

# BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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Vol. 10, No. 24

"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

March 30, 1991

## Dream Season Ends With Nightmarish Loss

# OSU Already Eyes Next Year

By Mark Rea

The Sweet 16 left a sour taste for Ohio State, but not so sour that members of the Buckeyes aren't looking forward to another taste next season.

Less than half an hour after Ohio State's dream season ended with a nightmarish 91-74 loss to St. John's, many of the team members were already talking about next year.

"We've had an excellent season," said junior point guard Mark Baker. "I'm really proud of what we've done, but I was always told you're only as good as your last game and this is something we'll have to think about for the rest of the spring and summer. I'd just like to say I know we'll be back next year."

Baker could be prophetic when he says he "knows" the Buckeyes will make a return to the NCAA Tournament.

Only center Perry Carter and Treg Lee will be missing from the team next season. While that means the Buckeyes will lose the bulk of their rebounding and inside strength, it also means that three starters will return along with a supporting cast that continues to mature by leaps and bounds.

"This loss hurts a great deal," admitted sophomore forward Jim Jackson. "This was a very frustrating game, especially considering how hard we worked and how much we really wanted it."

"But it just serves to give us a taste of what it's like. Last year, we gave UNLV a good game until getting beat in the second round. That inspired us for this year. Now, we'll have to take what we've learned this year and apply it for next year."

Buckeye fans have already breathed their collective sigh of relief that Jackson will be around to lead the team at least one more season. He has indicated he will not leave school to pursue a career in the NBA.

"That's not even something I've thought about," Jackson said of a professional career that remains on the horizon. "I'm at Ohio State and Ohio State is where I want to stay."

"We had a good season this year, but we sort of ran out of steam down the stretch. I want us to be able to maintain our play throughout next season, from start to finish. I want us to go to the Final Four next year and I want to work hard to help get us there."

Joining Baker and Jackson next season will be guard and defensive specialist Jamaal Brown, who will be looking to start for the fourth straight year.

"It's really hard to even think about anything else but the way we ended this season," Brown said. "We had things our way for so long, it really hurts to



Ohio State sophomore Jim Jackson (22), driving around St. John's forward Malik Sealy (21), scored a team-high 19 points in the Buckeyes' regional semifinal loss to the Redmen. The good news for OSU fans, though, is that Jackson returns next year.

think of the way things went tonight.

"But maybe we can take this and build off of it. We know we're better than we showed tonight. We really wanted to go to the Final Four, especially for Perry and Treg, guys who have worked so hard for so long."

While the Buckeyes will have three starters returning, some of the backup players received extensive playing time this season that should translate into improved depth for next season.

Forward Chris Jent returns as does backup center Bill Robinson, who continued to improve in the pivot. Meanwhile, forward Tom Brandewie gave the Buckeyes inspiring play during the time he was on the court.

Likewise, freshman guard Jamie Skelton will benefit from a year of experience under his belt, while sophomore

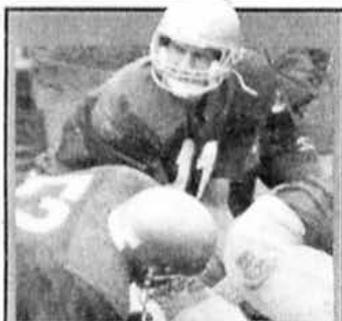
Alex Davis will be a season removed from a knee injury that seemed to slow him all of this year.

Despite the absence of Carter and Lee, the Buckeyes could make up for it with transfer Lawrence Funderburke, the return of freshman Joe Reid from academic problems, and the emergence of signees Antonio Watson and Rick Dudley, if they can overcome their academic woes.

And while some look toward the future, some continued to admire the recent past.

"I'm really proud of this team and what they have accomplished," said Ohio State head coach Randy Ayers, who guided the Buckeyes to the Sweet

Continued On Page 4



Spring Drills To Be Closed See Page 12



Pederson Off To Tennessee See Page 13



OSU Finishes 4th In Nation Pages 14-15

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# BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

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PUBLISHER  
Frank L. Moskowitz

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER  
Karen Wachsman

EDITOR  
Mark Rea

NON-REVENUE  
SPORTS EDITOR  
Mike Wachsman

PHOTOGRAPHY  
Tim Carson  
Liana Coutts  
Kevin Dye

CONTRIBUTORS  
Andrea Ardito  
Melissa Booker  
Gail Bushman  
Dana Dunn  
Rich Exner  
Julia Grubb  
Steve Helwagen  
Bron LaLonde  
Rich Leonardo  
Craig Merz  
Bob Rochm  
Steve Siegfried

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## Puzzle Pieces Missing For OSU

Maybe the season didn't end exactly according to the script that many had hoped for, but the Ohio State basketball team had an outstanding season, one in which it should take a tremendous amount of pride.

The Buckeyes are very lucky to have the services of Randy Ayers as head coach. He carries himself well, on and off the court, and represents everything that is good about college athletics today — a former player who has paid his dues as an assistant and now aspires to reach the pinnacle of his profession.

Having said that, I now take the risk of being perceived as a negative thinker. Somehow, between now and next November when the Buckeyes begin the 1991-92 season, Ayers must discover several things — a way for the Buckeyes to recover their shooting touch from 12 feet and farther, a rekindling of the team's defensive fire and a reliable big man.

Through the first 17 games of the just-completed season, the Buckeyes were hitting a glittering 54.8 percent of their shots. It was no coincidence that Ohio State was undefeated at the time.

Then, down the stretch, strangely sometime after the double overtime victory over Indiana, the Buckeyes couldn't find the bucket. In a couple of games in particular, if they were in a boat in the middle of a lake and had fallen overboard, they wouldn't have hit water.

In the final 14 games of the season, Ohio State shot better than 50 percent as a team only five times and dipped below 45 percent on seven occasions.

The poor shooting came to a head in the first half of the game against St. John's. While the Redmen were hitting 18 of 30 first-half shots for 60.0 percent, the Buckeyes made only nine of 29 attempts for 31.0 percent. St. John's ran out to a 43-24 halftime lead and never looked back on the way to a 91-74 win.

That's the bad news. The good news is that help should be on the way for the Buckeyes' shooting woes.

Jamaal Brown and Chris Jent, the team's best outside threats, are both back next year. And while both are streaky outside shooters at best, both have the three-point shot in their arsenal, a weapon that Ayers seemed to be reluctant to use this season.

The Buckeyes attempted only 278 three-point shots this season as compared to 348 by their opponents.

The team's three-point threats of the future would seem to be Jamie Skelton and Alex Davis. Skelton seemed to gain more and more confidence in his shot down the stretch, something that should benefit him next season. Meanwhile, it was mostly a wasted year for Davis after an off-season knee injury. He should return completely healed next year.

The only trouble with Skelton and Davis is that they play the same position as Brown, unparalleled on the Buckeyes as a defensive player. Still, Skelton improved tremendously at the defensive end of the court and Davis isn't exactly a defensive liability.

That brings us to the second point. While the Buckeyes were scorching the nets during the early part of the season, they held opponents down effectively.

In the first 21 games of the season, opponents shot over 50 percent only three times. During the final five-game

### Editor's Notebook with Mark Rea

stretch in which the Buckeyes lost three times, the trio of losses came at the hands of Purdue, Iowa and St. John's, all of which shot 50 percent or better.

There is only one known cure for the lack of defensive intensity and that is practice. After the loss to St. John's, many of the Buckeyes expressed the feeling that their defensive intensity was lacking down the stretch and that to make a return trip to the NCAA Tournament next season, they would have to turn things up a notch in the gym over the summer.

Now, about that big man. I'm sorry, but Bill Robinson is not going to be the answer. Robinson is an excellent role player, one who can come into a game and give quality minutes here and there while the starting center is getting a rest.

But while Robinson has improved tremendously during his OSU career, his penchant for committing fouls makes it appear that he will not be able to start.

Antonio Watson, a 6-9 center from Columbus Eastmoor, could be the answer for the Buckeyes, but he has yet to qualify for eligibility under Proposition 42. His contribution to the Buckeyes might not begin until the 1992-93 season.

Many experts believe Lawrence Funderburke can solve the Buckeyes' pivot problems. However, it is unwise to believe the enigmatic Funderburke, with a disruptive track record, could be the answer. There is no doubt he is an excellent basketball player and, when he's in the right frame of mind, can be an asset to any program.

But the player's past, which includes transfers from one school to another as far back as high school and a reputation for being a malcontent, makes it premature for Buckeye fans to count on him. The best I can do for Funderburke is what Ayers is doing now — wait and see how things develop.

The one wild card in all of this talk about next season remains Jim Jackson.

The sophomore received some of the recognition he so richly deserves, getting Big Ten player of the year honors along with first-team All-American plaudits from some publications.

For all of the talk about Mark Baker's exploits at point guard, Jackson is the man who makes the Buckeyes go.

The Buckeyes' world revolves around Jackson. He had a great freshman season and Ohio State made it to the second round of the NCAA Tournament's West Regionals. He had an outstanding sophomore season and Ohio State made it to the Sweet 16.

If he has another outstanding season as a junior and the Buckeyes can find the small missing puzzle pieces they need, there is every reason to believe the Buckeyes can be playing in the Metrodome in the 1992 Final Four.

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# Tourney Coaches Heap Praise Upon Bucks

Continued From Page 1

16 in just his second season as head coach.

"When we first started at the beginning of last year, I told these players that they had a chance to do some great things. All they needed to do was work together and they did that. I think I'm the most proud that the things we accomplished, we accomplished together."

Ayers and the Buckeyes probably received the highest praise from the three head coaches they faced in the tournament.

"Randy has done a great job with that team in a very short amount of time," said St. John's head coach Lou

Carnesecca. "To take your team, virtually the same one that was barely over .500 last year, and take it this far is a wonderful accomplishment.

"I thought we would have to play the best game we had played all season to beat them and that's what it took. The final score may indicate otherwise, but we did not have an easy time out there tonight."

Georgia Tech head coach Bobby Cremins, whose team defeated the likes of Arizona and North Carolina this season, added, "They are a tough, talented team, as tough and as talented as any we've played this season. Maybe the pressure of being number two in the nation got to them a little bit at the end of

the season, but they are an excellent team."

The coach of the Buckeyes' first-round opponent echoed the thoughts.

"They have so many weapons," said Towson State head coach Terry Truax. "A lot of coaches would be happy to have a Perry Carter or a Mark Baker or a Jimmy Jackson. Ohio State has them all and I think Randy has done a tremendous job getting all of that individual talent to play together as a solid unit."

That unit was able to accomplish things such as the school's first Big Ten championship since 1971 and first foray into the round of 16 since 1968.

However, after winning 25 of its first 26 games, Ohio State stumbled down the stretch, losing three of its last five games. Much of the trouble was traced to poor outside shooting, but Jackson said the Buckeyes just somehow lost their ability to outplay opposing teams defensively.

"This was a learning process for myself and all of the other underclassmen," Jackson said. "We worked hard this year, but we know we have to work even harder next year."

"We'll have to get into the gym and get back what we lost, which was our defensive intensity. During the first part of the season, our defense really shut teams down. We didn't have that a lot of times in the second half."

"We can't afford to get complacent. People will look at our record and say we had a pretty good season, and we did. We accomplished a lot, but it's the

goal of everybody on this team to go all the way. We didn't, so there's no way we could be satisfied."

Ayers said he agreed with his prized player.

"We've made progress as a program, and that's probably what pleases me as much as anything," the OSU coach said. "We have come a long way in a relatively short amount of time. We won the Big Ten and made the round of 16 after making the round of 32 last year."

"But we're not satisfied. There's still a lot of work to do. We're still in the process of trying to establish ourselves and, quite frankly, that work is probably never done."

"We were very fortunate this year in that we won a lot of games, got ranked very high in the polls and won the Big Ten co-championship," Ayers continued. "But those are things that we would like to do every year. We never want to rest on our accomplishments of the year before."

"The great programs are the ones who win games every year, the ones who are ranked high every year, the ones who win championships every year. That's what we want to be."

"Before this year, Ohio State hadn't won a Big Ten championship in 20 years, hadn't been to the round of 16 in 23 years. Those are things we want to change. We had some initial success last year and had even more this year. Next year, we want to build on the things we've learned and, hopefully, it will make us even better."

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*Buckeyes Unable To Dig Themselves Out Of Early Hole*

# St. John's Takes Ohio State Out Quickly

BOBBY BLOCKEY



The basketball seems to defy the laws of gravity sometimes as evidenced by this photo. Ohio State point guard Mark Baker had a slam dunk on the first play of the game against St. John's, but the ball somehow didn't fall. OSU went on to lose 91-74.

**By Mark Rea**

College basketball games are geared to last at least 40 minutes, but the NCAA Tournament's Midwest Regional semifinal game between Ohio State and St. John's was essentially decided in the first few seconds.

After controlling the opening tip, the Buckeyes ran one of their familiar plays with junior point guard Mark Baker getting loose under the basket. An alley-oop pass found Baker for an easy dunk, which promptly bounced off the rim.

The Redmen rebounded and went down the floor for a possession that netted a score after three missed shots and three subsequent offensive rebounds.

Although that made the score only 2-0 with more than 18 and a half minutes left in the first half, it set the tone for the rest of the game. St. John's controlled the tempo, the backboards and almost everything else, speeding to a 91-74 victory and ending the Buckeyes' storied season with a 27-4 record.

"Their first offensive series set the whole tempo for the game when they got four cracks at the basket," said Ohio State head coach Randy Ayers. "We couldn't rebound the basketball early and I thought that was one of the keys to their success all night."

While the Redmen rebounded with authority, they also had very little trouble breaking Ohio State's full-court pressure. Many times in the first half, St. John's junior forward Malik Sealy beat everyone down the court and scored easy baskets.

"We wanted to be quick to the ball, get every loose ball, and we wanted to be quick on the backboards," said Sealy, who scored 14 of his game-high 22 points in the first half.

"We wanted to get off to a fast start and then maintain. Things actually turned out just the way we planned them. That doesn't happen too often, but it did tonight."

While the Redmen sizzled the nets, shooting 63.0 percent (34 of 54) from the field for the game, the Buckeyes posted another performance below 50 percent. They converted on only 48.4 percent (30 of 62) for the game, but were only 31.0 percent (nine of 29) in a first half in which they fell behind by 19 points.

"We came out relaxed, maybe too relaxed, and waited for someone else to do something instead of stepping forward ourselves," Baker said. "We've had good balance all year, but we kind of got out of that tonight."

"We watched a lot of film on them and felt we were prepared. But they kind of caught us off-guard. Everybody says they like to control tempo, but they also like to push the ball up the court as they showed tonight."

While Sealy was running loose on the break in the first half, St. John's junior center Robert Werdann was having a field day under the basket against OSU senior center Perry Carter in the second half.

Werdann had only four points and two rebounds in the first 20 minutes of play, but finished up with 21 points, six boards and four blocked shots for the game.

"It's a lot harder to guard somebody when they're constantly moving," Werdann said. "We know they like to get

you in one place and lean on you. So, we kept moving and kept moving and that prevented them from being able to push us around."

Ayers added that the movement of the Redmen, especially from Werdann and junior forward Billy Singleton, disrupted the Buckeyes' defensive tempo.

"They did a good job of keeping us off-balance and that was one of the things we wanted to try and avoid," Ayers said. "We didn't want to come out of our (defensive) stance when they got the ball into Werdann or Singleton. But the first couple of minutes, they had us up, trying to block shots, and we're not a shot-blocking team."

Ohio State sophomore forward Jim Jackson admitted that he thought the Buckeyes came out of the starting blocks flat.

"They seemed much hungrier than we were," Jackson said. "They came out tough and took it right to us."

Nevertheless, the game was extremely tight for the first five and a half minutes. At that point, the Buckeyes had just received a pair of free throws from Jackson and a Carter tip in to cut the St. John's lead to 9-8.

Unfortunately for Ohio State, that was as close as things would get for the rest of the game.

In the next three and a half minutes, the Redmen hit everything and the Buckeyes hit little. The result was a 14-4 run by St. John's and a 23-12 lead with 10:11 remaining.

OSU tried to climb back into it, getting a basket from Baker and another from Carter to cut the deficit to nine each time, but the Redmen were intent upon running away and hiding. After Carter's basket, St. John's went on another tear, scoring 11 of the next 15 points to build the lead to 16.

It eventually reached 19 by halftime, leaving the Redmen running off the court with fists pumping and the Buckeyes walking into the locker room searching for answers.

OSU thought it had solved its problems early in the second half when senior forward Treg Lee got untracked for a while. After being held scoreless and reboundless in the first half, Lee scored the Buckeyes' first two baskets of the second half.

But St. John's refused to allow the Buckeyes to mount a serious challenge. Just when it appeared Ohio State had found its rhythm, the Redmen snuffed the rally.

Things began to get rough for the Bucks when Carter picked up his fourth personal foul with 18:00 left in the game. That touched off a spurt of six unanswered points for the Redmen and they posted a 53-29 lead.

To Ohio State's credit, the team refused to quit, cutting the lead to 16 points on several occasions. But the Buckeyes could never make any kind of serious run at the Redmen.

"It's very hard when you've dug such a big hole for yourself," Baker said. "I thought we played very well in the second half, but they were matching us almost basket for basket. You can't come back from 19 or 20 points down like that."

The Buckeyes' last hope came with

**Continued On Page 7**

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|                   | GP-GS | MIN/AV   | FGM-FGA | PCT.    | 3GM-3GA | PCT.    | FTM-FTA | PCT.  | OR  | DR   | REB  | AVG. | HI  | AST | ST  | BK  | TO     | PF-IDQ | PTS  | AVG. | HI |
|-------------------|-------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|-----|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|--------|------|------|----|
| Jim Jackson       | 31-31 | 997/32   | 228-441 | .517    | 17-51   | .333    | 112-149 | .752  | 63  | 106  | 169  | 5.5  | 13  | 133 | 55  | 24  | 100    | 69-0   | 585  | 18.9 | 30 |
| Perry Carter      | 31-31 | 905/29   | 154-265 | .581    | 0-0     | .000    | 74-141  | .525  | 106 | 153  | 259  | 8.4  | 18  | 29  | 37  | 27  | 74     | 88-2   | 382  | 12.3 | 24 |
| Jamaal Brown      | 31-31 | 852/27   | 126-273 | .462    | 34-85   | .400    | 85-114  | .746  | 28  | 47   | 75   | 2.4  | 5   | 69  | 43  | 3   | 47     | 56-0   | 371  | 12.0 | 29 |
| Treg Lee          | 31-30 | 780/25   | 137-236 | .581    | 0-0     | .000    | 72-81   | .889  | 57  | 118  | 175  | 5.6  | 13  | 43  | 26  | 18  | 62     | 79-2   | 346  | 11.2 | 24 |
| Mark Baker        | 30-30 | 897/30   | 113-218 | .518    | 0-4     | .000    | 101-142 | .711  | 17  | 55   | 72   | 2.4  | 5   | 150 | 49  | 7   | 87     | 67-1   | 327  | 10.9 | 24 |
| Chris Jent        | 31-2  | 670/22   | 90-190  | .474    | 32-79   | .405    | 38-47   | .809  | 43  | 70   | 113  | 3.6  | 11  | 56  | 20  | 5   | 36     | 78-2   | 250  | 8.1  | 17 |
| Steve Hall        | 4-0   | 25/6     | 5-7     | .714    | 0-0     | .000    | 3-6     | .500  | 4   | 9    | 13   | 3.3  | 5   | 3   | 0   | 1   | 2      | 5-0    | 13   | 3.3  | 6  |
| Jamie Skelton     | 31-0  | 254/8    | 36-94   | .383    | 10-34   | .294    | 11-18   | .611  | 7   | 14   | 21   | 0.7  | 5   | 19  | 14  | 4   | 19     | 35-0   | 93   | 3.0  | 11 |
| Jimmy Ratliff     | 10-0  | 58/6     | 11-25   | .440    | 0-1     | .000    | 7-10    | .700  | 10  | 7    | 17   | 1.7  | 4   | 4   | 0   | 3   | 7      | 10-0   | 29   | 2.9  | 7  |
| Bill Robinson     | 31-0  | 393/13   | 32-54   | .593    | 0-0     | .000    | 21-33   | .636  | 36  | 69   | 105  | 3.4  | 11  | 5   | 9   | 21  | 18     | 79-0   | 85   | 2.7  | 10 |
| Tom Brandewie     | 22-0  | 138/6    | 22-36   | .611    | 1-2     | .500    | 8-13    | .615  | 16  | 25   | 41   | 1.9  | 6   | 4   | 0   | 4   | 14     | 5-0    | 53   | 2.4  | 8  |
| Alex Davis        | 28-0  | 207/7    | 23-60   | .383    | 3-18    | .167    | 14-16   | .875  | 6   | 12   | 18   | 0.6  | 3   | 25  | 9   | 1   | 18     | 14-0   | 63   | 2.3  | 7  |
| Scott Reeves      | 7-0   | 37/5     | 4-11    | .364    | 1-2     | .500    | 3-6     | .500  | 1   | 4    | 5    | 0.7  | 1   | 3   | 2   | 0   | 14     | 5-0    | 12   | 1.7  | 5  |
| Nick Hodak        | 7-0   | 19/3     | 4-5     | .800    | 1-2     | .500    | 2-2     | 1.000 | 1   | 4    | 5    | 0.7  | 2   | 3   | 0   | 0   | 1      | 2-0    | 11   | 1.6  | 6  |
| Joe Reid          | 4-0   | 18/5     | 2-4     | .500    | 0-0     | .000    | 0-0     | .000  | 2   | 5    | 7    | 1.8  | 3   | 1   | 0   | 3   | 3      | 2-0    | 4    | 1.0  | 4  |
| Ohio State Totals | 6250  | 987-1919 | .514    | 99-278  | .356    | 551-778 | .708    | 438   | 742 | 1180 | 38.1 | 60   | 547 | 264 | 121 | 507 | 594-7  | 2624   | 84.6 | 116  |    |
| Opponent Totals   | 6250  | 782-1816 | .431    | 127-348 | .365    | 432-637 | .678    | 383   | 592 | 975  | 31.5 | 44   | 424 | 188 | 81  | 618 | 637-25 | 2123   | 68.5 | 95   |    |

# Bucks' Late Rally Not Enough Vs. Redmen

Continued From Page 6

about six and a half minutes left. Sealy had just been whistled for his fourth foul before Jackson hit a jumper to cut the Redmen's lead to 16 again at 75-59.

OSU appeared to be gathering momentum for a late charge until Singleton found teammate Chucky Sproling breaking free down the floor for a slam dunk. That began a run of nine straight points for the Redmen, a run which placed the outcome in doubt no longer.

The Buckeyes followed with eight unanswered points of their own, but it was much too late as St. John's won going away.

Jackson finished as the Buckeyes'

leading scorer and rebounder in the game with 19 points and eight boards. Junior guard Jamaal Brown added 14 points while Baker had 13.

St. John's landed all five of its starters in double figures. Following Sealy and Werdann, Sproling added 15 points while Singleton and guard Jason Buchanan each scored 14. Buchanan also passed out nine assists and grabbed six steals while committing only one turnover in 38 minutes of action.

### Game Notes

Jackson needed three stitches to

close a gash over his right eye sustained in the first two minutes of the game.

He looked like a bloodied prizefighter when he came out of the game, but team physician Dr. Robert Murphy and head trainer Mike Bordner closed the wound quickly to allow Jackson back into the contest about two minutes later.

"It didn't affect me very much," Jackson said. "I was into the flow of the game and I didn't think that much about it."

He explained the injury occurred

when Werdann accidentally hit him while making a long pass.

FOLLOWING THE game, reporters asked Ayers if he thought his team's loss, coupled with Big Ten co-champion Indiana's 18-point loss to Kansas the previous night, indicated the conference was not as strong as in recent years.

"I don't think these two games say a lot about our conference," Ayers said. "We got beat by two good basketball teams. Kansas is a good team, St. John's is a good team. They played well when they had to and we didn't. That's why they beat us tonight."

**St. John's (91)**

| Player    | mn  | fgfga | ftfta | rb | a  | pf | tp |
|-----------|-----|-------|-------|----|----|----|----|
| Sealy     | 32  | 10/17 | 2/2   | 5  | 2  | 4  | 22 |
| Singleton | 35  | 4/7   | 6/7   | 8  | 5  | 2  | 14 |
| Werdann   | 33  | 8/9   | 5/7   | 6  | 1  | 3  | 21 |
| Buchanan  | 38  | 4/7   | 5/6   | 4  | 9  | 1  | 14 |
| Sproling  | 40  | 6/10  | 1/2   | 4  | 3  | 3  | 15 |
| Scott     | 10  | 1/1   | 0/0   | 0  | 0  | 0  | 2  |
| Muto      | 3   | 0/1   | 0/0   | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Cain      | 9   | 1/2   | 1/2   | 0  | 2  | 0  | 3  |
| Totals    | 200 | 34/54 | 20/26 | 29 | 22 | 13 | 91 |

3-point FG's: Sproling (2-4), Buchanan (1-1). Total FG's: 1st half, .600 (18-30); 2nd half, .667 (16-24); Game, .630. Three-point FG: 1st half, .750 (3-4); 2nd half, .000 (0-1); Game, .600 (3-5). FT's: 1st half, .800 (4-5); 2nd half, .762 (16-21); Game, .769. Team rebounds—2. Deadball rebounds—5.

**Ohio State (74)**

| Player   | mn  | fgfga | ftfta | rb | a  | pf | tp |
|----------|-----|-------|-------|----|----|----|----|
| Jackson  | 32  | 7/15  | 5/8   | 4  | 5  | 1  | 19 |
| Lee      | 24  | 3/8   | 0/0   | 4  | 0  | 3  | 6  |
| Carter   | 20  | 4/7   | 1/3   | 7  | 0  | 4  | 9  |
| Baker    | 32  | 5/10  | 3/4   | 0  | 4  | 3  | 13 |
| Brown    | 32  | 6/8   | 1/2   | 3  | 5  | 0  | 14 |
| Jent     | 27  | 1/6   | 0/0   | 4  | 2  | 4  | 3  |
| Robinson | 14  | 0/1   | 0/0   | 2  | 0  | 2  | 0  |
| Davis    | 10  | 0/2   | 1/1   | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |
| Skelton  | 9   | 4/5   | 0/0   | 2  | 1  | 1  | 9  |
| Totals   | 200 | 30/62 | 11/19 | 28 | 18 | 19 | 74 |

3-point FG's: Brown (1-1), Skelton (1-1), Jent (1-5), Baker (0-1), Davis (0-1), Jackson (0-2). Total FG's: 1st half, .310 (9-29); 2nd half, .636 (21-33); Game, .484. Three-point FG: 1st half, .000 (0-5); 2nd half, .500 (3-6); Game, .273 (3-11). FT's: 1st half, .750 (6-8); 2nd half, .455 (5-11); Game, .579. Team rebounds—1. Deadball rebounds—4. Halftime—St. John's 43-24. Att.—0,461.

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## OSU Center Tallies 19 Points, 18 Rebounds In Victory

## Carter Tosses His Weight Around Vs. Tech

By Mark Rea

What was billed as a classic match-up between Ohio State's Jim Jackson and Georgia Tech's Kenny Anderson turned out to be a power struggle for chairman of the boards.

Senior center Perry Carter of the Buckeyes threw his 6-8, 230-pound frame against the Yellow Jackets' 6-11, 250-pound sophomore forward Malcolm Mackey throughout the game March 17 and the resulting aftershocks rocked a sellout crowd of 13,055 in the University of Dayton Arena.

After 40 minutes of rough and tumble basketball, Mackey had won the rebounding battle 19-18, but Carter's team had won the war, taking a 65-61 victory to advance to the Midwest Regional semifinals in Pontiac, Mich.

"It was our game plan to try and out-quick them," said Carter, who also scored a game-high 19 points for the Buckeyes. "I thought I could use my quickness today and that worked. I got a couple of easy baskets off my quickness and got some rebounds, too."

Ohio State head coach Randy Ayers confirmed that he wanted Carter to use his quickness against Mackey and Georgia Tech's 7-0 center, Matt Geiger, but sometimes quickness had little to do with the battle.

"Perry likes a game where he can lean on somebody and there was a lot of banging going on in there," Ayers said. "But it was in our game plan today to have our big men use their quickness and try to run the floor, and I thought all of them — (senior forward) Treg (Lee) and (backup center) Bill (Robinson), as well as Perry — did a good job today."

While the Carter-Mackey match-up was taking center stage, the Jackson-Anderson show did not exactly live up to its advance billing. Anderson wound up with a game-high 25 points, outscoring Jackson by nine, but the Yellow Jackets' sophomore made only eight of 28 shots from the floor for 28.6 percent, well below his season average of 44.1.

"I was getting pretty good shots, but they weren't falling," Anderson said. "It's that way sometimes. In some games, everything you throw up there goes in. Then, there are days like this one where you can't seem to get anything to go through."

Part of Anderson's problem was a sticky defense played against him by Ohio State junior guard Jamaal Brown.

"Jamaal did a great job on Anderson," Ayers said. "Jamaal stayed with him and gave him pressure all day."

"You see the stat sheet and you see Anderson made only eight of 28 shots. Because Anderson is such a great player, there has to be a reason why he would miss 20 shots today and I think Jamaal was a big part of that."

While Anderson was having an off-day, so was teammate Jon Barry, who was able to convert just four of 13 shots from the field and only one of eight from three-point range. Barry shot 44.1 percent from the floor and 37.6 percent from long range during the regular season.

"We really didn't play our best," said Georgia Tech head coach Bobby Cremins. "I thought we were a little tentative. We had some shots near the end that just didn't fall for us. (In a

first-round tournament victory) against DePaul, we made those shots. Today, we didn't."

"We need for Kenny and Jon to shoot the ball well for us to have a chance and they didn't shoot particularly well today."

The Yellow Jackets started off remarkably well, running out to a 13-7 lead in the early going. But then the Buckeyes outscored Georgia Tech 17-3 during the next seven and a half minutes to grab a 24-16 advantage.

However, Ohio State couldn't sustain its momentum as Anderson led the Yellow Jackets back, scoring eight points in three minutes to bring Georgia Tech to within one point of the lead.

Junior forward Chris Jent then ignited the Buckeyes, firing in a three-point goal, but the momentum didn't really switch until the final seconds of the first half.

With less than 30 seconds left, the Yellow Jackets had the ball with designs on cutting into the Buckeyes' 34-28 lead. But they missed a shot and lost the ball with less than five seconds remaining. Jackson scooped up the loose ball, dribbled the length of the court and shoveled a pass to teammate Mark Baker, who put in an uncontested layup just before the buzzer to give OSU an eight-point halftime lead.

"That was a big basket for us because I thought it changed the momentum in our favor," Ayers said.

He was right. Although Georgia Tech made several serious runs at the Buckeyes in the second half, the closest it could get was two points late in the game.

With 32.4 seconds left, Anderson missed the second of two free throws. Had he made the foul shot, it would have brought Georgia Tech to within a single point of the Buckeyes. But in the final 30 seconds, Brown, Jackson and Carter all converted two-shot foul opportunities to prevent any last-second heroics by the Yellow Jackets.

Neither team shot the ball well during the game. In fact, both finished with identical stats from the field: 24 of 65 for 36.9 percent.

"We didn't shoot the ball particularly well, but we hung tough and that's what this group has done for the last two years," Ayers said. "I'm really proud of what they've done. They're 27-3 and they really deserve a lot of credit."

"I thought we played well on defense and I was very pleased with the way we rebounded the basketball. When you're not shooting the ball well, you have to play good defense and you have to rebound. That's the reason we won today."

The Buckeyes were also cold at the foul line for the second straight game. After being under 50 percent at the charity stripe for much of the contest, OSU made seven of its last eight attempts to raise its game percentage to 55.6 percent at the line.

"I think it's all concentration," said Carter, who was three for eight at the line against Georgia Tech and an abysmal four for 16 in the two games at UD Arena. "I've got the technique down, but they're just not falling."

Ayers added, "It's a concern because we're a pretty good free-throw shooting team, and if you're going to continue in



Ohio State senior center Perry Carter (32), getting ready to bend Georgia Tech center Matt Geiger into a pretzel, led the Buckeyes to a 65-61 win over the Yellow Jackets in the second round of the NCAA Tournament. Carter had 19 points and 18 rebounds.

the tournament, you'd better be able to hit some down the stretch. But we hit our free throws down the stretch when we had to today, so that was encouraging."

## Game Notes

Carter's 18 rebounds against the Yellow Jackets represented a career single-game high for him. His previous high game was a 16-rebound effort against Illinois in January 1990.

He collected 29 rebounds during the Midwest Region's first and second rounds, giving him 982 career boards, within striking distance of becoming only the third OSU player in history to grab 1,000 career rebounds. Jerry Lucas and Herb Williams are the others.

THE GAME snapped a six-game losing streak for the Buckeyes in second-round games of the NCAA Tournament.

Before defeating Georgia Tech and advancing to the Sweet Sixteen, the Buckeyes hadn't won a second-round game since 1968 when they defeated Kentucky 82-81. OSU went on to the Final Four that season.

The win also broke a personal four-game losing streak in second-round games for Ayers. He was a member of the Miami (Ohio) team which lost to Kentucky in the second round of the 1978 tournament.

Ayers was an OSU assistant coach during second-round losses to Louisiana

Tech in 1985 and Georgetown in 1987 and piloted the Buckeyes last season when they lost in the second round to eventual champion Nevada-Las Vegas.

## Georgia Tech (61)

| Player   | mn  | fg | ft | fta | rb | a  | pf | tp |
|----------|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|
| Hill     | 26  | 3  | 6  | 2   | 4  | 6  | 1  | 4  |
| Mackey   | 40  | 5  | 10 | 0   | 19 | 1  | 4  | 10 |
| Geiger   | 16  | 3  | 5  | 0   | 2  | 0  | 5  | 6  |
| Anderson | 37  | 8  | 28 | 9   | 10 | 6  | 2  | 4  |
| Barry    | 38  | 4  | 13 | 0   | 4  | 5  | 2  | 9  |
| Domalik  | 17  | 0  | 1  | 0   | 0  | 0  | 3  | 0  |
| Newbill  | 26  | 1  | 2  | 0   | 2  | 6  | 1  | 3  |
| Totals   | 200 | 24 | 65 | 11  | 16 | 44 | 13 | 22 |

3-point FG's: Hill (1-1), Barry (1-6), Anderson (0-1), Domalik (0-1). Total FG's: 1st half, 400 (12-30); 2nd half, 343 (12-35); Game 369. Three-point FG: 1st half, 167 (1-6); 2nd half, 200 (1-5); Game, 182 (2-11). FT's: 1st half, 1,000 (3-3); 2nd half, 615 (8-13); Game, 688. Team rebounds—1. Deadball rebounds—1.

## Ohio State (65)

| Player    | mn  | fg | ft | fta | rb | a  | pf | tp |
|-----------|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|
| Jackson   | 34  | 5  | 17 | 5   | 8  | 8  | 6  | 1  |
| Lee       | 33  | 3  | 12 | 3   | 4  | 13 | 4  | 3  |
| Carter    | 30  | 8  | 14 | 3   | 8  | 0  | 3  | 19 |
| Baker     | 31  | 2  | 4  | 2   | 4  | 1  | 1  | 5  |
| Brown     | 27  | 1  | 9  | 2   | 3  | 4  | 1  | 2  |
| Robinson  | 14  | 2  | 3  | 0   | 4  | 0  | 4  | 4  |
| Jent      | 20  | 2  | 4  | 0   | 2  | 1  | 0  | 5  |
| Skelton   | 10  | 1  | 2  | 0   | 0  | 0  | 2  | 2  |
| Brandewie | 1   | 0  | 0  | 0   | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Totals    | 200 | 24 | 65 | 15  | 27 | 50 | 13 | 20 |

3-point FG's: Jent (1-2), Jackson (1-3), Brown (0-3). Total FG's: 1st half, 389 (14-36); 2nd half, 345 (10-29); Game 369. Three-point FG: 1st half, 333 (2-6); 2nd half, 000 (0-2); Game, 250 (2-8). FT's: 1st half, 500 (6-12); 2nd half, 600 (9-15); Game, 556. Team rebounds—0. Deadball rebounds—4. Halftime—Ohio State 36-28. Technical—Georgia Tech Bench (2). Att.—13,055.

## Ohio State Lands Six Players In Double Figures

## Defense Gets Buckeyes Past Towson State

By Mark Rea

Getting most of its recognition this season because of a potent offense, Ohio State turned up the defensive pressure a few notches March 15 to defeat Towson State 97-86 in a Midwest Region first-round game at the University of Dayton Arena.

The Buckeyes limited the Tigers to just 38.9-percent shooting from the floor in the contest. OSU also caused 17 turnovers, grabbed seven steals and blocked six shots.

"The most important thing about this game to me was the fact that we got our defensive pressure back up," said sophomore forward Jim Jackson. "You could really see us operating there, helping out, recovering, and getting in the passing lanes."

"That's something that we really didn't do in the last two games of the regular season. Now, if we can maintain that intensity, I think that will help us going into the next game."

Not that the offense wasn't clicking for the Buckeyes. They shot 57.1 percent from the field in the first half while racing to a 45-37 lead and finished the game hitting 35 of 63 shots, good for 55.6 percent.

Ohio State landed six players in double figures, led by Jackson's 24 points. Junior forward Chris Jent, who started for the first time this season in place of senior Treg Lee, responded with 17 points while senior center Perry Carter added 15 to go along with 11 rebounds.

Lee did not start because he missed a wake-up call from a midafternoon nap and was late for a mandatory team meeting.

The only problem the Buckeyes had during the game was at the free-throw line. Carter was a dismal one for eight at the stripe while junior point guard Mark Baker connected on only four of eight attempts. As a result, OSU made only 22 of 39 attempts, a subpar 56.4 percent, the team's third lowest mark in 29 games this season.

"I was concerned that we didn't hit our free throws," said OSU head coach Randy Ayers said. "We shot over 70 percent for the year from the free-throw line, so that was a concern."

Another of Ayers' concerns was the fact that Buckeyes played throughout the game in constant foul trouble. Junior backup center Bill Robinson collected four personals in the first half while Lee got his fourth foul with 9:10 remaining in the second half.

Jackson was whistled for his fourth just 48 seconds later.

"Towson State did a good job of keeping us small," said Ayers. "They kept Carter, Robinson and Lee in foul trouble and we never had an opportunity to keep our big lineup on the floor."

Towson State head coach Terry Truax took a little different view of the officiating than Ayers. He pointed out one particular call when his 6-8, 190-pound freshman forward, John James, tried to drive to the basket against the 6-8, 230-pound Carter and the 6-8, 220-pound Lee.

"I guess we're a bunch of classic bullies," Truax said. "Our big, fierce, strong John James makes a little blast to the basket and he gets called for a charge, then Carter and Lee almost knock him out of the building and nothing's called."

"But I guess that was to be expected. I was just proud of our kids because they didn't back down. Anybody can look at the lineup and tell who has the size advantage. But I give credit to our kids for not paying any attention to that."

The Buckeyes jumped out to an early 5-0 lead in exciting fashion. Jackson blocked Towson State's first shot and Baker turned it into a driving layup. Then Jent dropped in a three-pointer to get the UD Arena crowd of 13,055, made up mostly of OSU fans, on its feet.

But the Tigers came back quickly and even grabbed a 13-9 lead early in the first period. The Buckeyes kept hammering away, though, and eventually tied the game before using a 14-6 run in the middle of the half to grab an eight-point lead.

They maintained that advantage until halftime and then exploded for 10 of the second half's first 12 points to take a 55-39 advantage.

During the first two minutes of the second half, the Tigers were dealt two major blows. Junior guard Devin Boyd, the East Coast Conference player of the year, picked up his fourth foul and Towson State assistant coach Michael Hunt was slapped with a mysterious technical foul.

"I still don't know what that was about," Truax said. "I never got an explanation. Our assistant was up talking to someone at the scorer's table and the next thing I know, we got a technical."

"It was never explained to us and we just happened to have the ball at the time."

Despite losing Boyd's services for a time and falling behind the Buckeyes by as much as 18 points with 12:35 left in the game, the Tigers did not give up.

Trailing 64-46, Towson State took advantage of an Ohio State lull and quickly outscored the Buckeyes 22-9 over the next six minutes to climb back within five points at 73-68.

Sparking the comeback was Boyd, who returned to score the final eight points of the Tigers' run.

Towson State junior forward Chuck Lightening said his team never thought about quitting against the Buckeyes despite trailing by 18 points.

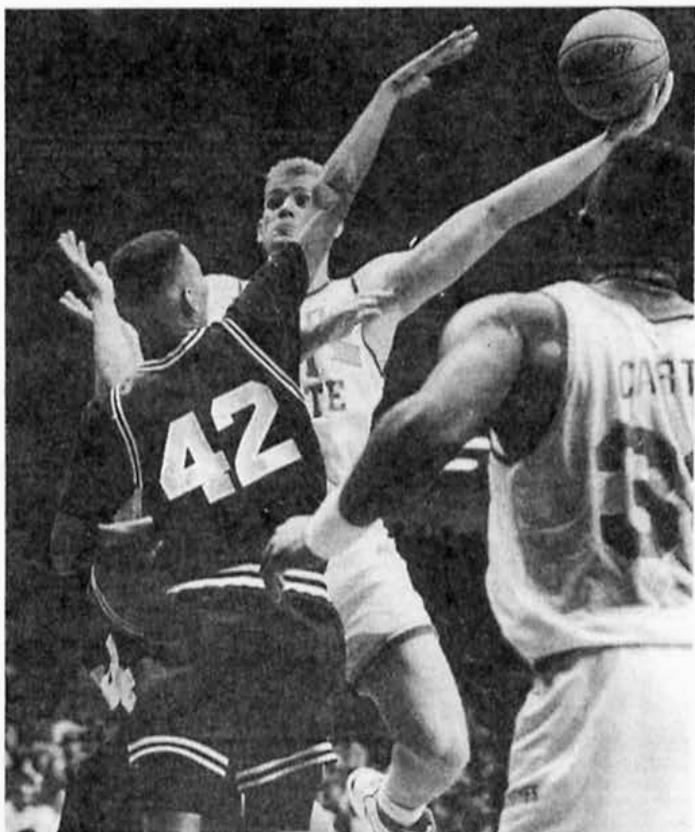
"We wouldn't have ever gone out on the court if we didn't think we could have competed against Ohio State," he said. "We've played from behind before, so we really didn't even think about it much."

However, five points was as close as Towson State could get. The comeback ran out of gas when the Buckeyes, who had made only nine of 19 free throws in the first 37 minutes of the game, found their touch at the charity stripe. OSU converted on 13 of 20 foul shots down the stretch to keep the Tigers at bay and collected the 11-point victory.

Towson State had four players in double figures, led by Lightning's 26. Junior guard Terrance Jacobs added 22 points while James tied Carter for game-high honors with 11 rebounds.

After the game, Truax went out of his way to answer some of the critics who said his team might not have belonged in the NCAA Tournament with its 19-10 record.

"After the way our kids played tonight, I don't think I have to make any excuses for Towson State being



Defense from Towson State center John James (42) wasn't enough to stop Ohio State junior Chris Jent from scoring two of his 17 points on this shot. Jent made a rare start for the Buckeyes as they disposed of the Tigers 97-86 March 15.

here," he said. "I feel bad for our team because we had to draw an opponent like Ohio State in Dayton, and I think we could have beaten a lot of teams tonight. Unfortunately, Ohio State wasn't one of them."

## Game Notes

The Buckeyes' 55.6-percent shooting from the floor was their best since a 59.2-percent effort Feb. 14 against Wisconsin.

It also snapped the team's five-game streak of performances below 50 percent from the floor.

The 45 first-half points against the Tigers was also the best for the Buckeyes since they had 48 in the first half against Indiana back on Jan. 21.

ALTHOUGH THE game was the first ever between Ohio State and Towson State, the Buckeyes have played East Coast Conference teams in the past.

The Buckeyes defeated Maryland-Baltimore County 77-68 in 1987 and dispatched Delaware 109-38 in 1960. OSU has never played the other ECC members — Central Connecticut, Hofstra, Drexel and Rider College.

TRUAX AND former Ohio State head coach Gary Williams were teammates at Maryland in the late 1960s.

The two met as head coaches for the first time this season and Williams won the battle when his Terrapins scored a 93-69 victory over Truax and the Tigers back on Nov. 26.

## Towson State (86)

| Player     | mn  | fg | ft | fta | rb | a  | pf | tp |    |
|------------|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Lightening | 35  | 8  | 24 | 9   | 13 | 6  | 0  | 2  | 26 |
| Brown      | 24  | 2  | 4  | 0   | 0  | 4  | 1  | 3  | 4  |
| James      | 33  | 2  | 2  | 2   | 4  | 11 | 2  | 3  | 6  |
| Boyd       | 21  | 5  | 11 | 6   | 6  | 2  | 0  | 5  | 17 |
| Jacobs     | 34  | 8  | 17 | 4   | 7  | 5  | 3  | 5  | 22 |
| Waller     | 27  | 1  | 5  | 4   | 4  | 2  | 6  | 1  | 6  |
| Campbell   | 15  | 0  | 1  | 0   | 0  | 3  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Griffin    | 5   | 1  | 3  | 0   | 0  | 1  | 0  | 3  | 2  |
| Ray        | 2   | 0  | 2  | 0   | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Manning    | 1   | 1  | 1  | 0   | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 2  |
| Valentine  | 1   | 0  | 0  | 1   | 2  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| Caldwell   | 1   | 0  | 1  | 0   | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Mason      | 1   | 0  | 1  | 0   | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Totals     | 200 | 28 | 72 | 26  | 36 | 43 | 12 | 28 | 86 |

3-point FGs: Jacobs (2-2), Lightning (1-2), Boyd (1-5), Waller (0-2), Ray (0-2). Total FGs: 1st half, 35.5 (11-31); 2nd half, 41.5 (17-41); Game, 38.9. Three-point FG: 1st half, 4.29 (3-7); 2nd half, 1.67 (1-6); Game, .308 (4-13). FTs: 1st half, .667 (12-18); 2nd half, .778 (14-18); Game, .722. Team rebounds—6. Deadball rebounds—2.

## Ohio State (97)

| Player    | mn  | fg | ft | fta | rb | a  | pf | tp |    |
|-----------|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Jackson   | 32  | 10 | 17 | 3   | 5  | 8  | 5  | 4  | 24 |
| Jent      | 30  | 5  | 11 | 4   | 4  | 3  | 3  | 2  | 17 |
| Carter    | 31  | 7  | 12 | 1   | 8  | 11 | 0  | 3  | 15 |
| Baker     | 36  | 4  | 6  | 4   | 8  | 5  | 9  | 3  | 12 |
| Brown     | 26  | 3  | 8  | 8   | 11 | 4  | 2  | 4  | 15 |
| Robinson  | 8   | 1  | 1  | 0   | 0  | 4  | 0  | 4  | 2  |
| Davis     | 8   | 1  | 2  | 0   | 0  | 1  | 1  | 0  | 2  |
| Lee       | 14  | 4  | 6  | 2   | 2  | 4  | 0  | 5  | 10 |
| Brandewie | 9   | 0  | 0  | 0   | 1  | 4  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Skelton   | 6   | 0  | 0  | 0   | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Totals    | 200 | 35 | 63 | 22  | 39 | 44 | 20 | 25 | 97 |

3-point FGs: Jent (3-5), Brown (1-1), Jackson (1-3), Davis (0-1). Total FGs: 1st half, .571 (20-35); 2nd half, .536 (15-28); Game, .556. Three-point FG: 1st half, .400 (2-5); 2nd half, .600 (3-5); Game, .500 (5-10). FTs: 1st half, .375 (3-8); 2nd half, .613 (19-31); Game, .564. Team rebounds—0. Deadball rebounds—10. Halftime—Ohio State 45-37. Att.—13,055.

*Bucks All Business As They Begin Preparation For '91***Cooper Closing Spring Drills To Public***By Mark Rea*

The smile has been replaced by a look of grim determination. The jokes don't come as quickly.

Not that Ohio State head coach John Cooper was operating with a country club atmosphere in the past, but suffice it to say that it is all business at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center in preparation for spring football practice, which gets under way April 6.

In three previous seasons with the Buckeyes, Cooper has posted a 19-14-2 record which includes two postseason bowl trips.

Last season was an especially tough one for Cooper. A plum home schedule produced only three wins against as many losses. He suffered through back surgery in the middle of the season. His contract was dragged through the media before the end of the regular season. His team had a disastrous Liberty Bowl adventure against Air Force. His in-state recruiting effort suffered defections to archenemies such as Michigan and Penn State. And assistant coaches have left the program in droves.

To Cooper's credit, he has chosen not to dwell on the past. He has set his jaw squarely with full intentions of beginning to work toward a Big Ten championship in 1991.

"Last year was last year and there's no point in living in the past," he said. "We want to learn from our mistakes, certainly. But everything bad that could have happened to us happened to us. We're taking that as a sign that nothing but good things will happen this year."

For that reason, Cooper will put his troops through strenuous spring workouts behind closed doors. For the first time in his tenure, the public and media will be barred from attending the practice sessions.

"We're closing them up for the same reason we did last fall," said the OSU head coach. "I think we can get a lot more done with fewer distractions by closing spring practice."

"I think the fewer distractions we have while we're out there, the better off we're going to be."

Cooper closed practices during the latter stages of last season as the Buckeyes put on a stretch drive for the championship. It resulted in victories over Iowa and Wisconsin and a narrow loss to Michigan.

He said the move was not made primarily to work on secret plays or to overhaul the program.

"We might throw some surprises in," Cooper said, "but we're not going to overhaul anything that we're doing. We're going to try to do things a little better. There are going to be slight changes every year."

"The main thing we have to do is get a handle on our personnel. That's why you have spring practice. As a coaching staff, we have to try and make intelligent decisions on a player in regard to what he can and cannot do. We don't want to ask him to do something he can't do."

"We're not going to install the run-and-shoot or the wishbone or the robust or stuff like that, but there will be some subtle changes. Maybe the average fan won't notice them, but there may be some differences in the blocking schemes or the pass routes."

Some of those differences will be installed because of the major revamping of Cooper's assistant coaching staff. Gone from last season are offensive coordinator Jim Colletto, running backs coach Bobby Turner, inside linebackers coach Gary Blackney and defensive backs coach Ron Zook.

In addition, the Buckeyes have lost the services of assistant coach Bobby April, who would have replaced Zook, and recruiting coordinator Steve Pederson. Also, some of the holdover coaches have switched positions.

Former receivers coach Gene Huey will now work with the running backs while offensive line coach Bob Palcic will coach the defensive ends this year.

**John Cooper**

Bill Young will continue as defensive coordinator, Ron Hudson remains quarterbacks coach and Fred Pagac stays with the linebackers. Palcic remains in charge of special teams.

Elliot Uzelac will replace Colletto as offensive coordinator, Joe Hollis has become the new offensive line coach, Jerry Sullivan replaces Huey as receivers coach and Larry Coyer will be the new man in charge of the secondary.

Because there are so many new faces on the staff, Cooper is eager to receive new ideas, both in regard to coaching philosophies and personnel.

In fact, the OSU head coach intimated that no Buckeye player should feel he has a position wrapped up before spring practice begins.

"I'd go so far as to say that with very few exceptions, almost every position on our football team is wide open going into spring practice," Cooper said.

"Obviously, some players are better than others. Obviously, Steve Tovar is the best linebacker we have at that position. But that doesn't mean Steve is forever entrenched there. Whoever his backup is will have a shot."

"If you started last year, you'll probably start off number one at that position. But we're not going to hand anybody anything," Cooper continued. "We want players to work hard to get those starting positions and we want the players behind them pushing hard to take those starting positions away."

"We want players competing against one another to make this football team better. If we were just going to write down a starting lineup, what would be the point of having spring practice anyway?"

While competition between teammates will be closely watched by the coaching staff, there will be time enough for work on improving problem areas left over from last year's 7-4-1 finish.

"We'll work on fundamentals, trying to improve the individual football player," Cooper said. "We'll try to get the players lined up at the positions they're going to play in the fall."

"The first thing we do each year is break down all the film from last year and put them on special teaching reels. All the sweeps, all the traps, all the

certain defenses, all the third-down plays, all the short yardage plays, we have on those reels.

"We'll see what worked and continue to improve on that and we'll see what didn't work and make the necessary changes."

Cooper said he didn't anticipate having to make wholesale changes, but did admit there will always be some fine tuning to perform.

"There are always things you can improve on," he said. "I was a little disappointed in our short yardage offense, for example. I think we have to be a little more physical. But we're getting there. Subtly, we're making improvements."

"We're getting stronger. I've talked to (strength coach) Dave Kennedy throughout the winter conditioning program and we believe we're a leaner, stronger, quicker football team than we were two months ago. Our players have lost weight and they've lost a lot of body fat through hard work."

The Buckeyes must replace 10 starters, six on offense and four on defense. Included in that group are three-year starting quarterback Greg Frey as well as three-quarters of the starting defensive backfield.

Scheduled to battle it out for Frey's vacated spot are senior Kent Graham, junior Kirk Herbstreit and redshirt freshman Joe Pickens. Another redshirt freshman, Preston Harrison, could make it a four-man race, but he has been slow to recover from a groin injury he suffered last August.

While many OSU fans figure the real quarterback battle will be between Graham and Pickens, Cooper said everyone at the position will be given a chance to win the starting job.

"All of them have worked hard during the winter conditioning program except Harrison," the OSU head coach said. "He's lifting weights, but he's not running and not participating in the agility drills."

"But the beauty of spring practice is that we can give all of them a shot. I'm not going to tell you that all of them will get the same amount of reps at the position, but starting off, everybody's on even ground."

In the defensive backfield, with starters Vinnie Clark, Mark Peltini and Jimmy Peel having used up their eligibility, the Buckeyes have number problems.

"Depth is a concern," Cooper admitted. "Our numbers are way down as far as the whole team is concerned. In the defensive secondary, for example, we lost three starters last year and we've already lost some players who didn't make grades (Larry Kennedy) and lost others who decided they didn't want to play anymore (Buster Howe and Darrell Lewis). We've only got seven scholarship players back there. We can't even go two deep in spring practice."

In addition to the attrition factor, three defensive backs will enter spring ball with injuries. Cornerback Tim Walton's availability may be severely limited due to a hamstring pull. Meanwhile, Chico Nelson and Foster Paulk have been bothered by minor injuries

Continued On Page 13

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# Annual OSU Spring Game Set For April 27

Continued From Page 12

throughout the winter conditioning program.

Cooper said help is on the way for the defensive backfield, but not for several months.

"We do have some players that we signed this year as recruits that are going to be defensive backs," he said. "But, of course, they won't be here until the fall."

The Buckeyes will also be in search

## Pederson Leaves Bucks' Staff, Cooper Hires Two New Aides

By Mike Wachsman

Ohio State recruiting coordinator Steve Pederson is the sixth member of John Cooper's coaching staff to leave since the end of the 1990 regular season.

Pederson left Ohio State at the end of March to become recruiting coordinator at Tennessee.

"Sometimes, a situation is just right for you and you need to take it," Pederson told *BSB*. "I'm excited about the situation and I have the greatest respect for Coach (Johnny) Majors and the Tennessee program."

Coordinating the Volunteers' recruiting will mark Pederson's third position at the major college level. Prior to OSU, he served five seasons under Tom Osborne at Nebraska.

"Nebraska, Ohio State and Tennessee have three of the top traditions in the sport," he said. "I am blessed that I've gotten to work with all three. It actually adds a little bit of pressure, because people expect more out of you when you're a top-notch program. But that's something I look forward to."

There had been a lot of heat directed at Cooper and Pederson for the perceived weak recruiting class this year.

## Jones No Longer In OSU's Plans

By Mark Rea

Prep All-American defensive lineman Chuck Jones of Chillicothe has apparently come to the end of a bumpy road in his quest to become a Buckeye.

Ohio State head coach John Cooper told *BSB* that Jones was no longer in his team's plans.

"Chuck Jones is history," Cooper said. "He wouldn't do what we asked him to do, so he's history. He wouldn't go to class, wouldn't go to study hall and was a grade problem."

Jones, a 6-5, 280-pound defensive tackle with 4.5 speed in the 40-yard dash, was recruited in the spring of 1989. Later that summer, he failed to graduate from high school on time, forcing OSU to withdraw its scholarship offer.

Jones stayed out of school as a non-qualifying Proposition 48 student. He enrolled at the university last year and had planned to try and join the Buckeyes this fall.

But his grade-point average was reportedly well below the required level for eligibility and Cooper became dissatisfied with his work habits in and outside of the classroom.

of replacements for a couple of offensive linemen — center Dan Beatty and tackle John Peterson — as well as substitutes for receiving tandem Jeff Graham and Bobby Olive.

While those players are gone, Ohio State will dust off the welcome mat for a pair of veterans who missed significant portions of the last two seasons with injuries.

Tailback Carlos Snow is coming off two arthroscopic knee surgeries in the last 18 months as well as major hip surgery to remove a benign tumor.

Linebacker John Kacherski has had two major knee operations in the past two years and also underwent elbow surgery to remove bone chips.

Neither will be ready for contact in the spring, but both Snow and Kacherski will participate in other spring drills.

They will be joined on the sidelines by wide receiver Greg Beatty and tight end Chris Roy, still recuperating from knee surgeries. Also expected to be less than full strength when spring practice begins are tight end Jeff Ellis (bad

back) as well as Harrison and Walton.

Scheduled to return to the team following a three-month suspension is junior defensive end Alonzo Spellman. He was suspended from school winter quarter after a fellow student reportedly was caught taking a test for him. The suspension also cost Spellman an appearance in the Liberty Bowl, but he will return to the team for spring ball.

Although the summertime rumor mill has ground out position change possibilities such as moving Butler Bynoté to defensive back or Robert Smith to wingback, Cooper said he foresees no major switches this spring.

"I don't think we have any major plans to move players this spring like we did last year with Roger Harper and Alonzo," he said. "We might want to do that once spring practice begins, but we have no plans about that right now."

It would be tough to move Smith from his tailback position, especially after he earned national freshman of the year honors from *United Press International* for setting the school's freshman rushing record with 1,126 yards.

Ohio State will hold 15 separate spring practice sessions, beginning in full pads at 10 a.m. April 6.

The team will practice five times each week for the following two weeks and then wind up spring ball with three weekday practices, April 23, 25 and 26, before staging the annual Scarlet-Gray Game in Ohio Stadium at 1:30 p.m. April 27.

Since there was no spring game last season due to the natural surface being installed in the stadium, Cooper said he is glad to have the opportunity to wage a spring contest this year.

"There are several benefits to a spring game," he said. "It lets you play as close as you can to game-type conditions in the stadium in front of a live crowd. In addition to that is the fact that your quarterbacks can run the team like they would in a game without the coaches being on the field."

"A lot of times, you pick your quarterback on his ability to put the ball in the end zone. When you don't scrimmage a lot and when you don't have a spring game, you're sort of going into the first game with unknowns."

"Then, when your first opponent is someone like we have in Arizona, you can't afford to go out and experiment in the first game. You can't look at a lot of players and all that stuff. We have to concentrate on winning the ball game."

However, Pederson said that was not a factor in his move.

"I think this class will turn out to be a good one," he said. "They will continue to surprise people with their ability. Good and bad recruiting classes are all relative. If this class had come in five years ago, I think it would be looked at as a good one."

"But because we had brought in such good classes the past two years, this one may not look as good. But that's only because there is now a lot of talent in place."

"When we got here, I was shocked at the recruiting process and how things were done. We have done a lot of things in the past few years so that Ohio State can compete again. If I recall, I don't think Georgia Tech or Colorado were in the top 15 recruiting classes five years ago, and last time I looked, they were national champions."

While Pederson's job has not been filled, published reports have indicated that Dublin (Ohio) High School coach and former Buckeye assistant Bill Conley is the front-runner for the post. He is a former member of the Ohio State staff, serving under Earle Bruce from 1984-87.

When a new recruiting boss is brought on board, Cooper believes he will have boarded up the revolving door that has led to the loss of a half dozen assistant coaches.

While Pederson was leaving, Cooper was hiring Jerry Sullivan as the Buckeyes' new wide receiver coach and Larry Coyer as defensive backs coach.

Sullivan replaces Gene Huey, who moved to running backs coach when Bobby Turner left to become offensive coordinator at Purdue. Coyer replaces Ron Zook, who took a similar post at Florida.

Sullivan's resume is an impressive one, including serving as receivers coach at Louisiana State for the last seven seasons. Prior to that, he was receivers coach at Indiana in 1983 and at South Carolina from 1976-82.

He spent three seasons as freshman coach at Texas Tech from 1973-75 and began his coaching career as an assistant at Kansas State in 1971.

Sullivan is a native of Miami, Fla., and played football two years at Florida State. He later transferred to Delta State and graduated from there in 1968.

Coyer, a native of Huntington, W.Va., served as defensive coordinator at Houston last season following a stint at UCLA from 1987-89.

His college experience also includes one season as defensive coordinator at

Memphis State as well as stints with Iowa State, Oklahoma State, Iowa and Bowling Green. Coyer also has professional football coaching experience, spending a total of three seasons in the old USFL with Memphis and Michigan.

Coyer began his coaching career as an assistant at Marshall, his alma mater, and later was a high school head coach at Martins Ferry, Ohio. He also served three seasons as defensive coordinator at Massillon before moving on to Bowling Green.

Cooper's staff will be decidedly new when the Buckeyes begin spring football practice April 6. In addition to Sullivan and Coyer, offensive coordinator Elliot Uzelac and offensive line coach Joe Hollis will make their debuts.

Gone from last year's staff are offensive coordinator Jim Colletto, who became head coach at Purdue, inside linebackers coach Gary Blackney, who became head coach at Bowling Green, Turner and Zook. Bobby April, an assistant hired by Cooper to coach the inside linebackers, was on the OSU staff through the recruiting season until accepting a post with the NFL's Atlanta Falcons.

"I think a little change sometimes is healthy," the OSU head coach said. "Obviously, I don't want to lose six coaches every year. But it's something that happens in this profession. Heck, it happens in every profession. You're constantly looking to better yourself and I think that's what most of the guys who left us did."

"Hopefully, the guys we have hired look at coming to Ohio State as bettering themselves and I believe they do. I think we've got a solid staff."

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## Buckeyes Finish Fourth In Final Team Standings

# Wrestlers Break Records At National Meet

By Mike Wachsman

Ohio State finished a school-record fourth at the NCAA wrestling championships in Iowa City March 14-16 and netted four All-Americans, another school record.

Taking its 12th national title was Iowa with 157 points, followed by Oklahoma State at 108.5 and Penn State at 67.5.

The Buckeyes scored 56.75 points in finishing fourth, eclipsing their previous best of ninth in 1988 when they scored 39.75 points.

The Buckeyes were led by redshirt freshman Kevin Randleman at 167 pounds, who made it all the way to the title match before being pinned by Iowa's Mark Reiland in 4:59. Randleman had been pinned only once before in his college career and it was by Reiland early in the season. Randleman finished the year at 42-6.

Randleman came out strong in the match, getting the first takedown to lead 2-0 after just 43 seconds. Reiland escaped and picked up a takedown with 40 seconds remaining to lead 3-2 at the end of the first period.

In the second, Reiland escaped to gain another point and followed that with a takedown to lead 6-2 with one minute left. Randleman was caught on his back trying to escape and Reiland scored the pin with one second left.

While Randleman earned All-American honors, so did three team-

mates. Finishing fourth in their weight divisions were senior Mark Marinelli at 134 pounds and junior Adam DiSabato at 126 pounds. Junior Ken Ramsey took fifth at 150 pounds.

"About the matches, I'm very elated," OSU coach Russ Hellickson said. "There is a lot to be proud of. The guys believed they were capable of being All-Americans and they did it. Ohio State has never had four guys become All-Americans in the same season."

"It just paves the way for so many more great things to happen, kind of like the first people who beat a path through the wilderness for the first time."

DiSabato finished in fourth place after losing to Tony Purler of Oklahoma State 10-4 in the third-place match.

Marinelli went down in the third-place match to Michigan's Joey Gilbert 7-5 in sudden death overtime.

Ramsey won the match for fifth place with a 5-2 decision over Old Dominion's Nick Garone.

Two other Buckeyes also competed at the nationals.

Senior David Range fell in the preliminaries to John Buxton of Nebraska 5-4 and was out of the competition. Also out of the tourney was sophomore Dan Ritchie at 190 pounds, falling to Bucknell's Bryan Burns 8-2 and Notre Dame's Steve King 3-2. Burns finished eighth in the tournament.

"There can be no negatives involved with any of the guys," Hellickson said. "Sure, if you ask them could they have wrestled better in individual matches, they'll all tell you yes. But we finished ahead of some tough schools, and in a tough situation."

"When you have to wrestle against Iowa with 10,000 hometown fans in the stands, that's an imposing thing. But we handled it very well, and I'm very satisfied."

Finishing higher than ever before and netting the most All-Americans in school history should make a coach happy and from a wrestling standpoint, Hellickson was pleased. But in the respect category, he was far from happy.

"It's a sad state of affairs when a fourth-place finish at a national tournament comes as a surprise to people within the athletic program," Hellickson said. "The mentality for football and basketball at this school is almost ridiculous. In a town the size of Columbus, and with a university like Ohio State, you should be able to have coverage of an event like the national wrestling finals."

"The media response in Columbus has been very poor. There are people in this town that don't know what kind of product we have, and they would be likely to read about it. It shouldn't be like that. To my way of thinking, the results at Hialeah are not more important than a college kid busting his tail on a wrestling mat in the championship event of his sport."

"When a kid does something worthy, he should be commended for it. There will be many people who won't know how we did at nationals, and that's what upsets me. When you try to build a national program and the local media won't pick up on the strides that are being made, well, I just don't understand it."

In all, the Big Ten had four titlists and four runners-up, making eight wrestlers who finished either first or second in the nation. That speaks well of the league's prowess in wrestling.

"The entire Big Ten was more dominant than it's ever been," Hellickson said. "We've never had the numbers we should have qualifying for the nationals, yet we come out way ahead of the Big Eight and other conferences."

"If we use the formula the NCAA supposedly hangs its hat on, the Big Ten should have about 70 or 80 qualifiers. But our dominance shows the quality of wrestling, and when you are a Big Ten champion, it is a hard-earned title."

Ohio State was considered by many people at the nationals as the up-and-coming team of the decade, a tribute to the hard work Hellickson and his staff, as well as the wrestlers, have put into making the Buckeyes a mat power.

But, while he is happy OSU finished fourth, he is not content with the result.

"My goals and the goals of the coaching staff have not changed," Hellickson said. "We want a Big Ten and national title. It is not an easy thing to do because the wrestling in the Big Ten is so competitive and teams can knock each other off."

"If we get good recruiting classes and have people who believe in themselves for the future, we can be at this level for years to come."

Individual Big Ten winners at the NCAAs included Iowa's Tom Brands, who successfully defended his 134-pound title, beating Oklahoma State's Alan Fried 5-3.

Other national champions from the Big Ten were Wisconsin's Matt Demaray at 150, Marty Morgan of Minnesota at 177 and Illinois' Jon Llewellyn in the heavyweight division.

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# Randleman Caps Rookie Year With Second Place At NCAAs

By Mike Wachsman

You might think winning a Big Ten wrestling title in his first opportunity would prepare an athlete for his first trip to the NCAA championships.

That wasn't exactly the case, though, for Ohio State's Kevin Randleman.

While he wasn't entirely in awe at the national championships March 14-16 in Iowa City, Randleman admitted he wasn't exactly relaxed heading into the 167-pound championship match with Iowa's Mark Reiland.

"I wasn't in awe, really," Randleman said. "I believe that I've wrestled enough this year that I'm past that stage. But I was excited.

"Wrestling in front of 15,000 fans, most of them from Iowa, really makes it an experience. I couldn't really afford to pay attention to the fans because of my match, but I knew they were there."

Randleman ended up getting pinned by Reiland in 4:59, only the second time this season the Buckeye was put on his back. The first was also done by Reiland.

Randleman was disappointed at losing in the final, but even more so since he had beaten Reiland the last two times they had wrestled, including a 9-8 win at the Big Ten championships, which put Randleman into the finals.

"We were both pumped for the match," Randleman said. "I had nothing to lose and he really didn't either, since he's a junior.

"He took me down twice and I escaped, and in the process of my taking him down, he went under and caught me. He brought me to my back and stepped over and pinned me. He deserved the win and I told him that. I congratulated him and gave him a hug and told him he was the best."

It truly was a storybook season for Randleman. He led the team in pins with 11, including one in just 30 seconds, the best mark on the team. He scored 71 team points, one behind junior Adam DiSabato with the team lead.

Sporting a first-year record of 42-6, Randleman seems headed for stardom in the next three years for the Buckeyes. But he would rather look at things from a team standpoint.

"A lot of people came up and congratulated me and all that," Randleman said, "but I was more concerned with how we did as a team. Finishing fourth was great, but I know we can do better than that.

"There were people there who told us that they believe that Ohio State has the up and coming program of the '90s, and I was very pleased to hear that. That's why I came here, to be part of a winner."

Ohio State head coach Russ Hellickson knows Randleman has what it takes to be the best in the country and feels that all the young wrestler needs is experience.

"It is not at all easy to make it to the finals of the NCAAs in your first year of collegiate wrestling," Hellickson said. "What Kevin has done really takes talent and a great amount of hard work. He will be back, because he wants to be the best and won't stop working until he reaches that.

"Second place, even as a freshman, is not good enough for him. He certainly proved he belongs with the top guys in the country, and with experience, he can only improve."

Normally a freshman would be

satisfied with just making it to the final match. But Randleman counts himself among the disappointed.

"It bothers me because I have beaten Reiland before," he said. "If he had pounded me every time, then it might not be as bad. But I'll learn from this match and it will make me hungrier to do better next year. I've already won the Big Ten, and I know if I keep working hard, a national title isn't too far behind.

"I plan on going back to the nationals three more times, and reaching the finals all three times."

It was a good feeling for the Sandusky, Ohio, native to gradually move up the ladder and succeed from virtually out of nowhere. After all, he was redshirted last season and listed as a competitor who "should see a lot of action this year" in the preseason wrestling media guide.

"(My success) didn't really surprise me," Randleman said. "And it's not going to stop here, either. When I broke into the top 10 and the top five, I really felt that I had what it took to win it all this year.



Kevin Randleman

"Then after beating Charlie (Jones, of Purdue) at the Big Tens when he was ranked number one, there was nothing I thought I couldn't do. Finishing second in the nation as a freshman is good, but there is another step that can be taken, and it's one I plan on taking soon.

"Second place didn't feel terrible, but I imagine first feels great. When I get another chance to finish first, I'll do it next time."

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# The View From 15th and High

By Frank L. Moskowitz, Publisher

## Bucks Must Be Able To Build On This Year's Success

I think if you asked any Buckeye basketball fan back in November if he or she would have been satisfied with a Big Ten co-championship, a ranking in the nation's top five for much of the season and a couple of NCAA Tournament victories, the answer would have most likely been yes. I certainly would have been pleased.

I guess all of our hopes and expectations increased as Ohio State's cage season progressed, and I think there has been a bit of a feeling of disappointment among both fans and team members that the Buckeyes finished on a sluggish note. That feeling is healthy in some ways. While it was a great season, if the team and its fans are completely satisfied with the Buckeyes' performance then the program might level out at the Sweet 16 plateau.

What the Buckeyes need to do is prove that they are building a solid program like that of Indiana, North Carolina, or the like, a team that is contending for league and national honors every year, not just occasionally as the Buckeyes have done in the last 20 years.

This season the Bucks proved they have the ingredients for such a program. They showed they have a good coach and staff, good players, a good recruiting base and great fans. Now they have to take that final step into the league of the above-mentioned schools.

One thing I think the Buckeyes lacked this season was a feeling of comfort with their success. The Bucks played better when they were the dark horse early in the season, sneaking up

on other teams. Once they beat Indiana for the second time and became the team that other schools were gunning for, they were never quite the same.

The perennial powers thrive on being the team that other teams get up to play against. The Bucks need to gain that comfort and confidence with the position of league leader or top seed.

One statistic I find interesting is the fact that in the last six games of the season, Ohio State shot just 59.4 from the foul line. The Bucks were just 56.5 from the stripe in NCAA action. Foul shooting is often as much mental as physical and I point to that as another indication the Bucks were not at the top of their game mentally down the stretch.

I see little reason for disappointment in the performance of the Buckeyes this season. If their success proves to be simply a one season thing, however, I will be very disappointed.

**SPEAKING OF** disappointments, my biggest one this cage season was probably the play of Perry Carter.

Carter made steady improvement from his freshman through junior years, going from 9.8 to 14.2 and then 15.2 points a game. He averaged 7.2, 8.1 and 7.8 rebounds, respectively, in those seasons and earned honorable mention All-Big Ten honors following his junior year.

It was logical to assume that the 6-8, 230-pounder would take another step forward this season, but I'm not sure he did that. Obviously, with OSU's talent, it was not necessary for Carter to carry the scoring and rebounding load as much as he might have had to in the past. His 12.3 points were decent enough and his 8.4 rebounds a game were his best ever and he earned third-team Big Ten honors.

But the Washington, D.C., native never really put together a string of games such as the one he had against Georgia Tech in the NCAAs, for instance. A more consistent Perry Carter might have made a great team even greater.

A possible indicator of Carter's importance to the team is that in OSU's four losses, Carter averaged 9.0 points, 7.5 rebounds, 42.4 percent from the field and 42.1 from the foul line, all well below his season averages.

Especially troubling was Carter's performance from the line. He came to OSU as a terrible foul shooter, making just 57.0 percent of his shots. He received a tremendous amount of deserved praise for his hard work in improving his percentage to a solid 68.2 as a sophomore. But Carter slipped to 64.4 last year and finished at an unacceptable 52.5 this season, including 26.3 in tournament action.

It will be interesting to see how Carter's future in professional basketball works out.

**ONE OF** the reasons OSU cage fans are so optimistic for the future is their confidence in the abilities of Randy Ayers as coach. The second-year mentor seems to have done nearly everything right, both on and off the court. He may be one of the few people with a higher approval rating than President Bush right now.



Randy Ayers

Count me as one of Ayers' biggest backers. But before any of you write and remind me of this, I want to acknowledge that when Ayers was hired, I was one of the people concerned about his selection.

"I have feelings of both happiness and concern with regards to the naming of Randy Ayers as the new Ohio State basketball coach," I wrote in this space in July 1989.

"I am happy because Randy Ayers is one of the finest, highest quality people in the Ohio State athletic department. I have yet to meet someone who didn't have only good things to say about the Springfield, Ohio, native.

"On the other hand, I would have liked to have seen Ohio State select a coach with substantial head coaching experience at the major college level."

The column went on to say "Buckeye backers, all of whom seem ready to support Ayers, might have been more comfortable with a more seasoned coach. There will be a tremendous amount of pressure on Ayers to produce and produce quickly."

Well, Ayers did produce and produce quickly and most Buckeye fans seem more than satisfied with his selection.

**WHILE THE** achievement received little fanfare, the OSU wrestling team's fourth-place finish at the national tournament in Iowa City was really quite an accomplishment. It is the school's best national finish ever and four different Bucks earned All-American honors.

College wrestling is a sport that is dominated by several traditional wrestling schools, most notably Iowa, which hosted the event and won it for the 12th time in the last 17 years. To finish at or near the top in the sport is extremely difficult. But OSU coach Russ Hellickson is slowly establishing Ohio State as one of the traditional wrestling powers, doing the things that will make the Buckeyes a contender every year, not just occasionally or not at all.

Buckeye fans will definitely want to keep their eyes on Kevin Randleman, who finished second in the country at 167 pounds as a freshman. The sky appears to be the limit for this competitor from Sandusky, Ohio.

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