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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

February 24, 2001

Brown: OSU's Quiet Assassin

Junior Takes On Roles As Scorer, Team Captain

By JEFF RAPP

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Brian Brown is basking in the joy of the moment even though it isn't his own. His longtime teammate, Will Dudley, had just played hero for the Ohio State men's basketball team by grabbing an airball, leaning back and making a short shot just before the buzzer sounded on a huge 65-64 win at Purdue Feb. 14.

This is Dudley's moment in the sun as reporters circle him like buzzards to roadkill, but Brown is enjoying it more. Brown is OSU's leading scorer this season, but he's always been near the bottom of the pack when it comes to ego.

Brown beamed while leaning against a wall in a Mackey Arena corridor outside the visiting locker room. That the airball Dudley snagged was Brown's didn't matter. That Brown battled foul trouble and scored a season-low seven points didn't matter. That he had his worst game of the season on his 22nd birthday didn't matter. That Brown failed to hit the game winner in a one-point game, as he also failed to do against Kansas back in December, also didn't matter. This time the Buckeyes won.

With Brown, that's all that matters — that and somehow managing to be well-liked by everyone he comes across.

"Brian has definitely stepped up," fellow co-cap-

tain Ken Johnson said. "He's just an awesome guy. Brian's always positive. He goes out there and plays hard and just has a huge heart."

A 6-3 junior guard, Brown came to OSU along with Dudley out of Bishop Loughlin High School in Brooklyn, N.Y., the hometown of OSU coach Jim O'Brien. When O'Brien was named OSU coach in 1997 he went to familiar ground for his first recruiting class by snagging Brown, a player he had seen compete at the prep and AAU level. He soon found out what kind of special player he was getting.

Longtime Loughlin coach Bob Leckie was quick to say that Brown was his all-time favorite player to coach, a point he made even in front of other players like Dudley.

"We were in Will's house (on a recruiting visit) and — even in front of Will and Will's mother — (Leckie) said, 'Will is a wonderful kid, he's the second-best kid I've ever had,'" O'Brien recalled. "So we said, 'Well, who's first?'" and he said, 'Brian Brown.' And then the Dudleys concurred.

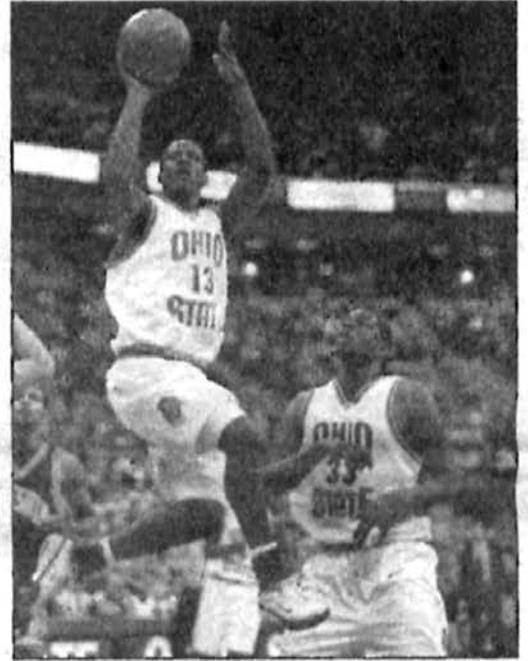
"They said Brian was the man."

Go-To Guy

That certainly has been the case this season as Brown is leading the Buckeyes in about every way imaginable. A former backcourt starter alongside Scoonie Penn and Michael Redd, Brown has taken on much of the scoring burden this season at a team-best 14.7 points per game.

He also leads the team in assists (104) and steals (39) and remains OSU's top defender on the perimeter.

Most important, Brown has done it while leading the Buckeyes to a 17-9 record, which has them on the doorstep of a third straight NCAA Tournament bid.



KEVIN OWE

THE MAN — Ohio State junior guard Brian Brown (13) floats in the lane for a shot, as teammate Zach Williams looks on during a game earlier this year. Brown has emerged as OSU's leading scorer this season for the 17-9 Buckeyes.

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In This Issue Of BSB

• Clarett In Fold Already For 2002

As expected, Warren (Ohio) Harding junior running back Maurice Clarett affirmed his verbal commitment to Ohio State for 2002.

The 6-1, 220-pound Clarett is considered one of the state's top five junior prospects. For more on Clarett and other OSU recruiting headlines, see **Recruiting Outlook** on pages 12-13.



Maurice Clarett

Tressel Spreads Word To State Prep Coaches

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

As the 22nd and current head football coach at Ohio State, Jim Tressel will command a lot of respect and attention inside the state's football community.

That is a given.

But Tressel seems to understand that his real power stems from his immense ties to the Ohio high school coaching community.

The head coaches and assistants at the state's 711 football-playing high schools serve as the conduits for college coaches like Tressel, Michigan's Lloyd Carr, Penn State's Joe Paterno and many others to Ohio's wealth of gridiron talent.

That's why Tressel gladly accepted an invitation to be the leadoff speaker for the Ohio High School Football Coaches Association clinic, held Feb. 9-10

at the Easton Hilton in Columbus. For good measure, he had as many of his assistants as possible in the audience as well.

Over 1,000 high school and college coaches descended upon the posh hotel to hear, among others, Oklahoma's Bob Stoops, Pittsburgh's Walt Harris and Boston College's Tom O'Brien.

But it was Tressel who started everything off on the clinic's first morning. Speaking before an overflow crowd, he talked on the topic of "Ohio State Football in the 21st Century."

He spent not one minute discussing X's and O's, formations or personnel.

"That's because I don't know anything," he would joke later.

Rather, this winner of four Division I-AA national championships talked on his vision of



Jim Tressel

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OHIO STATE FOOTBALL

Veteran Daniels Tabbed To Lead Ohio State QBs

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

OSU football coach Jim Tressel completed his first coaching staff with the hiring of University of Cincinnati offensive coordinator/assistant head coach Joe Daniels Feb. 13.

The 58-year-old Daniels will serve as OSU's quarterbacks and receivers coach. He has a wide variety of experience between the college and NFL ranks.

"Joe Daniels gives us a veteran coach who has proven himself at every level of coaching," Tressel said. "For us to be able to add a coach with his experience and his expertise is a real boost to our staff."

Daniels joined the UC staff in 1997 after spending the previous five years in private business. When asked what lured him to Ohio State, he replied:

"Coach Tressel, I knew about him and the type of individual he was. I knew about the success he had at Youngstown State, and that was a big plus for me.

"I came up here with a positive feeling about it, and the more time I spent with he and (offensive coordinator) Jim Bollman, I felt very comfortable. Not that it was uncomfortable at Cincinnati — it was a great situation. I just felt so comfortable and relaxed, and I believe we'll work together very well."

Daniels, a native of Bethel Park, Pa., will be the only member of Tressel's nine-man coaching staff who was not born or raised in Ohio. He has a wealth of experience working in football within the state, however.

"On the way up here today my wife and I remembered that this is my fourth coaching job in Ohio," Daniels said. "I guess I'm destined to be here. I'm from Pittsburgh, which is right next door. My parents are still there, so it's a great situation."

Daniels graduated from Slippery Rock in 1964 with a degree in physical education. He was a four-year letterman there as a running back.

He began his coaching career as a graduate assistant at East Stroudsburg in 1966. After two years there, he spent 10 seasons as the quarterbacks and receivers coach at Boston College.

In 1978, he became the quarterbacks coach at West Virginia. Two years later,



Joe Daniels

he became the quarterbacks coach and offensive coordinator at Pittsburgh. Dan Marino was one of his pupils with the Panthers.

He moved to the NFL in 1983 as the receivers coach for the Cleveland Browns. He spent three seasons in Cleveland before moving on to the Buffalo Bills for a two-year stint in a similar position.

He was out of coaching in 1988 before returning to the college ranks as the quarterbacks coach at the University of Akron in 1989. He jumped back to the NFL as the quarterbacks coach for the New York Jets from 1990-91 before moving into the private sector in 1992.

"I left football when I left the Jets after the 1991 season," Daniels said. "For some reason, I decided it was time to get out of football. But I never lost the desire to coach and teach. That's ultimately what brought me back."

Daniels and his wife, Kathy, have two children: Matthew (15) and Kaitlin (13).

Starting From Scratch

Daniels is excited to get in on the ground floor in designing the OSU offense. He brings a background with the spread offense from his time at UC.

"I don't think (Tressel) has said yet, 'This is what we're going to do,'" Daniels said. "This is an opportunity, and what I'm excited about is we're going to go in

there and talk offense and start putting together a playbook. I'll be involved in it from the very beginning, which is great.

"At this point my overall experience is there. The last couple years we've thrown the ball a lot from four wides and that spread offense, which is making a sweep through college football we've been involved with. That doesn't mean we'll be doing that here, but it could be a part of what we do. That experience and exposure I've had to that might be able to add some things."

Daniels inherits four returning quarterbacks in two-year senior starter Steve Bellisari, sophomores Craig Krenz and Scott McMullen and redshirt freshman Rick McFadden. Daniels said it is his intention to open the quarterback job up in the spring.

"Any new situation, a new coaching staff goes in and has to open it up," he said. "That's not only in fairness to the starter of a year ago and whatever order they finished, but for everyone concerned it has to be established in spring practice.

"We'll do some film evaluation, that's obvious. But I would rather see what's done on the field. If they're willing to work hard in the off-season, that's great. But ultimately it has to be done on the field. We'll look at some of last year's game tapes but really most of our decision-making will come after the spring game."

With the receivers also part of Daniels' coverage area, he said he would welcome Tressel's help with the quarterbacks. Tressel coached quarterbacks during his time at Youngstown State.

"I don't anticipate any problem working with Jim with the quarterbacks," Daniels said. "A good part of the time I spent up here last week was talking about that, and we're pretty much in tune on things."

"I've been around long enough to know that those ego things aren't part of it. They didn't even enter into the discussion. I don't anticipate a problem."

Tressel has intimated he will keep a close eye on the quarterback position.

"That will be interesting to see how that (working with QBs) evolves," Tressel said. "I certainly enjoy it, that's the job you enjoy most — teaching. I felt it was important to get a guy like Joe Daniels.

His track record speaks for itself. Between Joe and I, I'd like to believe that position will get plenty of attention.

"The first thing we were looking for at that position is someone I would call egoless. That person has to know that quarterback at Ohio State is a tough position to play. Our QB coach is going to have to cope with the fact the head coach has coached quarterbacks for the last 26 years and loves being around and talking about the quarterback position.

"We were going to have to have a person who had the maturity, who wasn't going to worry about their turf, per se, and that's why when we found Joe Daniels he really embodied all of that. He is confident that there's plenty of role there for him, but what's most important for Joe Daniels is quarterbacks and how they're doing and he has a feel for the importance of the head coach being involved with the quarterback as well. He was a great fit for us."

Daniels' NFL experience also figures to be a plus.

"He knows what pressure is all about," Tressel said. "He cares about kids. The background and general philosophy he has, I think he'll be ready for it. No one knows for sure until they've been through something. We'll do our best to make sure we have an environment such that we'll be sensitive to those realities as they unfold."

Tressel, who will have the ultimate call on the quarterback job, added his two cents on that potential derby.

"I would say the safest thing to say is that the quarterbacks will be evaluated on the same things," Tressel said. "We've said before that the quarterback that makes the best decisions, does the best job of making sure our offense doesn't turn the ball over and makes big plays — that's opposite ends of the spectrum there, taking care of the ball and making big plays — whoever can handle those two ends and what goes in between, which is the good decisions, will be the quarterback."

"The evaluation process will be the same whether you're a senior or a freshman rising to be a redshirt freshman."

BSB staff member Mike Wachsman contributed to this report.

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COVER STORY: TRESSEL SPREADS THE WORD

Tressel Shares Mission Statement With Coaches

Continued From Page 1

what Ohio State football should be about on his watch. He also seemed to reach out to the Ohio prep coaches, asking for their help to try to put the Buckeyes back on top again.

It was a landmark 45-minute address presented before a very important audience. As an exclusive for BSB's readers, we have excerpts of it for you here.

In this first installment, Tressel covers his background, introduces his staff, discusses the topic of leadership and outlines his mission statement for the OSU football program.

In an upcoming edition, we will provide another installment looking at Tressel's vision and goals for the OSU program.

Jim Tressel: I can't thank all the people in this room enough. As I think about where we stand today, I think about how grateful I am for so many things, beginning with, for whatever reason, the blessing of being born into my mom and dad's family and getting the chance to watch my dad coach every day.

I had a chance to play for him — I didn't play that much — but the chance to be on his team.

I had the chance to go out and work for Coach (Jim) Dennison at Akron then Coach (Tom) Reed at Miami (Ohio), Dick MacPherson over at Syracuse and then Coach (Earle) Bruce at Ohio State and a bunch of wonderful guys on that staff.

Then having the blessing of being at Youngstown State University, which is an extraordinary place, for 15 years. It's been amazing how blessed I've been.

I think about the guys in this room, some of which I played with, some of which I coached with, some of which I coached, many of which I call on in their schools. It was the guys in this room that gave me the courage and the confidence to be standing where I am today.

So my message to all of you first and foremost is, "Thank you." If it weren't for you, I understand that this situation wouldn't be as it is. I'm real grateful for the opportunity to be at The Ohio State University.

Along with that gratitude, I understand the responsibility this position holds. I look back at the people who have been the head coach at Ohio State and I think to myself, "Man, I don't know if I can match up."

But then I feel the strength, the prayers and the support and everything that you guys have meant to me and all my coaches and friends over the years, and I know we'll get it done — because of you.

The topic I was assigned today was "Buckeye Football in the 21st Century," which whoever put the program together knows I don't know anything about X's and O's because we've got guys coming from all different directions to talk about that. I don't know exactly, today, what we're going to do, outside of the fact we'll probably run off-tackle a little bit.

With that in mind, we've been in a little bit of a whirlwind since the 18th of January. We haven't had a lot of time to sit in and work on (clinic) presentations. But we threw a little something together and we wanted to share it with you.

Much of it you've heard before, because in my mind there are certain principles — in this great game, in this great profession, in this great calling — that aren't any different at Berea High School, at Baldwin-Wallace College or Youngstown State or The Ohio State University.

Lots of X's and O's are different, but I've never been one to believe that the X's and O's make the difference. They're important. My coaches are extraordinary in that area. But I don't think they're as important as some of the fundamentals I'd like to share with you.

Leadership Is Service

In my mind, there is no question that when you talk about leadership, what you're talking about is service. It doesn't matter if you're a position coach leading eight guys or a coordinator leading 20 or a head coach leading a whole team or a teacher leading a classroom or a pastor leading a church or an elected official leading an area or country, leadership is service. And we understand that we are here to serve.

I can promise you that in the 21st century at Ohio State, we will serve. That's the way it was when I was growing up, as I idolized the Woody Hayeses, the Rex Kerns and the Paul Browns. That's the way it's going to be in the 21st century.

That's a fundamental we better understand as leaders. I happen to think there is going to be great leadership on our staff. We've got a tremendous group. Many of them are from right here in the state of Ohio.

Coach (Bob) Tucker, many of you know, is from Sandusky, Ohio. He went on and played at the College of Wooster, went out to Penn State as a graduate assistant, then coached at Massillon, Wichita State and Iowa State and Ohio State with Coach Bruce. He went on to be the head coach at the College of Wooster and we've been fortunate to have him with us at Youngstown State the last four years.

I promise you he will be here to serve all of the needs all of you will have.

(Tressel then introduced his entire staff, saving his latest hiring, secondary coach Mel Tucker, for last.)



WHAT HE STANDS FOR — Ohio State head coach Jim Tressel, pictured at his introductory press conference, had plenty to say in an address to Ohio's high school football coaches Feb. 9. One highlight was a multi-point outline of his coaching mission.

One thing I've always liked to do is scoop the media. They always like to think they know what's happening. I'm going to announce Monday that Coach (Mel) Tucker is on our staff.

You guys are going to find out before them. Isn't that nice for the people who count, to find out before everyone else?

Coach Tucker is a Cleveland Heights graduate. He played at Wisconsin and had a great career there. He and Coach (Mark) Dantonio were together at Michigan State. He went on to Miami (Ohio) and most recently was coaching the secondary at LSU. He is joining us as of this moment, and we're excited about Coach Tucker being here.

These guys, I promise you, are going to be here to serve.

During the interview process at Ohio State, they asked, "What are you going to do about building a staff?"

I said, "I'm going to bring the greatest possible men that these young people could have." That's what these men are. They are the right kind of men. Are any of them geniuses? I doubt it. But they are great people.

My experience has been when you get great people together who work hard at their task and work hard at their trade, some extraordinary things can happen.

I'm excited about the group that is going to be here. Please, call on us, come down to spring practice, whatever you want, we're here to serve. That's the way it was when I was coming up. George Chaump was the quarterbacks coach at Ohio State. Whatever I needed as a young quarterbacks coach, he was

there for us. That's the way I want it to be in the 21st century at Ohio State.

The Mission

None of the things I'll talk about today are new or unique to Ohio State. They are things that I happen to believe in and things I've learned over the course of time through you, my father, my coaches, my colleagues and my peers in the coaching profession.

But the one thing I know is before you begin to do anything, everyone better be on the same page as to what's the mission.

What is the mission? What are we trying to accomplish? It's something that evolves. You change the names and you change the characters. This is similar to the mission we had at Youngstown State and it is something I believe totally in. Here are the different parts of our mission:

• **We have to understand that the team can only progress with the presence of love and respect** — If we don't build what we want to do — whether it's a junior high, a high school or a college — with love and respect at the beginning, extraordinary things won't happen.

We can throw all those X's and O's out the door. Those gimmicks might work for a second, but in the long run, if we're going to do something that is extraordinary, then love and respect have to be there. That's the only way it can happen.

• **We must commit ourselves to reaching our full potential** — I learned a long time ago that if you keep your eye on the scoreboard and your eye on the win-loss record, you'll be in trouble.

But if you keep your eye on "how close am I to reaching my potential," it's amazing how that scoreboard will end up. And that's not easy because the newspapers don't want to talk about anything but the scoreboard. The booster club doesn't want to talk about anything but the scoreboard.

We need to talk to each other and talk to our young people about reaching our potential. The amazing thing about it is, all of us in this room, if we play to the best of our ability, we have a chance to win. We've all beaten teams that we weren't as good as and we've all lost to teams that weren't as good as us.

The reason is because somebody wasn't playing to their potential. That has got to be a focus and it has to be a focus for our young people on and off the field. Our guys all want to go to the NFL. I understand that, and that's great because, you know what, their potential is probably good enough that if they reach it, they'll probably go to the NFL.

But you know what, they've got the potential to get a college degree or they wouldn't have made the entrance requirements. They've got the potential to go out and impact our community and our society because they are Ohio State Buckeyes.

We are going to reach our potential in everything we do. We're going to commit ourselves to that, we're going to mandate that and we're going to demand that. We must reach our potential.

• **We know that every action**

COVER STORY: TRESSEL SPREADS THE WORD

must be with the team in mind — That means just how closely you're listening in class, because that team needs you to be eligible. That society needs you to be as learned as you can be.

That action of being attentive in the film room, that focus on the field, that attention to detail, every second has got to be with the team in mind.

Is what I'm about to do going to help our team — our team of the Ohio State Buckeyes, our team of this society?

• We must have unwavering loyalty to the team — It must be built in to everything we do. That's a hard thing in this society. This society wants us all to step up and point to ourselves.

We have got to build in unwavering loyalty to our team, most especially in the tough times. That's the time when we really need you. When things are going fine, it's easy. When things are going tough, will you turn and run and worry about yourself or will you step in and worry about the group?

• Fun will prevail for all — We have got to make this fun. It's tough anymore to be a college football player. It's tough to be a high school football player. We ask a lot of them. They do a lot more than we did when we were in college.

We've got to make sure it's going to be fun. The way you learn is when it is fun.

• There will be an absence of special privileges for any individuals, coaches or players alike — There must be an absence of special privileges. The only way we're going to make it in society is if there is an absence of special privileges.

Every one of us deserves the same

privileges as the other. If we're going to build a great team and a great society, there's got to be no special privileges.

• We know that we will get as our works deserve — Coach Bobby Stoops, the real Bobby Stoops, the one who was on the Youngstown State staff, used to tell our guys all the time a verse from Revelations, "We will get as our works deserve."

There's no such thing as getting a bad call or getting screwed or anything like that. Forget any of that skeptical thinking that there is anyone against you or that set of officials always makes poor calls or that baloney.

• We are committed to growing mentally, physically and spiritually — We are committed to the classroom, we are committed to the weight room, we are committed to the football field and we are committed to being morally sound.

We are committed to having a spiritual journey. That's an individual choice as to what journey that is, but we are committed to making sure we are ethical, moral, and we do what's right.

• We recognize we are students first and athletes second — That's not easy. But even when you talk to a guy at our place who thinks he's going to be in the NFL in a couple of years, he's going to be in the NFL a lot shorter than he's going to be out there in the rest of the world.

• We will personify class and humility on and off the field — I can promise you this: I've had the good fortune of being around some extraordinary teams that have done some extraordinary things. In my mind, the differ-

ence, the thing that made them step to the top of the mountain, is that they had class. They were humble.

We have to understand that we've been blessed so much. We have to carry those blessings with class and humility.

• We seek to get better every day and develop consistency through the relentless execution of fundamentals.

• We will always compete with the best — One thing I learned long ago. In practice you better put your best against your best in practice constantly for your best to get better.

We're going to do that on the practice field. We're going to push them to compete in the best possible academic environment and not get in and take the easy way. We want to compete with the best to be the best.

• We will compete with passion and deserve to be Big Ten champions and NCAA national champions — We realize this can only be accomplished with extraordinary focus, one step at a time. To climb a mountain like that — that Big Ten is a heck of a mountain, that national championship is a heck of a mountain — it takes extraordinary focus.

That's why my hat is off to Coach Stoops and Oklahoma. It was a joy and, in my mind, a blessing for college football to watch the way Oklahoma ascended to be national champions. They did it with class and humility as well as great togetherness and focus.

That's how you get it done. That's why we're all here at clinics. There's only one state championship in each division and only one national championship in each division. We're all seek-

ing that one.

• We will respect the proud Ohio State tradition of the past and we will provide further tradition for the future — We will do so at all times, on and off the field. We will do so at all times, knowing it is our responsibility to serve as a positive role model for the youth of this great state, the young and old alike in this great country, and the neat thing about an Ohio State is we can touch the world.

We've got a chance to touch the world in a positive way. We have to be committed to that within our mission. We will be the class of college football. That is our mission.

The great thing about football is every one of us has a mission. And every year we get to find out who can finish the mission. That's the beauty of football.

Then there are years when you don't complete the mission. But you can line up and say, "Here's where I've got to get better," and you get to set out on that mission again. That's the beauty of football and why it's the greatest game there is, because the mission involves so many people in so many roles and is so much more complex than any other game. It's so lifelike, it's so real, but it has to be started with the right mission.

• We accept this responsibility, placed in our hands to begin the new millennium, in the proud tradition of Ohio State football — This will be our mission. We will continue this mission until we get this mission right. I can promise you that in the course of this mission, serving all of you will be a big part of it.



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OHIO STATE FOOTBALL RECRUITING

Ohio State Nets RB Clarett On Junior Day

As expected, Warren (Ohio) Harding junior running back Maurice Clarett has made it official: He is committed to Ohio State for 2002.

Clarett (6-1, 220, 4.5) told BSB he committed to the OSU coaches in person while visiting on Junior Day Feb. 10 then went public with the news Feb. 14.

"When I got down to Columbus that day, I committed in person to Coach (Jim) Tressel, (recruiting coordinator Bill) Conley and (running backs coach Tim) Spencer," Clarett told BSB. "I think they were happy, but they pretty much knew I was coming down when Coach Tressel got the job. I want to play in that kind of program."



Maurice Clarett

Clarett initially told several sources he planned to be a Buckeye just after news of the hiring of Tressel, the long-time Youngstown State coach, broke on Jan. 18.

But Clarett, who lives in Youngstown and commutes to school in nearby Warren, and Harding coach Thom McDaniels agreed that he would hold off on a formal announcement at least until the current crop of high school seniors signed national letters of intent on Feb. 7.

"I knew I was going there when Coach Tressel got the job," Clarett said. "I was playing basketball at the YMCA when somebody came in and said Coach Tressel got that job."

"Right then, I stopped playing, went home and called Coach McDaniels. He took it from there."

Clarett joins Toledo Rogers running back/linebacker Drushaun Humphreys as early verbal commitments for 2002, although Humphreys' offer remains contingent on his academic status. In an early survey by Ohio's Future Stars,

RECRUITING OUTLOOK with Steve Helwagen

Humphreys ranks as the state's No. 1 junior with Clarett listed at No. 2.

For Clarett, the chance to play for Tressel, whom he has known about since his childhood in the Youngstown area, was an easy decision.

"He and Coach McDaniels have the same style," Clarett said. "They bring the same approach to the game. They are interested in making you better as a person and a player."

"I know that since I came to (Harding) Coach McDaniels has turned me around as a person. I have also talked to some of Coach Tressel's players from YSU and they all say he is well-respected by the players. Everybody just loved him and what his program is about."

Even better, Clarett said he plans to graduate from Harding midway through his senior year in December then enroll at Ohio State in time to participate in spring drills in April 2002. This 3.3 student has 19-1/2 credits and needs 21 to graduate.

"I have to take my senior English class over the summer," he said. "Then, I will finish up in the fall semester. That will let me get in there for spring ball and really learn their system."

"I feel like if I'm able to work with the team beginning in January, they'll accept me more as a player than if I wait to come in the fall. Hopefully, I can earn their trust and get a chance to play as a freshman."

Recruiters have known about Clarett since he had a spectacular but injury-marred freshman debut at Austintown (Ohio) Fitch High School. He transferred to Harding the next year, going for 1,058 yards and scoring 18 touchdowns.

This past season, injuries limited Clarett to 5-1/2 games. But he still finished with over 1,000 yards and helped

Harding go 4-1 in the games in which he was fully healthy.

"Coach McDaniels helped me put the team first," Clarett said. "Before I was kind of selfish, worrying about myself. When he got here this year, it became more of a team concept."

As for his running style, injuries seem to be the only thing capable of standing in Clarett's way.

"I think he brings something unique to the field," McDaniels said. "As a running back, he will run away from you, over you or make you miss. A lot of running backs can do two of those things, but he can do all three."

Clarett added, "I feel over the last year I have really worked hard to develop a lot of skills. I'm working hard to position myself so I might be able to compete for a job."

Clarett, who also considered Notre Dame, will take the ACT for the first time March 3.

Remnants From Signing Day

Here are updates on three senior prospects whose status was still up in the air after BSB's Recruiting Wrap-Up issue went to press.

• **NaShan Goddard, defensive end, Dayton Dunbar** — Goddard (6-6, 260, 4.9) was still hopeful of receiving a late offer from Ohio State, pending his academic status.

Goddard told Bill Kurelic of The Ohio Football Recruiting News that members of the OSU staff had told him they were still interested in him if he could obtain a passing test score and meet Prop 48 guidelines.

He holds a 2.9 GPA but needed to improve on a 16 on the ACT. He took the SAT Jan. 27 and the ACT on Feb. 10.

Goddard made official visits to Baylor, Cincinnati and Indiana, all of whom are believed to have offered. But he did not sign with any of those schools on Feb. 7.

He had 110 tackles, 11 sacks and two interceptions this past year.

• **Gino Guidugli, quarterback, Fort Thomas (Ky.) Highlands** — Guidugli (6-4, 205, 4.8) committed to Kentucky but did not sign with UK after coach Hal Mumme resigned the day before signing day.

He has reopened his college search and may now be considering the Buckeyes. He had been recruited at Cincinnati by assistant Joe Daniels, who was just hired by Tressel as OSU's new quarterbacks and receivers coach.

Guidugli reportedly made an official visit to Notre Dame Feb. 15. He previously made visits to UC, UK, Virginia and North Carolina. Mississippi State and Illinois are also now in the running.

With his five official visits exhausted, any trip to OSU would have to be unofficial. He could visit OSU as soon as the weekend of Feb. 24.

According to one source, it was unclear whether OSU would be interested in offering Guidugli (pronounced Ga-doo-lee), ranked as Kentucky's sixth overall prospect this year by SuperPrep. He was not considered among the nation's top 30 quarterbacks by either SuperPrep or Rivals100.com Recruiting.

As a senior, he led Highlands to a 14-1 record and the Class 3A state championship. He completed 260 of 404 passes (64.5 percent) for 4,367 yards and 51 touchdowns.

"Gino probably won't make a decision

(on college) until March, after basketball season is over," his father, Dave Guidugli, told The Cincinnati Enquirer.

Guidugli holds a 3.8 GPA and scored an 1140 on the SAT.

• **Kellen Winslow Jr., wide receiver, San Diego Scripps Ranch** — Winslow (6-5, 220, 4.7) left everybody wondering on signing day when he did not make a decision.

But the son of former NFL star Kellen Winslow finally ended the suspense Feb. 13, when he signed with Miami (Fla.) over Michigan State and Washington. He had eliminated Ohio State previously.

Winslow said Miami's Jarrett Payton, the son of former NFL star Walter Payton, befriended him and that helped him settle on the Canes.

More From The Trail

Two of OSU's 2000 signees discussed their recruitment recently. Here are viewpoints from Canton (Ohio) GlenOak defensive back Dustin Fox and Cincinnati Moeller tight end Ryan Hamby.

• **Fox** — The GlenOak standout told reporters he was very serious about Penn State — until Tressel convinced him otherwise.

"I was ready to sign with the Nittany Lions until Coach Tressel came in," he said. "I've known the Penn State coaching staff for four or five years with Derek (his brother, a former PSU defensive back).

"But Coach Tressel came in and gained so much ground in a month."

What did Tressel do?
"He called me every day, from the day he got the job up until (signing day) to let me know how important I was to the program," Fox said. "He was in Florida, he gave me a call. He was in Kentucky, he gave me a call."

But Penn State did not go quietly, Fox said.

"They were calling me all over the place because they had my cell phone number," he said. "I would have messages after basketball games from Joe Paterno."

"I'm just an 18-year-old kid and he's 73 and he's calling my cell phone to try and get me to come to their school. It's an honor. It's unbelievable that people took their time to get me to come. It was interesting."

Fox said the PSU coaches understood his decision.

"(Paterno) was OK with it, a little distraught," he said. "Not as much as (defensive coordinator Tom) Bradley, who was recruiting me. We have been really close over the last three or four years."

"But Coach Paterno said, 'We're still family.' That's what he said. He made that apparent, wherever I decided to go."

• **Hamby** — Hamby and his coach, longtime Moeller mentor Steve Klonne, were impressed with the way Tressel assumed control of the OSU program.

"He's education first and he emphasizes it," Hamby told The Cincinnati Post. "When he came to the house to visit, he seemed like a personable guy you could talk to."

Klonne is well-acquainted with Tressel's work at YSU.

"Tressel is very organized," Klonne said. "He's won four national championships at Youngstown State. They hadn't won before he got there."

Of course, Hamby had settled on OSU

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OHIO STATE FOOTBALL RECRUITING

after his Jan. 5 visit — during the period after John Cooper's firing and before Tressel's hiring. He had decided as much, though, when he visited for the Nov. 18 Michigan game.

"I was in the locker room before the game and walked out onto the field," Hamby said. "That was amazing, just a chance to play in front of that many people. I've always watched them growing up and always been a fan."

Walking On

OSU has a commitment to become a preferred walk-on from one central Ohio senior and could lure another.

Upper Arlington linebacker Joe Bradley will be on the roster in 2001 as a walk-on, while prolific pass-catcher Lance Moore of Westerville South was pondering such an offer. Here are updates on these two players.

• **Bradley** — Bradley (6-2, 210, 4.6) played alongside OSU signee Simon Fraser on UA's 15-0 Division I state championship team.

He had an incredible 193 tackles over those 15 games and also tallied two interceptions, 30 tackles for loss and 10 sacks. He was a second-team All-Ohio pick in Division I.

"We had lost Brett Hughes, who was a first-team All-Ohio kid and a two-year starter," said UA coach Darrell Mayne. "Joe is cut out of the same mold."

"Especially in our last two (playoff) games, Joe came up unbelievably big. I don't know if we would have done it without him."

"He has great range and an uncanny knack for getting through seams. He is

a playmaker. He is a speed player who can cover the field."

Mayne said Bradley's size may have stopped some Division I schools from offering him.

"People are so concerned with weight today, but I think he will grow into a pretty good-sized kid," Mayne said. "That's the only reason I can think of why he wasn't offered because he just makes plays."

Bradley had the same offer to walk on at schools like Penn State, Cincinnati and Arizona.

"Growing up 10 minutes from the stadium, Ohio State has always been like a dream to me," Bradley said. "This just felt right."

"I would like to play linebacker. I know if I grew to be 6-5, I could move to defensive end. But I'd like to try and put on 20 or 30 pounds of strength and see what that gets me at linebacker."

Bradley holds a 3.0 GPA and scored a 25 on the ACT.

• **Moore** — Moore (5-10, 175, 4.45) is believed to have finished the 2000 season with the second-highest single-season reception total in state history.

He caught 103 passes for 1,585 yards and scored 24 touchdowns as South advanced to the Division I playoffs. Ashtabula Sts. John and Paul's Don Lagoni set the state record this year with 108 catches.

Moore visited with the OSU coaching staff over the weekend of Feb. 3 but did not commit to accepting their offer to be a preferred walk-on.

"I haven't decided yet," Moore said. "They liked me. They said they really want me to play at Ohio State. I don't know what will happen."

"I like the idea of being able to earn a scholarship there. Any opportunity you can get at a big school like that should just give you extra confidence."

Moore said he was also considering a chance to play at perennial Division III powerhouse Mt. Union. His South teammate and quarterback, Rocky Pentello (6-1, 185), also was offered preferred walk-on status by the Buckeyes. He threw for 3,245 yards and 35 touchdowns as a senior at South.

Their coach, Rocky Pentello, the quarterback's cousin by the same name, is mystified that his two offensive stars could not get any Division I-A offers.

"I'd say those are two of the biggest surprises I've had in 15 years of coaching," Pentello told The Columbus Dispatch for an article on his snubbed standouts Feb. 14. "I can't understand some of the lower-level MAC schools, especially watching their games."

"Maybe they don't watch their own game films. I have and I've seen their quarterbacks and receivers, and they aren't as good as what I've got."

"These are schools that have been at the lower level for a while. Maybe that's why they're at the lower level."



Lance Moore

issued his signing day rankings for the nation's top classes.

In a surprise, Hayes listed LSU No. 1 over Florida State, a unanimous winner in BSB's consensus poll of six national experts.

Hayes' top 10 then listed Oklahoma third, followed by Michigan, Texas, Washington, Miami (Fla.), Tennessee, UCLA and Auburn.

He ranked Wisconsin 13th, Illinois 19th, Ohio State 21st, Notre Dame 22nd and Pittsburgh 23rd.

Hayes listed OSU's impact signees as running back Lydell Ross, wide receiver Angelo Chattams and offensive lineman Adam Olds.

"The Buckeyes were on the verge of a huge class before John Cooper was fired, but new coach Jim Tressel rebounded nicely by landing Ross-late," Hayes wrote.

• Winslow wasn't the only late signee for Miami, which also got hometown safety Jovonny Ward of Miami Northwestern after signing day.

His signing gave the 'Canes six Rivals100.com top 100 players, tying them with LSU and Tennessee for third place in that category. Florida State led the way with 10 Rivals100 top 100 players, while Michigan signed seven.

• Michigan already has its first verbal for 2002 in Detroit Martin Luther King defensive lineman Larry Harrison (6-3, 290).

• OSU signee Chris Gamble, a wide receiver from Fort Lauderdale (Fla.) Dillard, has been selected to play in a California-Florida all-star game June 23 at UC-Santa Barbara.

Miscellaneous Notes

• Matt Hayes of The Sporting News



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COVER STORY: BRIAN BROWN

Penn's Work-Ethic Rubbed Off On Brown

Continued From Page 1

"I'm happy for those guys and some of them are starting to shine a bit, especially a guy like Brian, who has worked very hard," Penn said recently while back in Columbus to nurse a broken leg.

"That's what basketball is all about — it's about the next guy in line and him stepping up. I hope it continues."

Brown wears No. 13 but he's been anything but a bad omen for the Buckeyes. He was thrust into the starting lineup just in time for OSU's Final Four in 1999, his freshman season. Last year he gradually improved in all facets of the game and often came through on nights when Penn and Redd didn't have their shooting eyes. He more than doubled his scoring output of 4.1 points per game as a freshman by quietly logging 8.9 per game. He also proved to be sneaky on the boards with 4.1 per game and improved his free-throw percentage 30 points from 51.9 to a team-best 81.9.

It also didn't hurt OSU's future well-being that he roomed on the road with Penn, who taught him a lot of the tricks of the trade.

"Being with Scoonie for a couple of years, good things can't help but rub off on you to some degree," O'Brien said. "Work ethic-wise, Brian has always played hard. Leadership-wise, he's different. He's not somebody who's going to be like pushing guys and being loud about it and being vocal."

"Brian just makes his points by how he acts. Scoonie was very vocal when things were not going right. But if some of that rubbed off on Brian, it was all positive stuff."

Anyone who doubted that Brown could be an offensive leader this season — and that included one unnamed teammate — was quieted quickly. He played 34 minutes in the season opener with Yale and tallied 16 points on 6-of-11 shooting.

In OSU's first-round game at the Great Alaska Shootout, Brown was unconscious. He canned all nine shots, including 5 of 5 from three-point range, and burned Florida State for 23 points. In the next game, Brown lost his shooting touch but still scored a team-high 18 points by hitting 11 of 12 free throws. He's gone on to score in double figures in 23 of OSU's 26 games.

Since Brown's demeanor never seems to change, a reporter asked him if it was tough or fun to have such a prominent role on the team.

"I think it's a little bit of both," he said. "It's tough because you've got to be consistent night in and night out. You've got to go out there and always give it your all and have the big points. Sometimes it's hard because you can't mess up, you can't be turning the ball over a lot or have mental lapses because everyone's looking at you to make the big play."

"You can't worry about guys hugging you and grabbing you or what their game plan is for you. You've just got to go out there and play. That's what I do."

Some pundits picked OSU, currently third in the Big Ten at 8-5, to finish as low as ninth in the league without Penn, Redd and George Reese. O'Brien was concerned, too, which is one reason he named Brown and Johnson co-captains way back at the beginning of the summer.

It didn't take long for O'Brien and his staff to tailor the offense to both.

"I think Brian really deserved it because of what he's accomplished on the floor," O'Brien said. "He's got a lot more experience than anybody else and he's got the

perfect makeup personality-wise, so Brian (being a leader) was a no-brainer because it all fits."

Mr. Consistency

To watch Brown in his everyday world is to see one of the steadiest student-athletes around. He doesn't punch walls in the locker room and he doesn't overstate his team's success. What he does do is play very solid basketball and keep his chin up — every single day.

"It goes back to high school and playing for Coach Leckie," said Brown, who made only one top-100 list in high school. "He's one of those guys who expects you to play hard night in and night out and be very serious at practice. Coming here to Ohio State, it's the same thing. You've got to go hard every day and you just can't have any letup."

"That's rubbed off on me, plus I always try to be a positive, upbeat person."

While Penn and Redd were known for their moods, Brown is just the opposite.

"He just does the same stuff all the time and never changes," marveled O'Brien. "We all have our moods. We all have our ups and downs. But I've never seen a kid that day in and day out is always the same like him. He never has great highs and he never has any lows, so you know what you're going to get from him and I think that's a real positive."

Once Brown began to gain the faith of the coaching staff as a freshman, O'Brien inserted him in the starting lineup in time for the NCAA Tournament in place of 6-7 forward Jon Sanderson. With Brown hawking players like Detroit's Rashad Phillips and Auburn's Scott Pohlman, the Buckeyes advanced to the Final Four.

Last year, Brown often drew the toughest assignment on the outside. This year, even with all Brown has to do with the ball, is no different. He just has to lead the team in scoring while chasing around the likes of Charlie Bell, Dean Oliver, Joe Crispin and Frank Williams, that's all.

"I think in the last couple of years there wasn't a great responsibility on him to score points," O'Brien said. "All the points he got was gravy. We would go into games talking to him about, 'This is your task. You've got to lock this guy up.'"

"Now it's a little bit different. Now he has to score and we're still asking him to guard. It's no secret he's asked to do a lot more because we don't have the luxury of asking somebody else to guard the other team's best perimeter guy."

When asked about the heavy load, Brown simply shrugged.

"You've got to do it on both ends," he said. "When you look at Scoonie, he helped us so much on offense but he also played great D and helped with rebounds. I'm trying to be that way, too."

The Forgotten Man?

Despite all he does and OSU's success this season, Brown often seems overshadowed, but he likes it when he's been "sloped on," as he calls it.

"I like to be a quiet assassin," he said. "I don't worry about the glamour of being an all-star or anything like that."

But Brown isn't too golly-gee to have confidence in himself.

"I feel I'm as talented as anybody out there on the court when I play in the Big Ten," he said. "It's a challenge to play against so many great guards every time out, but I feel I hold up to it pretty well. The Big Ten is tough. If you can do it in this league you can probably do it anywhere."



KEVIN DYE

EVEN KEEL — The lows are never too low and the highs are never too high for Ohio State guard Brian Brown. Perhaps this is a reason why his play has been so consistent this season.

And Brown has proved he can excel in the Big Ten. Twice this season he has been named the league's player of the week, most recently after leading OSU to upset wins against Iowa (Feb. 7) and Wisconsin (Feb. 10).

"It means something to me," he said. "It means that somebody out there is recognizing that I'm going out there and playing hard every night. To be named Big Ten player of the week is a huge honor with all these good players in this conference. To be able to do it twice is really a great honor."

Brown, of course, still isn't expected to make first team All-Big Ten. With guys like Williams, Johnson, Crispin, Bell, Kirk Haaton, Jason Richardson, Marcus Griffin and Luke Recker in the league, he'll likely have to wait for his senior season for that type of recognition.

But if the Buckeyes keep winning and hang on to third place in the conference, somebody is going to have to notice — even though Brown draws no attention to himself.

"If there are any kind of individual honors that go his way, it will only come on the heels of our team (success)," O'Brien said. "And that's fine with him because he's the type of kid, without question, that would rather sacrifice any personal accomplishments for the benefit of our team."

"It's nice to know you have a player like that."

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Johnson Goes Out In Style

Center Will Leave As Big Ten Career Leader In Blocks

By JEFF RAPP

Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

How do you sum up the career of Ken Johnson? You probably start with the word "block," but then you realize there is a lot more to the story, a lot more to the persona of Johnson — an introspective, naturally gifted 6-11 center from Detroit.

You have to make mention of the team's success and realize Johnson has been a major part of it. Recruited to OSU by former head coach Randy Ayers, Johnson started out as a raw signpost. However, he started 26 of 30 games out of need during the Buckeyes' painful 8-22 campaign in 1997-98, the last in St. John Arena and the first under coach Jim O'Brien.

OUR MVP

BSB nominates Ken Johnson as our choice for OSU's men's basketball MVP.



KEVIN OYE

SO LONG, KENNY — Joined by his mother, Tanya (left), and his grandmother, Doris (middle), Ohio State center Ken Johnson takes in the applause during Senior Night Feb. 22 in Value City Arena.

Johnson averaged just 6.8 points and 4.2 rebounds per game but did hint at an ability to block shots with 58 and at times took advantage of all the attention put on fellow frosh Michael Redd. The next season, behind heroics from Scoonie Penn and Redd and dramatically improved play from Jason Singleton and Johnson, the Buckeyes finished second in the

Big Ten at 12-4, advanced all the way to the Final Four and tied the school record for wins with 27.

That raised the bar significantly and at times in 1999-

Continued On Page 14

In This Issue Of BSB

• Lewis, Seniors Say Goodbye

OSU point guard Jamie Lewis and fellow seniors Courtney Bale, Mandy Stanhope, Amber Barnes and Dana Stearns were honored before the women's basketball team's home finale against Northwestern Feb. 21. Lewis leaves as OSU's career assists leader. For more on the seniors, see Double Dribble on pages 24-25.



Jamie Lewis

Tressel Shares Vision, Goals For OSU With Prep Coaches

EDITOR'S NOTE — In the Feb. 24 edition of BSB, we provided excerpts from new OSU football coach Jim Tressel's address to the Ohio High School Football Coaches Association clinic Feb. 9.

That installment included Tressel's views on leadership and his mission statement for the OSU program.

In this second and final installment, the coach discusses his vision, his three goals for the OSU program and his definitions for success and "the big time."

His Vision

Jim Tressel: We have to create a vision for accomplishing this mission. All the media asked us what we did in recruiting. We came in late and guys were thinking this and thinking that.

We couldn't really say, "Here's where I envision you playing," or "Let me show you this film of what you're going to do."

All we could really do was create a vision for how

we saw them being part of a team and part of a family that was going to go and seek out that mission we just discussed.

We have to have a vision in our mind and keep replaying it so it is so real that it is going to come true.

The first step toward creating an improved future — no matter where we are at any point in time, the future needs to get better — is developing the ability to envision it. We have to be able to envision what we're going to try to do.

That was our task in recruiting. We didn't have the pictures and our coaches were coming in from here and there. All we had with us for the last 20 days



Jim Tressel

Continued On Page 6

COVER STORY: TRESSEL SHARES HIS VISION

Tressel's Goals: Graduate, Win, Positive Impact

Continued From Page 1

was the vision that we tried to make real in the minds of the young people who were considering great places.

I couldn't sit there and say, "Ohio State is better than so-and-so." Those were great places they were visiting. But could we try to help them envision what it would be like, what we want it to be and what they could be a part of at Ohio State? Yes. That's the first step.

That's been the first step with our current team. I've had a chance to meet with them three times as a team and some of them individually. It's had nothing to do with X's and O's. I haven't watched one snap of Ohio State football on film.

What we're doing now is creating that vision for what we want Ohio State football to be. That's why I feel good about leading off this clinic with "philosophy" because "philosophy" is going to be more important than any play you're going to see today. That I'll promise you.

The first step is can we get everyone to envision who and what we want to be?

• **Vision will ignite that fire of passion** — There were some guys as we sat down and painted our vision that ignited their fire and they wanted to be Ohio State Buckeyes. Some guys didn't. That's the way it is. When we sit down and lay out the vision and talk about the mission and if, all of a sudden, their passion has been lit, we've got a chance.

If it's not lit, then they need to go to some other extraordinary place, and that's fine. We understand that. Ohio State isn't the place for everyone. Hopefully, it's just the place for the guys who want the mission and vision we outlined.

That fire and passion will fuel our commitment. If we really believe and our passion is lit with the vision we create, then we'll be committed. I've been pleased as I watch and listen and talk with our current players at Ohio State. I really think they are a committed bunch.

I think that vision helps them light that fire for that commitment, and that commit-

ment is the only way we're going to achieve excellence and achieve that mission we set out for.

• **Only vision allows us to transform dreams of greatness into the reality of achievement** — That's the only way we can do it. Only a vision can help us to transform that to human action.

• **Vision has no boundaries and knows no limits** — I remember back in 1986, when Mark Dantonio was there, Jim Bollman was there and Ken Conatser was there in our locker room and there might be some guys here today from that Youngstown era.

We hung up the pennant in the Youngstown State locker room of every national champion, and we said, "We are going to hang up our pennant here one day. There is going to be a day."

The beautiful thing about it was the guys who played in 1986 didn't get to hang up a pennant. But they knew that when that first pennant was hung up, they had a lot to do with it. They may have had more to do with it than the guys who were there on the field of play.

That vision has no boundaries and no limits. They asked me about graduation rates when I was talking to the group at Ohio State. In my mind, there is no excuse for us to not have everyone graduate. The hard ones will be the ones who leave early for the NFL.

But Eddie George will graduate this year. He's got a commitment to do that. Eddie George, I think, has got enough money that he can get along. But there is no



KEVIN DYE

"My president at Youngstown State said goals are nothing more than dreams with deadlines. That's why people love football — there's a deadline. When the game ends, there's not a debate anymore. We either got it done or we didn't."

• **Jim Tressel, OSU head football coach**

reason in our vision that every person can't graduate.

Now it may take awhile and it may not be in that five- or six-year window that the NCAA creates their graduation rates in. But there is no reason why they can't do it.

Our guys love to come back and work out and Coach (Dave) Kennedy, our strength coach, does a great job of training those NFL guys. But I know they're going to enjoy one of our new rules, which is going to be, you've got to be back in school if you want to train with the Buckeyes. Because the vision is that every one of us can get that degree.

Vision is what we become in life.

We talked about a mission and we talked about a vision. Now we have to go all the way back to the beginning. We have to thoroughly understand the mission. We have to thoroughly have ingrained the vision in the long term of what we're seeking. The finish line has got to be inscribed on our brain, but now we've got to get in the starting blocks and focus on this moment.

There's no way that I'm envisioning breaking that tape at the end of the 100 meters if I'm in the starting blocks looking at that tape. I've got to have a perfect start in order to get that done.

With that, we've coined a phrase — although I'm sure we've borrowed it from someone because there's nothing I've ever said and done that's original — "Focus on the moment." And that is so important for all of us.

As I sit down and look at the magnitude of what we're trying to accomplish at Ohio State or I look at the magnitude of how my life changed in 20 days, dramatically, if I get caught up in all of that, I can't focus on this very moment right here.

When I'm sitting across from a recruit or one of our current players, I have to be focused on that very moment. I can't think about what went on before. I can't think about that finish line. I have to be focused on that moment.

You've seen it in a game. Sometimes things go good, sometimes things don't go good. All I can do is learn from that and focus on this one. I've had the great fortune to work on some great quarterbacks. The good ones had the ability to not worry about the last play.

They learned from it, but they had the ability to focus on the next play. The great ones that fulfill the whole mission and get to enjoy the end of the road are the ones who can sit in biology class and think about biology and not worry about practice this afternoon, the girlfriend problems, problems at home.

They sit in biology and they have the ability to focus on that moment. We have to be able to do that. There are a lot of distractions around a place like Ohio State.

I don't know why they have press conferences because when they have one, there are 900 cameras, radio guys and writers. Then they all call the next day and they want to have a one-on-one. I don't understand it. Why did we have that press conference?

There are a lot of distractions. They want to talk about this or that and the fans. But if we handle it the right way, we can have a tremendously positive impact at Ohio State. But if we don't focus on the moment, the task at hand, we won't.

This is a little quote my daughter gave me. She is an English student. She is a senior in high school. I'm recruiting her like mad because it would cost a lot less for her to go to Ohio State than Cornell or the University of Chicago, which she is considering.

She said, "One should count each day a separate life."

We need to get up each day — this is something I might believe in more than anything else — and sit down, before we get involved in the nine million things we have to do, and count our blessings and put something positive into our mind.

If we would start each day and give thanks for our blessings — man, are we blessed, there's not anybody in this room who is not blessed — we would then fill our mind full of positive things. Then we can step up and head through the day, focusing on each moment. If we do that, we've got a chance to finish the mission and live out the vision.

Some days it's easier to do that and other days it is harder. There are days when we're tired and beaten down a little bit and other days when we're just naturally up.

We have to try each day to be thankful, be positive and attack the day. If we'll do that, we can all accomplish our vision.

His Three Basic Goals

We have talked about a mission and a vision in broad terms. Now let's talk about goals.

My president at Youngstown State said goals are nothing more than dreams with deadlines. That's why people love football — there's a deadline. When the game ends, there's not a debate anymore. We either got it done or we didn't.

That's why people like it. They don't like things you can keep debating about. That's why I hope one day in Division I-A we go to a full-fledged playoff system.

I can't wait to where, in four rounds, we can play the No. 5, then the No. 2, then the No. 4 and the No. 1 team in the country and find out who's left standing. That's the way you do it in every division.

• **Our first goal is to graduate all players with a meaningful and useful**

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COVER STORY: TRESSEL SHARES HIS VISION

degree from Ohio State — But more important, even if we don't reach that goal, we want to prepare them to be responsible citizens.

Because, you know what, there are a lot of people out there in this world who have degrees that I wouldn't give a nickel for. I wouldn't want them on my team. And there's a lot of people out there without degrees that I would go to war with any day because they are made of the right stuff.

A degree doesn't make us a great person all of a sudden. I heard something during one of the bowl games. A commercial for one of the schools said, "A college education doesn't put us above anyone. It just makes us responsible for everyone."

If we've been blessed with a college education, our responsibility becomes greater. That's our goal.

• **Number two, it's real simple, win** — That, too, was part of the discussion during the interview at Ohio State. They're interested in winning. We all understand that. They want success. We want success.

That's our goal. We won't apologize for it. We want to win.

• **The third thing is we want to create a positive impact on our school, our community, our great state, our**

great country and, as I said before, at Ohio State we can impact the world — We want everyone at Ohio State, students and faculty and staff alike, to be impacted by our program and by our family. We want to have a positive impact on our institution.

The world has gotten smaller with technology. We have a chance to positively impact the world.

Those are our goals. It's that simple. Those goals have deadlines. We need to graduate our players — there's a deadline before they leave. We need to win — there's a deadline every Saturday. And every day, there's a deadline on making a positive impact.

What is Success?

What is winning and what is success? You have two choices. One is the one that our society believes and that is the accumulation of possessions, prestige, rank, how you dress, rings, all that. That's what society wants us to believe.

Or you could choose the latter one and the latter one is the one we borrowed from John Wooden at UCLA. He said that success is "the inner satisfaction and peace of mind knowing I did the best I could possibly do," and we added these last three words, "for the group."

For the group, for the world, for the state, for the city, for the university, for the team — whatever the group is — for the family, your own family.

That was John Wooden's belief and, as he said, the harder he worked on that, the top one came true. We adopted that philosophy a long time ago that success is, at the end, saying, "I know I did the best I could do."

The most miserable days I have ever lived through as a dad, as a husband or as a coach — or as anything — have been those days when I stepped back and said I knew I didn't do the best I could do. Those days are miserable.

Those days when I stepped back and said, "I did the best I could possibly do and I had the team and the group and the profession in mind," those are wonderful days.

The Real Big Time

There's been a lot made of whether you can make the jump from I-AA to the big time. I guess my only response to that is that Ohio State is awesome, no question about it, but Ohio State is not the big time.

If I can keep that perspective, I'll be fine. The state championship is not the big time. The Ohio High School Coaches

Association Hall of Fame is not the big time. Those are all wonderful things and it was great to see those coaches get inducted last night.

By the way, we need to do something about that Hall of Fame dinner. It needs to have a room like this. And we're going to do something about that.

But this is how I keep my perspective on the big time. This is something I read every morning before I leave to head out.

"The hall of fame is only good as long as time shall be. But keep in mind God's hall of fame is for eternity. To have your name inscribed up there is greater more by far, than all the praise and all the fame of any man-made star."

Ohio State is a man-made star. The Ohio state football championship is a man-made star. The Ohio coaches Hall of Fame is a man-made star.

God's hall of fame is the big time, and if I and we can keep that perspective and do the things and serve, that's the way to make God's hall of fame.

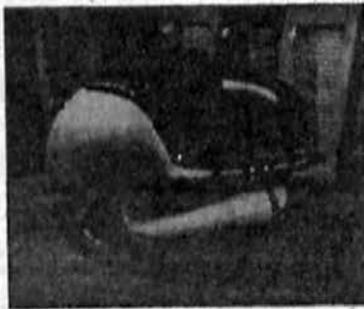
You serve. That's what we have every intention of doing at Ohio State.

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OHIO STATE FOOTBALL

Offensive Line Could Be Shorthanded Come Spring

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

The numbers are probably staring new Ohio State coach Jim Tressel and offensive coordinator/line coach Jim Bollman right in the face. They are:

- Three, the openings on Ohio State's offensive line, and

- Eight, the returning scholarship linemen due to participate in spring practice beginning March 31.

That meager total would not even allow OSU to fill two full lines of scholarship linemen during spring ball. Class commitments or injuries could put the Buckeyes in an even tighter pinch during some practices.

The two returning starters due back for the Buckeyes are senior center LeCharles Bentley and sophomore left tackle Adrien Clarke. But even they could not be considered locks — at least at those positions — because of the arrival of the new coaching staff.

Bentley, for instance, could move back to a guard spot — where he started in 1999 — after having trouble executing shotgun snaps in the Outback Bowl loss. Clarke, the new coaches may say, could be better suited for the right tackle spot.

But that still leaves three openings — likely at right tackle and the two guard spots if those two stay put.

The other returnees include junior Scott Kuhnhein and sophomores Bryce Bishop, Ivan Douglas, Shane Olivea and Alex Stepanovich. The eighth returnee, senior Tyson Walter, was still waiting on medical clearance after missing all of 2000 due to a mysterious infection in his hip.

Kuhnhein, Bishop and Stepanovich figure to battle for the openings at guard, while Douglas and Olivea would appear to be tackle candidates.

Kuhnhein has bided his time as a backup the last two seasons, while Bishop redshirted this past year after coming off Prop 48 status in 1999. By all accounts, he worked his way into game shape by season's end and could be a force to be reckoned with this spring.

Douglas started the first two games of 2000 as a redshirt freshman at left tackle before giving way to Clarke. Olivea and Stepanovich served as reserves this past season as true freshmen.

Walter started three seasons (1997-99) at left tackle before missing this past season due to the medical concerns.

Incoming freshmen Ryan Cook, a potential tackle, and Adam Olds, a center by trade, will help alleviate some of the depth problems in the fall.

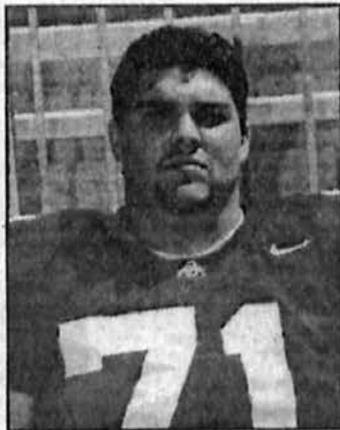
BSB had a chance to catch up with Olivea and Stepanovich to get their insight on playing as true freshmen.

Olivea A Mountain At 315

The soft-spoken Olivea has the look of a tackle. He is listed at 6-5, 315 pounds, and his broad shoulders tell you he is a load for opposing linemen to contend with.

However, this native of Cedarhurst, N.Y., on Long Island, knows he can't get by just on size.

"Right now, the biggest thing I need to work on is technique and knowing my assignments," Olivea said. "Now I'm feeling a lot more comfortable in my assign-



Shane Olivea

ments and with the offense and what I have to do.

"I just have to try and stay aggressive. My problem in (fall) camp was I'd have a real nice block and then the next six plays I would go the wrong way.

"I enjoyed playing this past year. I learned a lot. I kind of learned the ropes. Next year, it's going to be a lot of fun."

The opening for the Buckeyes appears to be at right tackle, where Henry Fleming started the last two years. Olivea has most of his experience on the other side but said he would go to the right side to get playing time.

"I played left tackle in high school," he said. "I've played mainly right tackle here. It's funny because I'm left-footed, but I'm right-handed. For pass protection, it took me a long time to adapt to it.

"I'm left-footed, so that makes it a lot easier to kick back and do some things on the left side. I always got into a left-handed stance. A lot of guys don't do that until they get to college.

"But it doesn't matter to me whether it's the left or right side, wherever I can get in and play the earliest. I like the right side, but I can go back over to the left side, too."

Olivea, Stepanovich and Bishop all started together during freshman orientation last fall. With Bentley leaving after this coming season, it looks like those three — along with Clarke — could form the core of OSU's line for several seasons to come.

"That's awfully exciting to play with the guys you came in with," Olivea said. "They are bringing in guys from all over the country. It's an adjustment period for them as well as for me. Playing with these guys is something I'm looking forward to over the next three years.

"I was just happy enough to play and contribute this year. Right now, my big thing is getting my technique back. If I can get that back, I'll be fine. Physically, I don't think there is anybody who overpowered me.

"I think I'll be all right after spring ball and preseason camp. When the season rolls around, I should be fine."

Olivea saw action in four games, playing at least two series in OSU's wins over Fresno State, Penn State and Iowa. Now he's looking forward to a chance to impress the new coaches and win a full-time job.

"I think spring ball is where you earn it," he said. "Camp is where you refine it.



Alex Stepanovich

But if you don't stay on your toes, you can also lose it in camp."

Stepanovich: Mr. Versatile

Stepanovich, listed at 6-4, 285 pounds, spent time at center during fall camp as Bentley wrestled with back problems. But the Berea, Ohio, native eventually settled in as the backup to Mike Gurr at left guard.

"It didn't bother me that much because when you play center, you have to learn all of the positions up front, particularly guard," Stepanovich said. "You have to know where the guys around you have to be on certain calls.

"The upperclassmen have made it an easy transition for me from center over to guard."

This former state heavyweight wrestling champion saw action in six games as a freshman, including appreciable playing time against Fresno State, Miami (Ohio), Penn State and Iowa.

"It has been great," he said. "I don't know if I exceeded my expectations. I have had a great time. You always try and do something better and I keep set-

ting the bar higher for myself. I'm happy, but I'm never content."

Stepanovich seemed to make strides all season, showing he has the mobility to be an effective guard at the Big Ten level.

"It doesn't matter where you're at," he said. "If somebody is in front of you, you always try and prove you are better than that man.

"I never really competed against Mike or anybody. I was just working as hard as I could to get to that level as a starter or just in the lineup a little more.

"I just tried to give 110 percent in practice and in the weight room."

Stepanovich used his first season to learn as much as he could about approaching the game.

"It's a big mental game," he said. "A lot of guys say you have to be physically dominant. But if you are not mentally strong to go along with the physical aspect, you can fall by the wayside very easily.

"You come here and guys get bigger and stronger and get better. But you're here for a reason. You aren't here because you sat the bench as a JV player. That mental aspect goes hand in hand with the physical.

"You've got to keep it in perspective, work at it one day at a time and let the chips fall where they may."

Like Olivea, Stepanovich hopes he can make some inroads this spring and crack the lineup this fall.

"I'm very excited," he said. "This is a picture I'm glad to see. I just hope I can stay healthy and work hard and compete for that position.

"It would be great to say that I'm going to be somewhere (with the ones) next spring, but you never know. I just come in here and do my job every day. Hopefully in the springtime there will be a spot for me and I can prove to the coaches that I deserve it.

"But right now I'm just trying to improve every day and work real hard. Things don't come easily at this level."

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COVER STORY: KEN JOHNSON

KJ No Longer A Secret To Rest Of Big Ten

Continued From Page 1

2000 the team was hurt by lofty expectations, but nothing slowed down Johnson. He played like a man possessed on defense and swatted a Big Ten single season-record 161 shots. He also improved to 7.8 points and 6.1 rebounds per game.

This season, despite the loss of Penn, Redd and George Reese, the Buckeyes were sitting on another golden ticket to the NCAA Tournament and had an overall mark of 19-9 and Big Ten record of 10-5 after a Feb. 24 win at Northwestern.

Picked to finish as low as ninth in the conference, the Buckeyes, with only the regular-season finale at Penn State on March 3 remaining, were eyeing a chance to nail down third place behind league powers Illinois and Michigan State, thanks, in part, to upsets of those teams when they were each ranked No. 3 in the nation.

Thanks also, of course, to Johnson, who stood second on the team to Brian Brown in scoring at 12.3 points per game. He was also leading the Buckeyes with 6.9 rebounds per game and again was atop the Big Ten in blocks with 115.

The Buckeyes are expected to make the Big Dance for the third straight year. That has happened only two other times in program history — 1960-64 and 1990-92. If you refer to those times as the Lucas-Havlicek era and the J.J. era, then 1999-2001 conceivably could be called the K.J. era.

Certainly, Johnson's immense impact on this season is unquestioned. BSB, in fact, nominates Johnson as MVP of the 2000-01 Buckeyes.

Johnson's career also has included lots of individual achievement, most of it coming in this, his senior season.

Among The Best

With at least three games left to play in his collegiate career, Ohio State center Ken Johnson stands fifth on the list of the NCAA's all-time shot blockers. Johnson has a good chance to finish his career in fourth place, with an outside shot at third. Here is how the top 10 plays out.

Player	School	Years	Games	Blocks
Adonal Foyle	Colgate	1995-97	87	492
Tim Duncan	Wake Forest	1994-97	128	481
Alonzo Mourning	Georgetown	1989-92	120	453
Lorenzo Coleman	Tennessee Tech	1994-97	113	437
Ken Johnson	Ohio State	1998-2001	124	434
Calvin Booth	Penn State	1996-99	114	428
Theo Ratliff	Wyoming	1992-95	111	425
Etan Thomas	Syracuse	1997-2000	122	424
Rodney Blake	St. Joseph's	1985-88	116	419
Shaquille O'Neal	LSU	1989-92	90	412

In fact, Johnson's success became encapsulated in a way in his last two games. In his final appearance before the home fans in Value City Arena, Johnson came through with 16 points, seven rebounds and two blocks to help the Buckeyes dump Illinois Feb. 22. In the process, he tied the Big Ten career record for blocked shots by tying former Penn State center Calvin Booth. He also became the 39th Buckeye to eclipse the 1,000-point mark.

Two nights later before a meager crowd in Evanston, Ill., Johnson tacked on six more blocks to give him 434 and counting in his career as the Buckeyes won their sixth straight conference game and left no doubt about their place in the postseason.

Moon-walking astronauts have had less exciting weeks. The league took notice, naming Johnson Big Ten player of the

week. Could first-team All-Big Ten honors, expected to be announced March 5, be far behind?

Long Path To Greatness

How do you appreciate Ken Johnson's emergence?

You have to understand his amoeba-like existence in the game of basketball just a few years ago then watch him terrorize teams on both ends of the floor this season.

Johnson didn't even play the game until the 10th grade, when he was as gangly and green as a 16-year-old weed. He averaged 14.1 points, 13.5 rebounds and 9.5 blocks per game his senior season at Henry Ford High School in Detroit, but the Big Ten hardly knew of him. Kent wanted him. Michigan State acted like it was recruiting him but forgot to leave tickets for him after inviting him to a home game.

He was stuck with the dreaded Prop 48 label his first year at OSU, forcing him to sit out the 1996-97 season.

When Johnson learned he would be ineligible for his first season at Ohio State and would have to live a state away without being an official member of the team, he wept like a baby. He even announced a decision to not go to Columbus after all, which was quickly overturned by his grandmother and legal guardian, Dorg.

Johnson not only enrolled at OSU, he did so during the summer quarter of 1996 to get acclimated to college life.

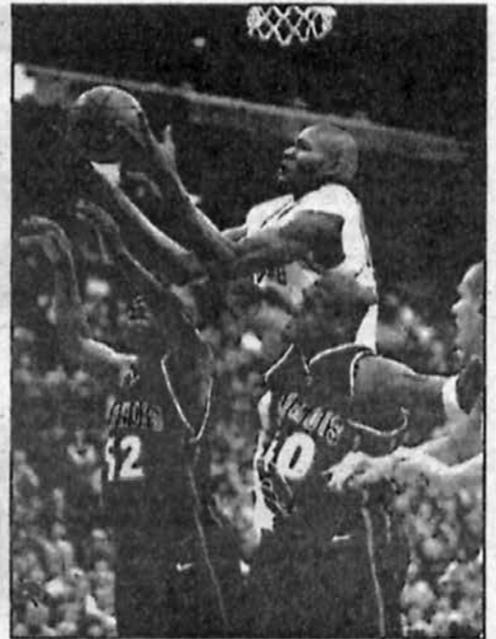
The next year he dealt with O'Brien's daily disgust in practice. Johnson nearly quit the team four years ago, O'Brien said, "because I was on him so much."

"I would not have been surprised if he bailed out," said the coach. "He could have easily walked into my office and said, 'You're right, I don't want to listen to your stuff anymore.' And I would have said, 'I understand.'"

Johnson admitted that he was close to bagging college hoops more than once.

"I didn't even understand basketball," he said. "I just knew that Coach wanted a lot and there were many times I felt like, 'Well, this isn't me.' But I just felt that if I stuck with it that someday something was going to happen that was positive."

Johnson's statistical improvement from year to year is no accident (see graphic, page 15), merely the result of hard work and tenacity. Asked to step up his game offensively, he's honed his hook shot and is shooting at a career-best 57.0 percent clip.



A 52-40 SPLIT — Buckeye center Ken Johnson drives to the basket between Illinois defenders Marcus Griffin (52) and Sergio McClain (40).

"When I think about him four years ago, it's absolutely incredible where he has come from — and he deserves all the credit," O'Brien said.

"The whole concept of this guy leading the Big Ten in blocked shots is off the charts for me. He's come light-years."

Johnson was a warm-and-fuzzy story for reporters when he petitioned the NCAA for a fourth year of eligibility in the off-season and received it when OSU officials proved he was three-fourths of the way to an art degree and validated his learning disability. Even more reporters started showing up when Johnson neared the block record.

"Ever had a player come this far?" one scribe asked O'Brien recently. "No," said the coach.

"Anyone close?"
"No."

Doctor Denial

How do you rate Ken Johnson the defensive intimidator?

"You watch in complete awe and wonderment, then you realize he's putting up NCAA block numbers that have a rightful place next to those of Shaquille O'Neal, David Robinson, Alonzo Mourning and Tim Duncan.

Johnson has it all when it comes to blocking shots — strong intuition, timing, great leaping ability and a lithe and long body with powerful arms that stretch to the county line. Most of all he puts his heart and soul into defense, something, say, about 1 percent of the players do in high-level basketball.

"He's meant everything defensively," O'Brien said. "You can't even put a price on it."

"And we haven't had any real input on this stuff. He's done it. It's been all him. The thing we always talk to him about is circumstance. We tell him, 'You don't have to go for everything. Pick and choose your spots.'"

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COVER STORY: KEN JOHNSON

Ken Johnson's Career Statistics

Season	GGS	Min-Avg.	FG FGA	Pct.	3P 3PA	Pct.	FT FTA	Pct.	Off. Def.	Tot-Avg.	PF-DQ	AT	TO	BS	ST	Pts-Avg.
1997-1998	30-26	811-27.0	79 162	.488	0 0	.000	45 73	.616	54 73	127-4.2	105-7	16	42	58	9	203-6.8
1998-1999	36-36	951-26.4	98 188	.521	0 0	.000	35 72	.486	80 124	204-5.7	102-1	8	39	100	11	231-6.4
1999-2000	30-30	885-29.5	94 170	.553	0 0	.000	47 74	.635	70 112	182-6.1	88-3	9	35	161	5	235-7.8
2000-2001*	28-28	831-29.7	131 230	.570	0 0	.000	81 114	.711	55 139	194-6.9	70-2	23	65	115	12	343-12.3
Career	124-120	3478-28.0	402 750	.536	0 0	.000	208 333	.625	259 448	707-5.7	365-13	56	181	434	37	1012-8.2

*Through games of Feb. 24.

"But we're hard on him because we tell him to be careful and that he doesn't have to go for everything, and yet when someone scores on him underneath we're yelling at him, 'Why didn't you go block it?'"

But that hasn't happened too often. Johnson isn't quite on the pace of last season, when his 5.4 rejections per game led the nation, but he has held up better than ever even with teams trying to go right at him.

One of the first teams to learn the hard way was St. John's. The Red Storm tried to attack Johnson in the 1999 NCAA South Regional final and saw seven of its shots sent back. Johnson also scored 12 points as the Buckeyes clinched a spot in the Final Four.

Last year, Johnson set an OSU single-game record with 11 blocks in another win over the Johnnies at Madison Square Garden.

"What Ken has done is remarkable," St. John's coach Mike Jarvis said earlier this season. "He's been given some very special gifts. Obviously he has incredible timing and leaping ability. He's just a great defensive player."

Another well-respected coach, Coppin State's Fang Mitchell, got an up-close look at Johnson in the preconference.

"He's one of the best I've seen, and we're in a league (the MEAC) where we have a kid (6-9 Tarvis Williams of Hampton) who blocks about five a game, so I've seen some of our shots sent back like that before," Mitchell said.

In league play, Minnesota's Dusty Rychart and Iowa's Reggie Evans both tried to foul Johnson out, to no avail. Wisconsin's Andy Kowack also tried to break his spirit, but when the game was on the line at OSU Feb. 10, Kowack could only pump fake and get rid of the ball with Johnson hovering over him.

"I definitely think that he changes the mind-set of the players when they get in and around the lane," UW coach Brad Soderberg said afterward. "I have just really come to respect the impact that a shot blocker can have on the game. The impact is remarkable. Sometimes he has no chance to block the shot but the thought of him being there is a factor."

Johnson's teammates sometimes are the most impressed.

"I understand how important he is every time he gets subbed out of the game," Brown said.



KEVIN DYE

COME HERE, BIG GUY — Ohio State coach Jim O'Brien embraces Ken Johnson following the Buckeyes' 63-61 victory over Illinois Feb. 22. In their four years together, O'Brien has watched Johnson develop into a lethal defensive presence.

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