

BSB Reprints: BSB Recalls Publisher's First Rose Bowl



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Rose Bowl Recap

Bright Spots Surface In Pasadena

Spangler Boots Rose Record FG

By Frank Moshowitz

It's hard to pick out bright spots in a loss as disappointing as Ohio State's 20-17 setback at the 1985 Rose Bowl.

But certainly, Buckeye fans have to feel like they've found a place-kicker. Rich Spangler, one of the most criticized players on the Ohio State squad over the last couple of years, responded to the pressures of the Rose Bowl by connecting on a record-equaling three field goals, including a record-setting 52-yarder.

Spangler's three field goals equaled the three hit by former Buckeye Vlade Janakievski in the 1980 Rose Bowl and his 52-yarder broke the mark set by USC's Steve Jordan earlier in the 1985 contest. The previous mark had been 48 yards, set by Stanford's Steve Horowitz against Ohio State in 1971.

The Ohio State field goal record is 59 yards, set by Tom Skladany against Illinois in 1975. Bob Atha is the only other Ohio State kicker to boot a field goal of 50 yards or more.

Naturally, Spangler had mixed emotions after his first Rose Bowl appearance.

"I'm real happy about my day, but I'm real disappointed that we lost because I came here to play as a team, not as an individual," Spangler said after the game. "A kicker is like an individualist, but when it comes down to winning or losing, it's all a team game."

The pressure of the big game apparently didn't bother Spangler.

"I'm always looking forward to kicking the game winning field goal," he said. "I guess that's why I'm a kicker. If you ask any kicker that, he'll give you the same answer."

"Why I came to Ohio State was to play in these kind of games. This is the first major game I've ever really played in besides the Michigan game."

"Nothing can touch the Michigan game," Spangler added.

Spangler's record 52-yarder came in the third quarter and allowed the Buckeyes to close to 17-



Kicker Rich Spangler Made Three FGs

9. The junior out of Geneva, Ohio, liked the way that one felt from the moment of contact.

"I hit the ball and I looked up and that ball had a slow rotation just like a field goal kick is supposed to. I knew it was good right when I hit it."

"I don't know if anyone in the stands could feel it. But when you're a field goal kicker, you know when you make a kick right when it leaves your foot."

Despite the loss, the Rose Bowl had to be a game to be enjoyed by Spangler. He has certainly hit some low points in his three-year stay in Columbus. As a freshman,

Spangler missed six field goals in a row at one point. During his sophomore year, Coach Earle Bruce benched him in mid-season.

With his performance in the Rose Bowl, Spangler figures that Bruce and the fans will have more confidence in him now.

"My freshman year, I was like any freshman kicker — a little touchy. Last year, I really didn't have a very good year," Spangler said. "I really don't know what was wrong last year. I worked with Lou Groza (all-time kicking great and father of Buckeye Judd) and we couldn't find anything wrong. It

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Freshman Class Shows Promise

By Rich Exner

The seniors are gone. Among the departed are veteran quarterback Mike Tomczak and starting linemen Jim Lachey, Kirk Lowdermilk, Scott Zalenski, Mark Krerowicz, Dave Creelius, Anthony Giuliani and Dave Morrill.

Those seniors will be missed, but more noticeable than the play of the seniors in the 1985 Rose Bowl were fine performances turned in by some returning Buckeyes, the most outstanding of which came from freshmen Cris Carter and Chris Spielman.

Carter and Spielman were just two of the six Buckeye freshmen to start in the Rose Bowl. Also drawing starting assignments were freshmen defensive backs Greg Rogan and William White, linebacker Eric Kumerow and punter Tom Tupa.

But even after watching his youngsters turn in splendid performances, coach Earle Bruce wasn't ready just yet to look toward next season.

"I'm not thinking about the future right now. I'm thinking real hard about this football game," Bruce said when asked to comment on the play of his freshmen.

Carter led the freshman parade, earning NBC's Ohio State player of the game honor. His nine catches paced all receivers and his 172 yards in receptions erased a 50-year-old Rose Bowl record held by Alabama's Don Hutson.

His last catch, an 18-yarder, was his eighth touchdown grab of the year for an Ohio State single-season record.

"The guy made some great catches," USC coach Ted Tollner said of Carter.

Tomczak, who threw those nine passes to Carter, added, "He is an exceptional athlete. He's got a great three years ahead of him."

Carter's explanation of his big day was that he just "wanted to take advantage of the openings they gave us across the middle because their secondary takes deep drops."

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With the Rose Bowl rapidly evolving into something different from that which veteran Buckeyes recall and revere, Buckeye Sports Bulletin publisher Frank Moskowitz wanted to look back at his first Rose Bowl for this edition of Reprint Thursday, maintaining that - like a first love - everyone recalls their first Rose Bowl.

The date was Jan. 1, 1985, and the Buckeyes fell to USC, 20-17, but Moskowitz still enjoyed this trip.

"This was my first Rose Bowl, and I now understand what everyone says is true, The Rose Bowl truly is the finest of all bowl games," Moskowitz wrote in his View From 15th & High.

But while the young publisher enjoyed his experience in Pasadena, he was disappointed in the performance of the Buckeyes, who featured such veterans as linemen Jim Lachey, Kirk Lowdermilk and Scott Zalenski, quarterback Mike Tomczak and running back Keith Byars, as well as freshmen like receiver Cris Carter, linebacker Chris Spielman, defensive backs Greg Rogan and William White, linebacker Eric Kumerow and punter Tom Tupa.

"You saw the same game I saw," Moskowitz said, "and I am not certain I can give any added insight. The problems were there for everyone to see. In fact, Ohio State's loss to USC was truly a team effort, with breakdowns in virtually every facet of the game. Everyone, from coach Earle Bruce down to the water boys, was in on this one."

One of the few highlights in the loss for the Buckeyes was Carter, who had 172 receiving yards, which came on nine receptions and broke a 50-year old Rose Bowl record held by Don Hutson. The 172 yards were also an Ohio State freshman record that was broken by Jeremiah Smith in this year's Rose Bowl. The following stories are reprinted from the Jan. 15, 1984, issue of Buckeye Sports Bulletin.