

BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN



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Vol. 30, No. 2

"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

September 18, 2010

Revenge Denied

*Sparked By Pregame Speech,
Buckeyes Downgrade Hurricanes*



JOSH WINSLOW

OUT OF REACH – Miami (Fla.) safety Vaughn Telemaque (7) could not catch Ohio State quarterback Terrelle Pryor (2) on one of the quarterback's 20 rushes Sept. 11 during a 36-24 Buckeye victory over the Hurricanes.

By ADAM JARDY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

In a week full of ghosts, it took the words of a past great to bring the focus back to the present for the Ohio State football team.

With the No. 2 Buckeyes preparing to face No. 12 Miami (Fla.) for a showdown in Ohio Stadium, talk leading up to the contest was peppered with thoughts back to the last time the two programs met on the gridiron. In a game that ranks among the most thrilling in school history, the Buckeyes produced a 31-24 double-overtime victory in the 2003 national championship game and won their first national title in 34 years.

So it was that a few hours before what would become a 36-24 victory for the Buckeyes, former linebacker Cie Grant found himself addressing this year's team as the honorary captain for the game. Grant played a key role in that championship contest, recording seven tackles, and his blitz around the left end forced the final incomplete pass of the game and set off a wild celebration in the Arizona desert.

Like his teammates, Grant had watched as line judge Terry Porter hesitated before whistling Miami cornerback Glenn Sharpe for pass interference as he defended OSU wideout Chris Gamble on fourth down in the first overtime. Three plays later, the Buckeyes punched the ball into the end zone to force a second overtime.

But with seemingly the entire state of Florida crying out for vengeance for a title it believed was rightfully theirs, Grant had a simple message for this group of Buckeyes during their pregame meal.

Forget that game.

"There was so much talk and hype on this game from '02 and Cie Grant came in and said, 'This is not about '02. Forget '02. That's in the past. This is the 2010 Buckeyes,' " junior center Michael Brewster said.

That apparently was exactly what the team needed to hear.

"He gave one of the best pregame speeches I've ever heard in my life," Brewster said. "He really set the tone. I wish you guys could've heard that pregame speech because it gave me chills. It was probably the longest and I heard it was the best pregame any of these four- and five-year guys have ever heard."

In his speech, Grant quoted lyrics from the song "Up All Night" by Drake, a popular rapper among the team. Grant, famous for his rendition of "Carmen Ohio" at the ceremony honoring that year's championship team, sang the chorus to "Up All Night" to this year's team.

"Their opinion doesn't matter – we're the only thing that matters," the song goes. "Man I love my team. I would die for these (guys)."

"Cie, he's a great guy," junior wide receiver DeVier Posey said. "He's a great speaker. He had

everybody ready to flip the tables and just go crazy in his pregame speech. When he said that, the whole team seemed to feel exactly where he was coming from."

During the season, a number of Buckeyes have posted lyrics to that song on their personal Twitter pages.

"It made a lot of sense," said junior quarterback Terrelle Pryor, who sang a few bars for reporters. "He was saying, 'I love my team, I love my team, I'd die for my team.' When he said that, I got fired up because we all came together. It was the perfect quote. He got us going."

Following the game, Brewster said the Buckeyes gave out a game ball for the first time in his OSU tenure. It went to Grant.

According to Posey, even head coach Jim Tressel was moved.

"Coach Tressel said, 'Whoever Drake is, I'm going to start listening to him,' " the wideout said.

Grant was not the only Buckeye to address the team. According to senior cornerback Chimdi Chekwa, he was followed by captains Brian Rolle and Dane Sanzenbacher.

However, Chekwa was reluctant to repeat what the seniors said to the team.

"I don't know if I can say what they said," he said. "I don't want to get in trouble. They've got to

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OPINION

Victory With Flaws Is Perfect For Tressel

In what had been overly hyped as a return match of the 2003 Fiesta Bowl, Ohio State pretty much had its way Sept. 11 with Miami (Fla.), rolling up more than 400 yards of total offense, creating four turnovers and cruising to a 36-24 victory.

Trouble was that the victory could have/should have been by a much, much wider margin.

The OSU offense that was so effective in piling up yardage in the middle of the field against a supposedly tenacious Hurricanes defense bogged down several times in the red zone and had to settle for a school record-tying five field goals in six tries from senior kicker Devin Barclay.

Worse yet, the Buckeyes' special teams – often the strength of any Jim Tressel team – has proved to be the team's weakest link. And that's being generous. To put it bluntly, after only two games of the 2010 season, Ohio State's kick coverage stinks. Miami returned both a kickoff and a punt for touchdowns in the contest, accounting for more than half of its points and keeping the Hurricanes in the game.

Take away the special-teams breakdowns and turn half of the field-goal attempts into touchdowns and you get Ohio State stomping a 51-10 hole into their talkative rivals from South Beach.

Yet for all of the scarlet and gray warts that were exposed, the game may have been the perfect contest in the eyes of Tressel. It was a good, sound victory over the 12th-ranked team in the nation, a win that kept Ohio State solidly in the No. 2 spot in the polls and hopefully silenced a few more of the team's critics. It was also a mistake-riddled performance filled with enough glaring errors to keep the team fully attentive as it enters the soft part of the 2010 schedule.

There should be no more lingering doubt – at least not within the Buckeye Nation – that this team is a legitimate national championship contender. You could make the argument that Miami was overrated, but even if that turns out to be the case, one thing not up for conjecture is the way Ohio State took care of business.

That is what seems to set this team apart from those of the past couple of seasons. Last year, for example, the Buckeyes had a talent-laden roster and still lost games they should have won to USC and Purdue, teams that combined to go a pedestrian 14-11 in 2009. Physical mistakes and the inability to stay mentally focused after those mistakes hurt the team as much as anything the Trojans or Boilermakers did in those games.

Then came an epiphany of sorts in the Rose Bowl against Oregon, another big game most national pundits wrongly figured the Buckeyes would lose.

The explosive Ducks took the opening kickoff of the second half and marched for a touchdown that gave them a 17-16 lead. In the past, that was about the point in a meaningful game when the throats of Ohio State players would have started to tighten. Instead, the Buckeyes responded with a workmanlike drive that netted a 38-yard Barclay field goal and a 19-17 advantage.

The OSU defense followed by creating a turnover on the next series and held the vaunted Oregon offense to just one first down to show for its last four possessions.

Fast-forward nine months and the Buckeyes found themselves behind Miami by a 10-3 margin early in the second quarter. No panic, no second-guessing, no scratchy throats this time. Just an emphatic two-play, 80-yard response that began to suck the life out of the Hurricanes.

You can go back to last November and find that the Buckeyes have now vanquished four top-15 opponents – No. 10 Penn State, No. 13 Iowa, No. 7 Oregon and No. 12 Miami – over their last six games.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK Mark Rea

It is often said that one of the hardest things in sports is learning how to win. After enduring some tough, tough lessons, it appears the Buckeyes have learned well.

Eye Of The Beholder

I will concede that practically nothing Terrelle Pryor does is going to convince some fans he is a legitimate Heisman Trophy contender.

Pryor accounted for 346 yards of total offense against Miami – a defense that had given up only 110 yards in its season-opening win against Division I-AA Florida A&M – throwing for 233 yards and running for 113 more. It marked only the fourth time in program history that an Ohio State quarterback had thrown for 200 or more yards and rushed for 100 or more in the same game – and Pryor has three of those performances.

Even more impressive was the control over the game the junior QB exhibited in the second half. He appeared to be totally relaxed, repeatedly took what the Miami defense gave him and never tried to force the issue. As a result, he scrambled eight times for 70 yards in the second half – that's a tidy 8.8 yards per carry – and five of those runs resulted in first downs.

Yet most of what I heard after the game was how confused he looked at the end of the first half and how he completed less than 50 percent of his pass attempts.

I will concede the end of the first half was a mess. Thanks to Chimdi Chekwa's second interception, the Buckeyes got the ball back at the Miami 27 with less than a minute before intermission and two timeouts remaining.

Pryor connected with DeVier Posey on a third-and-16 pass play that netted 26 yards and gave Ohio State a first-and-goal at the 7 with 24 seconds left. After spiking the ball on his first down to stop the clock, Pryor hit Posey again on a short pass but the play netted only 3 yards.

Then with the clock ticking, the Buckeyes seemed to panic. Pryor quickly got his team to the line of scrimmage but Miami successfully defended a quarterback keeper to the right that resulted in a 3-yard loss. Barclay came on to kick a 24-yard field goal and gave OSU a 26-17 lead, but the team clearly squandered a golden opportunity to deliver a knockout punch.

The play call was obviously an error in judgment, but it wasn't entirely Pryor's fault. Tressel should have called his final timeout from the sideline and come up with a solid pass play to get the ball into the end zone. Even if the play had failed, the Buckeyes still would have had more than enough time to get Barclay on the field.

Of course, Pryor is the field general and he needed to have the presence of mind to call the timeout in that situation. Still, it was one of the few mistakes he made in the game.

As far as his completion rate is concerned, I would rather concentrate on a stat that is much more valuable. While Pryor completed only 44.4 percent of his attempts, he aver-

aged 8.6 yards per attempt and 19.4 yards per completion.

Any coach or scout will tell you those averages represent a formidable passing attack. Don't believe me? Scott Tolzien of Wisconsin led the Big Ten in pass efficiency last season and he averaged 8.3 yards per attempt and 12.8 yards per completion. Heisman Trophy runner-up Colt McCoy of Texas averaged 7.5 yards per attempt and 10.6 yards per completion.

And while we're on the subject of stats, here's another one in Pryor's favor. By either passing or running the ball, he had a direct hand in 17 of the Buckeyes' 21 first downs. That's an 81.0-percent success rate.

Productive, mistake-free, winning football is what Pryor is displaying so far this season, and those attributes are what everyone looks for in a Heisman Trophy candidate.

And Finally

- I heard some fans lamenting the fact that Tressel instructed his team to take three straight knees at the end of the game. Another meaningless touchdown would have meant nothing at that point and the head coach took every plausible negative (i.e. injury, turnover, etc.) out of the mix with the kneel-downs. Tressel also showed once again one of his most admirable traits – winning with class.

- Here is a particularly ugly stat. Going back to last year's overtime victory over Iowa, the Buckeyes have allowed 801 kick return yards in their last five games. That includes surrendering an average of 16.4 yards on seven punt returns and 29.8 yards on 23 kick-off returns. To say that isn't getting it done is like saying rattlesnakes have a bad attitude. No kidding.

- From the ugly to the sublime. Cameron Heyward's 80-yard interception return established a new family record. The longest play ever turned in by his father, the late Craig "Ironhead" Heyward, was a 75-yard pass reception in 1986 while he was a college star at Pittsburgh. The longest play of Ironhead's NFL career was 73-yard touchdown run as a New Orleans Saints rookie in 1988. (Thanks to longtime BSB staffer Craig Merz for the info.)

- About five seconds after Boise State's 33-30 win over Virginia Tech ended Sept. 6, so-called purists began lamenting the possibility that the Broncos will go undefeated and get one of the spots in the BCS National Championship Game. So what? If that's the way the system is set up and Boise State winds up undefeated, why not let the Broncos have a shot at the title? Regardless of their conference, they are a solid, well-coached team that is extremely entertaining to watch.

- That said, I believe the BCS system is stacked against Boise State. Humans are still involved in the USA Today coaches' and Harris Interactive polls – two components of the BCS standings – and I can't imagine too many voters placing Boise ahead of a one-loss SEC, Big Ten or Big 12 team on their final regular-season ballots. Also, the Broncos' poor strength of schedule factors into every computer poll used by the BCS. That all bakes into a cake that will make it extremely difficult for Boise State to play for the national title.

- Should the Downtown Athletic Club and the Heisman Trophy Trust take away the award won by former USC tailback Reggie Bush in 2005? I can see both sides of the argument although Bush was never my Heisman choice that year. Texas quarterback Vince Young topped my '05 ballot.

COVER STORY

Bulletin Board Material Helped OSU Prepare

Continued From Page 1

play Miami again next year so I don't want any bulletin board material. I'll just say that they did a great job giving us confidence and belief in ourselves."

Brewster said Grant also channeled former OSU great Jack Tatum.

"We were getting pretty hyped in the pregame meal," Brewster said. "It was incredible. He was just speaking from his heart, telling us how much this means. He was telling us to go out there and hit them in the mouth just like Jack Tatum said."

Tressel attempted to keep attention on this year's team during both his weekly media appearances. The first two questions of his Sept. 7 press conference concerned the last contest against the Hurricanes, and the coach tried to defuse the talk by twice telling reporters they were testing his memory asking about a game played nearly eight years ago.

Finally, the coach said he has never watched a replay of that contest.

"Someday I'll invite you all over and we'll sit in our rocking chairs and we'll break that game down and I'll tell you what I was thinking, if I can still think by then," he said. "Gosh, I don't know, there have been some lot of games since then and a big one to come."

In all, Tressel fielded seven questions about the 2003 title game that day. When the final question on that topic began with, "That '02 team that we've asked a lot about," Tressel interjected, "I'm kind of happy about that too. That's really made my day."

Posey said he felt like the Buckeyes might have exorcized a few lingering ghosts from the



JOSH WINSLOW

EASY QUESTION – Some of the pregame talk centered around Miami's fans and players not forgetting the 2003 national championship game, and the fans at Ohio Stadium had not forgotten either.

last time they played the Hurricanes but said his focus remains on continuing to improve from here.

"We don't really care about the '02 team," he said. "Respect to them, they're our last national championship team, but they had no influence on this game. This was about the 2010 Buckeyes. I feel like we went out and proved who we were today, but we've got a lot of getting better to do."

The Swag Gap

The focus on the here and now did not stop players and reporters from comparing historical tendencies between the two schools. A buzzword heard throughout the week was "swag," as in a cocky sense of confidence displayed by the Hurricanes and not the Buckeyes.

After the game, a reporter asked Rolle, a native of Immokalee, Fla., if this team had "outswaggered" the Hurricanes.

"We expected those guys to come in here jumping up and down and they did, but we've got a little swagger ourselves," he said. "Our defense, if I might say, we 'outswagged' theirs."

The Hurricanes made headlines when they arrived for the 1987 Fiesta Bowl. As the team

exited its airplane, each member of the squad was dressed in military fatigues. They then went on to lose 14-10 to Penn State.

This year, a rumor broke out that the Hurricanes planned to deplane in Columbus sporting LeBron James Miami Heat jerseys after the NBA superstar left the Cleveland Cavaliers and signed a free-agent deal this summer, but those rumors proved to be just that.

During the days leading up to the game, senior defensive lineman Dexter Larimore said the locker room was wallpapered with comments from past and present Hurricanes.

"Guys took it personal," Rolle said. "I went into my locker one day and the coaches or somebody put something about (Miami quarterback) Jacory Harris in my locker. I took it personal. A lot of people called me from back home saying, 'We love you, but Miami is going to take it.' I took it personal and I feel like the whole team took it personal."

The Buckeyes were careful throughout the week not to say anything that could be turned into bulletin board material for the Hurricanes. At one point, Pryor declined to

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COVER STORY

compare his touch on throwing the deep ball to that of Harris for fear it could be turned against him. Sanzenbacher said there was a good reason for that.

"Well, Coach Tress is our coach," he said. "Has he ever given anybody bulletin board material? It trickles down from the top."

Posey said that attitude starts while being recruited by Tressel.

"It's not just Coach Tressel, it's the kids that he recruits," the wideout said. "Before he gives you that offer he makes sure that he shows you the Block 'O' of life. You look at those things and each kid on our team has those values. Talking trash isn't one of them. We just come in here and play football. All that trash talking, that had to show up here at 3:40 on Saturday. They couldn't run."

Chekwa said he felt the coaches were reaching a bit with some of the Twitter messages they had posted in the locker room and said most of the trash talking he heard came from former Hurricanes.

A case in point: former Miami defensive lineman Dwayne Johnson – better known as "The Rock" of WWE fame – posted a video promising that his alma mater would stomp the Buckeyes.

"He's an actor," Larimore said. "Maybe he doesn't know what really is going on in the real world or something. When guys do all that crazy macho stuff, I think it's more trying to get their team motivated, but obviously we never want to see stuff like that."

During his high school years at Merrillville, Ind., Larimore established himself as a topflight wrestler. As a senior, he earned a state title and was ranked the No. 1 heavyweight in the nation. Asked if he thought he could take Johnson in a wrestling match, he said, "A real wrestling match? Yeah, probably."

Chekwa added that he felt Miami talked less trash than USC did last season prior to its game in Columbus.

As the Hurricanes warmed up before the game in the north end of the stadium, the Buckeyes charged the field and jumped up and down just shy of midfield in their customary manner. With that ritual completed, the home team began to run to the south part of the field to start warming up when Miami made a move.

The Hurricanes gathered about 10 yards from midfield and began jumping up and down as well, mimicking the Buckeyes. Protective of the Block "O," the Buckeyes reversed course, congregated again and proceeded to jump up and down a second time.

Other than that, however, there were no outward signs of aggression between the two teams.

"It's such a sigh of relief," Rolle said. "We know they came out jumping up and down, showing that swagger that they have, but I feel like this team has taken a great leap by beating that nonconference, high-powered team. I think we did a great job of going out there and proving the critics wrong."

It might not have been a case of having more swagger, however.

"I don't know if we outswaggered them," Chekwa said. "One thing Cie Grant said at our pregame meal was Miami's going to be the swag. We're going to bring game. I think we brought a lot of game today."

Four days before the game, Brewster was asked if Tressel had any swag.

"His sweater is his swag," he replied with a laugh.

to knock off a big-time opponent during the regular season.

Including Rolle, at least three Buckeyes used the word "relieved" to express their feelings.

After losses to USC in each of the past two seasons, coupled with a three-game bowl losing streak broken by a Rose Bowl victory against Oregon, it seems the Buckeyes have shaken the big-game monkey from their back.

"I'll tell you what – it's a big relief," Brewster said. "We had a lot of confidence. There was never any doubt that we had the talent and the game plan. It feels good. Ask anybody on this team – that's the hardest-fought game, play for play, that we've ever played. I'm absolutely exhausted. It feels great to leave everything on the field."

Sanzenbacher said he felt a different feeling around this year's team approaching a big game as opposed to previous Buckeye squads he has been a part of.

"The thing I noticed is it was a relaxed focus," he said. "I always hated when we would go into big games and it felt like it was almost too intense and everybody was trying to be too perfect. Getting ready for this game, everybody was ready to go. We put the work in, but it was more relaxed."

That feeling emanated from the seniors, the wideout said.

"We've been a part of a lot of teams playing in big games," he said. "From my perspective, when you can play relaxed you play your best. You never play well when you're real tight. I encourage the guys to prepare, everybody focus and work hard, but there's no need to

treat it as any different game."

Now the task will be to carry that approach over into what figures to be a less-than-daunting stretch of the schedule. Up next are non-conference contests against Mid-American Conference foes Ohio and Eastern Michigan – a combined 1-3 so far this season – before opening Big Ten play against Illinois.

In a year when the Buckeyes are thinking national title, each one of those games becomes more important regardless of the perceived quality of opponent.

"I'm just happy we won," Posey said. "The bottom line is I just want to get better (each day) because we have a big game next week and a big game after that. Each week it gets bigger and bigger because it's your next game. I feel like we should approach each game like we're playing Miami."

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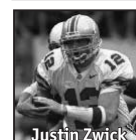
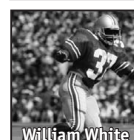
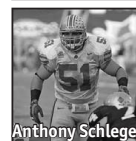
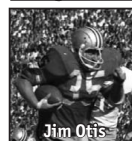
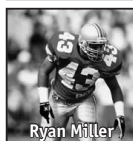
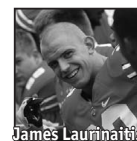
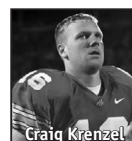
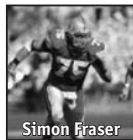
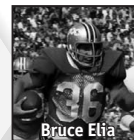
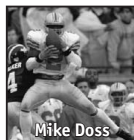
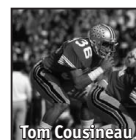
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The Big One

With Buckeyes scattered around the post-game interview room in the southeast corner of Ohio Stadium, a number of players were asked independent of one another how it felt

OHIO STATE VS. MIAMI (FLA.)

Buckeyes Overcome Mistakes, Beat Miami

By MARK REA
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Managing Editor

Miami (Fla.) had waited nearly eight years for another crack at Ohio State, and the Hurricanes will now have to wait another 365 days for their shot at redemption.

In what was billed as a return match of the 2003 Fiesta Bowl, the national championship game won in double overtime by the Buckeyes, OSU once again got the better of the Hurricanes, scoring a 36-24 victory Sept. 11 in front of 105,454 fans, the sixth-largest crowd in Ohio Stadium history.

The final score could have been much more lopsided for the home team.

The Buckeyes got 346 yards of total offense from junior quarterback Terrelle Pryor and a school record-tying five field goals from senior kicker Devin Barclay while the defense came up with four turnovers, all interceptions of Miami QB Harris.

But OSU proved to be its own worst enemy. There were two major breakdowns on special teams and the offense put the ball in the end zone only three times despite rolling up 414 total yards in the game.

For the first time since 1936 – and perhaps the first time in program history – the Buckeyes surrendered kickoff and punt returns for touchdowns in the same game while the offense got inside the Miami 25-yard line on 10 occasions and came away with only three touchdowns.

"You don't give up two long returns like that and usually survive," OSU head coach Jim Tressel said. "But defensively, we flew around. Our guys up front are relentless, our linebackers fly around and our defensive backs will hit you. Miami has some good guys but we were smacking them."

"When you can create four takeaways, you're going to have a chance. Then when you have zero giveaways, you have a real good chance."

Pryor completed 12 of 27 passes for 233 yards and a touchdown with no interceptions, but how he really hurt the Hurricanes was with his running ability.



JOSH WINSLOW

I'LL TAKE THAT – Miami (Fla.) quarterback Jacory Harris (12) watches helplessly as Ohio State senior cornerback Chimdi Chekwa (5) intercepts a pass intended for Travis Benjamin (3), who bobbled the ball before Chekwa took it away.

He carried 20 times for 113 yards and a touchdown and ran three times for important first downs late in the fourth quarter to seal the victory.

Meanwhile, Harris was pressured relentlessly by the OSU defense but still managed to complete 22 of 39 attempts for 232 yards and one TD. His four picks, though, matched a career high he set last season during a 33-24 loss to North Carolina.

Most of the fireworks generated by the Hurricanes came from special teams.

Redshirt freshman Lamar Miller returned a kickoff 88 yards for a touchdown in the first quarter to give his team a 7-3 lead at the time, and junior Travis Benjamin took a punt back 79 yards late in the second quarter to put his team within three points.

No Ohio State opponent had returned a punt for a touchdown since Heisman Trophy winner Charles Woodson ran one back 87 yards during Michigan's 20-14 win over the Buckeyes in 1997.

In the end, however, it was the Ohio State defense that kept Miami at bay and on its heels. Senior cornerback Chimdi Chekwa had two interceptions while defensive ends Nathan Williams and Cameron Heyward each had one. Both of Chekwa's picks and the one by Williams set up scores for OSU while Heyward's interception came at a most opportune time for the Buckeyes.

As the Hurricanes were headed for what looked to be a touchdown early in the third quarter that could have cut the OSU lead to 26-24, Heyward intercepted Harris at the 5-yard line and returned it 80 yards the other way.

Two plays later, Pryor scored a touch-

down to push his team's lead to 16 points, and the Hurricanes never seriously threatened again.

In addition to Pryor, the Buckeyes got the record five field goals from Barclay. The record was established by Bob Atha in 1981 during a 29-10 win over Indiana and equaled by Mike Nugent in a 22-14 win over North Carolina State in 2004. It was matched again in 2006 by Josh Huston during the Buckeyes' 25-22 loss to Texas.

Pryor connected with five different receivers in the game, including junior DeVier Posey who reeled in four catches for 105 yards. Senior co-captain Dane Sanzenbacher added three receptions for 37 yards while running back Brandon Saine had three for 36 yards and a touchdown.

Saine was bottled up for the most part by the Miami defense, which limited him to only 7 yards on 12 carries. But running mate Dan "Boom" Herron picked up the slack with 66 yards and a score on 14 carries.

Senior running back Damien Berry led the Hurricanes' rushing attack, carrying 16 times for 94 yards.

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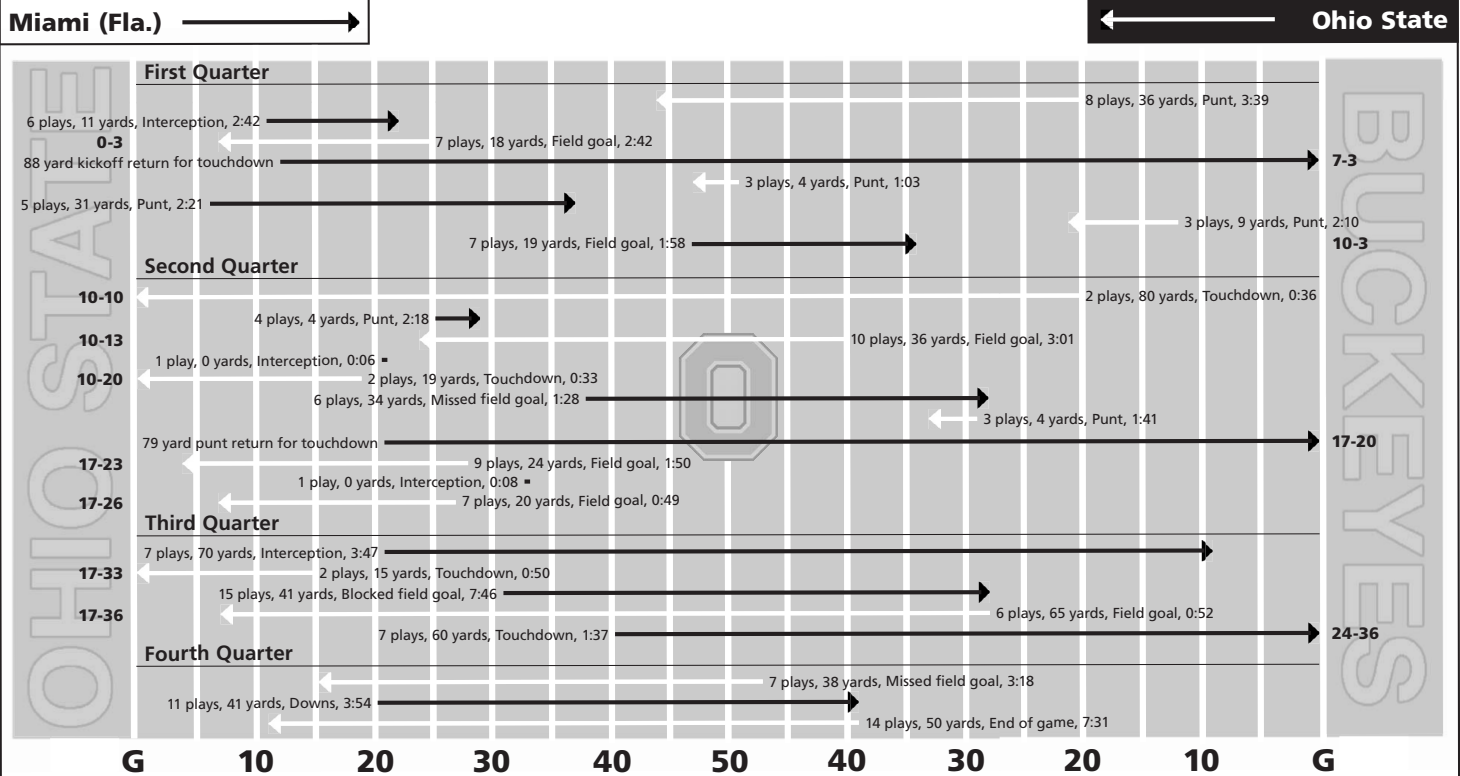
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OHIO STATE VS. MIAMI (FLA.)

Drive Chart



Meanwhile, Harris completed passes to nine different receivers with senior wide-out Leonard Hankerson leading the way with seven catches for 90 yards.

Wild First-Half Action

The Ohio State defense wasted little time dictating the action. After the Buckeyes' first possession fizzled, the Hurricanes took over deep in their own territory. Harris got his team one first down, but on the sixth play of the drive, the Miami QB's throw meant for Hankerson wound up cradled in the arms of Williams.

The OSU defensive end returned the pick 22 yards to the Miami 10-yard line, but an illegal block pushed the Buckeyes back to the 25. They got one first down but a holding penalty wiped out a 14-yard touchdown run by Herron and OSU eventually had to settle for a 24-yard field goal from Barclay.

That gave Ohio State a 3-0 lead at the 5:57 mark of the first quarter, but Miami wasted no time with an answer. Miller took the ensuing kickoff 88 yards for a touchdown, and following a PAT from senior kicker Matt Boshier, the Hurricanes suddenly enjoyed a 7-3 advantage with 5:45 left in the opening period.

Miami made it 10-3 at the 13:05 mark of the second quarter on Boshier's 51-yard field goal, but the Buckeyes came roaring back.

Off play action and with a Miami defender draped around his feet, Pryor connected with Posey on a 62-yard bomb. On the next play, the Ohio State quarterback hit Saine on a wheel route good for 18 yards and a touchdown. Barclay added the extra point to tie the score at 10 with 12:23 left in the second quarter.

After the defense stopped Miami on the ensuing possession to force a three-and-out, Barclay nailed a 41-yard field goal to

push OSU back into the lead at 13-10 with 7:03 left until halftime.

That was followed by the first of Chekwa's interceptions, which came on the first play of Miami's next possession. Chekwa returned the pick to the Miami 19, and two plays later Herron took a pitch from Pryor 4 yards into the end zone. Barclay tacked on the extra point to make it 20-10 with 6:17 to go until the break.

Harris quickly moved the Hurricanes back into OSU territory by completing passes of 20 and 12 yards to Benjamin, but the drive bogged down and Boshier pushed his 46-yard field-goal try wide to the right. It was his first miss after a school-record 14 straight three-pointers.

Miami didn't lament the lost opportunity for long. After forcing a three-and-out by the Buckeyes, Benjamin fielded a punt at his own 21, immediately split three OSU defenders and was off to the races. His 79-yard punt return, followed by a Boshier PAT, had the Hurricanes right back in the game at 20-17 with 3:04 left in the half.

Ohio State got two more excellent scoring chances right before intermission but had to settle for field goals on both occasions.

Sophomore Jordan Hall ran back the kickoff following Benjamin's punt return 47 yards to the Miami 28, and the Buckeyes pushed to a first-and-goal at the 6. But Pryor threw incomplete on first down, ran for only 2 yards on second down and then misfired to tight end Jake Stoneburner on third down.

Barclay came on to salvage the drive with a 21-yard field goal to make it 23-17 with 1:01 left until the half.

And the Buckeyes had another golden opportunity after Chekwa's second interception gave them the ball at the Miami 33 with 49 seconds left. But again, OSU couldn't capitalize on first-and-goal at the 7, and Barclay was called upon for a 24-

The Bottom Line

It was over when ... OSU senior defensive end Cameron Heyward picked off a pass early in the third quarter. Miami was driving for what could have been a touchdown that would have cut Ohio State's lead to two points. Instead, Heyward grabbed the interception and returned it 80 yards to set up a touchdown for his team. The potential 14-point swing was a backbreaker for the Hurricanes.

Game ball goes to ... Terrelle Pryor. The junior quarterback not only accounted for 346 yards running and passing, he strapped the team on his back in the fourth quarter. Pryor converted two long third-down plays and added a sneak on fourth-and-1 as the Buckeyes took over with 7:31 remaining in the game and never relinquished possession.

Stat of the game ... 167. Ohio State surrendered 167 kick return yards in the game and gave up a touchdown on both a kickoff and punt return. No team has done that against the Buckeyes since 1936. At least that is as far back as the university sports information department has records. It is conceivable no OSU opponent had ever accomplished the feat before.

— Mark Rea

yard field goal to give his team a 26-17 halftime lead.

Ohio State seemed to go into a prevent-style defense to open the second half and Harris quickly moved the Hurricanes into scoring position with the opening drive of the third quarter. However, on third-and-goal at the Ohio State 9, he was picked off by Heyward who rumbled 80 yards with the turnover.

Two plays later, Pryor provided the dagger. He rolled to his right and then suddenly reversed field before racing untouched to the end zone on a 13-yard score.

Barclay's PAT made it 33-17 in favor of the Buckeyes with 10:16 remaining in the third period.

Miami seemed undaunted as it came

right back with Harris engineering a 14-play, 47-yard drive that ate more than 8½ minutes off the third-period clock. But it was all for naught when the OSU defense held and Boshier's 39-yard field-goal attempt was blocked by Buckeye defender Devon Torrence.

Two plays later, Herron gashed the Miami defense by taking a shovel pass from Pryor and turning it into a 47-yard gain. A face-mask penalty against the Hurricanes on the play gave the Buckeyes a first down at the 13-yard line, but again they were forced to settle for three points as Barclay's fifth field goal sailed through the uprights from 24 yards away to increase the Ohio

Continued On Page 12

OHIO STATE VS. MIAMI (FLA.)

OSU Defense Turned Back Miami's Last Drive

Continued From Page 11

State lead to 36-17 with 1:29 remaining in the third quarter.

Now facing a three-score deficit, Harris went back to work and drove his team 60 yards in seven plays, topping things off with a 9-yard touchdown pass to tight end Chase Ford. Boshers' PAT cut the Hurricanes' deficit to 36-23, and when Barclay pulled his 32-yard field-goal attempt wide left at the 11:25 mark of the fourth quarter, Miami appeared to have hope.

But the Hurricanes got only as far as the OSU 39 on their next possession before Harris' fourth-down pass sailed over the head of his intended receiver. The Buckeyes took over possession at the 7:31 mark, and thanks to Pryor converting a pair of third-down runs as well as a fourth-and-1, Miami never got the ball back.

Herron broke off a 17-yard run to the Miami 6-yard line with 1:33 remaining, and Tressel instructed Pryor to take three straight kneel-downs to preserve the victory.

Game Notes

- Ohio State now enjoys a 3-1 edge in the all-time series between the two teams. The Buckeyes' previous wins were a 10-0 win in Ohio Stadium in 1977 and the 31-24 double-overtime game in the 2003 Fiesta Bowl that served as the BCS National Championship Game. The Hurricanes' lone win in the series was a 23-12 decision in the 1999 Kickoff Classic played at old Giants Stadium in the Meadowlands.

- Tressel moved his overall record to 95-21 with the Buckeyes. That includes a 58-7 record in Ohio Stadium and a 37-13 mark against top-25 teams.

- Randy Shannon, who is in his fourth season as head coach at Miami, owns a 22-18 overall record that includes an 8-10 record on the road, a 4-7 mark against top-25 teams and a 1-4 record vs. top-10 teams.

- Miami is now 6-3 in the past decade against top-five teams, and two of the three losses have come against Ohio State. The other defeat was a 26-3 loss to No. 5 Florida in 2008. The Hurricanes have not beaten a top-five team since a 27-7 victory over third-ranked Virginia Tech in 2005.

- The Buckeyes moved their record to 15-7 all-time against teams that are current members of the Atlantic Coast Conference. In addition to being 3-1 against the Hurricanes, OSU is 3-0 vs. Boston College, 2-0 vs. North Carolina State, 1-0 vs. Virginia, 3-1 against Duke and North Carolina, 0-1 vs. Clemson and 0-3 against Florida State. OSU has never played Georgia Tech, Maryland, Wake Forest or Virginia Tech.

- The Hurricanes are now 26-17 all-time against teams currently in the Big Ten. In addition to being 1-3 against Ohio State, Miami is 4-0 vs. Iowa and Michigan State, 5-1 against Purdue, 2-2 against Northwestern and Wisconsin, 1-1 vs. Indiana and Michigan, and 6-7 against Penn State. The Hurricanes have never played Illinois or Minnesota.

(They are also 5-5 vs. Nebraska, which joins the Big Ten next season.)

- The Buckeyes are now 32-4 in regular-season nonconference games under Tressel.

- The loss gave the Hurricanes an 11-3 record in regular-season nonconference games under Shannon. All three losses have come on the road against top-10 competition – a 51-13 defeat at No. 6 Oklahoma in 2007 and that loss at No. 5 Florida in 2008.

- Miami enjoys touting its propensity for producing NFL talent, and that is evidenced by the fact that 11 former Hurricanes were selected for the 2010 Pro Bowl. The Buckeyes had just one alum – New York Jets center Nick Mangold – in the game. However, when it comes to producing All-Americans since 1985, Ohio State has a 52-47 edge over Miami.

- Pryor turned in only the fourth performance in Ohio State history of at least 200 yards passing and 100 yards rushing in the same game. He has done it three times. Troy Smith was the first OSU quarterback to accomplish the feat when he ran for 145 and passed for 241 against Michigan in 2004.

- OSU is now a perfect 11-0 in games when Saine has scored a touchdown.

- Posey has a nice little streak going

of 16 consecutive games in which he has caught at least one pass. He has a way to go, however, to get the school record. That has been held since 1982 by Gary Williams, who finished his career with at least one catch in 48 straight games.

- Chekwa had the fourth and fifth interceptions of his career. Williams and Heyward each notched their first career picks.

- Torrence tied his career high with eight tackles. He had eight stops last season against USC. His blocked field goal was also the first for the Buckeyes since 2007 when Larry Grant blocked one against Washington.

- Miller became the first Miami player to return a kickoff for a touchdown since Devin Hester ran one back 100 yards at North Carolina State in 2004.

- Thanks to Virginia Tech's 0-2 start, Tressel has now nosed in front of Hokies

head coach Frank Beamer to become the second-winningest active head coach with at least five years at the Division I-A level. Tressel has 231 career victories to 229 for Beamer. Topping the list, of course, is Penn State legend Joe Paterno, who has 395.

- Several former Buckeyes were in attendance, including Will Smith and Malcolm Jenkins of the Super Bowl champion New Orleans Saints.

Former OSU linebacker Cie Grant served as honorary captain.



Jim Tressel



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OHIO STATE VS. MIAMI (FLA.)

Offense Did Not Waste Time Scoring Points

Once the Ohio State offense gets going, it doesn't take very long for it to score touchdowns.

The Buckeyes' three touchdown drives in a 36-24 victory against Miami (Fla.) on Sept. 11 all came on two-play drives. That was just one game after the Buckeyes put together TD drives of two, three and four plays while overwhelming Marshall with a first-half outburst.

While two of the end-zone piercing drives against Miami were set up by interception returns and measured only 15 and 19 yards apiece, the true big-play offense showed up when needed most – with the team down 10-3 early in the second quarter.

INSIDE THE OFFENSE

Jeff Svoboda

After the Buckeyes took over at their own 20 following a Miami field goal, quarterback Terrelle Pryor wasted little time getting the team back in the game. Using play-action out of the I-formation, Pryor stood up against the rush and lofted a pass to DeVier Posey down the left side. The junior wideout had gotten behind corner DeMarcus Van Dyke and safety Ray-Ray Armstrong, pulling in the ball and racing to the Miami 18.

On the next play, Pryor went for pay dirt and succeeded, hitting running back Brandon Saine – who lined up as an H-back – on a wheel route to the right side for what proved to be the game-tying touchdown after review confirmed Saine made a leaping, twisting grab.

Suddenly, an Ohio State offense whose first four drives had totaled 67 yards on 21 plays (3.2 yards per play) was in gear, and it was all because of what is quickly becoming the offense's trademark – the big play.

"I feel like we took a step as an offense right there," Posey said. "The first couple of drives, the first quarter, we weren't having big plays. The thing that we needed to do was be consistent and keeping pushing and keep pushing and know that we're bound to pop a big play."



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JOSH WINSLOW

QUICK STRIKES – Ohio State junior wide receiver DeVier Posey (8) hauled in a 62-yard pass that set up a quick second-quarter touchdown during the Buckeyes' 36-24 victory over Miami (Fla.) at Ohio Stadium. Six of OSU's eight scoring drives lasted less than two minutes.

Later, Posey added another important grab, netting a first down on a 26-yard catch and run from Pryor to get the Buckeyes into chip-shot field-goal range as the Ohio Stadium clock ticked to less than one minute to play in the first half.

Another big gainer through the air was the work of running back Dan "Boom" Herron, who took a shovel pass 47 yards – with an extra personal foul for a facemask added to the end – to change field position and set up the fifth and final Devin Barclay field goal of the day late in the third quarter.

Herron made safety Vaughn Telemaque miss before racing down the right sideline on the play, which came out of the shotgun and appeared at the start to be an option run, a play the Buckeyes had used successfully throughout the game.

"That was something we actually put in this week that we thought would work, and it definitely worked today," Herron said.

Plays such as those helped Pryor throw for 233 yards despite completing only 12 of 27 passes, meaning the Buckeyes averaged 8.6 yards per pass attempt and a lofty 19.4 per completion.

Head coach Jim Tressel wasn't pleased with the completion percentage but happy with the overall result.

"You know, we'd like to be a little bit better than (12 for 27), but anytime you're over 8 yards an attempt, that's a good thing," he said of Pryor. "I thought he did some good things and he'll have a chance to go back and study his feet."

Although those big plays helped get the Buckeyes out of some hairy situations, the fact of the matter is the final margin could

have been more if it weren't for five field goals the Buckeyes put on the board, four of which came after the team had stalled inside the Miami 10-yard line.

"We were all frustrated," Saine said. "We know that some games, field goals aren't going to be enough."

If the big-play drives were like fireworks, the field-goal jaunts were more like bottle rockets. The first four netted a total of 98 yards on 33 plays, an average of a tick less than 3.0 per play.

Miami's defensive line and north-south linebackers were well-suited to take away much of Ohio State's power running game that had been re-energized since the middle of the '09 season. Though the Buckeyes rarely lined up in a straight I-formation, instead choosing to use an offset I or put fullback Zach Boren on the wing, Miami was able to keep the tailbacks from finding room to operate.

While the Hurricanes took away that segment of the Buckeye offense, another part became open, that being the one in which Pryor became the focal point of the running game.

"I think the game plan changed throughout the game," said Saine, who was held to 7 yards on 12 carries. "We thought we were going to be able to run the ball a little differently, but I think that we adapted really well."

Pryor spent his most time in the shotgun since the Buckeyes experimented with more of a spread offense in the middle of last season, and that helped the quarterback get into a groove with his legs. He ran 20 times for a career-high 113 yards and topped 200 yards passing and 100 rushing for the third time in his career.

One of the Buckeyes' best plays out of the shotgun with Pryor running was the speed option, on which Herron took a pitch and scored a 4-yard touchdown run in the second quarter that gave Ohio State a 20-10 lead.

"It's definitely a great play, especially when you have an athletic quarterback like Terrelle," right tackle J.B. Shugarts said. "Definitely the front we were running into, it was there. We could get the linebackers sealed and get on the end. If the end was going to come upfield, (we could) cut it back. It's a great play in our offense."

Pryor later added a 13-yard touchdown run of his own in the third quarter. He was given a run-pass option and rolled right, but seeing no one open, he reversed field to the left and outraced the Miami defenders to the front corner of the end zone to make the score 33-17.

That was made possible by man-to-man defense the Hurricanes played in the secondary, which helped Pryor find room to operate.

"They ran man-to-man the whole game," Pryor said. "Not one play they didn't play man."

Speaking after the contest, the signal caller confirmed a question that the game was one of the toughest in which he'd played since arriving in 2008. So when he was asked what he was feeling when kneeling on the ball in the final minute to conclude a game-killing drive of more than seven minutes, Pryor had a quick answer.

"Relief," he said. "Those guys just kept on coming."

For Miami, it just wouldn't be enough, and one of the deepest, most explosive Buckeye attacks in years found a way to win on what wasn't its best day.

OHIO STATE VS. MIAMI (FLA.)

Defense Was Up To Hurricanes' Challenge

Were you to tell someone who did not watch the Sept. 11 game between Ohio State and Miami that the Buckeye defense forced only two punts in 11 possessions, that person would probably conclude the Hurricane offense had a pretty good day.

Surely the lack of a single, solitary three-and-out for the Silver Bullets was a sign Miami quarterback Jacory Harris and company showed the rest of the college football world Ohio State still had a lot of work to do in rebuilding a defense that lost five starters from last season.

Not so much.

INSIDE THE DEFENSE

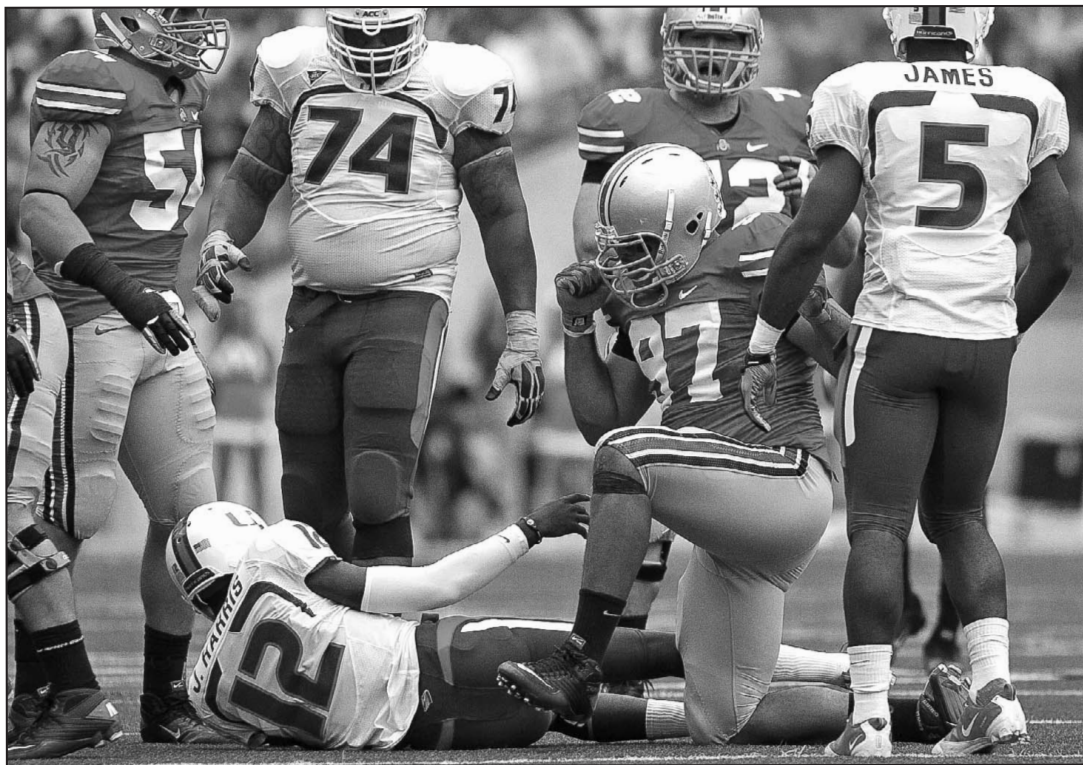
Marcus Hartman

Despite the fact that Ohio State gave up 352 total yards, Buckeyes such as defensive tackle Dexter Larimore were smiling in the postgame interview room after the team's 36-24 win.

"They're a good team," said Larimore, who had two tackles for loss, including a sack. "We came into this knowing they're going to get some passes, they're going to get some drives. They're a very talented team, a very good opponent. Things are going to happen during a game, but games are 60 minutes. If we're beating them in the first 30 minutes something might happen in the last 30 and we've got to be ready for it."

The first half saw the Buckeyes barely break a sweat on defense.

In part because the Hurricanes scored two special-teams touchdowns, Miami had the ball for only 11:29 of the first 30 minutes. During that time, the Hurricane offense totaled 104 yards and managed to produce



JOSH WINSLOW

ROUGH AFTERNOON – Ohio State's defense, including defensive end Cameron Heyward (97), helped ruin Miami quarterback Jacory Harris' (12) hopes of posting a big road win.

one field goal that came mostly as a result of a short field after an OSU punt.

In the second half, the Hurricanes had the ball only four times but managed 248 yards. No defense likes to give up that

kind of real estate, but in this case it hardly hurt.

On the first play of the fourth quarter, the Buckeye defense allowed a touchdown for the first time this season after seven scoreless quarters, but that was all the damage done in the second half thanks to an interception, a stoppage on downs and another stiffening that led to a blocked field goal.

To no one's surprise, Miami head coach Randy Shannon lamented after the game

the four interceptions his quarterback tossed.

"You can't win games when you turn the ball over the way we did," Shannon said.

The most damaging interception was probably the one that came from the least likely source.

The Hurricanes drove 70 yards on the opening series of the second half only to have their hopes of cutting Ohio State's lead

Continued On Page 16



JOSH WINSLOW

OVER HE GOES – Senior safety Jermale Hines (7) sent Miami tight end Chase Ford (9) head over heels on a play in the first quarter.

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OHIO STATE VS. MIAMI (FLA.)

Interceptions Helped Defense Stymie Miami

Continued From Page 15

to six or even two points snuffed out because Harris likely never saw Cameron Heyward drop from defensive tackle into the middle of the field.

His teammates laughed when they watched the 6-5, 288-pounder backpedaling on the zone blitz play during the week in practice, but the former high school basketball player showed he still has enough agility to step in front of the intended receiver to snatch the ball away. He rumbled 80 yards down the sideline before being tackled, and the play set up a 13-yard touchdown run by Terrelle Pryor that gave the Buckeyes a 33-17 lead.

"If we come down and score in the second half, it's a different light on the ballgame," Shannon said. "You've got to give them respect because they came up with a way to get those turnovers in the red zone."

On the play that produced Heyward's inter-

ception, the Hurricanes had hoped to run off the Ohio State coverage people then slip the ball to running back Damien Berry over the middle.

"It was a 2-yard under route, and they did a good job adjusting on that because that was a route we wanted to take advantage of because we got some yards on it. They called (the blitz) at the right time," Shannon said.

Ohio State senior Brian Rolle, who along with fellow linebacker Ross Homan blitzed on the play, said it was one of the team's basic pressure calls but one that's not often used.

"It's something we don't run a lot, but we happened to run it there, and it was great for us," Rolle said. "When you see Cam at 6-5, you don't think that guy can play too good out in space, but he did a great job of dropping back when we blitzed and was able to make a play."

A similar call brought an end to Miami's first possession of the day, but not because Harris was fooled.

He tried to complete a pass to a receiver downfield only to see Ohio State's C.J. Barnett break from his safety position to bat the ball away. It deflected to teammate Nathan Williams at the Miami 32.

Williams is a defensive end by trade, but the coaches like to take advantage of the skills that allowed him to play linebacker and running back in high school by dropping him into coverage from time to time as well.

In this particular case, Williams was charged with rerouting one receiver on a shallow route before dropping back into a zone.

"The first (receiver) got underneath me so I just dropped back and I think C.J. Barnett hit it out and it just happened to go into my hands," he said. "My gloves were wet and I bobbled it, but I was able to hold onto it. I couldn't live if I dropped it."

Such plays were all part of a plan to keep Harris confused. Film of the quarterback had indicated to the Buckeyes and their coaches

that he was prone to mistakes if he was under pressure, and he threw 17 interceptions as a sophomore a season ago.

Although Miami allowed only two sacks, Harris rarely looked comfortable on the Ohio Stadium FieldTurf.

"Our defense loves to get in quarterbacks' heads and try to make them make bad decisions," Larimore said.

When they weren't trying to get in Harris' head, the Buckeyes hoped to get under the skin of his receivers with physical play.

Cornerback Devon Torrence, who had a key pass breakup in the end zone against 6-4 'Cane LaRon Byrd in the third quarter, said his team thought it could make the visitors uncomfortable by challenging them.

"Our mind-set was we know you're fast. We're fast, too, but we're going to get up and get on you and see if you can get off these reroutes and get off these jams," he said. "They pride themselves on their skill guys and their athletes, but this is Big Ten football. We hit here, you know what I mean?"

Prior to the game, Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel told reporters the Hurricanes were not a team that did a lot of different things on offense, and his players said they saw the same things on film during pregame preparations.

"We schemed up for these guys," said Torrence, who had eight tackles. "We knew what they were going to do. They were going to try to get the ball to their playmakers, so we just went out there and made plays against them. They don't really run a lot of different things. On third and long, we pretty much knew what they were doing. We were sitting on a lot of routes because we knew they were coming."

Homan finished the game as the Buckeyes' leading tackler with 10 stops, while senior cornerback Chimdi Chekwa accounted for the other two interceptions.

Harris hit Chekwa in the chest with his first pick after the intended receiver failed to recognize that the defense's alignment signaled the originally called play should change from a run to a pass.

The second theft came just before the end of the first half when a ball bounced off the hands of Hurricane Travis Benjamin into Chekwa's.

"It felt great to help the team, to turn the field over and give the offense a chance to score," Chekwa said.



JOSH WINSLOW

MY BALL – Junior defensive end Nathan Williams (43) recorded the first of Ohio State's four interceptions.

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Buckeye Game Analysis

Play Of The Game

When Cameron Heyward met with the media following Ohio State's 36-24 win against Miami (Fla.), he was asked about his third-quarter interception that killed a threatening Hurricanes' drive.

"I'm still tired," he said, drawing laughter.

No one could blame him. Rarely do 288-pound defensive linemen such as Heyward get the opportunity to rumble 80 yards, but that's exactly the situation in which he found himself after picking off Jacory Harris' pass at the 5-yard line and making it all the way to the Miami 15.

Trailing 26-17, the Hurricanes had moved 70 yards on six plays to open the second half before facing a third-and-goal from the 9-yard line. Harris took the shotgun snap and, seeing a blitz, tried to hit running back Damien Berry as he circled out of the backfield.

What Harris didn't see was Heyward backing off the line of scrimmage as part of a zone blitz, and the Buckeye senior co-captain was able to break on the ball and sneak in front of the pass.

"When you drop, you just try to play his eyes," Heyward said. "That's what I did, and I was able to make a big play."

Miami head coach Randy Shannon was less than pleased with the turn of events.

"I don't know if (Harris) was late on the delivery or if Damien Berry didn't get his head around fast enough," he said. "I couldn't tell you right now, but an interception is an interception."

Once Heyward caught the wayward pass, the fun began. Looking only a bit like his running back father, the late Craig "Ironhead" Heyward, he rumbled down the left sideline and cut toward the middle of the field before being brought down by Miami center Tyler Horn after chewing up 80 yards of turf.

"I thought I had a chance (to score)," he said. "I had some great blocks and I was just following them."

Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel was quick to credit the play as a game-changer.

"Cam's play was extraordinary because it was down in the red zone and they were in scoring territory," Tressel said. "They were going to bring it down to a one-score game ... and he made the play and I was shocked how far he got (on the return)."

Two plays later, Terrelle Pryor ran the ball from 13 yards out to give the Buckeyes a 33-16 lead, and Miami never got within 10 points again.

What Worked Well

- **Pryor rushing the football:** One week after compiling only 17 yards on the ground in his third-worst rushing



JOSH WINSLOW

KEY PLAY – Senior defensive end Cameron Heyward (97) returned a fourth-quarter interception 80 yards.

performance as a Buckeye, Pryor looked more like the 2009 vintage. He posted team highs in carries and yards with 20 totes for 113 yards and was by far the team's most dangerous rusher.

- **OSU's second-half defensive strategy:** The Buckeyes were OK playing off the Miami receivers in the second half, and that proved to be a solid move. The Hurricanes' big-play offense had to try to work slowly down the field, and though Harris completed numerous passes, the OSU secondary came up with big hits and big plays when necessary.

What Didn't Work

- **Kick coverage:** This is an obvious one, but when multiple return touchdowns happen, it must be noted. Though the coaching staff said it put plenty of emphasis on the coverage units in camp, the big plays allowed thus far show that work hasn't paid off. Expect a tough week of practice for Luke Fickell's punt unit and Paul Haynes' kickoff squad, and personnel substitutions could be in the offing.

- **The power running game:** Ohio State ended up with a net of 181 yards on the ground, but 113 came from Pryor. Dan Herron was solid, averaging 4.7 yards on 14 carries, but Brandon Saine got only 7 yards on 12 tries. Add it up and the OSU tailbacks rushed 26 times for 73 yards, an average of 2.8 yards per try. The one thing Miami was able to stop with consistency was the power game the Buckeyes had operated so well going back to late in the 2009 season.

Reviewing The Matchups

Ohio State rush offense vs. Miami rush defense: As noted, the running backs were held in check – thanks in large part to a disruptive Miami line and active linebackers

– but Pryor ran quite well. Overall, the Buckeyes averaged 3.7 yards per carry, which isn't a great total, but Pryor's big plays make this one a push. **EDGE: Even**

Miami rush offense vs. Ohio State rush defense: Miami looked a bit like Marshall in the first half, stubbornly running into the teeth of a dominating OSU rush defense that allowed only 28 yards on 14 carries. Then the Hurricanes came out in the second half with a stacked front featuring six offensive linemen and a tight end and moved the ball on the ground with much more success. **EDGE: Even**

Ohio State pass offense vs. Miami pass defense: Given the way the day unfolded, the most important part of Pryor's day throwing the football was the fact that he did not toss an interception. His 12-of-27 performance wasn't pretty, but he stayed away from the big mistakes and used his arm to turn in perhaps the two biggest offensive plays of the day, consecutive passes to DeVier Posey and Saine that resulted in 80 yards and a game-tying touchdown early in the second quarter. **EDGE: Even**

Miami pass offense vs. Ohio State pass defense: If there was one story of the game, it had to be the four interceptions thrown by Harris, especially when the Buckeyes turned those picks into 20 points. Harris was all kinds of off kilter in the first half, completing only six passes to his team and three to the Buckeyes. He was solid in the second half – going 16 of 25 – but his interception to Heyward was a dagger. **EDGE: Ohio State**

Special teams: For the second week in a row, special teams both giveth and taketh away. The return touchdowns allowed were huge plays in the game, but the Buckeyes counteracted those with two big kick returns – a 47-yard return by Jordan Hall and a 45-yarder by Jaamal Berry – and a record-tying day of five field goals by Devin Barclay. Add in a blocked field goal against the nearly automatic Matt Bosher and you can't say this was a total loss for the Buckeyes. Clearly, improvements must be made, but the big plays are there on the positive side as well. **EDGE: Miami**

Intangibles: Swagger was the word of the day – at least when the South Stands chanted "Where's your swagger?" at the Miami players as they walked off the field – and there was no doubt Ohio State had it on this day. Riding an amped up crowd, the Buckeyes made big play after big play and didn't panic when the Hurricanes took an early lead. Talking to the Ohio State players after the game, there was little doubt the Buckeyes wanted to make an early-season statement and stay undefeated through September unlike the past two years when the team lost to USC. **EDGE: Ohio State**

– Jeff Svoboda

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The Numbers Game

Ohio State 36, Miami (Fla.) 24

Sept. 11, 2010 — Ohio Stadium; Columbus, Ohio

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
MIAMI (FLA.)	7	10	0	7	24
OHIO STATE	3	23	10	0	36

First Quarter

OSU — Barclay, 24 yard field goal, 5:57; 7 plays, 18 yards, 2:42 TOP.

UM — L.Miller, 88 yard kickoff return (Bosher kick), 5:45.

Second Quarter

UM — Bosher, 51 yard field goal, 13:05; 7 plays, 19 yards, 1:58 TOP.

OSU — Saine, 18 yard pass from Pryor (Barclay kick), 12:23; 2 plays, 80 yards, 0:36 TOP.

OSU — Barclay, 41 yard field goal, 7:03; 10 plays, 36 yards, 3:01 TOP.

OSU — Herron, 4 yard run (Barclay kick), 6:17; 2 plays, 19 yards, 0:33 TOP.

UM — Benjamin, 79 yard punt return (Bosher kick), 3:04.

OSU — Barclay, 21 yard field goal, 1:01; 9 plays, 24 yards, 1:50 TOP.

OSU — Barclay, 24 yard field goal, 0:00; 7 plays, 20 yards, 0:49 TOP.

Third Quarter

OSU — Pryor, 13 yard run (Barclay kick), 10:16; 2 plays, 15 yards, 0:50 TOP.

OSU — Barclay, 24 yard field goal, 1:29; 6 plays, 65 yards, 0:52 TOP.

Fourth Quarter

UM — Ford, 9 yard pass from J.Harris (Bosher kick), 14:52; 7 plays, 60 yards, 1:37 TOP.

Att. — 105,454.

Weather — 77 degrees, partly cloudy; wind, SE 12 mph.



Team Statistics

	UM	OSU
First Downs	19	21
Rushing	6	11
Passing	13	9
Penalty	0	1
Rushes-Yards	28-120	49-181
Passing Yards	232	233
Passes (Att.-Comp.-Int.)	39-22-4	28-12-0
Offensive Plays	67	77
Total Net Yards	352	414
Third Down Efficiency	7-15	6-18
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-2	1-1
Punts-Avg.	2-49.0	4-38.0
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	0-0
Penalties	8-59	2-25
Time of Possession	28:49	31:11

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) — **UM:** D.Berry 16-94; James 3-10; L.Miller 3-8; J.Harris 5-8; Whipple 1-0. **OSU:** Pryor 20-113; Herron 14-66; Saine 12-7; TEAM 3-(-5).

PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD) — **UM:** J.Harris 22-39-4-232-1. **OSU:** Pryor 12-27-0-233-1; TEAM 0-1-0-0-0.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) — **UM:** Hankerson 7-90; Byrd 4-35; Benjamin 3-51; D.Berry 2-15; Ford 2-13; A.Johnson 1-9; L.Miller 1-8; James 1-6; P.Hill 1-5. **OSU:** Posey 4-105; Sanzenbacher 3-37; Saine 3-36; Herron 1-47; Stoneburner 1-8.

PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) — **UM:** Bosher 2-49.0-58. **OSU:** B.Buchanan 4-38.0-46.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — **UM:** Benjamin 1-79. **OSU:** J.Hall 2-16.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — **UM:** L.Miller 2-100; Clements 1-14; A.Johnson 1-11. **OSU:** J.Berry 2-87; J.Hall 2-65.

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

INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) — **UM:** None. **OSU:** Chekwa 2-22; Heyward 1-80; N.Williams 1-22.

SACKS — **UM:** Regis 1.0-6. **OSU:** Simon 1.0-10; Larimore 1.0-8.

TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) — **UM:** McCarthy 2.5-6; Spence 2.0-4; Forston 2.0-3; Bailey 1.5-5; Regis 1.0-6; R.Hill 1.0-3; Ojomo 1.0-2. **OSU:** Larimore 2.0-9; Simon 1.0-10; Chekwa 1.0-6; Heyward 1.0-2.

TACKLES (Solo-Assst.-Tot.) — **UM:** Spence 6-5-11; McCarthy 4-7-11; Armstrong 4-5-9; B.Harris 6-1-7; Bailey 2-4-6; Telemaque 3-1-4; R.Hill 2-1-3; Van Dyke 2-1-3; Vernon 2-1-3; Ojomo 2-1-3; K.Robinson 1-2-3; Forston 1-2-3; McGee 2-0-2; Regis 1-1-2; R.Buchanan 0-2-2; Clements 1-0-1; Hankerson 1-0-1; D.Berry 1-0-1; Bosher 1-0-1; B.Washington 1-0-1; Horn 1-0-1; Porter 0-1-1; M.Robinson 0-1-1. **OSU:** R.Homan 6-4-10; Torrence 7-1-8; Moeller 4-2-6; Chekwa 4-2-6; Rolle 3-3-6; Heyward 3-1-4; Hines 1-3-4; Barnett 2-1-3; Simon 2-1-3; Larimore 2-0-2; Oliver 2-0-2; O.Johnson 1-1-2; Bellamy 1-0-1; Bell 0-1-1.

PLAYERS IN THE GAME — **MIAMI:** Offense, Franklin, Gunn, Horn, B.Washington, Figueroa, Gordon, Ford, J.Harris, Hankerson, Benjamin, D.Berry, Bosher. Defense, Bailey, Holmes, Forston, Vernon, K.Robinson, McCarthy, Spence, Van Dyke, Armstrong, Telemaque, B.Harris. Reserves, A.Johnson, L.Miller, R.Hill, Whipple, McGee, Clements, Gholston, Nicolas, P.Hill, Chambers, Holton, Nelms, Cornileus, R.Buchanan, Byrd, A.Smith, Green, Regis, M.Robinson, Futch, Gaines, Ivory, J.Johnson, Hurns, Thompkins, Cain, Porter, Ojomo. **OHIO STATE:** Offense, Adams, J.Boren, Brewster, Browning, Shugarts, Stoneburner, Sanzenbacher, Pryor, Saine, Z.Boren, Posey, Barclay. Defense, Thomas, Larimore, Simon, Heyward, R.Homan, Rolle, Sweat, Chekwa, Hines, Barnett, Torrence, B.Buchanan. Reserves, Herron, C.Brown (DB), J.Berry, J.Hall, Gant, Bell, C.Brown (WR), Bauserman, Domicone, Schwartz, Howard, O.Johnson, Oliver, Wood, Basil, Moeller, Clarke, Rice, Eevee, Klein, Ebner, DeLande, Whiting, Jackson, N.Williams, Sp.Smith, A.Homan, Hankins, Goebel, Crawford, A.Miller, Newsome, C.Smith, Fragel, Bellamy, McQuaide.

Season Statistics

2010 Game-By-Game

Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd
Sept. 2	(2) MARSHALL	W, 45-7	105,040
Sept. 11	(2) MIAMI (FLA.) (12)	W, 36-24	105,454
Sept. 18	OHIO	Noon	
Sept. 25	EASTERN MICHIGAN	TBA	
Oct. 2	at Illinois	TBA	
Oct. 9	INDIANA	TBA	
Oct. 16	at Wisconsin	7:15 p.m.	
Oct. 23	PURDUE	Noon	
Oct. 30	at Minnesota	8 p.m.	
Nov. 13	PENN STATE	TBA	
Nov. 20	at Iowa	TBA	
Nov. 27	MICHIGAN	TBA	

* 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	44	30
Rushing	23	9
Passing	19	19
Penalty	2	2
Average Per Game/Rush	230.5	82.0
Average Per Game/Pass	241.0	193.5
Total Offense	943	551
Total Plays	145	123
Average Per Game	471.5	275.5
Average Per Play	6.5	4.5
Penalties-Yards	9-72	16-119
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	4-2
3rd Down Efficiency	10-30	11-29
Percentage	33%	38%
4th Down Efficiency	2-2	0-2
Percentage	100%	0%
Sacks-Yards	3-24	4-16
Time of Possession Avg.	33:00	27:00

Score

By Quarters	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	24	37	17	3	—	81	40.5
Opponents	14	10	0	7	—	31	15.5

Individual Statistics

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Terrelle Pryor	28	130	4.6	1	26
Brandon Saine	21	110	5.2	2	45
Dan Herron	21	110	5.2	1	17
Jaamal Berry	7	80	11.4	0	30
Jordan Hall	5	32	6.4	0	12
Ken Guiton	2	4	2.0	0	2
Carlos Hyde	1	4	4.0	0	4
Joe Bauserman	1	-3	-3.0	0	0
OSU Totals	90	461	5.1	4	45
OPP Totals	49	164	3.3	0	42

Passing	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT	Effic.
Terrelle Pryor	29	52	55.8	480	4-0	158.7
Joe Bauserman	1	2	50.0	2	0-0	58.4
TEAM	0	1	0.0	0	0-0	0.0
OSU Totals	30	55	54.5	482	4-0	152.2
OPP Totals	40	74	54.1	387	1-5	88.9

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
DeVier Posey	8	146	18.2	2	62
Dane Sanzenbacher	6	150	25.0	1	65
Jake Stoneburner	4	49	12.2	0	16
Brandon Saine	3	36	12.0	1	18
Grant Schwartz	3	20	6.7	0	11
Dan Herron	2	56	28.0	0	47
Jordan Hall	1	13	13.0	0	13
Adam Homan	1	7	7.0	0	7
Chris Fields	1	3	3.0	0	3
Corey Brown	1	2	2.0	0	2
OSU Totals	30	482	16.1	4	65
OPP Totals	40	387	9.7	1	26

Scoring	TD	EPK	EPR	EPP	FG	PTS
Devin Barclay	0	9-9	—	—	6-7	27
Brandon Saine	3	—	—	—	—	18
DeVier Posey	2	—	—	—	—	12
Brian Rolle	1	—	—	—	—	6
Dan Herron	1	—	—	—	—	6
Terrelle Pryor	1	—	—	—	—	6
D. Sanzenbacher	1	—	—	—	—	6
Drew Basil	0	—	—	—	0-1	0
OSU Totals	9	9-9	—	—	6-8	81
OPP Totals	4	4-4	—	—	1-4	31

FG Distance	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Devin Barclay	4-4	1-2	1-1	0-0	6-7
Drew Basil	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-1	0-1
OSU Totals	4-4	1-2	1-1	0-1	6-8
OPP Totals	0-0	0-1	0-2	1-1	1-4

Punting	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Ben Buchanan	8	315	39.4	0	52
OSU Totals	8	315	39.4	0	52
OPP Totals	10	393	39.3	0	58

Interceptions	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Chimdi Chekwa	2	22	11.0	0	15
Cameron Heyward	1	80	80.0	0	80
Brian Rolle	1	30	30.0	1	30
Nathan Williams	1	22	22.0	0	22
OSU Totals	5	154	30.8	1	80
OPP Totals	0	0	0.0	0	0

Punt Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Jordan Hall	5	35	7.0	0	12
Corey Brown (WR)	1	11	11.0	0	11
OSU Totals	6	46	7.7	0	12
OPP Totals	2	81	40.5	1	79

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Jaamal Berry	4	123	30.8	0	45
Jordan Hall	2	65	32.5	0	47
OSU Totals	6	188	31.3	0	47
OPP Totals	11	298	27.1	1	88

Def. Leaders	Solo	Asst.	Tot.	TFL-Yds.	Sacks
Ross Homan	8	6	14	—	—
Tyler Moeller	9	4	13	2.0-10	1.0-6
Jermale Hines	5	5	10	—	—
Brian Rolle	5	5	10	1.0-1	—
Chimdi Chekwa	6	3	9	2.0-11	—
Devon Torrence	7	1	8	—	—
Dexter Larimore	5	1	6	3.0-12	1.0-8
John Simon	4	2	6	2.0-12	1.0-10
C.J. Barnett	4	1	5	—	—
Cameron Heyward	3	1	4	1.0-2	—
Nate Oliver	3	0	3	—	—
Andrew Sweat	2	1	3	—	—
Orhian Johnson	1	1	2	—	—
Solomon Thomas	1	1	2	—	—
Nate Ebner	2	0	2	—	—
Dorian Bell	1	1	2	—	—
Jamie Wood	1	0	1	—	—
Dominic Clarke	1	0	1	—	—
Tony Jackson	1	0	1	—	—
Adam Bellamy	1	0	1	—	—
TEAM	1	0	1	—	—
Johnathan Hankins	0	1	1	—	—
Zach Domicone	1	0	1	—	—
Aaron Gant	1	0	1	—	—
OSU Totals	73	34	107	11-48	3-24
OPP Totals	88	62	150	15-40	4-16

Fumbles Forced: 1 — Dorian Bell, Chimdi Chekwa, Tyler Moeller.

Fumbles Recovered: 1 — Ross Homan, Nate Oliver.

OHIO STATE VS. MIAMI (FLA.)

BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 36, Miami (Fla.) 24

Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel on Miami: "I think they're a top-10 team. In my mind going into the game, I was interested to see if we were a top-10 team, and I thought we played a very good team. So now if we'll keep growing from that, we've got a chance. If we think we've arrived, we're done."

Miami head coach Randy Shannon on the game: "We said it was going to be a game of field position, and we gave Ohio State a starting position of the 40-yard line and you can't do that. We also gave up 70 yards after first contact, but the defense did a great job to keep us in the game and give us a chance to win."

Shannon on receiver Travis Benjamin, who ran the wrong route on one of senior cornerback Chimdi Chekwa's second-quarter interceptions: "He just blew it. The receiver just blew it, to be honest with you."

Junior quarterback Terrelle Pryor on his performance: "Today was the most calm I've ever been. I was sitting there making jokes in front of Coach Tressel and (Nick Siciliano) and stuff and going up and talking to all the fans on the team walk. I was just so comfortable."

Pryor on if this proves a Midwestern team can play with the speed of a Southern team: "Those guys are fast, man. Once I got on the edge, those guys were taking me down. I'm fast as well. I'm a gazelle, too. But I don't know. I leave that to people on the Twitters and stuff like that. That's not my place to talk."

Pryor on throwing the game ball into the stands after the final play: "Hopefully a kid got it."

Pryor on pundits picking against the Buckeyes: "We were supposed to lose today. We heard all that stuff. The game is played in the middle of the field, between the lines. Nothing against Miami at all, but we heard a lot of stuff about Ohio State was supposed to lose, and we don't listen to all that. We have a great coach who makes sure we handle business on the field. We don't do much talking. We handle stuff with class."

Senior linebacker Brian Rolle on the significance of the win: "I think it helps us tremendously, but I think we can't get relaxed. We beat a big team, but we know next week Ohio U. is going to come in playing fast and playing hard. If we lay up one bit, then we'll be disappointed like we were at Purdue last year."

Senior kicker Devin Barclay on his busy day: "I'm here to do what I can when they need me, but obviously we want to score touchdowns first and foremost. I like extra points."

Barclay on executing pooch kickoffs after Ohio State allowed a kickoff return for a touchdown: "It's something we work on. A kicker has to be able to do anything, and sure enough we had to be ready for those. They had let me know in advance that if there was a pooch situation I'd most likely be taking it. So I had a few opportunities this week to work on it, but for the most part we did well on the pooches."

Barclay on his missed field goal in the fourth quarter: "I just swung all wrong on it. I had cramped up about the middle of the fourth quarter after my fifth field goal. But to be honest it still shouldn't matter. I should have made that kick. That's all there is to it."

Senior defensive tackle Dexter Larimore on Miami: "Coming in, we heard that they were a team that's going to talk. But honestly, they were a respectable team. The offensive line was very respectable ... We knew they would come in and complete a lot of passes and sustain a lot of long drives. We also knew each game is 60 minutes and we were ready for anything to happen in the second half."

Senior tailback Brandon Saine on the game: "This has been circled on the calendar for a while. Everybody's been looking forward to it. We love big games, especially in the Horseshoe. Coming in and getting a win today was huge for us. It's really going to help us going forward."

Saine on the defense nabbing four interceptions: "They gave us great field position. Without some of those takeaways, the game would have been a lot different."

Junior tailback Dan "Boom" Herron on OSU's red-zone struggles: "We have to do better there, period. That's something Coach Tressel really stresses, being 100 percent down there in the red zone. We'll continue to get better at that in practice and watch film."

Chekwa on Miami quarterback Jacory Harris: "We knew we had to get pressure on him. That goes for every game, but especially this game because this is a big game. Jacory Harris, from what we saw from last year, made some bad decisions sometimes when he got pressured. If you got pressure on him, he was going to throw it up sometimes. We made sure we got pressure on him and I got an opportunity to make some plays."

Chekwa on the first of his two interceptions: "I was very surprised. I didn't expect it to come, to be honest, but I read Jacory. I saw him drop back and it looked like a quick pass, so I broke on it. But then the receiver tried to block, so I didn't know what was going on. I just continued with the play and he threw the ball straight to me."

Chekwa on the second pick: "He was bobbling the ball. Initially I was trying to make a hit, trying to get him to drop the ball, but he was already bobbling. I capitalized on the opportunity."

Chekwa on the importance of the win: "I don't know if it was so much of a statement game. I think that's something that you kind of play into it before the game, just to get excited. Afterwards it's just another win for Ohio State, something we needed. We lost last year in an out-of-conference game. It's not so much a statement game, just a game that's going to carry us forward."

Chekwa on the win: "It's a big win. Miami's a great opponent, and I expect them to have a great season this year. I don't know if Ohio State needed the win. I'm playing on the team, so of course I needed to win. But it was a big win we are excited about."

Junior tailback Dan "Boom" Herron on OSU's red-zone struggles: "We have to do better there, period. That's something Coach Tressel really stresses, being 100 percent down there in the red zone. We'll continue to get better at that in practice and watch film."

Sophomore defensive lineman John Simon

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Opinions Varied After Buckeyes Beat Miami

By **MARCUS HARTMAN**
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Ohio State's 36-24 defeat of visiting Miami (Fla.) turned out to be a somewhat bizarre game and produced a wide range of reactions among writers from across the country.

There were those who came to praise Ohio State quarterback Terrelle Pryor while others were, if not quite ready to bury him, certainly far from preparing for a coronation.

Few had kind words for the Hurricanes, but the Buckeyes earned a fair amount of respect for their efforts.

Here is a sampling of what was written about the game from a multitude of sources:

• **Mike Bakas, CanesTime.com:** "That's the best offensive team (and probably player) Miami will face all season so the defense has a chance. They still need to tackle better but they played well enough for the most part to believe

they can be a very good unit this season. They're good enough to keep the team in every game and can even be good enough to win some games for the 'Canes this season."

• **Tim Dahlberg, The Associated Press:** "LeBron James should have stopped by to see the quarterback who looks up to him so much. If nothing else, he might have enjoyed watching an Ohio team that can win a big game."

• **Thayer Evans, FoxSports.com:** "They'll talk about (Pryor) being a front-runner for the Heisman Trophy. But the problem is the 6-foot-6, 233-pound junior continues to have more head-scratching moments than flashes of brilliance like he did against the Hurricanes ... Yet Pryor's flaws didn't end up mattering in this game. After all, Miami beat itself with quarterback Jacory Harris' four interceptions that led to 20 points for Ohio State. But truth be told, if they converted opportunities offensively, Pryor and the Buckeyes should have won this game in a blowout instead of making a

fourth-quarter defensive stand to snuff out a hollow Miami comeback effort."

• **Pat Forde, ESPN.com:** "Pryor reigns as the most argued-about quarterback in America. That much is inarguable. Reasonable people can completely disagree about the Ohio State quarterback's performance and his fit in Jim Tressel's offense – from year to year, from week to week, even from play to play. Here's my take on Terrelle: He was plenty good enough Saturday. And in the course of 24 career starts, he's gotten better. Significantly better. Steady progress defies the sweeping judgments we tend to want to make after every game, or sometimes after every throw. Steady progress is kind of boring. But steady progress is working for Pryor and his team."

• **Israel Gutierrez, The Miami Herald:** "Look, the Buckeyes are very good. They might even be the best team in the country, and playing in The Horseshoe is no easy task. But at some point, this collection of talent has to improve enough to win these types of games. Under Shannon, the Hurricanes have gone 1-6 against ranked teams away from home. So, at some point, this team has to learn from these experiences and not look ragged as often as it does. If that happens, there remains plenty to look forward to this season. If not, you might want to wear a hat while watching the 'Canes play. It'll help you avoid the temptation of pulling your hair out."

• **Brian Kollars, Dayton Daily News:** "There are times Ohio State plays like I feel after guzzling NyQuil. You know, like zombies. Saturday was not one of those times. The Buckeyes played fast and looked very interested in an impressive 36-24 dismantling of Miami (The U). Other than the punt and kickoff teams — whose practices this week could be longer than Braylon Edwards' beard — OSU resembled a national title contender. Terrelle Pryor didn't look like Dan Marino, but he didn't turn over the ball over, either."

• **Doug Lesmerises, The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer:** "The game was odd, no doubt, the special teams coverage units a major issue to be addressed this week. And if anyone was looking for Pryor to storm to the front of the Heisman race with a magical performance, it didn't happen. But he threw for 200 yards, ran for 100 and didn't commit a turnover, which in Tressel's mind is ideal. And his team won."

• **Bill Livingston, The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer:** "The game was played in cloudy half-light, then in mist, then in a rain squall, then in sunshine, and finally in twilight that arrived early because of the overcast skies. The conditions barely mattered, though, because the Ohio State defense, ball-hawking and hitting and hustling stride for stride with the supposedly speedier Sunshine Boys, was the dominant force in all weathers."

• **Stewart Mandel, SI.com:** "For four years, they've been haunted by the ghosts of nonconference meltdowns, from BCS championship losses to Florida and LSU to the pair of early season defeats against USC Pryor was referencing. Last year's Rose Bowl win over Oregon offered some salvation, but even the normally button-lipped Buckeyes had to admit there was something

special about silencing 'The U' and its patented, Florida-born-and-bred 'swagger' ...

Neither team looked championship-ready here today, but the Buckeyes certainly appeared a whole lot closer.... Those still waiting for Pryor to morph into Vince Young may be left waiting forever. It's not going to happen. But there are worse things to have than a veteran QB who accounts for 346 yards, avoids turnovers (he had none on the day) and can make plays with his feet... Two years ago this week, then fifth-ranked Ohio State went to Los Angeles and got hammered by Mark Sanchez's top-ranked Trojans, 35-3. In interviews afterward, the Buckeyes players' looked not just defeated but beaten down, not from one loss but from the cumulative effect of yet another big-stage blowout and the accompanying criticism. It's taken two years and a new crop of players to bury those demons and transform Ohio State into a legitimately confident contender. Going back to last November, the Buckeyes have now beaten four top-15 opponents (Iowa, Penn State, Oregon and Miami) in their past six games. That kind of success tends to have an effect."

• **Rusty Miller, The Associated Press:** "This one was no work of art, with numerous sloppy plays and bad tackling. But it kept the Buckeyes perfect and prevented the Hurricanes from making a case they belonged back among the nation's elite."

• **Rob Oller, The Columbus Dispatch:** "Besides wondering if LeBron would show (he didn't), there was a question of whether Miami would show up with enough attitude — because of the 2003 national championship game loss — to intimidate the Buckeyes into making mental mistakes. Answer: The Hurricanes, with blown receiver routes and dropped passes, lost their focus even more than Ohio State. Apparently carrying a chip on your shoulder for eight years is too big of a burden for The U."

• **Ralph N. Paulk, Pittsburgh Tribune-Review:** "Ohio State quarterback Terrelle Pryor confidently stepped into Ohio Stadium on Saturday with a chance to bolster his Heisman Trophy profile against 12th-ranked Miami. The Jeannette, Pa., graduate didn't dazzle with his arm, yet he delivered an array of clutch throws. And he tormented the Hurricanes with his legs in leading No. 2 Ohio State to an impressive 36-24 victory before a crowd of 105,545. For Pryor, his performance can't be summed up in his passing numbers — 12 of 27 for 233 yards. But his game-high 113 yards rushing sums up perfectly the frustrations a Miami defense had in trying to contain him."

• **Dan Wetzel, Yahoo!Sports.com:** "Ohio State has been ripped for years for floundering in big nonconference games, so a double-digit victory over Miami is to be savored. The stakes are high here though. Ohio State is ranked No. 2 and deserves every bit of it. There is talent all over the field. Speed too. The Buckeyes have all the athletes you need; forget that reputation for lumbering. Which is why the progress of Pryor becomes so compelling. This team is capable of winning it all. It probably needs steadier play from its gifted quarterback to do it."

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Terrelle Pryor

OHIO STATE FOOTBALL

Chekwa Willing To Let Play Do His Talking

By CRAIG MERZ
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

It's not in Chimdi Chekwa's nature to be loud or boastful, so the transplanted Floridian wasn't going to get drawn into the pregame trash talk emanating in some corners before Miami (Fla.) played Ohio State.

The fifth-year senior is known for his thoughtful answers and displays a quieter side than most of his defensive cohorts, so he avoided the prodding of the Columbus media to return volleys from south Florida.

It was when the whistle blew that Chekwa did his talking. He picked off two Miami passes and totaled six tackles as the Buckeyes rolled to a 36-24 victory Sept. 11.

Chekwa's quiet demeanor might have been a reason he was not among the six captains chosen this year. His side of the ball was represented by defensive end Cameron Heyward and linebackers Brian Rolle and Ross Homan, but the secondary was shut out.

Even though Chekwa doesn't have a title he knows as one of the older players his responsibilities haven't lessened.

"It's leadership, making sure guys are where they are supposed to be, doing the little things," he said. "I'm a leader in the defensive backfield. I'm a guy who knows what he's doing no matter what it is."

"I just try to communicate that to the other guys and help the young guys make the transition like I did, like Malcolm Jenkins and Donald Washington did to (help) me."

While he feels more comfortable taking a commander's role among the defensive backs, he's not afraid to step outside his boundaries.

"It depends on the situation," Chekwa said. "Of course, a leader crosses groups but at the same time you have Dane (Sanzenbacher) in the receiver room. You have DeVier (Posey) in the receiver room. You've got a QB like Terrelle Pryor and you have Jermaine Hines in the safety room."

Chekwa, Hines and Devon Torrence provide a seasoned defense that has yet to play as consistently as is expected at Ohio State.

"You hope your seniors step up," defensive coordinator Jim Heacock said Sept. 2

before the season opener against Marshall. "Those guys should step up and make more plays and be more productive."

He won't get any disagreement from Chekwa, who said, "I felt like we didn't make the plays that we should have" last year.

Chekwa is hoping a strong senior year will improve his stock in the 2011 NFL draft after deciding in January not to leave Ohio State. He also wanted to finish school and will receive a degree in accounting in December.

"I prayed about this decision and talked about it with my parents, and I know this was the right decision for me," Chekwa said.

Education is important in his family.

His parents, Charles and Eunice, fled the civil war in Nigeria in 1975 and came to the United States to start anew. One of the things they did was shorten the family surname from Onwuchekwa because people had trouble pronouncing it. (For official purposes, such as documents needed to enter Ohio State, Chekwa has to use the birth certificate name Onwuchekwa.)

Charles Chekwa, a professional soccer player at one time in his native land, graduated from Mississippi State before he and his wife moved to New Orleans, where they eventually earned five college degrees between them and began their teaching careers. The family of eight moved to Clermont, Fla., near Orlando, in 2001.

Chimdi (meaning "God is our life" in their religion) is the youngest of six children. His brothers are Uchekwu (God's will), Chukwu (God understands) and Ikechukwu (power of God) while his sisters are Blessing and Chinonye (God with us).

Ikechukwu, or Ike, played football for Texas State, and Blessing was on the basketball team at Mississippi State.

"We were all very competitive," Chimdi said.

That desire may have helped him climb the depth chart at Ohio State after redshirting his freshman year in 2006.

He said the 2003 Fiesta Bowl, won by the Buckeyes, 31-24, in double overtime against Miami, first put OSU on his radar.

"I have very few memories of the game other than overtime," Chekwa said. "I remember (Miami) had a great team, a lot of great players, and not knowing too much about Ohio State at the time. I remember rooting for Ohio State because they were the underdogs and coming out with the victory."

"At that point was the first time I recognized who Ohio State was and I paid attention to Ohio State. What ultimately got me here was the official visit and what I saw from the tradition all the way up to the facilities and everything like that. I was a big college football fan, but I was an LSU fan back then."

Although he was first-team all-central Florida and second-team All-Florida as a senior at East Ridge High School, he was not heavily recruited by Miami. That diminished further when head coach Larry Coker was fired and replaced by Randy Shannon.

"I was recruited a little bit but then the coaching staff changed," Chekwa said. "A lot of the coaches got fired and I stopped getting recruited by them. Throughout the recruiting process I looked at the best team recruiting me. It was Ohio State. I think I would still be here at Ohio State (even without the switch in Miami coaches)."

Chekwa first made an impact with the

Buckeyes in his freshman year during week six of 2007 when he had 10 unassisted tackles in a win against Purdue to earn Big Ten Player of the Week honors. His career high for tackles is 11 against Texas in the 2009 Fiesta Bowl.

Chekwa had 43 tackles last season and seven pass breakups and has started 27 of the past 28 games. Along the way, the 6-0, 190-pounder has learned to cope with bigger receivers.

"It's technique, doing what you're taught and making sure you execute and you're aware of their size and how they might attack you," he said.

It also helps to get some occasional help from the big guys in front of him.

"I expect my D-line and my linebackers to be able to go out there and attack the quarterback," he said. "It makes it a whole lot easier (for me)."

Chekwa had a slight hamstring injury going into the Marshall game but managed three tackles, a tackle for loss, a pass breakup and a forced fumble early in the fourth quarter of the 45-7 victory. That was followed by his excellent performance against the Hurricanes.

"He's the senior who has to lead us," OSU cornerbacks coach Taver Johnson said.

Chekwa is trying and even attempting to exhibit a little bravado.

"We can bring a lot of swagger to the table," he said. "That's kind of the blueprint of the defense every year. We have to come to the field with the swagger, the confidence, the belief in our teammates."



Chimdi Chekwa

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OHIO STATE FOOTBALL

Several Freshmen Already Ready For Playing Time

By JEFF SVOBODA
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Size and speed will get a player a long way on the gridiron, and they are two attributes that have helped some of the newest Ohio State players gain notice from the coaching staff this fall.

When it comes to size, literally the biggest freshman Buckeyes – in two different ways – have turned heads in 335-pound defensive tackle Johnathan Hankins and sky-scraping wideout T.Y. Williams.

The hole-plugging Hankins rose up the depth chart throughout the fall to the second team before making his debut against Marshall, logging nearly 20 plays in relief of senior Dexter Larimore. Hankins responded by pushing his man into the backfield on his first career play.

That early playing time wasn't a surprise to teammates, who spent much of camp talking in awed tones about the abilities and intangibles of the defensive lineman.

"If you didn't tell me who 'Big Hank' was, I would have thought he's a junior or senior just by how he plays," linebacker Ross Homan said. "He's a snout-nosed, tough defensive tackle, which is what you want. He's a big dude, a strong dude, but at the same time he's very, very athletic. He uses his hands. He's a great pass rusher.

"He doesn't just stuff holes on the ground. He can pass rush the quarterback. I think he's going to be a huge contributor for us this year."

On the other end of the spectrum is Williams, who checks in officially at 6-5 but looks even bigger when going through drills with his teammates.

Williams also boasts surprising smoothness for his size, especially given the fact that he didn't play football full time until his sophomore year in high school and then missed part of his junior year at East Cleveland (Ohio) Shaw with an injury.

As a result, Williams has a long way to go to become a polished wideout, but he earned some of the best praise among the early newcomers Aug. 30 from his position coach, Darrell Hazell.

"He is going to be spectacular, maybe one of the best guys to come out of here," Hazell said. "I really believe that. I have never seen a 6-7 guy drop his hips and change directions like that. He plays at 6-7, not 6-2. He doesn't know anything about the game yet, so he's learning the game, but he is going to be a phenom. Love him."

When it comes to speed, the word is the most impressive freshman has been another receiver, Corey Brown. Known as

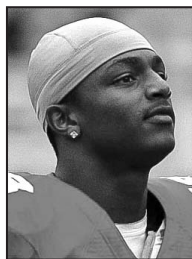
"Philly" because his home city of Upper Darby is near the City of Brotherly Love, Brown has earned immediate playing time thanks to the speed that made him an all-state track performer in high school.

"From the beginning, my impression was he is fast – very, very fast," senior cornerback Chimdi Chekwa said. "At first I thought my corners were just doing a bad job of technique until I went out there myself and I realized, 'Oh, he's really fast.'"

Hazell was also full of praise for Brown – who caught his first pass in the opener against Marshall, a 2-yarder, and had another tough sideline grab come out of his hands – but noted he has more than just pure physical skill.

"He's a very mature kid (who) picked up the offense very quickly," Hazell said. "He's an amazing guy. He's just so smooth and a lot of fun to watch. He can do it all. He can punt catch, kick return, catch the short one, go get the deep ones. He'll make a lot of plays for us this year."

Those are just three members of a freshman class rated 20th in the country and third in the Big Ten by Scout.com. On a veteran team, the Buckeyes haven't needed too many freshman contributors, but five – Hankins, Brown, offensive lineman Andrew Norwell, kicker Drew Basil and defensive back Christian Bryant – saw the field in the opening two games.



T.Y. Williams

Those are among the players head coach Jim Tressel said were most impressive at the conclusion of their first OSU training camp.

"I would say Johnathan Hankins was a guy that sometimes in the trenches it's hard to come in and not be overwhelmed, and he's shown, I think, that he's going to be able to help us," the coach said Aug. 30 at his first weekly luncheon.

"Corey 'Philly' Brown is a guy that played a lot of different positions in high school, so you didn't really know for sure where he may end up. He's going to play some at receiver. We had seen Drew Basil in the spring, so we knew he was going to be good and he'll play.

"Those guys jump out at me a little bit. (Defensive end) J.T. Moore jumps out at me a little bit because Nate Williams has been out (and) some other Leos have gotten more reps. I'm not saying some other guys aren't plenty good, but when you get in there and play more reps, you know, he's shown he can help us."

Another freshman was discussed heavily throughout camp, but it was more because of his absence than anything else. Four-star tailback Roderick Smith of Fort Wayne (Ind.) Paul Harding did not take part in

camp while awaiting an eligibility ruling, which came down in his favor the week of the opening game.

Even though Smith missed that contest as well as the entire preseason and enters a team with plenty of depth at tailback, Tressel said Smith wasn't a definite redshirt as of Sept. 7.

"I don't know if he could get enough reps now to be able to earn the right to go in before someone else, but you never know with injuries and so forth," Tressel said after Smith hit the practice field Sept. 5. "I thought he looked good."

But what is the outlook for each of the 18 scholarship freshmen on the roster? BSB takes a look at this year's class of newcomers, complete with camp talk about each player and a rating – called Playing Time Possibilities – from 1 to 10, with 1 meaning a player is ticketed for a sure redshirt, 5 meaning he'll see the field at least once, and 10 meaning the player is expected to start this season.

Darryl Baldwin, DE, Solon, Ohio – Baldwin (6-4, 267) looked capable at strong-side defensive end, the same position as Cameron Heyward, in camp. Because of the All-America talent ahead of him, Baldwin looks like a probable redshirt, but he has a similar body type to Doug Worthington and could have a similar career in his future. **PTP: 2**

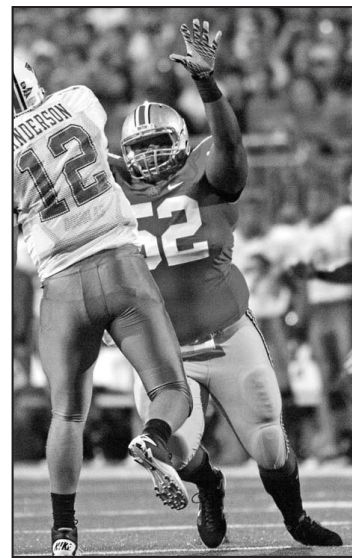
Drew Basil, K, Chillicothe, Ohio – Basil (6-1, 206) impressed early with his leg strength and seemed to have the kick-off job wrapped up before camp. He has filled that role in the first two games and is expected to take the long field-goal tries, such as the 53-yarder that was blocked and returned for a touchdown in the Marshall game. **PTP: 8**

Corey "Philly" Brown, WR, Springfield (Pa.) Cardinal O'Hara – Brown's redshirt was burned in the first game when he played on the second wide-receiver unit and returned a punt. The 5-11, 170-pounder was among the most impressive freshmen in camp and seems ticketed for future stardom. This year, he'll be a role player, but the Buckeyes seem excited to see what that role might be. **PTP: 7**

Christian Bryant, S, Cleveland Glenville – A highly decorated high school player, Bryant (5-9, 178) started his OSU career as a cornerback but quickly moved to the "star" position to take advantage of his abilities as a cover man and a big hitter. A gamer who seemed to make big plays when necessary for Glenville, Bryant has the intangibles necessary to play at the college level and made his debut in mop-up duty against Marshall. **PTP: 6**

David Durham, DE, Charlotte (N.C.) Christian School – Durham (6-1, 231) played linebacker in high school but has been a Leo since arriving at OSU. He brought that linebacker mentality with him to the new position, scuffling in camp with Andrew Norwell at one point, and flashed a few times while working with the second and third units. However, considering OSU's depth at line, he looks like a probable redshirt. **PTP: 2**

Taylor Graham, QB, Wheaton (Ill.) North – Only a three-star prospect, Graham (6-4, 225) has impressed early, with Tressel noting that players told him after summer workouts about Graham's ability to throw a good ball. A dropback passer with some mobility when it comes to rollouts, Graham still needs to learn the OSU system and



JOSH WINSLOW

IMPOSING FIGURE – True freshman Johnathan Hankins (52) saw playing time in Ohio State's season-opening victory Sept. 2 against Marshall.

seems to be a likely redshirt choice given the three quarterbacks ahead of him on the roster. **PTP: 2**

Adam Griffin, CB, Columbus DeSales – Griffin (5-7, 178) seems certain to take a redshirt. He was nicked up with an undisclosed injury during camp, never taking part in drills with the rest of the defensive backs in practices open to the media. **PTP: 1**

Chad Hagan, S, Canonsburg (Pa.) Canon-McMillan – Hagan (6-0, 230) is in the same boat as Griffin. He was never able to get any reps with the safeties because of injury and was not dressed for the first two games. When healthy, he's billed as a solid combination of size and speed. **PTP: 1**

Johnathan Hankins, DT, Detroit Southeastern – The man known as "Big Hank" is impossible to miss, and not just because of his size. Hankins (6-3, 335) made a quick trip up the depth chart, debuting in the opener to cement his spot as Larimore's backup. There were questions about whether the three-star prospect's stamina would allow him to make an immediate impact, and those have been answered. **PTP: 8**

Carlos Hyde, RB, Fork Union (Va.) Military Academy – Hyde (6-0, 238) is just one of many talented options in the Ohio State backfield, but the Buckeyes clearly want to see what he can do after getting him on the field for a carry in the season opener. He has the leg drive and strength of a power back but also boasts surprisingly nimble feet. Hyde has potential but will have to fight for carries in 2010. **PTP: 6**

James Louis, WR, Delray Beach (Fla.) Atlantic – Never say never, but Louis (5-10, 176) looks pretty far away from seeing the field this year. Though he has speed and burst and was an all-state performer in Florida, Louis struggled to pick up reps during the preseason and was behind fellow freshmen Brown and Williams. **PTP: 1**

Scott McVey, LB, Cleveland St. Ignatius – McVey's solid play in the early

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threes of camp allowed him to pass some veterans to move up to the second team when injuries struck at the top. Considering the 6-0, 218-pounder is at a stacked position and still could use some time in the weight room, a redshirt looks likely, but he could be an option on special teams at some point if the Buckeyes need him. **PTP: 3**

J.T. Moore, DE, Youngstown (Ohio) Boardman – Moore (6-1, 246) is perhaps the closest player to the redshirt line who has not yet played. He was working with the second team at Leo when Nathan Williams was injured and earned praise from Tressel, but with Williams back it's anyone's guess if Moore will see playing time. **PTP: 4**

Andrew Norwell, OT, Cincinnati

Anderson – It didn't take long for Norwell (6-5, 308) to move up to the second team during fall camp, and he made his debut in the opener with the No. 2 line. The highest rated player in the OSU class, Norwell is an excellent run blocker thanks to his days at run-heavy Anderson and figures to improve at pass protection as he gets older. For now, he'll see limited time and learn the ropes. **PTP: 7**

Verlon Reed, WR, Columbus Marion-Franklin – Reed (6-0, 190) can play any number of positions – he was a quarterback in high school and rated by Scout as a safety – but started his Ohio State career as a wide receiver. He showed occasional flashes during camp but still has a lot to learn about the

position, so a redshirt seems likely. However, Reed's versatility could earn him a spot on special teams if the need arises. **PTP: 2**

Bradley Roby, CB, Suwanee (Ga.) Peachtree Ridge – Roby (5-11, 176) seems on his way to a redshirt after a position switch from wide receiver in high school. His preseason play seems to show a bright future, though. Roby wasn't afraid to be physical in camp and showed enough cover ability to earn public plaudits from starter Devon Torrence. After another year in the OSU system and the weight room, he should be a solid contributor. **PTP: 2**

Roderick Smith, RB, Fort Wayne (Ind.) Paul Harding – It's hard to imagine Smith (6-3, 220) getting carries after miss-

ing fall camp, but Tressel said he's not an automatic redshirt. Smith put together one of the best high school careers in Indiana history and is billed as a good combination of size and speed. Whether that will be enough to get him time in a crowded backfield remains to be seen. **PTP: 3**

T.Y. Williams, WR, East Cleveland (Ohio) Shaw – As Hazell said, Williams (6-5, 218) is as raw as they come but has loads of potential. He was more than just a jump-ball receiver in camp, showing good hands and earning praise from teammates for one early touchdown catch. Because of his inexperience, he'll likely sit out for a year of seasoning, but there's no denying he could help the Buckeyes in a pinch. **PTP: 3**

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OHIO STATE FOOTBALL

Unsung Browning Helps Anchor O-Line

By MATTHEW HAGER

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Bryant Browning did not come to Ohio State with the hype center Michael Brewster and tackles Mike Adams and J.B. Shugarts brought to Columbus in 2008 as true freshmen. Nor did he make headlines by transferring from Michigan and becoming an All-Big Ten first-team selection last year like left guard Justin Boren.

Browning is simply the most experienced member of the Ohio State offensive line. The three-time letter winner and returning right guard may not be the most high-profile member of the Buckeyes, but for his teammates, he's a crucial cog in the offensive machine.

Browning started on the offensive line for the third consecutive season Sept. 2 when the Buckeyes kicked off against Marshall. His first starting experience came in 2008 as a sophomore when he replaced graduated All-America right tackle Kirk Barton, but it is at right guard where Browning has found a home. He locked down the starting spot last season. The Cleveland Glenville product started every game at right guard last season and was the Jim Parker lineman of the week after wins over Toledo and Indiana.

For his efforts, Browning earned an All-Big Ten honorable mention. Now he hopes to make the most of his final season as a Buckeye. That senior sense of urgency had already hit him when he represented Ohio State at the annual Big Ten Media Days in Chicago in early August.

"It started hitting me back when we started training for this year," Browning said. "Every workout, every session, every 6 a.m. start is the last one. All I can do is do my best with it, try to get better and know it's my last go-around as an Ohio State Buckeye."

Most fans probably best know Browning for his academic prowess. He was a valedictorian at Cleveland Glenville and has continued to excel in the classroom at Ohio State. Browning is one of the football representatives to the university's Student-Athlete Advisory Board, a three-time academic all-district second-team selection by the College Sports Information Directors of America and a two-time Academic All-Big Ten team member.

So it really shouldn't be a surprise that learning is one of the first things Browning recalls when looking back at his time so far at Ohio State.

"I've basically just learned a lot – a lot from my coaches, from my teammates," he said. "I've made a lot of lifelong friends here. I've learned a lot from my schoolwork as well, working toward my degree. It's all been about learning. You learn a lot."

Part of that attitude is what has helped him progress as much as he has as a Buckeye. Browning credits the coaching style of position coach Jim Bollman for much of his success.

"He's not a big yeller," Browning said with a smile. "There are some coaches that start screaming at you when you mess up, but he's more like a teacher really. He tries to show you what you did wrong by watching film. If you get beat, he'll show you why."

"He'll say, 'This is what you did wrong. You've got to change that. If you don't, you'll keep getting beat the same way.' He does a great job of breaking down film and teaching things to make sure you learn from mistakes."



FILE PHOTO

STEADYING FORCE – Ohio State senior offensive guard Bryant Browning (70) is in his third year as a starter on the offensive line and is the line's most experienced member.

Browning's admiration for Bollman is reciprocated.

"He's a fun guy to be around, a great guy to coach, but not necessarily an attention-seeking guy," the offensive line coach said. "He doesn't have a big ego that way, which is really neat. I appreciate him a lot."

That appreciation was evident in talking to the other returners on Ohio State's line.

"A lot of my success comes because I've been able to play next to someone like Bryant Browning," said Shugarts, the man who lines up next to Browning as the right tackle. "He makes it a lot easier out there just because he's as good at what he does. He really communicates well, and we work really well out there. We have good chemistry."

Brewster cited Browning as one of his teammates he respects most.

"He's just a real good guy," Brewster said. "You know you can count on him. You don't

have to worry about him doing the wrong thing. You can always count on him being at workouts, taking care of his business and working hard."

Added Boren: "He's a great leader for us. BB is kind of a quiet guy. He stays out of the spotlight, but he works hard every day."

Several of his linemates consider Browning to be one of the most underrated players on the entire team.

"We appreciate his skills, but I guess from an outside perspective maybe he's not as noticed as some others," Boren said. "But everyone here at Ohio State appreciates what he's all about."

Part of that leadership comes through his humor. Though Browning can seem reserved at first, his teammates say he is one of the funniest people to be around in the locker room and at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center.

"He's not that quiet once you get to know him," Boren said. "If you didn't know him, you'd think he's quiet. But in the locker room he's always yelling and having a good time. He's always cracking jokes and being loud. He's a funny guy. He keeps us loose."

As for his senior season, Browning listed explosion off the ball and other minor technique issues as things he needs to improve on this fall. When it comes to the future, Browning – like most of the Buckeyes – has NFL aspirations, but if professional football is somehow not in his future he'll be ready for whatever is next. Unsurprisingly, he will leave Ohio State with a college degree in marketing, one he will receive in December. Browning said graduate school or maybe even law school might be on the horizon whenever his football playing days are over.

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OHIO STATE FOOTBALL RECRUITING PROFILE

Smith's Patience Paid Off With OSU Offer

By ADAM JARDY
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

With numbers tight and the class of 2011 filling up, Devin Smith knew what his chances were of fulfilling a dream.

As he put the finishing touches on his junior year of school, the wide receiver from Massillon (Ohio) Washington held a number of impressive scholarship offers but wanted one from Ohio State. As of mid-June, the Buckeyes had 13 verbal commitments but just one from a wide receiver.

Despite the fact that OSU was running out of room, Smith spied an opportunity for him to join the class.

"All year after my junior season we were in contact a lot and I thought an offer would possibly come," he told BSB. "It didn't come, so during the summer I went to their camp because I guess they wanted to see me work out a little bit. I performed pretty well there and the next day they had offered."

Smith's scholarship offer came June 14 via e-mail from wide receivers coach Darrell Hazell. Although he wanted to accept on the spot, Smith said he had to discuss it with his family.

"For my mom, that's where she wanted me to be," he said. "I knew from her that's where she wanted me to go. I talked to my dad because he graduated from Ohio State. I asked him what it was like down there and he said it's a great experience. He said to go ahead and take it. He said if this is the school you really want to go to and if this is where your heart is, go ahead and take it. When I thought over it that night, the next day I decided I was going to take it."

He issued his verbal commitment June 17.

In his mind, the scholarship offer validated Smith's hard work during the previous year. However, Massillon head coach Jason Hall pointed out that Smith was not exactly lacking for attention during that time period.

At the time of his OSU offer, Smith had landed offers from Notre Dame, Michigan State, Michigan, Penn State, Nebraska and Wisconsin, among others. As a result, Hall said Smith never appeared stressed while he awaited an OSU offer.

"We told him to be patient," the coach said. "Obviously he's an Ohio kid who loves Ohio State, but you're talking about a kid that had Notre Dame and a lot of big schools that had already offered him. He had tons of opportunities in front of him, but he wanted to go down and showcase himself for the Buckeyes. Obviously they were excited and offered him."

Smith said he felt it was his camp experience in Columbus that sealed the deal for the OSU coaching staff.

"It showed them that physically I could handle whatever they throw at me," he said. "To them, they knew what they had here and they knew that I was a good receiver and I could do some of the things very well. It was just a matter of time for when they were going to do it. It was disappointing when they didn't offer, but I just knew in the back of my head that the offer probably would come."

Since his commitment, Smith has been elevated to four-star prospect status by Scout.com. He is also ranked the No. 19 prospect from Ohio and the No. 41 wide receiver nationally.

Once he issued his commitment to the Buckeyes, Smith said he received a few e-mails from colleges he had been considering

congratulating him on his decision. Since then, however, all he has received are occasional letters through the mail from schools other than Ohio State.

Although he is a senior, Smith is in only his second season at Washington. After transferring from Akron Ellet following his sophomore season, Smith earned first-team all-county honors after catching 50 passes for 989 yards and 15 scores. He also carried the ball seven times for 43 yards and completed a 29-yard pass.

Hall said it did not take long for him to recognize Smith's potential.

"He came to summer workouts, and we noticed right away that he was going to be a premier player," the coach said.

The coach said the Tigers use Smith in a number of different ways.

"He's a dynamic player for us," Hall said. "He obviously is very athletic. He's got great hands. He returns punts, returns kickoffs. Devin is just a premier player. He can do anything. We put him in motion and we put him at multiple positions. He played some quarterback, too, in the Wildcat (formation). He has a very strong arm. He has the ability to do just about anything."

Smith also showcases his talents on his school's basketball and track teams. He said he has been timed at 10.5 seconds in the 100-meter dash.

With his recruitment out of the way, Smith is now focused on helping his team reach a state title. Last year's squad advanced to the semifinals before dropping a 31-17 decision to Cleveland Glenville.

His desires both to win now and play for Ohio State are not in opposition to each other, he said.

"I am very happy that I have this opportunity to play for Ohio State and I think about it all the time, (but) right now I'm focused on our team and reaching a goal that we have," Smith said. "It's not really hard for me to focus on what I need to focus on."

The wideout was voted a captain by his teammates.

"He's a great kid in the classroom and in the school," Hall said. "He has a great personality. He's not a distraction. When he's at practice or when he's in the weight room, he works extremely hard. He's a great teammate. That's another one of those great qualities - his teammates and the people around him have a lot of respect for him because he's not that selfish kid."

This year, Smith has gotten off to a fast start. After catching seven passes for 144 yards in a season-opening loss to Akron Buchtel, he snagged five passes for 116 yards in a 28-27 road victory Sept. 2 against Canton GlenOak. In the latter contest, Smith caught touchdown passes of 43 and 45 yards, the second of which was the game-winning score.

"When he catches the ball in space, he's just dynamic," Hall said. "We put him on an underneath route (against GlenOak) and he caught the ball 3 yards from the line of scrimmage and took it right down the middle of the field. I have no doubt in my mind he's going to be a great, great player at Ohio State."

Should that prove to be true, Smith should be well-suited to the pressures of being a Buckeye after playing for a tradition-rich program such as Massillon Washington.

"Every time you play, you're playing in front of 10,000-15,000 people," Hall said. "Going into that type of situation (in col-

Get To Know: Devin Smith

NAME - Devin Smith

HIGH SCHOOL - Massillon (Ohio)

Washington

POSITION - Wide receiver

HEIGHT, WEIGHT - 6-1, 175 pounds

40 TIME - 4.55 seconds

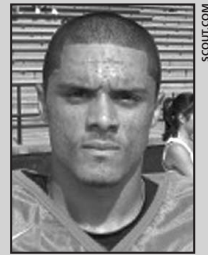
VITAL STATISTICS - As a junior, Smith earned first-team all-county honors after catching 50 passes for 989 yards and 15 touchdowns. He also completed one pass for 29 yards and carried the ball seven times for 43 yards.

RANKINGS - Scout.com lists Smith as a four-star prospect, the No. 19 prospect from Ohio and the No. 41 wide-out in the country.

PLAYER EVALUATION - "He can fly. If I could compare him to anyone, it would be (Ohio State wideout) DeVier Posey. He might not be as fluid but he's close. He really worked hard on being more than just a deep threat. He's a lot better player as a senior than what he was as a junior." - BuckeyeSports.com recruiting analyst Bill Greene

STRENGTHS - Speed, route running

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT - Upper-body strength



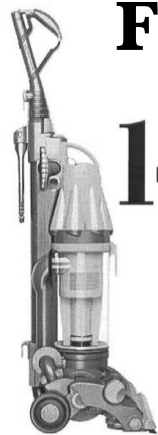
Devin Smith

lege) is nothing new for our kids. Going and playing in a hostile environment where everybody wants to beat you and you get everybody's best every week, our kids feed off of that and they enjoy it. I think our kids come out and nothing surprises them when they get to school."

The last surprise the 6-1, 175-pound Smith got, however, was a pretty good one.

"I always had faith," he said. "I told myself the offer would come but it was going to take some time. Ohio State is where I wanted to go. I just waited and waited and had faith, and when the offer came through I didn't wait."

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