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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

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Shazier Sparks Buckeyes

Sophomore Honors Friend, Leads Team To Win At Penn State

By MARK REA
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Managing Editor

Ryan Shazier proved it is possible to play a college football game as much with a heavy heart as with an iron fist.

The sophomore linebacker switched his jersey number to honor a friend and then played the game of his life, leading No. 9 Ohio State to a 35-23 victory over Penn State in a battle for supremacy in the Big Ten Leaders Division.

Shazier posted the team lead with eight tackles and also contributed a pair of sacks, a forced fumble and an early second-half interception return for a touchdown that gave the Buckeyes a lead they would never relinquish.

That was all accomplished after Shazier changed his jersey number from No. 10 to 48 as a tribute to a high school friend who died earlier this year.

Gary Curtis played football at Plantation (Fla.) High School and then spent two years as team manager after graduation despite being confined to a wheelchair because of muscular dystrophy.

Shazier had requested permission to switch jersey numbers – Curtis wore No. 48 during his playing days – but the logistics proved to be a little tricky.

"I wanted to do it in a big game," Shazier said. "I wanted to do it against Nebraska, but somebody else had the number and my coaches said there was too short a notice then."

True freshman Joe Burger, a walk-on from Cincinnati La Salle, wears No. 48 for the Buckeyes, and since all team members suit up for home games – and Burger is a member of Shazier's position group at linebacker – allowing



SONNY BROCKWAY

DOING A FRIEND PROUD – Sophomore linebacker Ryan Shazier (48) returns a third-quarter interception for a touchdown while wearing his new number Oct. 27 during Ohio State's 35-23 win at Penn State.

Shazier to change numbers for the game against Nebraska was impractical.

Because walk-ons typically do not make the travel squad, however, Shazier was able to don the new number with remarkable results.

"I was thinking about him the whole game," Shazier said. "I knew I had his number on and I just felt like he was playing through me. No matter what was going on, I just felt like he had my back."

There were times when Penn State must have felt the same way.

Following a nip-and-tuck battle in the first half that left the score tied at 7, the Nittany Lions were ready to make their own statement by getting the ball to begin the third quarter. They began deep in their own territory but immediately got a 6-yard run from running back Zach Zwinak to set up a second-and-4 at the 17-yard line.

But Shazier effectively turned the game around with his own defensive daily double.

On second down, the OSU linebacker lined up behind defensive tackle Johnathan Hankins, and when Penn State center Matt Stankiewitch blocked right on Hankins and left guard Miles Dieffenbach picked up blitzing linebacker Zach Boren on his left, Shazier shot through the unguarded gap for a steamroller of a 9-yard sack on quarterback Matt McGloin.

The play seemed to take some of the starch out of the Penn State signal caller. McGloin, who entered the game as the Big Ten leader in passing yardage, had completed 8 of 14 first-half passes against the Buckeyes for 116 yards. But after getting a face full of Shazier, the fifth-year senior QB followed on the next play with a critical error.

McGloin took a shotgun snap on third-and-13 and retreated into his own end zone. Trying to get the ball upfield to wide receiver Alex Kenney, who was running a curl route, McGloin failed to recognize Ohio State's umbrella cover-

Continued On Page 8

COVER STORY

OSU Takes Advantage Of Several Key Moments

Continued From Page 1

age of Boren and Shazier in front of his intended receiver and safety C.J. Barnett behind him.

When the pass was underthrown, Shazier made an easy interception and raced 17 yards untouched to the end zone. That gave the Buckeyes their first lead of the game, and they were never headed after that.

"Going back-to-back on plays like that, that's a defensive player's dream," OSU defensive lineman John Simon said. "Ryan is a huge playmaker for us and going back-to-back was pretty cool - for him especially but for the team, too. It gave our whole defense the momentum shift we needed."

Shazier insisted his game-changing plays were simply the product of good, old-fashioned coaching and film study.

"Everybody felt really prepared about this game, and we just ran our fundamentals and read our keys," he said. "We knew what they liked to do and we just tried to take it away from them."

"On the sack, Penn State ran that play just like we thought they would and how the coaches called it. Then on third down, I had that coverage on the curl and he just thrut it right there. I couldn't believe it."

The interception marred an otherwise standout performance from McGloin, who established a new career high with 327 yards through the air on 27-for-45 passing. The senior QB also threw for two touchdowns, but it was the pick that had him shaking his head after the game.

"(Shazier) made a great play. My hat's

off to him," McGloin said. "I didn't think he would ever be there. He probably shouldn't have been there. Kenney just cleared the first linebacker, and normally the other guy will match up with your running back who's running a route outside and for some reason he just peeled back and picked it off."

When asked if he ever saw Shazier, the Penn State quarterback replied, "No. Normally, I do take a look there, but for the most part of the game, they were peeling back with the running back. He just made a great play. I don't know if he knew the play was coming or just read my eyes. They were definitely well-prepared. They knew what we were trying to do and they brought a lot of pressure. They were ready to play the game."

Shazier's pick-six continued an amazing run for the Buckeyes. Since 2002, Ohio State has returned eight interceptions for touchdowns against the Nittany Lions - and the Buckeyes are now 6-0 in those games.

Chris Gamble got the pick-six party started during the national championship run of 2002. Gamble's 40-yard return early in the third quarter helped erase a 7-3 deficit and the Buckeyes went on to post a 13-7 victory at Ohio Stadium.

Two years later, Tyler Everett returned a late first-quarter interception 24 yards that was part of a 21-10 win in Columbus.

Malcolm Jenkins had a 61-yard return with 2:31 remaining, and Antonio Smith followed less than 90 seconds later with a 55-yarder to help turn a close game into a 28-6 OSU rout in Columbus in 2006. And a year later, Jenkins had a 24-yard return in

the fourth quarter during a 37-17 runaway for the Buckeyes in Happy Valley.

Two seasons ago, Devon Torrence returned a McGloin interception 34 yards to turn a 14-10 deficit into a 17-14 lead with 4:29 left in the third quarter. That opened the floodgates for the Buckeyes, who got a 30-yard return from Travis Howard in the fourth period on their way to a 38-14 win.

"That's kind of unbelievable, isn't it?" said OSU defensive coordinator Luke Fickell, who has been on staff to witness all eight of the pick-sixes since 2002. "It seems like that happens a lot for us against these guys. But this one, at that time, we really needed it. You know, the way the second half started out, with them getting the ball, you can never really count on those things, but it's a game of momentum. Those are the things that break the other team's back."

Shazier was just happy that he corralled the pass.

"I've dropped so many picks and they could have been pick-sixes," he said with a sheepish grin. "But when I got that one and got into the end zone, it felt like I was dreaming. Just knowing I was helping my teammates was amazing. I could feel (Gary) with me all the way on that one. I could feel him. I really could."

No one connected with the team seemed to know about the protocol Shazier would have to go through to continue wearing No. 48 for the remainder of the year, but the OSU sophomore said he would be open to making the change permanent.

"I'm going to think about that because I had a great game and I'd like to keep it rolling," he said.

Game-Changing Moments

While Shazier's early third-quarter sack of McGloin and subsequent interception return represented significant turning points in the game for the Buckeyes, there were others.

The first came late in the second quarter after Penn State had seized control of a scoreless game by blocking a punt that fifth-year senior Michael Yancich recovered in the end zone for a touchdown.

The Nittany Lions seemed ready to build upon that momentum by forcing a three-and-out on Ohio State's subsequent possession. But Penn State was whistled for

holding on the punt, giving the Buckeyes a fresh set of downs with less than five minutes to go in the second quarter. OSU was able to capitalize on the penalty, and tailback Carlos Hyde eventually scored on a 1-yard touchdown burst with 34 seconds remaining to send the teams to their locker rooms tied 7-7 at halftime.

Penn State had entered the game tied for the fewest penalties in the Big Ten, but the Nittany Lions were uncharacteristically flagged nine times for 85 yards.

"Those penalties, they hurt us a lot," Nittany Lions cornerback Adrian Amos said. "That one time when we stopped them and we had a holding penalty and lost it right back - that was tough. It's not like us to make so many penalties, and they hurt us a lot."

OSU head coach Urban Meyer said the defensive holding call on the punt was critical.

"We talk about huge shifts in momentum and field position and in an environment like this ... that was a big moment," Meyer said.

The holding call on the punt allowed the Buckeyes to achieve a tie just before halftime, and Shazier's big plays gave Ohio State a 14-7 lead early in the third quarter. But Penn State did its best to get momentum back on its side.

Midway through the third quarter, OSU quarterback Braxton Miller underthrew intended receiver Corey "Philly" Brown and gave up an interception to give Penn State possession at the Ohio State 44.

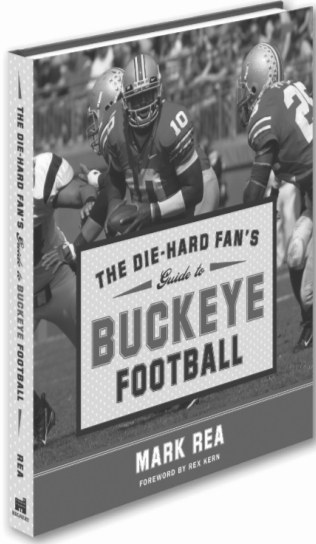
Unfortunately for the Nittany Lions, they went in reverse after the turnover. Zwinak picked up just 1 yard on first down and then McGloin was thrown for an 8-yard loss by OSU defensive lineman Nathan Williams, one of four sacks the Buckeyes had in the game. On third down, McGloin got those 8 yards back on a quick flip to Zwinak, but that set up a fourth-and-9 at the Ohio State 43.

Penn State head coach Bill O'Brien decided to call for a fake punt, and the play nearly succeeded - except the Buckeyes were able to sniff things out at the last second.

"We actually had a block on and they showed (the fake) right at the last second and we had to have someone make a play," Meyer said.

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COVER STORY

That someone was sophomore Adam Griffin, who somehow dropped back far enough to break up punter Alex Butterworth's sideline pass to teammate Derek Day.

The Buckeyes took over on downs at their own 43 and then marched the other way, capping a 10-play drive with a spectacular 1-yard run by Miller that gave the Buckeyes a 21-10 lead.

"Little Griff made a great play there on the fake punt," Meyer said. "I think that was the turning point in the game. I want to think that our average starting field position was awful today – just terrible – before that. And to knock it out and knock it out, and then you can hand our offense the ball at the 40, the 43? Yeah, OK. That was huge."

With the Buckeyes holding only a 14-10 lead and momentum seemingly switching to his sideline, O'Brien said he was confident going for the fake punt in that situation.

"I felt good about the play call we had," the Penn State head coach said. "I felt at that point in time I wanted to get something going. I liked the play we had called (and) we had it. We just didn't execute it very well. We have to coach it better."

Another For The Highlight Reel

Miller has had many exciting runs during his season and a half as Ohio State quarterback, but his 1-yard scamper following Penn State's failed fake punt had the season-high Beaver Stadium crowd of 107,818 in awe.

Rarely has such a short-yardage run been so athletic.

On third-and-goal, Miller lined up in the shotgun with Hyde a step behind and to the quarterback's right. At the snap, Hyde moved forward to take the handoff, but Penn State defensive end Sean Stanley seemingly blew up the play by knifing through for a clear shot on Hyde.

Except Hyde didn't have the ball.

Miller jerked it away from his tailback at the last possible second and quickly moved to his right. As right tackle Reid Fragel occupied linebacker Michael Mauti, Miller hopped backward to avoid linebacker Gerald Hodges and then restarted his forward momentum, diving between linebacker Glenn Carson and safety Malcolm Willis and into the end zone.



SONNY BROCKWAY

UP AND OVER – Ohio State sophomore quarterback Braxton Miller (5) dives over Penn State middle linebacker Glenn Carson (40) at the end of a highlight reel-worthy 1-yard touchdown run in the third quarter.

After the game, Meyer could only shake his head and offer a wry smile when asked about the play.

"Yeah, we work on that," he said as reporters laughed. "We have a drill – make seven people miss and then stretch out and dive across. I was on field level, so I really didn't see it, but basically the conversation we had on the headset was 'Oh, my God!' Only a few guys can do that."

O'Brien simply shrugged his shoulders.

"I think Miller's an excellent player," the Penn State head coach said. "He's one of the top five players in the country. We stopped him at times, and at other times we didn't. We have to go back and watch the tape and see what we can do better to stop a player like that."

As far as Miller himself was concerned, the play was nothing special except that Hyde thanked him immediately afterward.

"Their guy just came in and tried to tackle Carlos, so I pulled it," he said. "I don't

know who was around me. My instincts just took over after that."

Miller struggled some in the passing game, often overshooting wide-open targets on his way to a 7-for-19 performance that included 143 yards, one touchdown, one interception and three sacks. In fact, he had only 71 yards through the air until a picture-perfect toss to senior receiver Jake Stoneburner in the fourth quarter netted 72 yards and the Buckeyes' final touchdown.

The sophomore QB was his normal electric self in the running department, though. Shaking off any lingering effects from the neck injury that caused him to miss the fourth quarter of the previous week's game against Purdue, Miller carried 25 times for 134 yards and two touchdowns.

In addition to a pair of 1-yard touchdown runs in the third quarter, Miller also set up Ohio State's first touchdown with a 33-yard scramble off a read-option play that pushed the Buckeyes from the Penn State 39 to the

6 just as the clock was winding under a minute in the first half. Three plays later, Hyde scored from 1 yard out.

Miller's rushing total against the Nittany Lions allowed him to eclipse the 1,000-yard mark for the season, the first time that threshold has been crossed by an Ohio State quarterback. It was his ninth career 100-yard game and sixth this season. Miller has also rushed for more than 130 yards six times this season, matching a single-season Football Bowl Subdivision mark last achieved in 2010 by Heisman Trophy winner Cam Newton of Auburn.

"With Miller, you've got to worry about the pass and you've got to worry about the run obviously," Penn State cornerback Stephon Morris said. "It's definitely hard to prepare for someone like him. (True freshman receiver Malik Golden) did a really good job on scout team, but we got the real thing today. Braxton Miller – he's a good player."

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OHIO STATE VS. PENN STATE

Ohio State Continues Trend With Win At PSU

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

Ohio State left State College an unhappy place for a third consecutive trip, and the Buckeyes had a dominant third quarter mostly to thank.

Sophomores Ryan Shazier and Braxton Miller jump-started the ninth-ranked Buckeyes after a lackluster first half with a total of three third-quarter touchdowns that provided all the cushion the visitors would need in a 35-23 victory at Penn State on Oct. 27.

First there was Shazier, the linebacker who dropped into zone coverage on a third-and-13 on the first possession of the second half and got a gift from Penn State quarterback Matt McGloin.

McGloin, who had just been sacked by Shazier on the previous play for a loss of 9, misread Ohio State's defense and practically hit the 6-2, 230-pound Shazier between the numbers at the Penn State 17. From there the path was clear for Shazier to sprint into the end zone in just a few short strides to put the Buckeyes ahead 14-7 and leave most of the 107,818 fans in attendance at Beaver Stadium in shock with 13:41 on the third-quarter clock.

Miller created much the same effect when he left multiple defenders grasping at air on a breathtaking 1-yard touchdown run that extended the Buckeyes' advantage to 21-10 with 3:30 left in the third quarter.

The sophomore signal caller – one week removed from a major injury scare that sent him to the hospital while his team rallied for a 29-22 win over Purdue at home – added two more touchdowns before all was said and done, reasserting himself as a Heisman Trophy candidate and preserving the Buckeyes' perfect record.

"It's good to be 9-0," head coach Urban Meyer told reporters after the game. "How many teams have gone 9-0? We are going to enjoy that win. We are going to work on some things. We were exposed on some things on our punt protection, but those guys are some good players and they are some good coaches. We've got to get better."

Meyer highlighted his team's lopsided advantage in the rushing game in praising the Buckeyes, who ran for 234 yards on 53 attempts. On the flip side, Ohio State held the home team to only 32 yards on 28 rushes.

Penn State piled up passing yards, but that was at least in part because of the three-score deficit it faced for most of the fourth quarter.

McGloin completed 27 of 45 passes for 327 yards and two touchdowns along with the interception. He was 14 for 21 for 126 yards in the fourth quarter, which was also when he made both of his scoring tosses.

"We would have liked to have closed the game out much better, but in that situation, where we were, we had to play a little softer, bend a little bit," Ohio State defensive coordinator Luke Fickell said. "But we'll find a way to get better at those things."

The Penn State quarterback's favorite target was redshirt freshman tight end Kyle Carter, who caught six passes for 77 yards, both team highs. His 20-yard touchdown reception with 1:41 left in the game helped set the final margin along with a PAT kick by Sam Ficken.

McGloin had no trouble sharing the ball, however, as he hit a total of nine different receivers. Sophomore Allen Robinson, who entered the game leading the Big Ten in catches per game and second in receiving yards, totaled 68 yards on five catches while



SONNY BROCKWAY

FLEXING SOME MUSCLE – Ohio State junior tailback Carlos Hyde (34) shows off his biceps after scoring a 1-yard touchdown late in the first half.

sophomore running back Bill Belton had five catches for 35 yards. Wide receiver Brandon Moseby-Felder added 70 yards on four grabs, while junior tight end Matt Lehman had a pair of catches for 21 yards and running back Zach Zwinak picked up 12 yards on two catches.

Zwinak, a sophomore who started his career at fullback, was the top ground gainer for Penn State with 42 yards on 12 carries while Belton added 26 yards on 10 totes.

"I think what we're doing is coming together," Fickell said of his defense and staff. "Being challenged the way we've been challenged, you can just feel it coming together."

For Ohio State, Miller led the way by land and by air. He had an off night passing, going 7 for 19 for 143 yards with an interception and a touchdown, but he was his usual self running as he totaled a game-high 134 yards on the 25 carries.

"I was so excited I missed a lot of throws," Miller said of his particularly tough early struggles. "I was just so excited to come back on the field from my injury (last week against Purdue). The crowd was energetic."

Running back Carlos Hyde added 55 yards on 22 carries that included a 1-yard touchdown run, and Rod Smith rumbled for 48 yards on four attempts.

Wide receiver Evan Spencer was Miller's top target as he hauled in three passes for 33 yards, but receiver Jake Stoneburner topped the team in yards with 86 despite only a pair of catches. Defensively, Shazier was the clear star for the Buckeyes as he totaled a team-high eight tackles and a pair of sacks. He also forced a fumble.

"I think I'm playing my best football right now because early in the season, I was missing too many tackles," the Plantation, Fla., product said. "I'm starting to learn the game plan a lot more and a lot better."

Zach Boren added seven tackles, including five solos, in the senior's third game

at linebacker after moving from fullback. Christian Bryant added six tackles and a pair of pass breakups from his safety spot, and Nathan Williams had six tackles and a sack while playing both linebacker and defensive end.

Senior end John Simon accounted for the other of Ohio State's four sacks, and he knocked down a pass at the line of scrimmage.

Cornerback Bradley Roby, safety C.J. Barnett and tackle Johnathan Hankins all had five tackles apiece, with one of Barnett's going for a loss.

Roby broke up a game-high four passes, including one in the end zone in the fourth quarter that was intended for Robinson, who was momentarily wide open.

"We played pretty good tonight," Roby said. "Coach said that was some incredible defense that we played. But, more importantly, it was a great team effort. A lot of games that we play, the defense plays great and the offense suffers, or vice versa, but tonight was a team game."

Senior linebackers Gerald Hodges and Michael Mauti led the Penn State defense with 14 and 13 tackles, respectively. Hodges added a sack, as did linebacker Mike Hull and end James Terry. Senior ends Sean Stanley and Pete Massaro combined for another sack as well.

Cornerback Adrian Amos had five stops and an interception while Stanley and tackle Jordan Hill added seven tackles apiece as Penn State fell to 5-3 overall.

The Buckeyes snapped the Lions' five-game winning streak and improved to 4-0 in Big Ten play while sending Penn State to 3-1 in the conference.

The win left Ohio State a game ahead of Penn State in the Big Ten Leaders Division standings while holding the head-to-head tiebreaker, meaning the Buckeyes can lose one

of their last three games and still claim the division title.

Slogging Start

An enthusiastic home crowd, decked out in white for the game dubbed a "White Out" by PSU officials, greeted the Buckeyes on a cloudy but not-too-cool evening in central Pennsylvania.

They nearly had multiple chances to go crazy early, but the home fans saw their team let scoring chances slip through their fingers – literally.

The Buckeyes went three-and-out on the opening possession of the game and were forced to punt after linebacker Glenn Carson and Hill pulled Miller down a yard short of the line to gain on a third-down keeper.

Penn State took over at its own 26 after a 42-yard punt by Ben Buchanan, and they nearly blew the lid off Beaver Stadium on third down.

With his team facing third-and-3, Penn State head coach Bill O'Brien eschewed the run and went deep, a plan that worked to perfection until McGloin let go of the ball. He saw Robinson streaking alone down the sideline – several yards behind Ohio State cornerback Travis Howard – but underthrew the pass. Robinson tried to make a diving grab but had it bounce off his hands incomplete, denying the Lions not only a long touchdown but even a significant gain.

Instead they punted to Ohio State, which took over with good field position at its own 43 thanks to a punt of only 24 yards by Alex Butterworth.

The Buckeyes squandered that good fortune, however, as a false start penalty on left tackle Jack Mewhort cost them 5 yards before they could even get started. After a 1-yard run by Hyde, disaster nearly struck as Penn State safety Stephen Obeng-Agyapong jumped a short out route that would have netted him six easy points if he had held onto Miller's pass. He didn't, though, and the Buckeyes would live to play another down that turned out to be a 14-yard catch-and-run by Stoneburner that netted a first down.

Two plays later, Miller nearly suffered an interception again as Penn State cornerback Stephon Morris jumped a short pass intended for receiver Chris Fields. That, too, fell harmlessly to the turf, a second missed opportunity for the PSU defense.

"When we get the opportunities to make big plays, we have to make them and execute," Mauti lamented. "Turnovers are the difference between winning and losing games. We had a couple of opportunities for interceptions but we didn't get them. That's something we have to work on."

Next it was Ohio State's turn to leave six points on the field as Miller misfired on a deep throw to wide receiver Corey "Philly" Brown, who thanks to a busted coverage was all alone on a go route but several feet too short to get his hands on the pass near the 10-yard line.

The Buckeyes punted again as a result, and the teams would continue to jockey for field position through the rest of the first quarter and into the second.

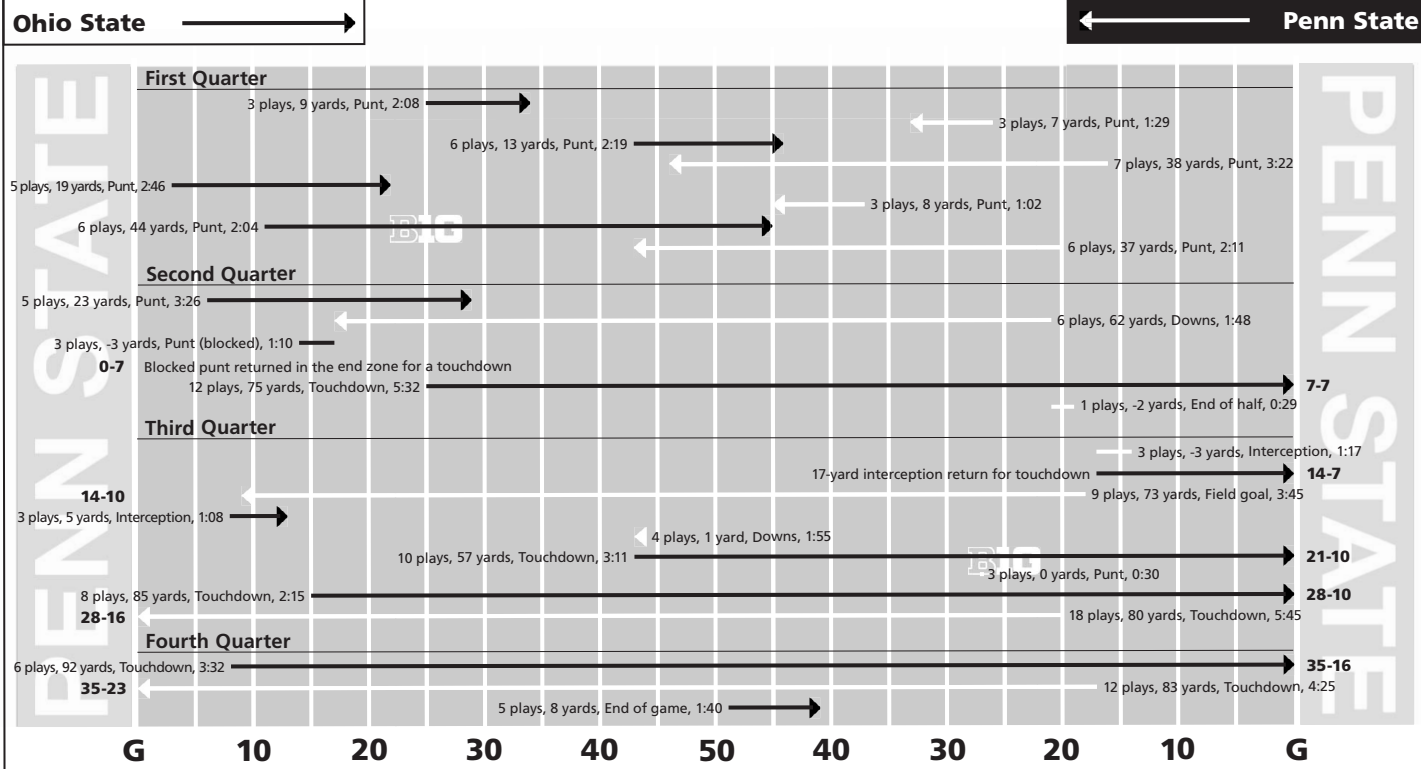
Penn State finally broke through with less than seven minutes to go in the first half, but it was not with its offense.

The Nittany Lions got on the scoreboard with a blocked punt linebacker Michael Yancich smothered in the end zone with 6:15 on the clock. Hull had streaked in through a gap in the Buckeyes' protection and energized the home crowd.

"We just had an overload on the left side,

OHIO STATE VS. PENN STATE

Drive Chart



and I came free from the wall in the back, went to the right and just went right between them," Hull said. "It was pretty awesome blocking the punt. As soon as you break free, your heart starts pumping and you just want to help out your team."

The third punt Buchanan has had blocked this year did not discourage the Buckeyes, however, as they responded with by far their best drive of the game to that point.

The Nittany Lions initially stopped their guests on three plays, including a third-down sack of Miller by Terry, but they granted the Buckeyes a reprieve when they were flagged for holding Ohio State long snapper Bryce Haynes as he attempted to cover Buchanan's punt.

That gave the Buckeyes new life at their 37, and they took advantage. Smith burst through the right side of the line for 12 yards to move them near midfield, then Miller made a man miss and went for 8 yards following a first-down incomplete pass.

Hyde followed with a 3-yard run on third-and-2, then Miller made his first big play of the game two snaps later. The scintillating sophomore faked a handoff to Smith then followed the running back through a hole on the right side. Smith picked up Obeng-Agyapong, the safety who had been doing a good job of gumming things up by concentrating on run support, and Miller was off to the races. He was not stopped until Amos knocked him down at the Penn State 6-yard line, and three plays later Hyde put the Buckeyes on the board with a 1-yard touchdown run.

Drew Basil added the PAT kick, and the teams went to the locker rooms tied at 7 despite the myriad of missed scoring chances.

The Buckeyes dominated time of possession in the first half, keeping the ball for 20:08, and outgained the Lions, 150-145. They totaled 10 first downs compared to six for the hosts and converted 3 of 8 third-down situations while holding PSU to zero of 5.

Ohio State did its damage on the ground with 105 yards on 28 attempts while the Lions totaled 116 yards through the air with McGloin completing 8 of 14 attempts.

Turning The Tide

The second half was nearly all Buckeyes, starting with Shazier's pick-six three plays after the end of intermission.

Penn State answered that big blow with a nine-play, 73-yard drive that yielded a field goal. A 42-yard pass play from McGloin to Moseby-Felder put the Lions in business at the Ohio State 4, but they would have to settle for a 27-yard kick by Ficken after a second-down holding penalty put them off schedule.

Miller threw an interception on an ill-advised deep pass caught by Amos at the Ohio State 44 on the following drive, but the Buckeye defense responded by forcing a three-and-out that included Williams' sack for an 8-yard loss on second down.

O'Brien tried a bit of chicanery on fourth down with a fake punt, but the Buckeyes were up to the task as reserve cornerback Adam Griffin broke up a pass from Butterworth intended for Derek Day.

That gave the Buckeyes the ball at their own 43 and broke up what had been shaping up to be another half dominated by the battle for field position.

"I felt at that point in time I wanted to get something going," O'Brien said. "I liked the play we had called. We had it, we just didn't execute it well. We have to coach it better."

Ohio State made him pay for his gamble, driving 57 yards in 10 plays with Miller starting to settle in.

After looking jittery many of the times he dropped back to pass in the first 40 or so minutes of the contest, he had a pair of key passes to Spencer on the drive. First he found the sophomore along the left sideline for 13 yards after escaping a pass rusher in the pocket. The second time he went quickly to Spencer

The Bottom Line

The game was over when ... Braxton Miller hit Jake Stoneburner in the seam with the only nearby defender trailing the senior receiver. Miller struggled to find open receivers and execute his throws at various times during the evening, but not in the fourth quarter when he saw Stoneburner, who outran Penn State safety Jacob Fagnano for a 72-yard touchdown that gave the Buckeyes a 35-16 lead with 6:11 left.

Game ball goes to ... Ryan Shazier. The sophomore linebacker sacked Penn State quarterback Matt McGloin on the second play of the third quarter to set up a third-and-long then picked off McGloin's pass on the following play and returned it 17 yards for a touchdown that gave Ohio State a lead it would not relinquish. Shazier finished with a team-high eight tackles.

Stat of the game ... 234. Ohio State had trouble finding room to run early, but the Buckeyes kept hammering away at the Nittany Lions' front until Miller and running backs Carlos Hyde and Rod Smith started to find creases. The result was 234 yards on the ground, the third time in a row the Buckeyes have gone to Penn State and run for at least 200 yards while also winning the game.

– Marcus Hartman

on a slant route for another 13 yards that gave the Buckeyes first-and-goal at the 9-yard line.

After Hyde slashed for 7 yards and smashed for another, Miller capped the drive with a spectacular 1-yard touchdown run that seemed to stun the Nittany Lion defenders and their crowd.

Stanley crashed hard from his end position and smacked into Hyde as Miller stuck the ball in his belly, but the quarterback was able to pull it out in time to keep the play alive. He then skipped to his right and hopped backward to avoid Hodges before gathering himself to step forward and leap across the goal line and away from safety Malcolm Willis.

Basil's PAT kick made it 21-10 with 3:30 left in the third quarter, but the Buckeyes were just getting warmed up.

After a quick three-and-out by Penn State, Ohio State took over and marched 85 yards in just eight plays to take complete command of the contest.

It started with a 6-yard run by Hyde that grew to a 21-yard gain after Hill was flagged for a personal foul for grabbing the Ohio State running back by the face mask.

Miller followed that by pulling the ball from Hyde and keeping it on a zone read play.

Continued On Page 12

OHIO STATE VS. PENN STATE

Miller Continues Assault On Record Books

Continued From Page 11

With defensive end Anthony Zettel playing the running back, Miller darted outside for 11 yards.

After an incomplete pass, he took advantage of Penn State paying him too much attention by handing to Smith, who followed a big block by Mewhort of Mauti to pick up 28 yards down to the Penn State 25.

Miller went to Smith again for 5 yards on the following first down then kept it for 14 to set up first-and-goal at the 6. He gave to Hyde for 5 then finished the job with another 1-yard run.

Throughout the drive, Miller had the Nittany Lions guessing if he would keep the ball or hand it off, using the zone read play to perfection while also tiring them out with a quicker tempo and no huddle.

Basil's PAT made it 28-10 with 40 seconds left in the third quarter as Beaver Stadium sat in stunned silence.

Ohio State outscored its host 21-3 in the third quarter, picking up 105 yards rushing on 15 attempts with Miller mixing in two completions on six throws.

"Things got away from us in the third quarter, and it was just Braxton and how he was able to make all the right plays and made the right zone reads," Stanley said. "It was just his ability to scramble when he needed to and make a big play."

The Penn State defense looked worn out at the end of the quarter, but the offense wasn't done yet. McGloin drove the Lions 80 yards on 18 plays, capping it with a 2-yard touchdown pass to Lehman after the quarterback

kept a third-down play alive by scrambling out of the pocket. Belton was stopped after taking a handoff on the ensuing two-point attempt, but Penn State remained within two scores at 28-16.

That would not last long.

The Buckeyes put the game away six plays into the ensuing drive when Stoneburner sprinted past Penn State safety Jacob Fagnano on a post route and Miller hit the senior in stride with nothing but green grass in front of him.

Fagnano could not catch Stoneburner and had no help over the top, resulting in a 72-yard touchdown that equaled the longest play of the season for the Buckeyes.

"At first I was only thinking that I cannot get caught," Stoneburner said. "It was surreal. I have never had that long of a touchdown in this big of a game. To get the touchdown at that point in the game, that kind of touchdown, I couldn't have asked for anything better."

Another Basil conversion kick gave Ohio State a 35-16 lead with 6:11 to go.

Penn State tacked on a touchdown against a loosened up Ohio State defense just looking to prevent a quick score, but that would be largely cosmetic.

McGloin completed it with a 20-yard pass to Carter, who worked his way free in the end zone after McGloin again bought time with his feet and Carter eluded Shazier.

Ficken's kick made it 35-23 to set the final score, and Ohio State ended all hope for a Penn State comeback when Roby recovered an onside kick.

"That darned outside kick, I almost tackled him," Meyer said, flashing back to two weeks earlier when an Indiana player pitched an onside kick back into the field of play for a teammate to recover. "On the throwback, I don't know the ruling on that, but our guys were trying. We've worked awfully hard on that."

The Buckeyes took possession at the Penn State 49 with 1:40 to go and ran out the clock after Hyde converted a third-and-1 with a 2-yard run.

"I thought our offense did a good job of closing things out," Meyer said. "When the whole world knows you're running the ball, and you still close it out by running the ball, that's something else. That shows you how far this offensive line has come - and they've come a long way."

Notes

- Miller finished the game with 1,093 rushing yards on the season, making him the first Ohio State quarterback to break the 1,000-yard mark and the third in Big Ten history. He joins Antwaan Randle El of Indiana and Denard Robinson of Michigan. Robinson has done it twice and has 946 yards rushing so far this season.

- Miller passed the 100-yard mark rushing in a game for the sixth time this season and 10th time in his career.

- Ohio State opened a two-game lead in the all-time series against Penn State, one that includes 28 games and began in 1912. Ohio State is 15-13 against the Nittany Lions, including 6-5 at Beaver Stadium. The Buckeyes have won 12 of 19 meetings since

Penn State joined the Big Ten prior to the 1993 season.

- The Buckeyes won for the third consecutive trip to University Park, adding to victories in 2007 and '09.

- Meyer improved to 2-0 all time against the Nittany Lions. In his final game as Florida head coach, the Gators scored a 37-24 triumph over the Nittany Lions in the 2011 Outback Bowl.

- Counting vacated seasons, Ohio State ranks fifth all-time among Division I-A teams with 846 wins while Penn State ranks sixth with 832. Michigan is first all-time with 900 followed by Texas (864), Notre Dame (861) and Nebraska (852).

- Shazier's interception return for a touchdown was the ninth for Ohio State against Penn State since 2001 when Derek Ross started what has become quite a trend. Chris Gamble equaled him in 2002, as did Tyler Everett in 2004, Malcolm Jenkins and Antonio Smith in 2006, Jenkins in 2007 and Devon Torrence and Travis Howard in 2010. McGloin also threw the picks by Torrence and Howard.

- In the past 15 games between the teams dating back to 1998, Ohio State has 14 non-offensive touchdowns against Penn State. In addition to the interception returns, the Buckeyes have received a Ted Ginn Jr. punt return in 2004, fumble recoveries in the end zone by Gary Berry in 1999 and Jerry Rudzinski in 1998, a fumble return by Mike Collins in 2000 and a blocked punt return by Joe Cooper in 1998. Penn State has 19 offensive touchdowns in that time frame.

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The Numbers Game

Ohio State 35, Penn State 23

Oct. 27, 2012 — Beaver Stadium; State College, Pa.

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
OHIO STATE	0	7	21	7	—
PENN STATE	0	7	3	13	—

Second Quarter

PSU — Yancich, blocked punt recovered in end zone (Ficken kick), 6:15.

OSU — Hyde, 1 yard run (Basil kick), 0:34; 12 plays, 75 yards, 5:32 TOP.

Third Quarter

OSU — Shazier, 17 yard interception return (Basil kick), 13:41.

PSU — Ficken, 27 yard field goal, 9:50; 9 plays, 73 yards, 3:45 TOP.

OSU — B.Miller, 1 yard run (Basil kick), 3:30; 10 plays, 57 yards, 3:11 TOP.

OSU — B. Miller, 1 yard run (Basil kick), 0:40; 8 plays, 85 yards, 2:15 TOP.

Fourth Quarter

PSU — Lehman, 2 yard pass from McGloin (Belton rush failed), 9:49; 18 plays, 80 yards, 5:45 TOP.

OSU — Stoneburner, 72 yard pass from B.Miller (Basil kick), 6:11; 6 plays, 92 yards, 3:32 TOP.

PSU — K.Carter, 20 yard pass from McGloin (Ficken kick), 1:41; 12 plays, 83 yards, 4:25 TOP.

Att. — 107,818.

Weather — 59 degrees, cloudy, cool; wind, SE 10-15 mph.



Team Statistics

	OSU	PSU
First Downs	19	19
Rushing	10	2
Passing	5	13
Penalty	4	4
Rushes-Yards	53-234	28-32
Passing Yards	143	327
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	7-19-1	27-46-1
Offensive Plays	72	74
Total Net Yards	377	359
Third Down Efficiency	8-16	5-17
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	2-4
Punts-Avg.	6-34.2	5-41.2
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-0
Penalties	7-75	9-85
Time of Possession	32:07	27:53

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) — **OSU:** B.Miller 25-134; Hyde 22-55; R.Smith 4-48; TEAM 2-(-3). **PSU:** Zwinak 12-42; Belton 10-26; Zordich 1-3; TEAM 1-(-2); McGloin 4-(-37).

PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD) — **OSU:** B.Miller 7-19-1-143-1. **PSU:** McGloin 27-45-1-327-2; Butterworth 0-1-0-0-0.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) — **OSU:** Spencer 3-33; Stoneburner 2-86; Vannett 1-22; Hyde 1-2. **PSU:** K.Carter 6-77; Robinson 5-68; Belton 5-35; Moseby-Felder 4-70; Lehman 2-21; Zwinak 2-12; James 1-20; Gilliam 1-16; T.Williams 1-8.

PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) — **OSU:** Buchanan 5-41.0-50; TEAM 1-0-0-0. **PSU:** Butterworth 5-41.2-58.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — **OSU:** None. **PSU:** Della Valle 3-1; Hull 1-14.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.) — **OSU:** R.Smith 2-28; Bryant 1-25. **PSU:** Belton 5-67; McGregor 1-16.

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

INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) — **OSU:** Shazier 1-17. **PSU:** Amos 1-0.

SACKS (No.-Yds.) — **OSU:** Shazier 2-0-22; N.Williams 1-0-8; Simon 1-0-7. **PSU:** Hodges 1-0-10; Hull 1-0-6; Terry 1-0-3; Stanley 0.5-3; Massaro 0.5-3.

TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) — **OSU:** Shazier 2-0-22; N.Williams 1-0-8; Simon 1-0-7; Barnett 1-0-1. **PSU:** Stanley 1.5-4; Hodges 1-0-10; Hull 1-0-6; Terry 1-0-3; Massaro 0.5-3.

TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.) — **OSU:** Shazier 4-4-8; Z.Boren 5-2-7; Bryant 6-0-6; N.Williams 5-1-6; Roby 5-0-5; Barnett 4-1-5; Hankins 2-3-5; Howard 4-0-4; Griffin 2-1-3; Bennett 1-2-3; Washington 0-3-3; O.Johnson 2-0-2; De.Smith 2-0-2; Simon 1-1-2; Marcus 1-1-2; Goebel 1-1-2; Haynes 1-0-1; P.Brown 1-0-1; C.Brown 1-0-1; S.Miller 1-0-1. **PSU:** Hodges 6-8-14; Mauti 7-6-13; Stanley 4-3-7; Hill 2-5-7; Willis 3-2-5; Carson 2-3-5; Amos 2-3-5; Hull 3-0-3; Morris 2-0-2; Terry 1-1-2; Fagnano 1-1-2; Massaro 0-2-2; Barnes 1-0-1; Zettel 1-0-1; Dukes 0-1-1; Olanijan 0-1-1; Obeng-Agyapong 0-1-1; Kline 0-1-1; D.Jones 0-1-1; Day 0-1-1.

PLAYERS IN THE GAME — **OHIO STATE:** Offense, Mewhort, Norwell, Linsley, M.Hall, Fragel, Heurman, Stoneburner, B.Miller, Hyde, De.Smith, P.Brown, Basil. Defense, Simon, Hankins, Bennett, N.Williams, Shazier, Z.Boren, Roby, Bryant, O.Johnson, Barnett, Howard, Buchanan. Reserves, R.Smith, C.Brown, C.Williams, Spence, Reed, Griffin, D.Grant, Guiton, C.Grant, Spencer, Dunn, Tanner, Rice, Marcus, Perry, Haynes, Roberts, Homan, Goebel, Makridis, Farris, S.Smith, Decker, Kramer, C.Carter, Baldwin, Fields, Vannett, M.Thomas, S.Miller, Schutt, Washington. **PENN STATE:** Offense, Stankiewicz, Urschel, Farrell, Dieffenbach, Do.Smith, McGloin, Belton, Robinson, Moseby-Felder, Kenney, T.Williams, Ficken. Defense, Massaro, D.Jones, Hill, Stanley, Mauti, Carson, Hodges, Amos, Willis, Obeng-Agyapong, Morris, Butterworth. Reserves, McGregor, Davis, Zordich, J.Lucas, Barnes, James, Keiser, Day, Dukes, Fagnano, Zwinak, Bars, Yancich, Zerbe, Ev.Lewis, Kline, Della Valle, Hull, Fuhrman, Alosi, Etter, Howle, Mangiro, Cadogan, Shrive, Baublitz, Lehman, Olanijan, K.Carter, Gilliam, Terry, Zettel.

Season Statistics

2012 Game-By-Game

Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd
Sept. 1 (18)	MIAMI (OHIO)	W, 56-10	105,036
Sept. 8 (14)	C. FLORIDA	W, 31-16	104,745
Sept. 15 (12)	CALIFORNIA	W, 35-28	105,232
Sept. 22 (16)	UAB	W, 29-15	105,019
Sept. 29 (14)	at Mich. State (20)	W, 17-16	76,705
Oct. 6 (12)	NEBRASKA (21)	W, 63-38	106,102
Oct. 13 (8)	at Indiana	W, 52-49	48,880
Oct. 20 (7)	PURDUE	W, 29-22 (OT)	105,290
Oct. 27 (9)	at Penn State	W, 35-23	107,818
Nov. 3	ILLINOIS	3:30 p.m.	
Nov. 17	at Wisconsin	TBA	
Nov. 24	MICHIGAN	Noon	

* OSU's gameday AP ranking is in parentheses before the opponent, while the opponent's ranking is after the name.

Team Statistics

	OSU	Opp
First Downs	188	171
Rushing	110	45
Passing	65	102
Penalty	13	24
Average Per Game/Rush	247.9	111.7
Average Per Game/Pass	183.9	277.9
Total Offense	3,886	3,506
Total Plays	629	653
Average Per Game	431.8	389.6
Average Per Play	6.2	5.4
Penalties-Yards	67-596	54-491
Fumbles-Lost	14-7	9-3
3rd Down Efficiency	55-123	52-148
Percentage	45%	35%
4th Down Efficiency	6-8	7-17
Percentage	75%	41%
Sacks-Yards	20-173	19-113
Times Of Possession Avg.	29:49	30:11

Score

By Quarters	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	51	108	94	87	7	347	38.6
Opponents	17	37	60	64	0	217	24.1

Individual Statistics

Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
Braxton Miller	166	1,093	6.6	12	72
Carlos Hyde	126	600	4.8	10	29
Jordan Hall	40	218	5.4	1	15
Rod Smith	26	179	6.9	2	33
Philly Brown	8	70	11.4	1	19
Bri'onte Dunn	12	60	5.0	1	13
Zach Boren	11	33	3.0	2	8
Kenny Guiton	7	16	2.3	0	11
Ben Buchanan	1	6	6.0	0	6
Devin Smith	1	2	2.0	0	2
TEAM	11	-46	-4.2	0	0
OSU Totals	409	2,231	5.5	29	72
OPP Totals	277	1,005	3.6	10	81

Passing Comp. Att. Pct. Yds. TD-INT Effic.

Braxton Miller	112	198	56.6	1,527	12-6	135.29
Kenny Guiton	12	21	57.1	128	2-1	130.25
TEAM	0	1	0.0	0	0-0	0.00
OSU Totals	124	220	56.4	1,655	14-7	134.23
OPP Totals	223	376	59.3	2,501	13-12	120.20

Receiving Rec. Net Avg. TD Long

Philly Brown	44	447	10.2	1	38
Devin Smith	23	505	22.0	6	72
Jake Stoneburner	14	236	16.9	4	72
Evan Spencer	10	118	11.8	0	44
Carlos Hyde	7	43	6.1	1	14
Jeff Heurman	6	86	14.3	1	35
Nick Vannett	6	73	12.2	0	32
Zach Boren	5	42	8.4	0	14
Chris Fields	3	44	14.7	1	35
Jordan Hall	3	31	10.3	0	14
Michael Thomas	2	17	8.5	0	11
Verlon Reed	1	13	13.0	0	13
OSU Totals	124	1,655	13.3	14	72
OPP Totals	223	2,501	11.2	13	83

Scoring TD EPK EPR EPRC FG PTS

Braxton Miller	12	—	2-2	—	—	76
Carlos Hyde	11	—	—	—	—	66
Drew Basil	—	44-45	—	—	3-5	53
Devin Smith	6	—	—	—	—	36

Jake Stoneburner	4	—	—	—	—	24
Philly Brown	3	—	—	—	—	18
Bradley Roby	3	—	—	—	—	18
Zach Boren	2	—	—	—	—	12
Rod Smith	2	—	—	—	—	12
Bri'onte Dunn	1	—	—	—	—	6
Chris Fields	1	—	—	—	—	6
Jeff Heurman	1	—	—	1	—	8
Jordan Hall	1	—	—	—	—	6
Ryan Shazier	1	—	—	—	—	6
OSU Totals	48	44-45	2-2	1	3-5	347
OPP Totals	26	21-24	1-2	—	12-20	217

FG Distance 0-29 30-39 40-49 50+ Total

Drew Basil	2-2	1-2	0-0	0-1	3-5
OSU Totals	2-2	1-2	0-0	0-1	3-5
OPP Totals	5-6	2-3	2-6	3-5	12-20

Punting No. Yds. Avg. Bk Long

Ben Buchanan	44	1,851	42.1	3	55
TEAM	3	0	0.0	0	0
OSU Totals	47	1,851	39.4	3	55
OPP Totals	49	1,975	40.3	2	70

Interceptions No. Yds. Avg. TD Long

Travis Howard	3	26	8.7	0	17
Bradley Roby	2	49	24.5	1	41
Orhian Johnson	2	6	3.0	0	3
Christian Bryant	1	38	38.0	0	38
Ryan Shazier	1	17	17.0	1	17
Etienne Sabino	1	2	2.0	0	2
C.J. Barnett	1	0	0.0	0	0
Doran Grant	1	0	0.0	0	0
OSU Totals	12	138	11.5	2	41
OPP Totals	7	6	0.9	0	3

Punt Returns No. Yds. Avg. TD Long

Philly Brown	8	97	12.1	1	76
Devin Smith	4	15	3.8	0	16
Chris Fields	2	14	7.0	0	9
Travis Howard	1	13	13.0	0	13
Bradley Roby	1	11	11.0	0	0
Jordan Hall	1	6	6.0	0	0
OSU Totals	17	156	9.2	2	76
OPP Totals	16	125	7.8	2	43

Kickoff Returns No. Yds. Avg. TD Long

Rod Smith	10	232	23.2	0	36
Devin Smith	8	147	18.4	0	26
Armani Reeves	2	45	22.5	0	26
Christian Bryant	1	25	25.0	0	25
Bri'onte Dunn	1	22	22.0	0	22
Philly Brown	1	0	0.0	0	0
OSU Totals	23	471	20.5	0	36
OPP Totals	46	911	19.8	1	100

Def. Leaders Solo Ast. Tot. TFL-Yds. Sacks

Ryan Shazier	49	36	84	9.5-51	4.0-36
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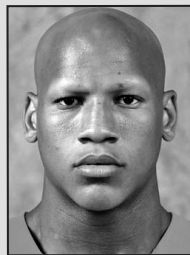
OHIO STATE VS. PENN STATE

Buckeye Game Analysis

Play Of The Game

Wearing No. 48 for the first time to honor a friend who died of muscular dystrophy this spring, Ryan Shazier played like a man possessed as Ohio State took a 35-23 win at Penn State on Oct. 27.

Shazier finished with eight tackles – a solid but not spectacular number – but filled up the rest of the stat sheet, finishing with two sacks, a forced fumble and a 17-yard interception return for a touchdown that changed the game in Ohio State's favor.



Ryan Shazier

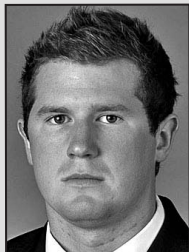
The Buckeyes struggled on offense in the first half, needing a late touchdown to tie the Nittany Lions, 7-7, at the break. Penn State got the ball to begin the second half, but that proved to be a critical fact that went against the Nittany Lions.

First, Bill Belton could return Drew Basil's kickoff only to the 11-yard line. Zach Zwinak gained 6 yards on first down, but then Shazier broke through the line unblocked on a blitz and sacked quarterback Matt McGloin for a loss of 9 yards.

The sack set up third-and-13, a clear passing down for the Nittany Lions. McGloin had thrown only two interceptions on the season, but his third would prove costly.

The Penn State quarterback took the shotgun snap and dropped into his end zone, receiving plenty of time as he faced a four-man rush. The senior set his feet and threw over the middle to Alex Kenney, who ran a curl route from the left side of the field, but McGloin did not see Shazier in zone coverage.

The ball went right to the Ohio State sophomore linebacker, who had nothing in front of him but green grass. Shazier returned the ball right up the middle of the field and wasn't even touched as he crossed the yellow goal line, and Basil's PAT gave Ohio State a 14-7 lead it would not relinquish.



Matt McGloin

"It almost felt like a dream," Shazier said. "I'd dropped so many picks this year. When I caught the ball it felt amazing. It was a great momentum change."

It was Ohio State's eighth pick-six in the last 11 games against Penn State. Not coincidentally, Ohio State has won all six of those games since 2002 in which it has a pick-six.

"At that point in the game, it was unbelievable," defensive coordinator Luke Fickell said. "We needed momentum, and you can never account for those kind of things. Those are the things that just break the back of the other team."

Hidden Play Of The Game

Penn State went to work to regain the momentum after Shazier's interception return for a score, and the Nittany Lions nearly put seven points on the board to tie the score.

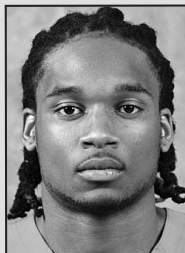
In fact, the home team would have done so if it weren't for cornerback Bradley Roby.

Penn State took over at its 18-yard line and quickly moved out of the shadow of its own goal line. A 20-yard pass to Jesse James put the ball at the 40, and a holding penalty on Roby moved the ball into Ohio State territory at the 46.

On first down, McGloin dropped back, had time and lofted a pass to Brandon Moseby-Felder down the left sideline that the wideout grabbed in stride. He had put a double move – an out and up – on OSU safety C.J. Barnett, giving him space to operate.

Moseby-Felder cut inside Christian Bryant and Travis Howard, freeing him to score if it weren't for Roby. The OSU corner started the play on the other side of the field but never stopped pursuing, and he was able to get Moseby-Felder by the legs as he reached the 5-yard line.

Penn State still had a first-and-goal situation, but a holding penalty pushed the team back and resulted in Sam Ficken having to kick a 27-yard field goal. Though the kick was good, Ohio State kept the lead and went on to pad it the rest of the quarter.



Bradley Roby

What Worked Well

- **Sticking with the run:** Braxton Miller was 4 for 12 passing for 45 yards in the first half, and the Buckeyes chose to simply keep it on the ground in the second half. Miller threw only seven passes the rest of the way while Ohio State established itself on the ground. The result was three straight touchdown drives aided by only three completed passes. The running game worked so well that it tired the Penn State defense.

- **Winning third down:** Penn State had dominated third downs during its five-game winning streak, but that wasn't the case against the Buckeyes. Ohio State was 8 for 16 overall, a solid 50 percent, while Penn State finished just 5 of 17. The Nittany Lions converted only one of their first 10 third downs, one reason Penn State finished with only 74 offensive plays after running 90 or more in its last two games.

- **Disguising blitzing:** Ohio State's pass rush had one of its most effective games of the year, making four sacks of McGloin after failing to make a sack in the past two games. One of the reasons behind the increased presence in the backfield was the way the Buckeyes disguised their blitzes. Penn State's offensive line often allowed rushers to come through untouched as the Buckeyes crowded the line of scrimmage with multiple players in a way that made it unclear who was coming to rush the passer.

What Didn't Work

- **The start, again:** Ohio State has been outscored in the first quarter this year, and Penn State hadn't allowed a point, either, entering the game. The Nittany Lions kept that stat going, shutting out the Buckeyes in the opening stanza. Ohio State's defense also kept the Nittany Lions off the board, but the Buckeyes' slow start

allowed Penn State's crowd to stay in the game for the first half.

- **The punt formation:** Ben Buchanan had his third punt this year blocked, with Mike Hull getting the punt and Michael Yancich falling on it to give the Nittany Lions a 7-0 lead in the second quarter. Buchanan still takes too many steps, but all three blocks have been made by untouched players. Clearly, something needs to be fixed when it comes to the team's punting scheme.

Reviewing The Matchups

Ohio State rush offense vs. Penn State rush defense: The Ohio State front dominated the second half, paving the way for the Buckeyes to finish with 234 rushing yards as a team – more than twice what Penn State had been allowing. Miller and Rod Smith contributed some explosive plays, but those were often the result of good play up front from the O-line. After the game, Meyer was impressed by his team's ability to run the ball in the second half even when Penn State knew it was coming. **EDGE: Ohio State**

Penn State rush offense vs. Ohio State rush defense: Ohio State controlled the Penn State rushing game, keeping the Nittany Lions to 32 net yards. The Nittany Lions didn't have a rush over 10 yards on the day, with backs Zach Zwinak and Belton combining for 68 yards on 22 carries. OSU was particularly effective on first down; Penn State ran 18 times but earned 5 or more yards on only four of those rushes. **EDGE: Ohio State**

Ohio State pass offense vs. Penn State pass defense: Miller truly struggled in the first half. He was rushed a few times, resulting in three sacks in the half, but also misfired badly when he did have time. Things changed in the second half, though, as he completed a pair of important passes to Evan Spencer on one touchdown drive and added the dagger in Penn State's heart with his long fourth-quarter score to Jake Stoneburner on a perfect throw. Miller also had to deal with injuries to Corey "Philly" Brown and Devin Smith that limited their playing time. **EDGE: Even**

Penn State pass offense vs. Ohio State pass defense: McGloin finished with solid numbers – 27 for 45 for 327 yards, two scores and the interception to Shazier – but it could have been better. A number of his passes were late, allowing OSU to break up what had been open lanes, and a good percentage of his yards came on two late scoring drives as the Nittany Lions played catch-up. **EDGE: Even**

Special teams: The special teams score for Penn State was huge, but the Nittany Lions also committed two important blunders. The first, a debatable holding penalty on an OSU punt, allowed the Buckeyes to keep their initial scoring drive alive. The second, a fake punt pass that was broken up by Adam Griffin, gave OSU good field position and set up a scoring drive that changed momentum for good. **EDGE: Even**

Intangibles: Penn State had a rowdy crowd behind it and had to feel like it was poised to make its first true statement win under head coach Bill O'Brien, especially after the blocked punt score made it 7-0. But Ohio State simply did what it has done all year – banded together when it needed to and played a complementary game between all three units when the chips were down. **EDGE: Ohio State**

– Jeff Svoboda

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OHIO STATE VS. PENN STATE

BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 35, Penn State 23

OSU head coach Urban Meyer's assessment of the game: "This is the first time I've experienced this stadium and their crowd, and this is big-league – a big-league atmosphere. The one thing about coming on the road is you find out about your team because it's a gladiator-type mentality. It's us against the world, and our guys seem to thrive on that."

Penn State head coach Bill O'Brien's assessment of the game: "It starts with me. I didn't do a very good job tonight as the head football coach. I need to do a much better job for this football team. We made mistakes, but we win as a team and we lose as a team. It starts with me and I'm going to go dive into that tape tomorrow and figure out things that I can do better to help the team to do better."

OSU defensive coordinator Luke Fickell on linebacker Ryan Shazier's performance: "You know, he's only a 19-year-old kid who's a true sophomore and a kid who never played linebacker in high school, so he's obviously a talent but he's also really growing as a football player. He's a natural-born leader type of kid, he loves the game of football, and I think he's really starting to embrace it. He's just one of those guys. He really is. He's growing and embracing everything that we're throwing at him. You can see him growing as a football player right in front of your eyes."

Meyer on Shazier: "I can't say he played his best game this week because I haven't watched the film obviously, but I thought that last week – I love Ryan, but he's kind of an out-of-control guy who missed tackles early in the year. But I thought last week, the way he played was just beautiful – shuffle, shuffle and then accelerate. He's so quick. I think he's playing his best football right now."

OSU senior defensive lineman John Simon on Shazier getting an important sack early in the third quarter and then following on the next play with a pick-six: "It was nice to see a guy who works so hard day after day to get out there and get a sack and then a pick-six. I'm not sure I was as happy as he was because he's an excitable guy, but it was close."

OSU sophomore cornerback Bradley Roby on how far the defense has come this season: "I think we're playing a lot better. We still have a long way to go, but I think we're getting it. At the beginning of the year, we were all kind of trying to get on the same page and we had some miscommunications and things like that. But we're working hard and getting better. I think we're playing some of our best football right now."

Fickell's opinion on why the defense is playing better: "Don't shy away from the fact of (senior co-captain) Zach Boren coming over there and showing an unselfish attitude. This was his third week over there with us, showing what he can do and how he can play. He's one of our team leaders and has been a tremendous addition to our defense."

Meyer on his team's defensive game plan: "I know we pressured more – played more man coverage and pressured more than any game all year against a team that throws the ball, the No. 1 throwing team in the Big Ten. We played more man coverage than we've played all year. When you have a pocket quarterback, you have to pressure him and make him throw early, and I think we did that."

Simon on the same subject: "It was a great win for us and a very hostile environment against



SONNY BROCKWAY

TAKING BLAME – First-year Penn State head coach Bill O'Brien said after his Nittany Lions lost to Ohio State that he did not coach well enough.

a pretty good team. But we were able to go out there and perform pretty well and held them to (32 yards rushing). That's awesome. We challenged ourselves – our front seven this week – we really wanted to stop the run and make them one-dimensional, and I thought we did a pretty good job. They stopped running the ball early on in the third quarter, and we were able to cruise back and go a little bit."

Fickell on holding the Nittany Lions to 32 yards on the ground while totaling four sacks: "That's the kind of defense we've got to be. We have to be a little more aggressive and give those guys up front a chance to pin their ears back a little bit. That's the name of the game. We want to stop the rush. We have to do a better job of ganging up on the ball."

Penn State senior quarterback Matt McGloin on the OSU defense: "Their front seven were tremendous. They have some good defensive linemen and some good linebackers. They applied pressure on us all night, and they were definitely well-prepared."

O'Brien on what went wrong with his rushing attack: "We have to give a lot of credit to Ohio State. They did a good job, and Luke Fickell and (defensive line coach) Mike Vrabel did a great job of getting their guys ready to go. Again, I have to sit down and watch the tape really close and figure out things that I can do better to help our offensive line with different schemes and things like that."

Penn State sophomore running back Zach Zwinak on the same subject: "Ohio State is a good team, definitely the best team we've played so far this season. We went into this game realizing it was going to be a tough one up front because they've got a great front seven. But we weren't executing. You're going to move the ball if you execute the play, but we just weren't doing that."

Meyer on OSU quarterback Braxton Miller's competitiveness: "He had that look in his eyes. There have been twice this year that I've seen that look – the look of the competitive guy. One was Nebraska and the other was tonight. It was a night game, it's the rah-rah, it's the flash, so our challenge is to get that out of him during a noon game."

Meyer on his team rushing for 234 yards and three touchdowns against a Penn State defense that had been No. 2 in the Big Ten against the rush: "The offensive line, those guys are good now. I thought Tom Herman, our offensive coordinator, really did a nice job. He felt and we felt that the best way to get Penn State was to tire them out, and we did that up-tempo, no-huddle stuff and kind of wore them out a little bit."

Penn State senior linebacker Michael Yanchich on recovering a blocked punt in the end zone: "They say that special teams can make some of the most explosive plays in the game. I think it really boosted us and got the crowd into it. It was truly a tremendous feeling. Words can't describe what was going through my mind and my body as I was getting up."

OSU senior defensive end Nathan Williams on Penn State's 83-yard touchdown drive in the final six minutes: "Honestly, I kind of feel a little sick to my stomach that we let them score there at the end. I'm proud of our offense, and I'm happy about the win, but I'm just a little sick to my stomach about that last score. We didn't close them out like we should have."

Shazier on giving up that late touchdown to the Nittany Lions: "We have to keep playing until the final whistle. That was my fault. I want to carry the team and I didn't. I lost the control and I let my team down. Everybody thought Indiana was all good, but they came back on us, so it's never over until the clock runs out."

A cooled-down Meyer, who hurled his headset to the ground following Penn State's final touchdown, mocking himself regarding the poor coverage on that play: "That Shazier kid, that Shazier kid. I'm gonna run him when I get back tonight. (Laughs.) He didn't ... that's really nonsense. On the headsets, our coaches knew they were going to throw that bender on our cover-2, and we just didn't carry it out. But we'll work on it."

Roby on recovering the onside kick after Penn State's final touchdown: "That was kind of weird. All of them are, but there was this bright light in the stadium and I kind of lost the ball in the lights when it came by me. Then it took kind of a funny bounce and their guy tried to jump out of bounds and save it – just like at Indiana. But I wasn't going to let that happen this time. I grabbed that thing and fell on it."

Fickell, who presided over last year's 6-7 season as interim head coach, on being 9-0 so far this season: "It's hard to imagine. It's really hard to imagine. Coach Meyer always says not to take that lightly and we don't. I think these guys are really starting to believe."

Miller on the team's goals with just three games left in the season: "We want to go 12-0 and win the division. How great would that be?"

Simon on the same subject: "We're just taking it one day at a time, one game at a time. Our goal at the beginning of the season was to win as many games as we could, and that hasn't changed."

OSU senior receiver Jake Stoneburner on the same subject: "Win every game. That's our goal. For us seniors, this is our last go-round, so why not? We can still win our side of the championship and go 12-0. I mean, how great would that be to be on probation but still go 12-0 in Coach Meyer's first year here?"

Win At Penn State Is OSU's Best 2012 Performance

THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

In the days leading up to Ohio State's game with Penn State, a Buckeye fan I spoke to was wondering why BSB was building up the Nittany Lions so much. He was particularly unhappy that our staff prediction for the game in the Oct. 27 issue saw the Buckeyes earning only a three-point, 24-21 victory.

Never mind that the oddsmakers, who know a thing or two about these things, had the game pretty much a "pick 'em." This fan was insistent that I explain why Buckeye Sports Bulletin was building up Penn State.

I explained to him that I didn't think that it was so much a case of building up the Nittany Lions as it was a case of recognizing that it was going to be a tough game. Penn State was on a five-game winning streak, undefeated in Big Ten play and coming off a 38-14 thrashing of Iowa on the road. The game was going to be played in one of the toughest environments in the Big Ten – in the early evening, no less – against a well-coached bunch of players who, after a year of scandal they had nothing to do with, had a collective chip on their shoulder and much to try to prove on national television.

Perhaps more important than anything that Penn State brought to the equation was the fact that Ohio State, despite being undefeated, had hardly been a world-beater against Indiana or Purdue – teams not in Penn State's league – in its previous two contests.

But I expressed hope to the fan that maybe this would be the game when the Buckeyes finally put it all together. And if that were the case, it would be quite a game for Ohio State.

I'm not going to say that the Buckeyes put it all *completely* together given the blocked punt for a touchdown, but based on the play of the defense and the fact that the game was played in such a hostile environment, I will say that the 35-23 win over the Lions surpassed the Nebraska game as the Buckeyes' best performance of the season.

The game was a good, old-fashioned Big Ten slugfest in the first half with neither team gaining an edge as they battled to a 7-7 tie at the break. But OSU head coach Urban Meyer and his staff had to be heartened with the fact that the defense – by anyone's definition the team's Achilles' heel – was holding Penn State in check with the Lions' only points coming on the blocked punt.

There's an old adage in sports that big players make big plays in big games, and this particular big game started to turn late in the second quarter when the Buckeyes' biggest player, quarterback Braxton Miller, turned in one of his patented big plays.

Penn State had pretty much corralled Miller during the early going, allowing him only 26 net yards on 13 carries after three sacks were taken out, giving him just a 2.0-yard average. Plus, the sophomore QB's passing had bordered on abysmal.

But on the drive after the blocked punt, and aided by a questionable Penn State defensive holding call after the Lions had forced a punt, Miller faced second-and-9 at the Penn State 39. That's when he finally broke loose with a 33-yard run, a run that seemed to jumpstart Miller's game and the OSU offense along with it.

Three plays later, Carlos Hyde went in from the 1 and the Buckeyes had tied the game with 34 seconds to go before the half.

Penn State received to start the second half, and that's when another big-play player stepped up for the Buckeyes.

Linebacker Ryan Shazier has missed his share of tackles and made his share of mistakes this season, but even as a freshman

last season, he proved he has a nose for the football and a flair for the big play.

On consecutive plays on that first possession of the second half, Shazier blew through to sack Penn State quarterback Matt McGloin for a 9-yard loss and then picked of McGloin on the next play, returning the theft 17 yards for a touchdown and a 14-7 OSU lead.

The Nittany Lions countered with a field goal on their next drive to cut the lead to 14-10, but they and their crowd were never really the same after Shazier's quick alteration of the momentum.

The much-maligned Ohio State defense would ultimately wind up yielding two touchdowns and a total of 16 points in the second half, but how the Buckeyes gave up those TDs was critical to the outcome of the game.

After the field goal – and an unfortunate interception – Miller engineered a 10-play, 57-yard touchdown march aided by a pair of 13-yard completions to Evan Spencer, and then directed an eight-play, 85-yard touchdown march sparked by a 28-yard Rod Smith run to give Ohio State a 28-10 lead with 40 seconds to play in the third quarter.

Ohio State was in a groove, and time was becoming an ally. The Lions needed to score and they needed to score quickly. Score they did. But quickly?

The Buckeyes allowed Penn State to march 80 yards to pay dirt, but the defense forced the Lions to use 18 plays and nearly six minutes to get there. Once Jake Stoneburner took a Miller pass 72 yards for a touchdown and a 35-16 lead, it was pretty much all over but the shouting.

The Nittany Lions would score once more, but again the OSU defense made them eat up the clock to do so. PSU was forced to use 12 plays and 83 yards to get its final score, leaving a two-touchdown deficit with only 1:41 to play.

The defense made the Penn State offense, which entered the game No. 2 in passing offense in the conference and No. 4 in total offense, work for every yard.

As for the Buckeye fan who said we were building up Penn State too much, he is probably thinking "I told you so" right now.

But maybe it wasn't that we built up the Lions so much as the Buckeyes, led by Miller, Shazier and the improving defense, finally built up themselves.

Game Notes

- Much will be made of Stoneburner's 72-yard touchdown reception in the fourth quarter to ice the victory over the Nittany Lions. I found Stoneburner's other reception during the game equally significant.

In order to appreciate that 14-yard catch in the first quarter, you have to understand that Meyer had accused his veteran receiver of not playing hard earlier in the season. (See story, page 17.)

The Buckeyes found themselves facing a third-and-14 at their own 39 on their second possession. Miller connected with Stoneburner over the middle, but the receiver was well short of the first down. He simply dragged Lions defenders the rest of the way to give the Buckeyes a fresh set of downs. Ohio State did not score on the drive, but the 6-5,

245-pound senior put everyone on notice that he had come to play.

In the last three games, Stoneburner has caught seven passes for 144 yards, and several of those catches have been extremely important.

- Miller wound up with 134 rushing yards and a pair of touchdowns on 25 carries against Penn State, but that total could have been higher and the game might have turned in the Buckeyes' favor earlier had the quarterback elected not to throw in several instances when a running lane appeared to be open. I don't know if Miller was still a little gun-shy after his hard tackle against Purdue or if the coaches had told him to try to eschew the run to protect their franchise player.

But once Miller took to the ground in earnest, there was no stopping him or the OSU offense. Starting with his previously mentioned 33-yard run, Miller gained 108 yards on 12 carries the rest of the way and was not sacked again.

I have no doubt the coaching staff would love to limit their quarterback's carries, but they seem to have made the decision to use the 6-2, 220-pounder as much as they have to in order to win each game.

Will he carry a lighter load against Illinois?

- Even in a big victory, you have to look for the areas in which the Buckeyes still need improvement. In addition to continued problems with blocked punts, I remain bothered by the number of penalties Ohio State commits.

This time, they were flagged seven times for 75 yards, giving them 67 penalties on the season for 596 yards or an average of 7.4 a game for 66.2 yards. The 7.4 penalties on average ranks them 96th in the country. Of course, in a game in which I was not impressed with the officiating, Penn State was flagged nine times for 85 yards.

Here's an interesting note. Navy (3.5) and Air Force (3.6) are the least penalized teams in the country with Army 12th at 4.3.

Would you want it any other way?

A Similar Change

Many similarities between the current edition of the Ohio State football team and the national championship version from 2002 have been made this season, most notably with regard to both teams' penchant for winning close games that maybe they shouldn't have won.

Here's another possible similarity.

If you are following the 2002 season in Buckeye Sports Bulletin as we continue our 10th anniversary celebration with reprints from BSB both in our print and electronic issues, you know that a key piece of the championship puzzle was the insertion of wide receiver Chris Gamble into the defensive secondary.

It was at about this time during the 2002 season when Gamble's move – he was still starting on offense and was second on the team in receptions – really started to take hold. He had already intercepted passes during wins against Cincinnati and Wisconsin, and in week nine against Penn State, head coach Jim Tressell and defensive coordinator Mark Dantonio finally inserted Gamble into the starting defensive lineup to better shore up a deficiency at cornerback.

All Gamble did was return an interception 40 yards for the Buckeyes' lone touchdown in a 13-7 win over the visiting Nittany Lions, starting a string of eight OSU picks returned for touchdowns against Penn State that was extended this year by Shazier. For good measure, Gamble added a reception and returned five punts for 64 yards, sparking one of BSB's more memorable cover headlines: "No Risk With This Gamble."

Fast-forward to this season.

The Buckeyes were struggling on defense, especially at linebacker, and the Ohio State coaching staff moved fullback Zach Boren to linebacker, a position he hadn't played since high school, to try to stabilize the stop troops.

In his first game against Indiana, playing primarily on instinct, Boren led the Buckeyes with eight tackles during a 52-49 victory. He added five more stops in the 29-22 overtime victory vs. Purdue, and then in arguably the team's best defensive performance of the season, he was second for team-high honors against Penn State with seven tackles, behind only Shazier's eight.

Will Boren's switch to defense, like Gamble's move 10 years earlier, be one of the differences between a good season and one for the ages? Keep your eye on the 6-1, 245-pound senior.

"Don't shy away from the fact of Zach Boren coming over there and showing an unselfish attitude," defensive coordinator Luke Fickell said after the Penn State game of Boren's move. "This was his third week over there with us, showing what he can do and how he can play. He's one of our team leaders and has been a tremendous addition to our defense."

There are two 2002 games chronicled in this edition of BSB as we try to line up that season's 14-game schedule with our 2012 printing schedule. Both the win over the Nittany Lions and the victory against Minnesota are featured, and there will be plenty of additional coverage of the team and both of those games in our Nov. 2 electronic issue.

Key performers such as Gamble are starting to emerge in the 2002 march to the championship.

Another is kicker Mike Nugent, who had struggled the year before as a freshman while splitting time with Josh Huston, hitting just 7 of 14 field-goal tries with only one longer than 40 yards.

By week 10 of the 2002 season, however, Nugent had already broken Vlade Janakievski's school record of 15 straight field goals and was perfect on all 20 of his attempts, including all eight from the 40 or beyond.

Nugent's breaking of Janakievski's record was chronicled in our Oct. 26 electronic issue, and there was also a reprint of a wonderful BSB feature by former Columbus Dispatch columnist Dick Fenlon on Janakievski. Fenlon and Janakievski recall how the Macedonian-born kicker was twice within seconds or yards of possibly altering OSU football history. (You'll have to read the story.)

But my favorite part of the story comes when Janakievski talks about trying to impress legendary coach Woody Hayes, who I am sure had little use for soccer-style kickers from Macedonia.

"Funny, I found that if I could kick in front of him, I could kick in front of 100,000 people with no problem," Janakievski said.

All electronic and print issues dating back to 2009 are archived, so if you are a paid print BSB subscriber and are not already enjoying this complement to your subscription, see the instructions on how to sign up on page 5.