

BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

25th Anniversary Est. 1981

\$2.00

PERIODICAL NEWSPAPER
CLASSIFICATION
DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE RUSH!!

Vol. 25, No. 6

"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

October 15, 2005

Buckeyes Are Nit-Picked

Penn State Quashes OSU's Rose Bowl Hopes

By MARK REA

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Managing Editor

A No. 6 overall ranking in the both major polls. Continuing aspirations for a second national championship in four seasons. An undefeated Big Ten season and the school's first outright conference championship since 1984.

It all melted into the early autumn mist of Beaver Stadium for the Ohio State football team Oct. 8 as it absorbed a 17-10 defeat at the hands of a resurgent Penn State, a loss that sent the Buckeyes reeling into the middle of the conference standings and left them searching for answers in a season that once held so much promise.

Ohio State not only tumbled out of the national top 10 for the first time this season, it also descended into a tie for fifth place in the jumbled Big Ten standings. The Nittany Lions currently rule the roost with a perfect 3-0 conference mark, the only unbeaten conference team left just three weeks into the Big Ten season.

In addition to PSU's upset of the sixth-ranked Buckeyes, Northwestern outlasted No. 16 Wisconsin 51-48 and Minnesota beat No. 21 Michigan 23-20, besting the Wolverines and winning the Little Brown Jug for the first time in 16 years.



SONNY BROCKWAY

HEADED THE WRONG WAY — Ohio State quarterback Troy Smith lost the ball after being upended by Penn State's Tamba Hali in the closing moments of the Big Ten showdown. The Lions recovered the fumble and held on to win 17-10.

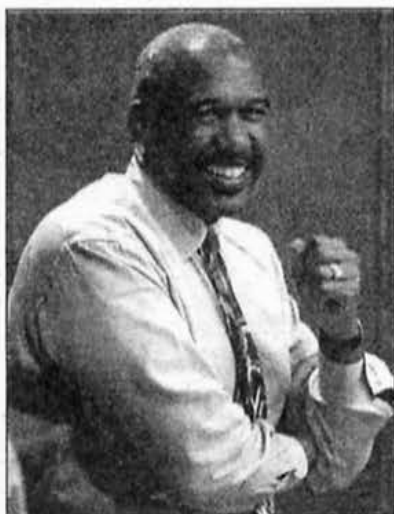
Indiana and Iowa also posted victories, over Illinois and Purdue respectively, and that left no less than seven league teams trailing Penn State with a single conference loss. Trailing the Lions are Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa, each with 2-1 records, followed by the Buckeyes, Indiana and Northwestern, not to mention Michigan State, the only Big Ten team that was idle Oct. 8 and Ohio State's next opponent, all at 1-1.

As bad as the conference picture is after only two games, things are even more bleak for the Buckeyes on the national scene. OSU was expected to be one of a handful of legitimate contenders for the national championship in 2005 — even normally reserved head coach Jim Tressel admitted as much last spring. But now, the loss to Penn State coupled with the Sept. 10 home loss to No. 2-ranked Texas makes Ohio State a 3-2 team overall, and any hopes of that national title are gone.

It is a season gone sour in a little more than a month, and it has left most of the team's leaders scratching their heads.

"I really don't know what to say," OSU offensive lineman and senior co-captain Rob Sims said after the game. "Before this game, I still felt like we were the best team in the country. I know that Texas beat us, but we just as easily could have won that game. We wanted to keep going after that, win out and maybe play them again in the Rose Bowl. I guess that's pretty much out now."

Continued On Page 10



TERRY GILLIAM

LIKES WHERE HE'S GOING — Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith has been on the job for just six months but has gotten off to a good start.

After Six Months, 'Everything Is Going Great' For AD Smith

Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part series on Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith as he completes his first six months on the job.

By MARK REA

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Managing Editor

When he became director of athletics at Ohio State six months ago, Gene Smith inherited some \$200 million of facility debt, an ongoing NCAA investigation into three marquee programs — football, men's basketball and women's basketball — and a department with a somewhat tarnished reputation.

Yet there sat Smith in his St. John Arena office, a broad smile on his face as he proclaimed himself "pretty lucky" to be piloting one of the country's largest college athletic departments.

"Everything is going great," Smith told BSB during an exclusive interview in late

September. "I'm enjoying this immensely. The job is everything I expected and even better. I couldn't have asked for a better transition."

Smith was announced as the university's eighth athletic director in early March then formally took over the department from the retiring Andy Geiger on April 15.

The 49-year-old Smith came to Ohio State after spending five years as athletic director at Arizona State. He also had stints as the director of athletics at Eastern Michigan from 1986-93 and Iowa State from 1993-2000.

Born and raised in the Cleveland area, Smith was a football star at Bedford Changel (now known as St. Peter Changel), later playing for Ara Parseghian at Notre Dame and returning to South Bend as an assistant coach on Dan Devine's staff.

Once Geiger announced his decision to step down in January, it took a university search

Continued On Page 8

COVER STORY: 'EVERYTHING IS GOING GREAT' FOR SMITH

Geiger Credited With Smooth AD Transition

Continued From Page 1

committee only about six weeks to decide upon Smith.

"Gene was somebody that I had watched for a long time and thought would be phenomenal at Ohio State," university president Dr. Karen Holbrook told BSB. "On the other hand, I wasn't on the search committee and had no input into it. But when the committee presented me with the final candidate and it was Gene, I couldn't have been happier."

Six months later, Smith has no doubt he made the correct decision to leave the desert Southwest to return to his roots.

"Usually when you make this kind of transition, there is some wild thing that pops up and throws you off-guard," he said. "That hasn't happened here, but I don't think that is by accident. Andy did a marvelous job here, and I think I'm pretty lucky to follow in some pretty impressive footsteps."

"When someone thinks of Andy and what he accomplished here, I know that most people think of the facilities that he helped to build. And while they are impressive, his legacy is much, much more than that."

"Our long-range budgeting is in place, and that is because of Andy's hard work," Smith continued. "And he brought in some of the most outstanding people in college athletics to head our programs. Everyone knows about football, of course, and the national championship that Jim Tressel won. But (Geiger) turned what could have been a major problem into a positive when he hired Thad Matta, and if Jim Foster isn't the top women's basketball coach in the country, he's certainly among the top two or three."

As a result, the new department head has not had to make very many changes at all.

"I've never been a 'new broom sweeps clean' kind of guy anyway," Smith said. "I prefer to get the right people in the right positions and then let them do the job they were hired to do."

"We really haven't changed much of



TERRY GILLIAM

WELL-SUITED — Prepared to tackle a broad range of issues as Ohio State's enthusiastic new athletic director, Gene Smith, a former football coach and player, says he's ready to take the ball from former AD Andy Geiger and run.

anything, at least not in any comprehensive way. The changes have been more subtle, I think, so that we have more of an integrated department where consultation with everyone involved is our goal."

As an example, he said that sometimes in the past, the OSU ticket office, marketing department and office of development were not always on the

same page when it came to planning.

"When it came to tickets, marketing and development — which is basically fund-raising — we wanted to make sure that all three departments were communicating better, planning better," Smith said. "Because we are now all on the same page, it means that our season ticket packages can be offered more quickly."

"For instance, we anticipate plans for

our 2006-07 ticket packages will be completed by this coming February at the latest. We will have our season ticket packages available sooner because the coaches will be able to finish their schedules sooner. It all goes hand in hand, and communication is the key."

Communication is a word that Smith does not toss around lightly.

"That's what we're all about," he said. "We are a pretty big department with 300-plus employees, and if we can't communicate among ourselves, we're in trouble. Communication is the key for any relationship to work."

"When I first arrived here, I talked a little bit to our staff about how our department operated in their own silos, and how we needed to break down those silos and get everyone integrated into working with each other and communicating with each other. That is what I was talking about when I mentioned subtle changes. That's tweaking the system in order to make things work just a little better."

To make sure everyone in the OSU athletic department remains on the same wavelength, Smith has instituted monthly meetings — not just for members of his staff, but all 300-plus employees.

The large get-togethers are held in the Schottenstein Center or the Huntington Club in Ohio Stadium and feature discussions about departmental issues and updates from such varied speakers as assistant athletic director for finance Pete Hagan, associate legal counsel for athletics Julie Vannatta, and Martha Garland, OSU vice provost and dean for undergraduate students.

Tours of facilities such as the newly completed Recreation and Physical Athletic Center (known as RPAC), a 605,000-square-foot facility that houses the McCorkle Aquatic Pavilion, are also part of the monthly meetings.

"It's all about creating more platforms for communication," Smith said. "It helps make everyone feel that they are part of the process."

Obviously, the new athletic director is into large crowds. Twice each school year, he plans to gather in one place every student-athlete from each of the 36 intercollegiate sports offered at Ohio State.

"We already get a lot of them together in the spring (at the annual Scholar-Athlete Banquet)," Smith said, "but we'd like to see everyone together in one place — again so that everyone feels they are part of the entire process. It lets everyone have an appreciation for one another."

"I've done this in other places and it's always been a highlight of the year, if for no other reason than for all of the student-athletes to meet all of the different head coaches face to face."

It was also Smith's initiative to honor more than 800 student-athletes from the university's various sports programs during halftime of the OSU-Iowa football game. Joining the Ohio State marching band, players from each sport spilled onto the field to sing "Carmen Ohio."

"It was just a small way of showing our appreciation for the contribution those kids make to our university," Smith said. "I don't know how many of them told me they'd never been on the field before and how excited they were to have the chance to get out there with the band."

"I think those are the things that are important. Wins and championships are

Football Fans Win Every Time
Only at the Country Giant...

BUCKEYE FORD!



See why Buckeye Ford was the #7 Superduty Dealer in a 5-State Region in '04.
Because we got 'em and we know how to sell 'em.

The Best Deal of Your Life is Only a Phone Call Away — 800-800-FORD

Call the Deal Hotline!
1-800-800-3673



Visit our website at buckeyeford.com

All The Inventory
All The Time!

Corner of US 42 and St. Rt. 40 • London, Ohio

COVER STORY: 'EVERYTHING IS GOING GREAT' FOR SMITH

great, and those are always going to be our ultimate goals. But competition and dedication, and the recognition of that dedication — that's extremely meaningful."

Facing Initial Challenges

Smith inherited a situation with the Ohio State football program that included a spate of off-the-field problems ranging from drug arrests to alleged bar fights.

Three Buckeyes were arrested in a period of just 10 days before Smith had been on the job a month, furthering a perception — at least in the national media — that began with a November 2004 ESPN The Magazine piece that included allegations from ex-player Maurice Clarett and others.

It wasn't too long thereafter that Tressel called for a "roundtable discussion" with media members and several senior members of his team to help repair some of the damage done by the off-the-field incidents.

Smith said that he did not tell Tressel to address the incidents in any specific way but admitted the roundtable meeting seemed to put a stop to the problems.

"I haven't been that much of a contributor," he said. "I've just tried to be a collaborator whenever any of our coaches here face a challenge. That said, the problems have seemed to subside — knock on wood."

"I think when Coach Tressel pulled his seniors together and gave them ownership of how to deal with that problem — that was a marvelous idea. Ultimately, your team has to take care of itself. He put the onus on them and I think they've responded."

Another challenge facing the football team was the NCAA suspension of quarterback Troy Smith, who accepted improper monetary benefits from a booster during the spring of 2004. Smith's indiscretion touched off another round of NCAA investigations into the football program already poked and prodded to the limit by the suspension of Clarett and his subsequent allegations.

In essence, those were the proverbial straws that broke Geiger's back, prompting his early retirement. And while Smith is mindful that off-the-field problems are now intrinsic to today's college athletics — he had a few choppy seas of his own to navigate while at Arizona State — he hopes that everyone can learn from the mistakes of a few.

"All we can do is keep educating," he said. "Keep educating our student-athletes, keep educating our fans — as many of them who care, and we believe that to be the vast majority."

"These are unfortunate instances, but we can't pretend they didn't happen and we can't ignore them in hopes they'll go away and never happen again. We have to approach them as teachable moments so that the mistakes of the past are not repeated in the future."

Smith added that he had nothing but glowing things to say about Tressel.

"I think he is an outstanding teacher with great principles," he said. "Coach Tressel is someone who never loses focus on the main reason why we're here — the kids. We have to be mindful of always doing right by the kids, and he always does right by the kids."

"You know, it's extremely challenging to work at a high-profile university as a high-profile coach where the fans need to interject their own ideas about how to handle certain situations, both on and off the field."

"However, those people don't know everything that's going on inside the program, and every decision Coach Tressel makes has to do with the impact on the individual kid and the team over the long haul," Smith continued.

"There is one thing I don't worry about and that is Coach Tressel's program because you know he's always going to do the right thing and do it the right way. I think he's everything you could want in a coach."

Talking Football

As a self-proclaimed "football guy" where football is king, Smith admits a special affinity for the sport he played in college and later coached.

Not long after his first official trip through Ohio Stadium, he noticed there was nothing inside the storied facility to note the tenure of longtime head coach Woody Hayes. It didn't take long for that to change.

"I just couldn't believe there was nothing inside the stadium to honor Woody," Smith said. "I saw all of the names and the retired numbers, but I was dumbfounded. All I can remember thinking was, 'Where's Woody?' Well, no one will have to answer that question from now on."

At the new AD's urging, Ohio State earlier this season unveiled a sign memorializing the legendary coach, honoring his national championship teams and commemorating what he meant to the university for so many years.

"For all of those championships and all of the kids he touched, it was the right thing for us to do," Smith said. "He needs to be honored in this facility with all of the other greats who came before us."

"Maybe it's because I'm a football guy, but in the game of football, the championship experience is the ultimate — it's what we all strive for. He was able to provide that experience for hundreds and hundreds of kids, and he deserves recognition for it."

The Hayes memorial may just be the start. Smith indicated that the university may begin recognizing more outstanding former players.

"I can't think of a reason why we wouldn't or shouldn't do that down the

road," he said. "I think there are other platforms around the stadium, not just in the stadium, we might consider to recognize our greats. I don't have any particular plan to do that, but I think it's a good idea."

The honoring of Hayes came during halftime of the nationally televised Texas game, a contest between two traditional powerhouses that was one of the most eagerly anticipated games in recent history.

Smith enjoyed the atmosphere, "saying what he calls 'another major-major' and is doing his best to fill at least one spot on Ohio State's future football schedules with marquee matchups."

"I inherited the home-and-home series with Texas, USC and Miami (Fla.), but that's right in line with my thinking," he said. "We have a tremendous amount of alumni in places like Florida, Texas, California and Arizona, and we're interested in taking our team to those places."

That means OSU football fans can anticipate games against such potential opponents as Florida State, UCLA, Cal, Arizona and Arizona State on a home-and-home basis. It also means that games against the likes of such schools as Nebraska, Oklahoma or Auburn are less likely.

"If the situation arose where one of those schools would come to us, I certainly would listen," Smith said. "But it isn't a situation that I would necessarily dive into. I would like to see us take our team to places where we have large alumni pockets and give those people a chance to see us in person when they normally would not have the chance."

The Buckeyes travel to Austin next September to complete their series with Texas, and have home-and-home games with USC in 2008-09, Miami (Fla.) in 2010-11 and Virginia Tech in 2014-15.

Also on future schedules are trips to Washington (2007) and Washington State (2009) that fulfill previous home-and-home obligations as well as a home game with Syracuse in 2007 and a return trip to the Carrier Dome in 2010.

Smith said he would prefer any future games with major opponents be in back-to-back years, making scheduling those series a little easier.

He also plans to continue scheduling at least one Ohio or Mid-American Conference school per year.

"It's the right thing to do," Smith said. "We can offer the guaranteed money for them, it's easier on travel and it provides these teams — most of which have rosters filled with Ohio kids — a chance to play in Ohio Stadium."

One team that Smith would like to get on a future schedule — his alma mater Notre Dame — currently has no desire for a series with Ohio State.

"At this point in time, they're not interested," Smith said. "They have their own scheduling issues to work through, and I don't foresee a series with them in the near future. They have, however, told me that I can always have the opportunity to talk with them about a possible meeting in the future, so you never know."

(Next week: Men's and women's basketball, the seating arrangement in Value City Arena and renovations at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center.)

OSU GAME DAY SPECIALS

Woodfin Suites Hotel Dublin



**GREAT FOOTBALL RATES
STARTING AT \$89
888-433-9408**

4130 Tuller Rd.
Dublin, 43017

www.woodfinsuites.com/dublin

Complimentary Full Hot Breakfast
Large Suites • Full Kitchens
Free Indoor Hot Tub

It's Time To Kick Off The 2005 Season With New Ohio State University Signscenery™ Merchandise

Get Yours Today!

Officially Licensed

GAMEDAY & TAILGATE PARTY PLACEMATS



Set of 4 - Washable

513 PIECE JIGSAW PUZZLE



15"x21.25"

FRAMED POSTER OR UNFRAMED (In tube)



18"x24"

ORDER FORM

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY, STATE, ZIP _____
DAYTIME PHONE _____
Check _____ or Money Order _____
Credit Card (at famouslandmarkphotography.com) _____

ITEM	QUAN	COST
PUZZLE	\$14 ea	_____
SET OF 4 PLACEMATS	\$18/set	_____
FRAMED POSTER	\$25 ea	_____
UNFRAMED	\$15 ea	_____
SHIPPING & HANDLING		_____
\$4 1st item, \$2 ea. addtl. item		_____
TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$		_____

AVAILABLE AT SELECT RETAILERS OR ON-LINE AT:
famouslandmarkphotography.com

**FAMOUS LANDMARK
PHOTOGRAPHY**
P.O. Box 43485
Cincinnati, OH 45243

513-766-3770

COVER STORY: BUCKEYES ARE NIT-PICKED

The Extras Aren't Extra!



Free! HOT! QUIKSTART® Breakfast including scrambled eggs, sausage, Belgian waffles, biscuits & gravy and more

Free! Evening Beverages & Snacks (5:30 - 7 p.m.)

Free! Long Distance One Hour • Every Room • Every Night

Free! Indoor/Outdoor Pool & Whirlpool

Free! Local Calls

Free! High-Speed Internet Access in all rooms

● **Two-room Suites with Microwave & Refrigerator**

Located in Arena District
Minutes from OSU Campus

Drury Inn & Suites-Columbus Convention Ctr.
88 East Nationwide Blvd.
614-221-7008

Drury Inn & Suites-Columbus Northwest
6170 Parkcenter Circle
614-798-8802

DRURY INN & SUITES®

druryhotels.com
1-800-DRURYINN
Ask for OSU Sports Rate



SONNY BROCKWAY

END OF BALLGAME — A dejected Ted Ginn Jr. walks away following Ohio State's 17-10 loss to Penn State before nearly 110,000 fans in Happy Valley. Ginn caught three passes against the Lions but still hasn't gotten totally untracked this season.

Buckeyes Not Exactly Big Ten Road Warriors

Continued From Page 1

"And it's tough to take, you know? We're better than this. I know we are. I really don't have any explanation for what happened in this game. We could have had this game just like we could have had the Texas game. We can still be Big Ten co-champs, and that's got to be our focus now. But we wanted more. We wanted this season to be magical."

Instead of magical, however, what this season is turning into is something much less enchanting. The Buckeyes continued their style of playing like Dr. Jekyll one week and Mr. Hyde the next — at least on offense — and they struggled once again to try to decide what kind of attack they wanted to show Penn State. As a result, they followed a 530-yard output two weeks before against Iowa — their best offensive showing in nearly two seasons — with only 230 against Penn State — their lowest production so far this season.

"Inconsistent," said OSU sophomore receiver Ted Ginn Jr. "We'd get a little

something going and then it seemed like we'd stop ourselves. Penn State has got a good defense. Give them credit. But we shouldn't be held to 10 points. No way."

Stranger still was the fact that despite the Buckeyes' season-low yardage total, the Nittany Lions had even less. They mustered only 195 total yards, including just 74 in the second half. But as early as the final few minutes of the third quarter, when he continued to enjoy a seven-point lead courtesy of his defense, Penn State head coach Joe Paterno went ultraconservative with his offense — in essence, playing his own brand of Tressel Ball — and virtually dared the Buckeyes to try to score.

They couldn't.

"We had plenty of opportunities," said OSU junior quarterback Troy Smith. "We just didn't capitalize on those opportunities. I take a lot of the blame on myself. I'm the quarterback and I made too many mistakes. I threw an interception and I had a fumble. I can't do that on the road against a Big

Ten defense like the one Penn State has and expect us to win."

Despite his turnovers, Smith accounted for two-thirds of the Buckeyes' offense, but then again that was part of the problem. He threw 25 passes and ran the ball 19 times, amassing 154 yards of total offense and accounting for 44 of the team's 65 offensive plays. But the Nittany Lions seemed to account for the OSU quarterback at all times. He was sacked five times, several of them coverage sacks as the Penn State secondary effectively shut down the Buckeyes' fleet stable of receivers for much of the game.

Junior split end Santonio Holmes had four receptions and Ginn grabbed three more of Smith's passes, but the sum total of those seven catches was only 81 yards. Meanwhile, sophomore receiver Anthony Gonzalez, who was a thorn in Iowa's side with a pair of touchdown receptions, never touched the ball against Penn State.

"We can't make excuses and I won't make excuses," Holmes said. "They have a good defense. Their DBs played great, and their defensive line played outstanding. They pressured our quarterback and that's a big part of our offense. But our defense played well, too. Our defense pressured their quarterback and got after him, especially in the second half. We just didn't do our part as an offense. We didn't do enough on offense to help out our defense."

"We answered them back at the end of the first half, but it seemed like we just couldn't get anything going in the second half. We'd have a couple of good plays and then nothing. We couldn't get any kind of momentum going on offense."

Adding Insult To Injury

In addition to their national rankings and a slip in the conference standings, the Buckeyes also continued what has become a pair of alarming trends. The loss was Ohio State's fifth in its last six Big Ten road games dating back to the 2003 Michigan game, and it sent Tressel's record to 1-4 in games following open weeks.

"I don't know what to say about that," said OSU senior linebacker Bobby Carpenter. "I guess I knew about the bye week thing, but I didn't realize about the road game losses. But you know, it really doesn't matter. Losing isn't ever easy to take — I don't care where it happens. It's just tough to win in the Big Ten on the road. It's a huge advantage to play at home."

"As far as the games after bye weeks, I don't have any explanation for that. Ever since I've been here, we don't do things any different in preparation for those games. I think it's just one of those things."

Smith agrees that it is simply an anomaly.

"I'm not a superstitious guy, so those kinds of things don't mean anything to me," the OSU quarterback said. "The next game is the next game no matter when it comes. We prepare for teams the same way whether it's after a bye week or not. There's nothing to that kind of stuff. They played well and we missed our opportunities. It doesn't make any difference whether there was a bye week last week or not."

So if it wasn't the road or the week layoff, just exactly what happened to the Ohio State offensive attack in the space of only 14 days? What turned it

COVER STORY: BUCKEYES ARE NIT-PICKED

from a machine hitting on all cylinders to a unit that appeared largely one-dimensional, placing most of its emphasis on its quarterback and his ability to make plays?

"Execution," offered OSU senior center and co-captain Nick Mangold. "Against Iowa, we executed well. Today, we didn't. Yes, their defensive line played well. Yes, their entire defense had a good game plan. But we had all the opportunities in the world and couldn't cash in. And that comes down to execution — pure and simple."

Mangold's comments were backed up by the fact that the Buckeyes reached Penn State territory five times during the game and came away with only 10 points. Two of those missed opportunities resulted in punts while the other ended in a missed field goal from 50 yards away by senior kicker Josh Huston.

But there were also other missed opportunities — lots of them. In addition to outgaining the Nittany Lions, Ohio State had more first downs (16-11) and held more than a three-minute edge in time of possession. The Buckeyes also ran more offensive plays, had fewer penalties, and punted fewer times but had a better punting average.

But it was the mistakes that were most costly. As good as the OSU defense played, it never got to Penn State quarterback Michael Robinson and couldn't create a single turnover against the most turnover-prone team in the Big Ten. Meanwhile, the Nittany Lions created two huge turnovers — one in the second quarter that gave them momentum and the eventual game-winning

points, and one in the fourth period that salted away the game.

Ohio State held a 3-0 lead at the end of the first quarter, and following a career-best 60-yard punt from A.J. Trapasso on the first play of the second quarter, the Buckeyes seemed to have a handle on the game. But Robinson engineered a nine-play, 74-yard touchdown drive to take the lead for Penn State, and three plays later, the Lions got a huge shot of adrenaline when defensive back Calvin Lowry picked off Smith and returned the interception 36 yards to the OSU 2-yard line.

"My mistake," Smith said, "I had my receiver and didn't get him the ball. It was a bad throw and a bad time to make a bad throw."

Lowry said Smith made it rather easy to make that interception and play the OSU receivers close the rest of the game.

"The way their quarterback was playing, he was staring down his receivers," the Penn State senior safety said. "I think it was a big changing point in the game. For us to get it on the 2-yard line, that was a big momentum change."

Three plays after the pick, Robinson scooted into the end zone on a 1-yard run, giving his team a 14-3 advantage. And although there was still 7:55 left in the second quarter, it proved to be an insurmountable lead for the Buckeyes.

"I just can't do that — put my team in that kind of situation," Smith said. "But to the credit of our guys, we fought back. Our defense pretty much held them after that, and I was confident we were going to come back."

That confidence continued despite the fact the Buckeyes' offense sputtered in the second half. In fact, the team had totaled only 68 yards in five second-half possessions until taking over for one last-ditch try with 3:37 remaining in the game. Facing a second-and-16 at his own 5-yard line, Smith scrambled and found Ginn for a 26-yard gain then connected with Holmes on the very next play for 21 more yards, pushing the ball out to the Penn State 48.

But two plays later, Lions defensive end Tamba Hali blew around tight end Ryan Hamby and sacked Smith from the blind side, Penn State's fifth sack of the day. It also proved to be their most important. As Hali hit Smith, the football came loose and was recovered by defensive tackle Scott Paxson. After that, it was only a matter of running out the clock for Penn State, triggering a celebration in Happy Valley that continued several hours after the game had ended.

Meanwhile, the Buckeyes headed off into the dark, chilly night, facing a long charter flight home and left to ponder a season that might have been. Still, they swore there was still plenty to play for and they had no intention of simply mailing it in over the final six games.

"We're not giving up. I can guarantee that," said OSU senior linebacker and co-captain A.J. Hawk. "I know we said that after the Texas game, too, but I also know that we didn't give up. We're never going to give up. We're going to go back to work, figure out what went wrong and get it fixed. We just have to come out and play solid football starting again next week with Michigan State."

"And that's all we care about right now — the next game. We've got a loss now in the Big Ten, but so do a lot of other teams. There are still a lot of games left in the season and you never know what's going to happen. I don't think anyone on this team thinks the season is over."


TICKETS

**INDIVIDUAL AND
SEASON TICKETS
ON SALE NOW!**

AWAY GAMES TOO!

2941 Kenny Rd. • Suite 205 • Columbus, OH

614-457-1122 • 800-933-7773

www.osutix.com

MAKING TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTIVE...

AND business profitable!



HelpWizards

MAKING TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTIVE

We don't want to sell you a product, we want to sell you a way to make your company more profitable...by making technology productive.


DISPATCH CENTER

No Automated Response or Menu System
Dedicated Dispatchers


CERTIFIED TECHNICIANS

Efficient Service
Expert Training and Service


CUSTOMIZATION

Stored Database of Information Specific to You
Single Point-of-Contact (your own Client Relationship Manager)


SUPPORT

Remote Support
Automated Monitoring


VALUE

Competitive Rates
Value-Added Service Agreements

**THE COMPUTER SPECIALISTS
THAT COME TO YOU!**

Business IT Consulting
Network Design & Management
Firewalls and Security
Cable and Wireless

Business Internet
Website Development
Intranet/Extranet
Hosting and E-Mail Services

Service
Computer Repairs and Upgrades
Remote Administration
Rapid Response Emergency Service

Residential Service

Microsoft
CERTIFIED

Partner



NORTEL
NETWORKS
Networking
Reseller



www.helpwizards.com (614) 291-4357

BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN

25th Anniversary
Est. 1981

\$2.00

PERIODICAL NEWSPAPER
CLASSIFICATION
DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE RUSH!!

Vol. 25, No. 7

"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

October 22, 2005

Having Matta, Foster In Place Upon Arrival Was A Blessing For AD Smith

Editor's Note: This is the second in a two-part series on Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith as he completes his first six months on the job.

By MARK REA

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Managing Editor

When Gene Smith arrived for his first day of work as Ohio State athletic director last April, he had the benefit of two of college basketball's most respected coaches waiting for him.

In 2002, his predecessor Andy Geiger had hired Jim Foster to resurrect the lagging women's basketball program then followed that in 2004 by luring Thad Matta to pick up the pieces of a men's program shattered by the firing of Jim O'Brien for giving money to a former recruit.



Gene Smith

"What a blessing to have two of the best coaches in the country here and already in place," Smith told BSB during an exclusive interview in late September. "If you look around the country, you're not going to find a more energetic guy than Thad Matta."

"And not only will he work every other head coach into the ground, he's successful at what he does. I think you can tell that just by the number of outstanding players who have already agreed to join his program in the future."

"Then you have Jim Foster, and if he

Continued
On Page 8

Building Block



Photos by JEFF BREHM

AIRBORNE EXPRESS — Ashton Youboty (26) and Nate Salley (21) sprawl out to block a field-goal attempt by Michigan State during Ohio State's 35-24 victory. Salley was credited with the block, and then Youboty (left) scooped up the loose ball and took it 72 yards for a touchdown.



Touchdown Off Spartans' Goof Gets Ohio State Rolling To A 35-24 Win

By CHRIS NIDA

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

In the week leading up to his team's Oct. 15 homecoming matchup with Michigan State, Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel noted to reporters that his team topped the conference in time of possession, and he said the one important statistic he was concerned with was that his team was last in the league in turnover margin.

Against the Spartans, the Buckeyes held the ball for just over 19 minutes, and they turned the ball over four times to MSU's zero.

And yet when the clock expired in Ohio Stadium, Ohio State was on top, legging out a 35-24 victory. The Spartans outgained the Buckeyes 456-386 in yards of total offense and made 27 first downs to the home team's 13, yet they were outpointed in the one all-important category.

"They got us sometimes. We got them sometimes," OSU junior safety Donte Whitner said. "And we're just thankful that we got them more times than they got us."

How did Ohio State manage to do so?

A big-play offense that converted three touchdowns of 46 yards or more helped, as did a pressuring defense that got to standout Michigan State quarterback Drew Stanton a record 12 times.

But where the game swung was on two special teams plays — one in particular. A pair of blocked field goals, one returned for a touchdown just before halftime, sealed the Spartans' fate.

Early on, it did not appear as if homecoming would be a banner day for the Buckeye special teams. Antonio Holmes muffed two first-half kickoffs, with the Spartans recovering one at the OSU 4-yard line.

Trailing 17-7 late in the second stanza, the Ohio State defense forced Michigan State into a fourth-and-33 situation at its own 36-yard line. The Buckeyes called timeout at the 1:28 mark to preserve an opportunity to chip into the Spartans' lead before the half.

Continued On Page 10

COVER STORY: SMITH PLEASED WITH HOOPS COACHES HE INHERITED

'There's No Such Thing As A Minor Violation'

Continued From Page 1

isn't the premier women's basketball coach in college right now, he's certainly in the top two or three," Smith added. "When Andy hired Jim and Thad — for me to come into that situation is huge. An athletic director can only feel blessed when he starts out with two of the best coaches in all of college basketball."

Unfortunately, the new AD also started out with pending NCAA investigations in both his men's and women's basketball programs.

While the allegations against Foster's program were deemed minor in nature, the men's program was rocked with several accusations that included the following:

- O'Brien, through then-assistant coach Paul Biancardi, provided a cash payment of approximately \$6,700 to then-recruit Aleksandar Radojevic.

- Kathleen Salyers had improper in-person contacts and impermissibly provided recruiting inducements to Radojevic.

- An unnamed individual (who became a booster after providing benefits) gave recruiting inducements and benefits to a former men's basketball student-athlete, including meals, cash payments and living expenses.

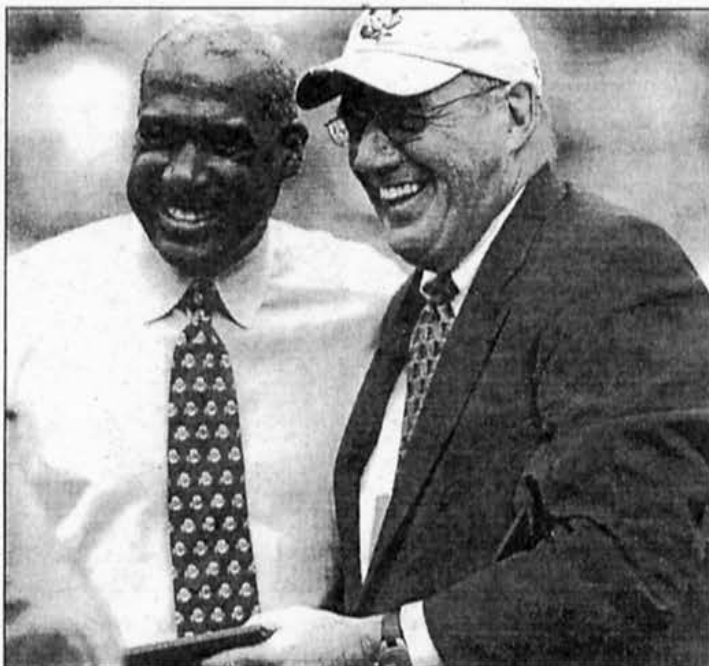
- An unnamed booster provided a former men's basketball student-athlete with impermissible academic assistance.

- O'Brien impermissibly provided Salyers with two season tickets for four consecutive home men's basketball seasons.

- O'Brien and Biancardi acted contrary to the principles of ethical conduct by failing to report their knowing involvement in NCAA rules violations relating to the above allegations.

- Both the institution and O'Brien failed to monitor the conduct and administration of the men's basketball program.

The allegations came to light during



JEFF BREHM

ADS PAST AND PRESENT — The present meets with the recent past as current Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith (left) shares a laugh with Andy Geiger, OSU's former AD. Smith credits his predecessor for hiring some of the best college coaches in the country.

a civil lawsuit brought in 2004 by Salyers against Kim and Dan Roslovic, a Columbus-area couple whom Salyers alleges hired her to provide former OSU player Slobodan "Boban" Savovic with housing, clothes and other inducements. Savovic, who played for the Buckeyes between 1999-2002, also allegedly had an affair with Kim Roslovic. The Roslovics are now divorced.

O'Brien was fired June 8, 2004, after admitting to Geiger that he had given money to Radojevic. The former coach

has since filed a multimillion-dollar wrongful termination lawsuit against the university, while Biancardi — now head coach at Wright State — has steadfastly denied any allegations made by Salyers or the NCAA.

Salyers' lawsuit against the Roslovics was dismissed by a judge in early May, and her attorneys have since filed an appeal of that decision.

Smith, who has prior service on the NCAA infractions committee, refused to speculate on what kind of penalties the men's basketball program will face, although both he and university president Dr. Karen Holbrook have indicated in the past that the university believes its immediate firing of O'Brien and self-imposed tournament ban last season could help lighten any sanctions the NCAA may be contemplating.

"When I studied this thing and was trying to decide whether or not this move was the best thing for me and my family, I certainly studied our situation with the basketball program as it pertained to the NCAA," Smith said. "We have several allegations and we take that pretty seriously. There is no such thing as a minor violation, and we have to admit that mistakes were made."

"At the same time, I have to be honest and admit that I felt pretty good about the outcome of the investigation and the NCAA's findings. We feel like our athletic department operates with honesty and integrity, and it's refreshing to know that we're not alone in that regard."

Any forthcoming sanctions against Ohio State will be announced after an infractions committee hearing, scheduled for Dec. 9-10. NCAA precedent in similar cases would seem to indicate the Buckeyes will not face any further post-season bans.

However, some observers continue to opine that the school may have to take down its 1999 Final Four banner, repay NCAA Tournament money from the years that Savovic played and forfeit games in which he appeared.

Whatever occurs, Smith believes the case should send a clear message to those who would try to align themselves with OSU programs or student-athletes outside the boundaries of NCAA regulations.

"We have to accept this case as a teachable moment for all of us," he said. "It will hopefully be a lesson to boosters on what is proper behavior and what is not proper behavior. It was clearly a mistake, but the most important thing is how we learn from it so that it never happens again."

And when the dark clouds finally part, Smith believes Ohio State will enter a new era of success as far as its men's basketball program is concerned.

"I'm not supposed to talk about specific players who have not yet signed letters of intent, and I won't," he said. "But just when you consider the number of players — top-ranked players by any and everyone who follows that sort of thing — who want to come to Columbus and be part of what Thad is building here, that has to get you excited."

"The same is true on the women's side. Jim knows what it takes to build a consistent winning program that wins the right way, and that's what we all want to be about. It makes you want to be a part of some of the great things that are happening here in terms of the basketball programs."

VCA Seating Arrangement

One of the few knocks against Geiger was that he refused to entertain any ideas of reconfiguring the seating arrangement at Value City Arena in order to get the students move involved in the action.

Some have hoped that Smith will address that change, but he said that his hands are tied in the matter.

"We really can't do anything about the way the seating is configured," he said. "The funding for the Schottenstein Center is based on our present seating chart and the sale of our personal seat licenses. We could never have built the building in the first place without the present seating arrangement."

"I think what many people have to understand is that The Schott is not just a basketball venue. It is a multipurpose entertainment facility that is home not only to basketball but to ice hockey, concerts and other forms of entertainment as well. That's why the seating trajectory is the way it is. That's why the acoustics are the way they are."

Smith said he faced similar problems when he was athletic director at Iowa State from 1993-2000. The university had trouble filling its spacious Hilton Coliseum, which was originally built as a multipurpose facility.

"We had the same questions being raised there," he said. "Then, all of a sudden, we started winning and those questions began to fade. I knew we had turned the corner when the older — uh, let's make that the more mature — ones like me began to stand throughout the games."

"Is it perfect? Maybe not, but I'll tell



PROCARE
Carpet Cleaning Co.

1130 Cleveland Ave. • Columbus, OH 43210

**Call (614) 291-6699
for a FREE ESTIMATE**

SERVICES

- Professional Carpet Cleaning - absolutely the best carpet cleaning available
- Complete Upholstery Cleaning - furniture, vehicles, rv's, etc...
- Complete Power Washing - Signs, buildings, sidewalks, etc. - wood deck restoration and sealing
- Tile Floor Cleaning - grouted ceramic tile floors
- Water Extraction - emergency service available
- Air Duct Cleaning - complete extraction

10% Off Any Service when you mention this ad.

COVER STORY: SMITH PLEASED WITH HOOPS COACHES HE INHERITED

you this: I was fortunate enough to be in The Schott last March when our team beat Illinois and ruined their perfect season. It was plenty loud enough in there that day. So, I think if you have an exciting team and they're winning, the seating arrangement won't be viewed as much of a problem anymore."

Still, the Buckeyes have traditionally played a nonconference schedule that features a host of teams not quite at their level. Also, nearly every game is telecast — at least locally — further holding down attendance at Value City Arena.

"Thad and I have talked about that," Smith said. "He definitely would like to try and strengthen the nonconference schedule and include at least one major school every year."

Asked if that meant the traditional powerhouses such as Duke, North Carolina, Syracuse or Kansas, the athletic director nodded and replied, "That's exactly what it means. Thad's an eager guy and he's ready to play anybody anywhere. We'd love to get Duke or North Carolina or anyone like that in a home-and-home series."

As for the fact that every game is televised, Smith said that is a Catch-22 situation.

"It does have its drawbacks at times in terms of local attendance," he said. "But it is also a tremendous recruiting tool at our disposal. It's a tremendous advantage to be able to tell a prospective player that every game he plays here will be on television. I don't know if that would be something we'd want to change."

"Something that could be looked at, though, is how we fill our arena. I don't think there is anything wrong with asking some of our PSL holders if we can use their seat licenses during games they're not going to attend. We also need to address ways to make our games a must-see attraction — give those in attendance much more than they can get from staying at home and watching on TV."

"I think if we can do that, plus have an outstanding, exciting, winning team, that's what will get the people here and keep them coming back."

WHAC Renovations Coming

Geiger took care of upgrading most of Ohio State's athletic facilities during his tenure including the Schottenstein Center, Jesse Owens Memorial Stadium, Bill Davis Stadium and renovations to Ohio Stadium.

He was also at the fund-raising forefront to construct the new McCorkle Aquatic Pavilion, which had its grand opening Oct. 10. (See related story, page 46.)

But while Geiger kicked off the campaign to upgrade the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, Smith will be the one to see renovations of that facility come to fruition.

In late September, the OSU Board of Trustees approved the letting of bids for some \$19 million in renovations and upgrades to the facility that was dedicated in 1987.

Groundbreaking is scheduled for December, and the project will be completed in two phases — the first costing approximately \$14 million and the second at a cost of about \$5 million.

Smith said the focal point of the renovations will be an expanded weight room and new offices for the football coaching staff. The weight room will expand from 8,000 to more than 18,000

square feet, while the coaches will be able to stretch out with larger offices and meeting rooms.

Also contained in the project will be an enlarged and enhanced team room, a spacious lounge area for the players, a new video room, basketball and racquetball court facilities and a large rehabilitation and training area.

Around the first of February, the coaching staff will move out of the facility and into temporary offices across Olentangy River Road at the Fawcett Center. Meanwhile, the team will move all of its weight room equipment to the indoor practice field so that strength coach Allan Johnson can continue his year-round conditioning programs.

"We haven't quite figured out all of the logistics yet, but we'll get there," Smith said. "Moving the coaches out of their offices during recruiting season won't be easy, and there will be construction right through the (2006) season, so we'll have to try moving the locker room to where the training room is now."

"But this has been a long process and now it's going to be a reality. Once the project is completed, it is going to make one of the best facilities in the country just that much better."

Fitting In Quickly

Barely six months into his new job, Smith said he has yet to experience any major problems — at least not after most of the alumni got used to his being a Notre Dame alumnus with no previous Ohio State ties.

"I understood some of the early trepidation," he said. "I understand that we deal in a world of college athletics where emotion and passion are part of the deal. I would be lying if I said I didn't hear from a few people who told me straight up that they would rather the university hire an Ohio State guy for this job."


"But I understand that. I'm a professional and this is my career. This is where I wanted to be. And in the end, all people want is for you to be successful. I think regardless of where you came from, they just want you to share their

affinity for their team and their university. I don't see that as a negative at all. I'm glad it's that way, and I'm working hard to become the best Buckeye I can be."

To that end, Smith and his wife, Sheila, have continued the tradition of Geiger and his wife, Eleanor — being a visible presence at every in-season, intercollegiate sport that Ohio State offers.

"I think that's very important because, after all, we're here for the kids, not the other way around," Smith said. "For example, after a football game earlier this season, my wife and I drove to Centerburg and watched the (women's) volleyball team play against BYU. Watching those kids compete — that's what it's all about. Then you talk about our field hockey team — they're rocking and rolling right now."

"And I can't wait to see women's basketball and the gymnastics teams — that's one of the things I really like about this job, interacting with the kids — I love that part."



BUCKEYE BUBBA BASH

shucking
bubba
deluxe



PRESENTED BY BUCKEYE HALL OF FAME CAFE & MILLER BEER!


OSU Football Friday Night
"Pep Rally" 7pm - 11pm
(No Cover Charge)

September 2, 9, 16 & 23rd, 2005 -
October 14, 2005 - November 4 & 11th, 2005

- Register to win a pair of OSU Football Tickets every Friday Night
- Miller Beer Girls
- Prizes
- Big Screen, Game Highlights

Food: Burgers, Hot Dogs, Brats. Etc.,
Beverages: Miller Products and
Absolut Vodka Specials



COVER STORY: BUILDING BLOCK

MSU's Haste Turned The Game's Tide

Continued From Page 1

But Ted Ginn Jr. did not field the bouncer from MSU punter Brandon Fields cleanly, allowing Diego Oquendo to fall on the ball at the Ohio State 26-yard line. In a matter of seconds, Michigan State had gone from penned in its own territory to within easy striking distance of a chance to extend its lead.

Michigan State's next four plays — one of which was an OSU sack — gained just 9 yards. The final of those began with 24 seconds showing on the game clock and ended when Buckeye defensive tackle Quinn Pitcock stopped Stanton for no gain.

The Spartans were out of timeouts, but it was only third down, so they could have spiked the ball to stop the running clock and provide some time to set up for a field goal. Instead, chaos ensued with the Michigan State field-goal unit rushing onto the field as members of the first-team offense tried desperately to leave the field of play.

"We would have spiked the ball so our offense had time," Stanton said. "I even tried to get us toward the center because I knew we would try for that. But I heard someone yelling, 'Field goal, field goal,' and it was a huge miscommunication. No one knew what was going on."

Meanwhile, the Ohio State defense was coolly awaiting the Spartans' next move.

"Our field-goal block team is the first defense," junior cornerback Ashton Youboty said, "so while they're running around, we're just waiting to see if there's a quarterback in the game or a kicker."

When it became apparent that Michigan State was going to rush a field-goal attempt, Ohio State lined up in its field-goal block formation. That's when the Buckeyes realized the Spartans were



JEFF BREHM

TAKING IT IN — Ohio State quarterback Troy Smith (10) celebrates his fourth-quarter touchdown with teammate Antonio Pittman (25) late in the Buckeyes' victory over Michigan State. Smith ran for 42 yards and tossed a career-high three TD passes.

handing them a gift: In the frenzy to get the field goal off, MSU lined up with just 10 men on the field. There was no wing on the left end of the line to fend off any

potential blockers.

Both Youboty and Nate Salley had an unimpeded line to Fields, who serves as his team's holder on placements.

Said Tressel, "When we saw that happening, I was just praying they could get the snap off in time."

"I was kind of licking my chops," Salley added. "I was excited to see that (the wing) wasn't coming. I was like, 'Please just don't come, don't come.' And we took advantage of it."

Almost as soon as the ball was snapped, Salley and Youboty were in the backfield. Kicker John Goss' attempt was cleanly blocked and bounded toward the Horseshoe's east sideline. Youboty scooped the ball and raced down the sideline, with Whitner and others providing an escort as the junior cornerback covered 72 yards and crossed into the end zone long after the clock on the stadium scoreboard read all zeros.

All-everything linebacker A.J. Hawk made 19 tackles on the afternoon, but his biggest play of the game may have been wiping out Goss following the block, thus eliminating the only Spartan with a chance at recovering the football.

"The first thing I want to say is give A.J. some credit," OSU quarterback Troy Smith said. "If he doesn't get the kicker out of the way, maybe that doesn't go all the way. And everybody was going for the ball. It was an unselfish play to push that guy over."

After failing to prevent Spartans wide receiver Jerramy Scott's second-quarter touchdown reception, Salley was itching for a shot at redemption. He was credited with the block of the field goal, although photographs appear to show that Youboty at least got a hand on the ball as well.

"When I saw they didn't have a wing, I knew I had to get that block because I knew we needed a big play," Salley said. "Early in the game, I kind of gave up a touchdown. It was on me and I just put a lot of pressure on myself. I just felt like I needed to try my best to help the team in some way because we gave up that big play."

"That (block and return) turned out to be a huge one for us. It helped turn the game around."

Michigan State received an illegal substitution penalty on the play, but declining the infraction was merely a formality. The Buckeyes had been outgained by nearly 100 yards and turned the ball over three times in the first half, and yet

Ribs • Wings • Burgers • Pizza



Catch All
The Action

CROSSWOODS

100 Hutchinson Ave.
Columbus, OH 43235
614-785-9755

Now Open

1380 Bethel Road
Columbus, OH 43220

www.winkinglizard.com

Accommodations available for large parties!

World Tour of Beers • Over 40 TV's • Direct TV • All Sports

NORTH STAR VISION CENTER

NORTHWEST

1910 Crown Park Court
614-326-1830

NORTHEAST

1680 Schrock Rd.
614-882-2223

SOUTH

Southern Vision Center
105 Great Southern Blvd.
614-491-3435

Comprehensive Eye Exams
Contact Lenses & Fashion Eyewear
Special Attention to Children
Laser Surgery Consultation
Treatment of Eye Diseases
Emergencies Welcome

Personalized
Care Is Our Focus

COVER STORY: BUILDING BLOCK

they entered the locker room down only 17-14 not long after it appeared they would trail 20-7.

"With that play right there, and with the guys hustling and playing to the last snap, it gave us new life," Whitner said.

"We can either go in down 13 or we go in down three. That's a 10-point swing, and that's big."

Youboty couldn't really enjoy his first-ever trip to the end zone as a collegian, though. Several plays before the game-changer, he absorbed a shot to the hip from Stanton. As the clock was ticking down, he was just trying to ignore the pain and make it to halftime.

"If you haven't had a hip pointer before, it's very painful," Whitner said. "It feels like you can't even move your leg, and every time you do move your leg, it feels like somebody is stabbing you with a knife. So he gutted it out up the sideline, and I was there with him to make sure nobody caught him."

Linebacker Bobby Carpenter said Youboty had tears in his eyes as he was helped into the Buckeye locker room at halftime.

"I think it was all adrenaline," Youboty said of his painful return. "I saw Donte on my right, so when we were running down I knew I had someone to block for me, no matter how fast or slow I was running."

Stretching and icing during the half-time intermission eased Youboty's pain, and he appeared unhindered the remainder of the contest. He obviously felt well enough to turn in at least one more game-changing effort.

With approximately nine minutes remaining in the game, the Buckeyes trailed 24-21. They took possession of the ball following Fields' sixth punt of the game, but on the second play of the drive Smith fumbled, with Michigan State recovering at the Buckeye 22-yard line.

Ohio State's defense stiffened, allowing the Spartans just 3 yards on three plays, but that still left Goss in position for a 36-yard field-goal attempt.

Michigan State had the requisite number of players on the field this time, but it didn't matter. Youboty came around the end again and got a hand on the kick, which landed harmlessly in the south end zone.

"They could have been up by six, and that would have changed the game," OSU senior linebacker Anthony Schlegel said. "That was a huge play."

On the ensuing possession, the Buckeyes gained 13 yards on two rushes from Pittman and one from Smith. The fourth play of the drive was a screen pass to Pittman that went for 21 yards, and the next play was a 46-yard pass to Holmes. He hauled in Smith's toss at the 30-yard line, broke one tackle and sprinted up the sideline, capping his second touchdown of the day with a dive into the end zone.

After apparently being in position to go down by six points, the Buckeyes found themselves leading by four with just under five minutes to play. The Spartans would never again mount a serious threat as Smith's 1-yard touch-

down plunge with 1:29 to play capped the scoring.

"When we came out there, three-and-outed them, blocked the kick and let the offense go back and do what they do, I knew that we were in their mind and we had their number right there," Schlegel said. "We were being physical all game and hitting the quarterback and hitting their guys up front, hitting the receivers. It finally takes its toll."

With the victory, the Buckeyes put their loss to Penn State behind them and moved to 4-2 on the season. Perhaps more importantly at this juncture, it pre-

vented them from being saddled with another conference loss.

Coupled with the Nittany Lions' last-second loss at Michigan later in the day, OSU is now one of five teams with one Big Ten loss. They again control their own destiny when it comes to claiming a share of the league crown, one of the stated preseason goals that still is attainable.

"We're out of the national championship season, and we understand that," Carpenter said. "But being a senior, and (with) all the other seniors I'm around, it's all we've got now. We're trying to win a Big Ten title. If we would have lost this

game, we would have been out of it."

A defeat at the hands of the Spartans would have left the Buckeyes with an even .500 record of 3-3. Sound familiar?

"If we end up 3-3, we were at the same situation we were last year," Smith said. "This victory today I hope can be a turning point in the season. Character describes a man, woman, whoever you want to talk about, and the guys showed up to play today."


"If we had gone back into the locker room at 3-3, there wouldn't have been too many happy coaches."

Car Rental

Airport Valet Parking

Car Sales & Leasing

The Thrifty team always gives John and George a winning deal,

and you'll get one, too, when you rent a car or truck, use our airport valet parking service , or buy one of our Thrifty Certified used cars.

614.237.5800

For rental reservations or other information call

Columbus Thrifty.com

Radio personalities John Corby and George Lehner.



A licensee of Thrifty Rent-A-Car System, Inc.

For Home Delivery
Of Buckeye Sports
Bulletin
Call (614) 486-2202

Thrifty

Car Rental