before the Michigan game, and we were horrible that week. I mean, the first drive, we go down and score a touchdown. We couldn't do anything the rest of the day. And we had to win the game on a field goal that almost slipped off the tee, so we won 10-7. We played like crap."

"And that Sunday, we never even saw film of that game. It was all behind us. It was all about Michigan."

With the derailing loss from 1969 still fresh in the mind of Hayes, he walked straight into the locker room one day after practice with two materials – notepaper and a brown bag.

"Woody gave us notepaper, we put our name on the paper and wrote down what we were going to do to beat Michigan that week," Brockington said. "And then he made us all stand. And then he put all of our notes in the bag – brown bag – shook them up, took them out and read them all."

"He said, 'So-and-so! You said you're going to do this! Are you going to do it?' It was unbelievable. That week was intense, dude."

The OSU players stayed true to their word, and Hayes' unique locker-room exercise worked.

Then-No. 5 Ohio State avenged the 1969 loss with a 20-9 victory Nov. 21, 1970, over then-No. 4 Michigan at the 'Shoe.

"Thank God we won that game," Brockington said. "Thank God we won that game."

When it comes to the current state of his alma mater's football program, Brockington hasn't missed a game. Through the highs and the lows of the 2017 season, he's been watching every little detail closely from his television screen – from the kickoff struggles to the targeting woes.

His message to Urban Meyer and the Buckeyes ahead of The Game is simple.

"This is the big one," Brockington said. "This is Big Blue going against the Buckeyes. This is The Game."



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MICHIGAN MEMORIES

Cheney Still Bothered By Lone Loss To U-M

By MARCUS HARTMAN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Like many of his Ohio State classmates, Dave Cheney prefers to remember his first and last games against Michigan rather than his second.

The rest of the world has a way of making that difficult, however.

"Well, it's a high and low, the comparison of which is like night and day," Cheney replied when asked for his thoughts about facing the Wolverines as an offensive lineman for head coach Woody Hayes from 1968-70. "That '69 thing was just an all-time low and regrettably we had to live with it for a year."

"The '70 game was the success that it was, and I guess the good news is you get to live with that one most of your life. But that '69 game never goes away, especially this time of year because the damned Big Ten Network is pumping it on every time I turn around. I get so tired of people telling me, 'I saw you on TV last night.'"

Indeed, though Cheney can brag of a 2-1 record against Michigan when he was suiting up for the Scarlet and Gray, that digit in the loss column represents perhaps the most disappointing day in the program's history.

Riding a 22-game winning streak, the top-ranked Buckeyes were expected to crush the 12th-ranked Wolverines in Ann Arbor and lay claim to a second consecutive national championship in 1969.

Instead, Michigan shocked its ancient rival and the college football world with a 24-12 upset that reverberates to this day.

That it still comes to mind so often more than 40 years later could be a result of a lack of forethought then.

"I'll be honest with you - and I don't know if many people will admit this - but I don't know if we took Michigan seriously that year," Cheney said. "I mean, we had beaten them (so badly) the year before, and when we got there Michigan was not the powerhouse they would become over the next five years."

With Michigan stumbling under the direction of Chalmers "Bump" Elliott in the mid-1960s, Purdue rose to become Ohio State's main competitor for the top of the Big Ten standings. From 1965-69, the Boilermakers of head coach Jack Mollenkopf finished no lower than 13th in the final UPI rankings.

Michigan was absent from the final rankings in all but one of those seasons, finishing 15th in 1968 but with a caveat. That team was humiliated 50-14 by Ohio State in the regular-season finale, a game neither team forgot during the year that followed.

The Buckeyes rolled through the early and middle part of the '69 campaign before dominating Purdue in the penultimate game of the season. With both a 42-10 whipping of the 10th-ranked Boilermakers a week before and the 36-point win over Michigan from the previous season on their minds, the Buckeyes might have taken the wrong mind-set to Michigan Stadium on Nov. 22, 1969.

"The focus on that game wasn't what it should have been in '69, and I don't know how Woody could have done much about it," said Cheney, citing human nature as the cause.

"I really think that even though they look like 'Man Mountain Dean,' you can't

forget that these are children - they are 21, 22 years of age. When I was that age, and I got done beating Purdue the way we did in '69 and having beaten Michigan like we beat them the year before, I subconsciously thought we would march up there and all we had to do was show up."

That would be far from enough.

The Wolverines controlled the afternoon, running for 266 yards and forcing seven turnovers during the historic upset. They carried new head coach Bo Schembechler - a former Ohio State assistant and Hayes protégé - off the field and rekindled the rivalry in the eyes of the Buckeyes and their fiery head coach.

Hayes had a rug bearing the final score of the game made for the football facility, a daily reminder as the Buckeyes worked out for the following season, but no further motivation was necessary.

Michigan had their full attention.

The Buckeyes put together another 8-0 start to the 1970 season, this time beating Purdue by a 10-7 final in West Lafayette the week before The Game.

Unbeaten Michigan traveled to Ohio Stadium ranked fourth in the nation and hoping to claim a second straight Big Ten championship, but the Buckeyes had other plans. They took an early 3-0 lead thanks to a field goal set up by a U-M fumble on the opening kickoff and never looked back.

Ohio State scored only 20 points on the day, but it was more than enough for a 20-9 victory. The Buckeyes firmly controlled the game, outrushing the Wolverines by a 242-37 margin and picking up 18 first downs compared to 10 for the visitors.

Hayes rarely had quarterback Rex Kern go to the air, but he was effective when doing so. The senior All-American completed 8 of 12 passes for 87 yards, including a 26-yard touchdown pass to split end Bruce Jankowski in the second quarter that put the Buckeyes in front to stay.

Cheney remembers that pass play well. It came at the expense of Michigan safety

Jim Betts, who had intercepted Kern earlier in the game.

"Woody always said Betts started overplaying the run and the short passes (after the interception) and that was a longer pass," Cheney said. "Bruce went in untouched and was really wide open on the play going into the south end of the stadium. Woody always attributed it to the safety overplaying the shorter passes and the run."

Not surprisingly, Hayes chose to stick with the run for most of the rest of the afternoon but with a bit of a twist.

Rather than the typical "26" and "27" lead off-tackle plays that were the bread and butter of his offense, Hayes relied mostly on "15" and "16." Those were sprint draws designed to take advantage of Michigan's slanting defensive front.

"The halfback and fullback wouldn't go directly to the hole - they would step out and then Kern would go back and hand the ball off," Cheney said. "They could see the hole better and the defensive linemen from Michigan had committed to their slants so you could take them where they wanted to go and then cut off the back side."

"It really worked well because it gave their defensive linemen a chance to commit to the slant and then we just blocked them the way they wanted to go and cut off the back side. It created a lot of natural holes."

Halfback Leo Hayden ran for 117 yards and a touchdown on 28 carries while full-

back John Brockington added another 77 yards on 27 totes that afternoon.

"I've got to give Woody tremendous credit because you could see those numbers are what they were, and there was a reason for it because (Michigan) had a lot of talent," Cheney said.

In the process of gaining revenge and ruining the Wolverines' perfect season, the Buckeyes finished their own unbeaten regular season and earned a trip to the Rose Bowl, where they lost a 27-17 decision to No. 12 Stanford and Heisman Trophy winner Jim Plunkett.

The victory over the Wolverines gave Cheney two pairs of Gold Pants in his three seasons on the varsity squad. He was not a starter during the first one, but he did see a couple of minutes late in the 50-14 rout of 1968. That included clearing the way for star fullback Jim Otis to score his school-record-tying fourth touchdown of the afternoon, a 2-yard burst with 1:23 remaining.

"I was in the game at the end and we had driven down to the north end and there wasn't much time left - probably two minutes - and Woody sent Otis into the game and the story goes that Woody had told Otis to call his own play," Cheney said. "If Otis was going to call his own play, you know he was going to run the ball. He purportedly saw that I was playing left tackle and knew that the chances were better if he ran the ball over me, and lo and behold, we scored."

"I think by that time the Michigan linemen were so worn out that Mickey Mouse could have blocked them."



Dave Cheney



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MICHIGAN MEMORIES — REX KERN

Kern Helped Lead Buckeyes To 50-14 Spanking Of UM

Win In '68 Propelled OSU To National Title

By Mike Wachsman

Winning or losing the Ohio State-Michigan game has often had a direct bearing on the outcome of the Big Ten championship.

But in 1968 and 1969, the game took on even more meaning. Winning or losing that game had a direct bearing on the national college championship.

"In 1968, our win over Michigan helped us be ranked number one in the nation," former Ohio State quarterback Rex Kern told *BSB*. "We beat Michigan 50-14, which I think still stands as the biggest margin of defeat in the history of the rivalry."

Actually, Michigan's 86-0 win in 1902 stands as the most lopsided game in the series history, but Kern can be forgiven for not knowing much about a game that was played nearly 50 years before he was born.

"What I really remember going into that sophomore year game was that Michigan was a very good football team and we were a very good football team," Kern said. "It was a hard-fought game from the very beginning through the end of the first half."

"At the beginning of the second half, we made some adjustments. Even as we were far ahead of Michigan, I still felt like we were in a very close football game."

That 1968 contest was a good one for Kern as he completed five of eight passes for 41 yards and ran the ball eight times for 96 yards.

The Buckeyes went on to play in the Rose Bowl and defeated Southern Cal, earning the national championship for 1968. They had their sights set on a second

straight national crown in 1969 and entered the Michigan game unbeaten.

But the Buckeyes lost to the Wolverines in 1969 by a score of 24-12. In those days, if a Big Ten school did not go to the Rose Bowl, it stayed home for the holidays. Therefore, the Buckeyes, who were rolling for a possible second straight national championship, had their season suddenly grind to a halt.

That made the 1970 contest, Kern's last in Ohio Stadium, even more important to him.

"The game in 1970 had more emotion than any other game I participated in, either at the high school, college or professional level," he remembered. "Michigan had beaten us the year before and knocked us out of our second national championship."

"In our three years, we had only lost one game in the Big Ten, the Michigan game the year before, and we were very much keyed up for the football game."

The Buckeyes were keyed up enough to win the game 20-9 and get to their second Rose Bowl in three years.

Kern credited then-head coach Woody Hayes with keeping the Buckeyes focused on beating Michigan in 1970.

"The thing that impressed me the most was how Woody was able to contain us and control us," he said. "We did not peak too early. We were ready to play that football game probably midway through the season."

"It was something that weighed on our minds heavily. It was something we felt we wanted — to go out a winner and not have what happened to us the year before happen again."



Rex Kern

There have been many memorable games played between the two schools. Ones that stand out include the 1950 Snow Bowl, the 1954 win that gave OSU its first national title under Hayes, and the 1968 contest that Kern remembers so fondly.

But he sensed an increase in the rivalry when Bo Schembechler took over as head coach at Michigan in 1969 and believes that Woody and Bo helped make the Ohio State-Michigan tilt what it is today.

"Let's not take anything away from the history of the rivalry," Kern said. "There was always that strong rivalry. Woody and Bo just added to it and made it even bigger. It had its place before, but they brought it to a higher level."

Kern, who now resides in Ventura, Calif., is not sure the game has as much at stake as it did when he was playing. He said the reason for that is the principals who made the game the premier college football game of the 1960s and 1970s are now gone.

"I know Woody is no longer there and Bo is no longer there," he said. "But I'm sure somewhere there has to be some tradition that is carried on. Is it as intense as it once was? That I don't know."

But Kern did know that it was instilled into players who wore the scarlet and gray that, if nothing else, salvage your pride and beat the Wolverines.

"I do know this," Kern said. "When you came to Ohio State, you prepared to beat Michigan. If you didn't win another football game all year, you'd better beat

Michigan.

"There's not any animosity or any begrudging of Michigan. Woody had the greatest amount of respect for the University of Michigan, not only from a football standpoint but from quality of education. So it was the strong, strong, respectful rivalry."

The games may have been great ones from an individual view, but the bottom line was that if you didn't beat the Wolverines, you didn't have a good game.

"There are so many great memories," Kern said. "Two of the three years, it was very fond memories. Woody always built the game up that if we beat Michigan, everything else would take care of itself."

"I would probably have to put the Ohio State-Michigan games I played in into two categories: the two we won, and the one I don't like to talk about."

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MICHIGAN MEMORIES — JIM OTIS

Strap Crossed Michigan's Goal Eight Times

By MARK REA

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

Former Ohio State fullback Jim Otis owns a place in the history of the OSU-Michigan rivalry. He also owns a piece of it.

Otis keeps an old chin strap he had from the Michigan game in 1968 when he scored four touchdowns and the Buckeyes whipped the Wolverines 50-20.

But the chin strap wasn't the one Otis wore that day. It was one that was already steeped in tradition when he received it from a fan the night before his big game.

"We had an old-fashioned pep rally the night before that game, and somebody came up to me and gave me the chin strap that Bob Ferguson had worn when he scored four touchdowns against Michigan in 1961," Otis remembers. "Now, when I was a little kid, Bob Ferguson was one of my heroes. So of course I thought getting that chin strap was the greatest thing."

"I really wanted to wear it, but it had deteriorated somewhat over the years and I couldn't wear it on my helmet. But I did tape it under part of my shoulder pads, and like him, I scored four touchdowns against Michigan. That chin strap crossed the goal line eight times against Michigan."

Otis, who played for the Buckeyes from 1967-69, rushed for 143 yards and tied a school record that day with his

four TDs. The record has since been broken — Pete Johnson scored five times against North Carolina in 1975, and Keith Byars equaled that against Illinois in 1984.

But the fact that Otis got to score a fourth touchdown in 1968 was unusual.

"My fourth touchdown came really after I was out of the game," he said. "You know, you look at the final score and it looks like a blowout, but it was a heckuva game in the first half, a real see-saw battle."

"But we put it away in the second half. We were beating them pretty soundly and near at the end of the game, one of our backup tailbacks, Ray Gillian, made about a 50-yard run and got the ball inside the five-yard line. We tried to put it in, but couldn't do it. Then it got to be fourth and four."

"I was standing on the sideline real close to Woody and I said, 'Coach, do you want that touchdown?' He said, 'Yeah. Go in and get it.' I asked him, 'What play?' and he looked at me and said, 'You call it.'"

Otis said he didn't have time to think as he was running back onto the field.

"I got out there in the huddle and I was the only upperclassman out there," he said. "I looked over and saw (offensive tackle) Dave Cheney, who was a sophomore that year and said, 'Dave, Coach Hayes wants this touchdown and we're coming right over you.' We called the infamous '27' play. I ran right over Dave, and that was my fourth touch-



Jim Otis

down that afternoon."

The 50-20 victory over the Wolverines in 1968 propelled the Buckeyes to a Big Ten championship and a Rose Bowl appearance against Southern Cal. When OSU defeated the Trojans 27-16, it gave the Buckeyes the national championship.

They were working on a 22-game winning streak and a shot at back-to-back national titles in 1969 when the Buckeyes met up with Michigan again during Otis' senior year.

"I guess I could take some credit for the win my junior year, and I certainly need to take some credit for the defeat the following year," he said. "One of the real critical plays of that game was when we went for fourth-and-one and I carried the ball. And I tell you this: I'll go to my grave knowing I made it, but they didn't give it to us."

"A runner who does a lot of short-yardage running knows whether he made it or not. Of course, I did a lot of it in college and did a heckuva lot of it in the pros. A runner always knows how much he has to get, how he's going to get it and whether or not he gets it. It was around the 25-yard line, and I knew exactly how much I had to get."

"I remember we had a great surge on the play, and I knew that we'd made it. We got a really, really bad spot. Isn't this crazy? Here I am, sitting here talking about something that happened 23 years ago like it was yesterday."

"Anyway, we got that bad spot and turned the ball over to Michigan. I think that was real critical for us. If we

had made that, we would have gone in and scored and then, who knows what would have happened."

As things turned out, the Wolverines took advantage of some uncharacteristic turnovers by the Buckeyes and took a 24-12 victory. It was the first of 10 classic OSU-Michigan games with Woody Hayes and Bo Schembechler on the opposing sidelines.

After Otis finished his Ohio State career, he went on to a 10-year career in the NFL that included NFC rookie of the year honors with the St. Louis Cardinals.

Despite his accomplishments in the pro ranks, though, Otis said he never played in a bigger game than "The Game."

"It's the greatest college game in football," he said. "I don't know if these kids who are playing right now understand it, but this is bigger than the Rose Bowl. This is the biggest game in college football. They won't ever play in a bigger game. That's why they're so damn lucky — they get to play in it every year. It's just the greatest college game there ever was."

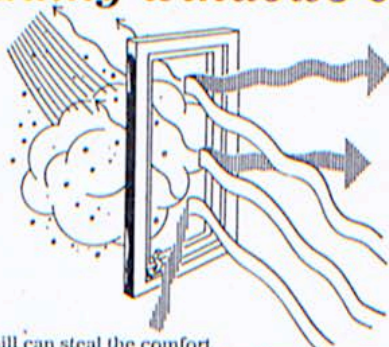


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MICHIGAN MEMORIES

Rivalry Never Left Super Sophomore Safety

By BLAKE WILLIAMS
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Associate Editor

Mike Sensibaugh was a fan of Michigan opponents early on.

The Cincinnati native who would go on to play safety for Ohio State from 1968-70 and set the program record for interceptions with 22, a mark that still stands, attended one Michigan home game during his recruitment.

Sensibaugh was a standout quarterback in the Queen City and initially wanted to attend an out-of-state school. He went to a game in Ann Arbor as a favor to the man recruiting him, he said, but after seeing North Carolina hand No. 8 Michigan a 21-7 loss thanks to a solid day through the air, he left the Big House more interested in the Tar Heels.

"I was so excited after that game, I was a quarterback at that time, and I remember watching the quarterback on the other team," Sensibaugh said with a laugh. "I think I contacted them."

Sensibaugh didn't go to North Carolina, of course, and didn't play quarterback in college. Instead, he remained in state and transitioned to safety, becoming one of the members of the famed Super Sophs at Ohio State under legendary coach Woody Hayes. Ohio State landed him in large part because Hayes was the only coach in his recruitment to take an interest in academics, setting up a meeting with the head of the math department on Sensibaugh's visit.

The son of a preacher, Sensibaugh had limited knowledge of the Ohio State-Michigan rivalry prior to arriving at Ohio State in 1967. Thanks to conference rules that prohibited freshmen from playing, he didn't fully experience the intensity of that game until 1968.

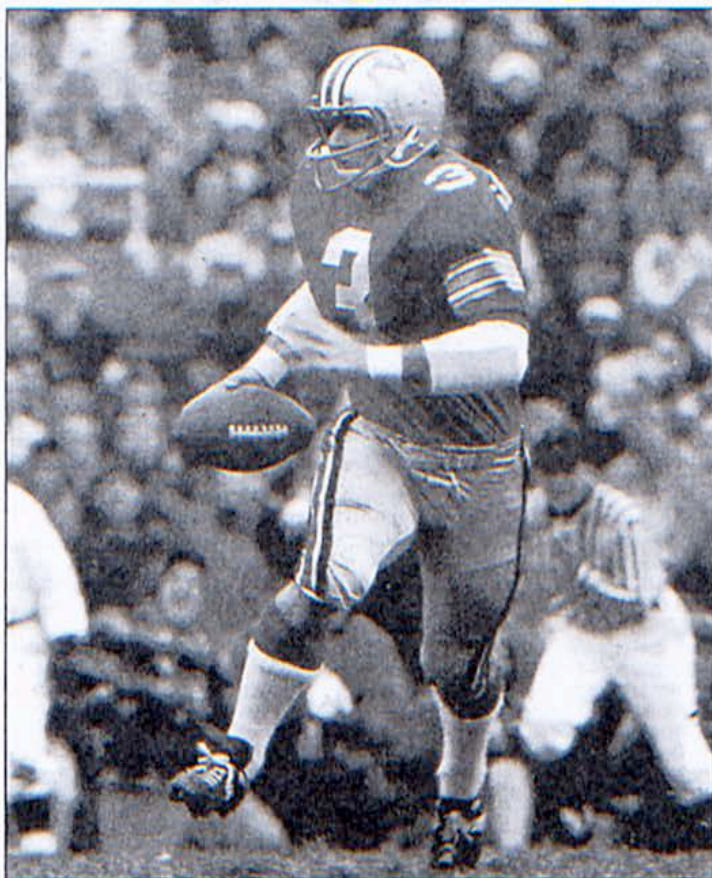
While waiting to see the field as a freshman — a year the former safety called the longest and most grueling of his life — Sensibaugh and the rest of the freshmen routinely challenged the varsity in practice. He and his classmates were so dominant that when Sensibaugh and his roommate Doug Adams hosted a recruit the week of the 1967 game against Michigan, they jokingly asked the high schooler why he would bother coming to Ohio State with so much talent in front of him.

That high school senior, Big Ten Network analyst and former Minnesota head coach Glen Mason, attended Ohio State anyway, but Sensibaugh's point about the abundance of talent in his class was proved correct the following season.

In his first year of eligibility, Sensibaugh and his fellow Super Sophomores dominated every team in their path, winning their nine regular-season games by an average of 18 points per game. Sensibaugh hauled in five interceptions and handled punting duties for the Buckeyes.

None of those picks came in the 50-14 drubbing of Michigan that sent Ohio State to the Rose Bowl and led to a national championship, but none was needed. Sensibaugh remembers that game and that national title season as much for the selfishness of the seniors as he does for the excellence of his classmates.

"What I remember so much about it was guys that were ahead of us age-wise, a lot of them took a seat," Sensibaugh said. "I remember seniors playing on special teams. Guys didn't give up with what was going on. The breed of the athletes that we had in the



FILE PHOTO

NOSE FOR THE BALL — Safety Mike Sensibaugh (3) recorded 22 interceptions during his Ohio State career, a program record which stands to this day.

sophomore class was pretty good, but they were better leaders than we were as seniors.

"A big victory against Michigan and all the stuff that came out after with Woody going for two points, it was the final touch. The big thing was getting to go to the Rose Bowl as sophomores."

The Buckeyes dominated the Granddaddy of Them All that year, topping O.J. Simpson's USC Trojans by a 27-16 margin as Sensibaugh returned an interception for 22 yards in the victory.

It was thought the Buckeyes would be even better the following year, and for eight games they were, topping opponents by more than 37 points per game entering the yearly clash with Michigan. Ohio State famously fell 24-12 in that game, despite an interception and six solo tackles from Sensibaugh, and the national champion safety said the loss stays with him 46 years later.

"We couldn't repeat in the Rose Bowl, so where do we go? The best team is not even going to get to go to a bowl game," Sensibaugh recalled. "That was sort of an eye-opener."

"That was a big loss and a long ride home. If I remember right, after that game we couldn't even get the bus out of the place to get home. It was just crazy, wild, nuts up in Michigan."

When the Buckeyes finally did arrive home, they watched a two-loss Wolverine team go to the Rose Bowl and suffer its third loss of the season to USC.

Sensibaugh's senior season saw him fol-

low up his school-record nine interceptions in 1969 season with eight thefts in 1970. He earned his second consecutive All-Big Ten honor and was a first-time All-American that season. Still, it was a difficult year to enjoy.

Hayes was obsessed with the 1969 loss to Michigan, and it colored the entire 1970 season. Sensibaugh said that the first eight wins of the season were nearly impossible to enjoy because none of those victories accomplished the stated goal for the year. At least for that year, it really was a one-game season.

"It set a goal for us that our senior year we

had one goal, to beat Michigan," Sensibaugh said of the 1969 loss. "It was, 'Come on, OK, three more games to go and then we get to Michigan ... two more games to go.'"

That countdown mercifully came to an end Nov. 21, 1970, when the Buckeyes topped Michigan 20-9 in a game in which Sensibaugh recorded three stops.

"It was all out," the safety said. "This was our last game in Ohio Stadium and we were determined."

Ohio State went to the Rose Bowl to face Stanford but had already accomplished its season-long mission and fell to the Cardinal, 27-17.

While that 1970 regular-season finale was the last one Sensibaugh played against Michigan, it was hardly the end of the rivalry for the Cincinnati native.

He was an eighth-round pick in the 1971 NFL draft by the Kansas City Chiefs. After five seasons Sensibaugh was traded to St. Louis, an unlikely spot for the rivalry to be reignited for the safety.

Waiting for Sensibaugh in the Gateway City was offensive lineman Dan Dierdorf. The Michigan alum went just 1-2 against the Buckeyes, but he graduated the same year as the Ohio State safety and his one victory was the all-important 1969 contest. He didn't let Sensibaugh forget.

"I encountered Mr. Dierdorf, he was part of the Michigan team that beat us and was there when we beat them both times," Sensibaugh said. "There was always a little bit of a rivalry there, mouthing off. Dan was very vocal everywhere."

After three seasons with the Cardinals, Sensibaugh retired with 27 career interceptions in his 83 NFL starts. He settled in the St. Louis area and got into the pool business. His three grown children relocated to Ohio and while they may not have the passion for the rivalry that their father does, they know not to say the M-word around him, Sensibaugh said.

Though he now deals with various health issues related to his playing days, the safety said he wouldn't give up his time playing football and the experiences it afforded him — including a firm place in the history of the Ohio State-Michigan rivalry — for anything.

"I think I inherited a little bit of Woody's — I don't know how much he really hated them, but I inherited that," Sensibaugh said. "Michigan is not part of me in any way. It's a rivalry to this day."

It's fitting that a man whose first experience with the Wolverines involved a fondness for their opponent still roots against them nearly 50 years later.



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MICHIGAN MEMORIES — JIM STILLWAGON

Revenge Motivated Buckeyes To Win In '70

By TODD HARRELL

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

When Jim Stillwagon thinks about the Ohio State-Michigan game, he thinks of 1969 and the word "revenge."

"I don't think I was ever involved in a game that I or my teammates wanted to win more badly than the Michigan game in 1970," the former All-American middle guard says.

Stillwagon was the anchor of the Ohio State defense during the time period in OSU football history better known as the "Super Sophomores" era.

As a sophomore in 1968, Stillwagon and company compiled a perfect 10-0 record, won the Big Ten championship and took home the unanimous national championship.

Perhaps more importantly to some, the Buckeyes routed Michigan at home that year 50-14.

But that '68 clash pales a bit for Stillwagon in comparison to what happened the next two years when the Bucks faced the Wolverines in Ann Arbor in 1969 and the following year in Columbus in 1970.

Stillwagon and the '69 Buckeyes rolled into Ann Arbor as the number one-ranked team in the country with a perfect 8-0 record and were being touted as being not only OSU's greatest team ever, but also possibly the greatest team to ever play the game of college football.

Then something happened. The 7-2 Wolverines, under first-year head coach Bo Schembechler, did what was thought to be the impossible. They defeated the Buckeyes 24-12.

The Wolverines' victory that year not only sent Michigan to Pasadena, but it also crushed the Buckeyes' national championship hopes and ended their 22-game winning streak.

"What can I say? They just outplayed and outcoached us and came out and won the game," Stillwagon said. "We were always an attacking, swarming defense and the only two times that we did not really attack our opponent was

that game against Michigan and against Stanford a year later in the Rose Bowl."

Stillwagon said he heard stories through the years from some former Michigan players that the Wolverines felt like they would win the game if they had the lead at halftime.

"(Former UM offensive guard and current ABC color analyst) Dan Dierdorf once confided in me and told me that before that game, Bo had told his team that if they came out and would happen to outplay us for the first 30 minutes, that they would win the game," Stillwagon remembered.

"Apparently, Bo told his players that Woody was predictable and by watching us in the first half, they would pretty much know which way and what plays we would run in the second half. As it turned out, Bo was pretty much right."

Interestingly enough, the halftime score in 1969 was 24-12. Neither team would score any more points the rest of the afternoon and the final score would forever be etched in Stillwagon's mind as well as in the minds of his teammates.

"We just played against ourselves," he said. "Ohio State was just not geared up to play catch-up football and we were just taken out of our game plan."

More vividly than the game itself, Stillwagon said he remembers what happened when the game ended and thousands of Michigan fans came pouring onto the field.

"People were spitting on us and throwing mixed drinks in our faces as we were leaving the field and the police were not helping us out at all," he said. "They wouldn't give us a police escort out of the place or anything and that whole experience was something that I think burned in all of us and made us anticipate the game for the following year."

In 1970, both teams came into the game with perfect records — Ohio State at 8-0, Michigan at 9-0 — and a possible



Jim Stillwagon

national title on the line. But the records and titles were secondary in Stillwagon's mind.

"Revenge," he said. "It was a game of revenge. I think every player to a man, even down to the OSU ball boys, wanted to win that game."

Everyone's wish came true as Ohio

State won 20-9. Despite the bitterness of losing in '69 and the shabby post-game treatment the Bucks endured, Stillwagon said the Buckeyes still respected the Wolverines.

"We actually sort of got along and respected most of the Wolverine players," he said. "It was just the people around them, their fans. That was really who we wanted to exact some revenge on in 1970."

Stillwagon had such an outstanding game against Michigan in that fabled 1970 contest that he was named *Sports Illustrated's* defensive player of the week.

Looking back, he said he thinks the reason the OSU-Michigan game is so important is the history behind the rivalry.

"It's the pride and the tradition between the two schools that I think makes it as great as it is," Stillwagon said. "It's about bragging rights, about the schools' fans. It's about everything. It's just a great, great event."

Stillwagon's advice for the 1993 Buckeyes as they prepare to try to capture the outright Big Ten title with a victory over the Michigan: "When you get the opportunity, just take it."

In '70, Stillwagon and the rest of the Buckeyes did just that.

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1968 PROFILE/MICHIGAN MEMORIES: JACK TATUM

Tatum Still Irked By '69 Loss To Wolverines

By MIKE WACHSMAN

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Although he was on the winning side two of the three times his Ohio State teams played Michigan, the one that stands out in Jack Tatum's mind was the 1969 loss.

Bo Schembechler was the new Michigan head coach, and he had learned at the feet of the master, Woody Hayes himself, while Hayes was coach at Miami (Ohio). No one gave the Wolverines much of a chance against the top-ranked, nearly dynastic Buckeyes, but they somehow pulled it off, scoring the 24-12 upset.

"To this day I'm still not sure how they did it," Tatum said.

The numbers, save for the ones on the scoreboard, were pretty even, with Michigan outrushing the Buckeyes 266-222 and OSU throwing for 47 more yards. Turnovers would be OSU's undoing, though. The Buckeyes fumbled twice and threw six interceptions, watching helplessly as Michigan controlled the clock and ended OSU's 22-game winning streak.

"We just were not very sharp that day," Tatum said. "I'm not really sure why, either. We were on a huge winning streak, we were big favorites, we pointed to that game and felt confident. But Michigan probably remembered what we did to them the year before (a 50-14 OSU shellacking)."

Tatum was instrumental in that game, helping to hold a big-time Michigan rushing attack in check. The Wolverines averaged over 300 yards on the ground in '68, but OSU limited them to just 140 yards, 91 from all-league back Ron Johnson.

That 1968 team was one of the greatest in college history, largely because of Tatum's sophomore class.

Blessed with athletic ability and speed seldom seen in Columbus, Tatum was instantly marked for stardom. He began his career at linebacker, where he played for two years before moving back to the secondary as a senior. His savage hits

Tatum Vs. Michigan

Won 2, Lost 1

1968 — Ohio State 50, Michigan 14

1969 — Michigan 24, Ohio State 12

1970 — Ohio State 20, Michigan 9

were the stuff of legend, and he could ferret out a ball carrier from anywhere on the field.

"I was always someone who loved to hit," he said. "I enjoyed contact more than being hit, so I decided to play defense. They had the opportunity to put me at running back, but I felt more comfortable on defense."

Tatum said one of the keys to the 1968 season was the way the older players allowed the youngsters to fit in. He expected some animosity — sophomores were ruling the roost and taking jobs — but there was none.

"The older guys did a great job with us," Tatum said. "There were probably a few who were a little upset at us, but they realized we were all on the same team and working for one thing."

The second half of the '68 Michigan game was perhaps the best the Buckeyes played all year, maybe even better than the 13-0 shutdown of Purdue earlier in the year.

Everything clicked, and when the lights finally went out, the Buckeyes had their biggest victory over the Wolverines.

"We were just on," said Tatum, who intercepted a pass in the win. "We came out after halftime and really put it on them."

But that '69 game still nags at him.

"If we put it together there, who knows how we might be looked at," Tatum said of OSU's legacy. The Buckeyes also went into 1970 as the nation's No. 1 team but lost in the Rose Bowl, so three straight national titles didn't happen.

"We really had a pretty unbelievable bunch of players," Tatum said. "By all rights we probably should have won three in a row. But things happened and we only

won one."

The '69 game gnaws at Tatum for a variety of reasons, mainly because the Buckeyes had things under control and fell apart.

The Buckeyes led 12-7 after Rex Kern found Jan White on a 22-yard scoring pass. The kick was good, but Hayes decided to take the points off the board after Michigan was whistled for being offside. The Wolverines got to Kern, who ate the ball, and left the margin at 12-7 in OSU's favor.

Michigan took over from there, quarterback Don Moorhead engineering a 67-yard drive with short passes before Billy Taylor broke loose for a 27-yard scoring scamper. That put Michigan up 14-12, and OSU was never the same.

"We knew what they were doing, but we couldn't stop it," Tatum said. "That's the worst thing. If you don't know what's coming, it's a little different. But we expected everything they did and just did a bad job stopping it. That's why that game was so bad — we did ourselves in."

Tatum finished his career with two All-American mentions and is widely regarded as the Buckeyes' all-time greatest defensive back. Tatum, known in football circles as "The Assassin," also had a standout career with the Oakland Raiders. He still works for the club in an administrative capacity.

"I've been part of two great teams during my football career — the Buckeyes and Oakland," Tatum said. "They were different situations, but they both had the same

idea, trying to win it all. We're having a pretty good season right now and want to make the playoffs, but there's still a lot of football to be played," he said of his Raiders.

"The one thing I've learned is that you don't assume you've got something taken care of until it is. We all learned that the hard way (in 1969)."



CHANCE BROCKWAY

JACKED UP FOR MICHIGAN — As one of Ohio State's all-time greats, Jack Tatum starred out of the box as a sophomore in 1968. Still bothered to this day by OSU's 1969 loss to Michigan, Tatum put that behind him and had an All-Pro NFL career.

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MICHIGAN MEMORIES: JAN WHITE

White Saw Highs, Lows Of Michigan Rivalry

By MARCUS HARTMAN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

For memorable Michigan-Ohio State games, few can top Jan White's experiences.

One of the storied "Super Sophs" of 1968, White took part in whipping the Wolverines en route to a national championship then suffered one of the bitterest defeats in school history one season later when the Buckeyes' hopes for a second consecutive national championship went up in flames in Ann Arbor.

Those two titanic tussles are so significant they overshadow the final OSU-Michigan game White took part in, despite that contest being another matchup of two top-five teams.

More than 35 years after his final college football contest, the tight end who was a three-year starter for head coach Woody Hayes' Buckeyes and earned All-America recognition in 1970 had no trouble recalling what stuck out in his mind when remembering what it was like to play Michigan.

"For me, one of the things I remember is the week leading up to the game there was no levity whatsoever with Coach Hayes," White said.

Things were always a little tight during the season, White said, but the tone grew even more serious when "That Team Up North," as the coach often referred to the Wolverines, was the next opponent.

"The week leading up to it was usually filled with a little bit of extra tension to make sure you know your plays, make sure you know your assignments," White said. "That's what strikes me right off the bat."

And that phenomenon was most prevalent before White's first OSU-Michigan contest in 1968.

A sophomore and a first-year starter (freshmen were not eligible at the time) at tight end, the native of Harrisburg, Pa., said he was not prepared for the sheer magnitude of attention heaped on the 65th edition of The Game.

"I'm 19 years old and I certainly understood the significance of the rivalry, but at 19 years old, I don't know that you get it," he said. "I wasn't as nervous as I might be today, but I remember the sound was just deafening. We'd come up to the line and (Ohio State quarterback) Rex (Kern) would make an audible and we wouldn't be sure what he was saying."

White could not recall ever hearing a stadium that loud before.

"I didn't even know it could get that loud," he said. "Most of the time as players we didn't pay that much attention to the crowd. You hear the crowd but your focus is elsewhere. That day you couldn't help but focus on the crowd. You were certainly focused on your assignments and what you were supposed to do, but that day you just couldn't help it because it was so loud."

With Ohio State ranked No. 2 and Michigan ranked fourth, it was the first time both rivals entered their clash ranked in the Associated

Press top five since 1942.

The teams traded leads in the first half, with Michigan going in front with a touchdown on the opening drive only to fall behind 14-7. After the Buckeyes fumbled a punt deep in their own territory, Michigan was able to tie the score with a run by Ron Johnson with more than seven minutes remaining in the half.

From that point, the Buckeyes took the ball at their own 14-yard line and never looked back. Halfback Jim Otis scored a touchdown from 2 yards out with 0:36 left to cap an 86-yard drive and give the Buckeyes a 21-14 halftime lead.

White said the atmosphere in the locker room was fairly calm.

"There was no panic as I recall going into the locker room," he said. "It was a home game so we were feeling pretty good that we were ahead, and there were some things we needed to keep doing on offense and the defense needed to shut them down."

Whatever was said or done must have been effective, as the Buckeyes outscored Michigan 29-0 in the second half.

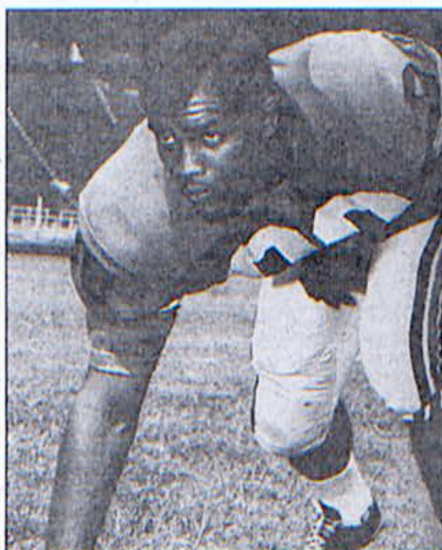
Ohio State scored the points on the strength of its rushing attack and staunch defense led by Jim Stillwagon and Jack Tatum.

Otis and Kern combined to account for six touchdowns and 239 of the Buckeyes' 421 rushing yards, while Tatum and Stillwagon led the defense with 12 and nine tackles, respectively. Tatum, Art Burton and Doug Adams all had interceptions.

Burton's pick late in the fourth quarter set up one of the more famous exchanges in the history of the rivalry.

With the Buckeyes ahead 44-14, Burton returned the interception to the Michigan 11. Three plays later, Otis scored from 2 yards out for his fourth touchdown of the day, giving Ohio State a 36-point cushion with 1:23 left in the game.

A 51-14 final figured to look good in the newspaper the next day, but Hayes apparently thought 52-14 would be better.



SUPER SOPH — Former Ohio State tight end Jan White enjoyed the best of times and the worst of times against Michigan. His Buckeyes beat the Wolverines in 1968 and '70 but lost out on a chance at the national championship after an upset loss in 1969. (File photo)

attempt was no good.

Final score: OSU 50, U-M 14.

But it was not good enough for the OSU coach.

"He's upset with us," White said. "He's mad because we didn't get these points."

When a reporter asked Hayes after the game about the failed conversion, the coach balled up his fists and declared, "Because they wouldn't let me go for three."

"That's how bad he wanted to beat them," White said.

One year later, the story would be quite different.

After beating No. 1 Southern California in the Rose Bowl to earn the school's fourth national championship, Ohio State returned 40 lettermen, including 18 starters, and destroyed

"The offense is running off field and we think we're done for the day so we're giving each other high fives, and all of a sudden Woody sends us back on the field," White said. "We're trying to figure out why we were back on the field. I thought at first maybe there was a penalty or something, and then someone gets in the huddle and says, 'We're going for two.'"

And that they did. Senior backup quarterback Bill Long threw for William Pollitt, but the pass was too long and the conversion

virtually all corners before traveling to Michigan for the season finale.

The Buckeyes' closest win in their first eight contests was a 34-7 win at Minnesota, but the 12th-ranked Wolverines pulled a major upset by a 24-12 score.

Although White put Ohio State ahead 12-7 in the second quarter by turning a hook pattern into a 22-yard touchdown pass from Kern, those were the last points the Buckeyes would score. They were undone by six turnovers.

It was the first organized football game White ever lost.

"We were going into that game as No. 1, so we were feeling pretty cocky," White said. "We were feeling our oats a little, but we also understood that anything could happen."

"I can't tell you what happened. I really don't know. I just know that at the end of the game I was as devastated as anybody, of course. I'm not sure what I was supposed to be feeling because I hadn't had that feeling before."

That game snapped the longest winning streak in school history at 22 games and denied Ohio State a second straight national championship.

Needless to say, much emotion swirled around White's final contest against Michigan. The 1970 edition of The Game was the first matchup of unbeaten, untied conference foes going for a Big Ten championship since 1905.

"I don't know that it was as big a buildup (as the 1968 game)," White said. "We went back to the '69 game and vowed not to let that happen again. We came to realize that regardless of rank anything could happen. You have to give it everything and not take anything for granted and just do your job."

Although he professed not to remember much more from the '70 contest, the fifth-ranked Buckeyes knocked off No. 4 Michigan, 20-9.

The Buckeyes outrushed Michigan 242-37, and Leo Hayden put the contest away with a 4-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter for the final points of the afternoon.

For White, it was a fitting end.

"Absolutely, to beat those guys two out of three, it was that feeling of revenge," he said. "It wasn't quite as big because they weren't No. 1, but nevertheless it was payback."



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