BASKETBALL

It appears that the first black basketball player was Cleo Vaughn who played on the 1954-55 team as a sophomore. Joe Roberts comes to OSU in 1958 and then Mel Nowell in 1959. bli: 6/2000
From: "Kevin B. Leonard" <kbl767@northwestern.edu>
To: chute.6@osu.edu
Subject: OSU Basketball

Tamar,

NU Archives just posted a collection of digitized basketball game films from the late 1950s. In case you or your basketball alumni are interested, an OSU - NU game, featuring the great Frank Howard, is included.


http://www.facebook.com/NUArchives

Best wishes,

Kevin

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END-ANTISPAM-VOTING-LINKS

11/12/2010
Basketball

Wm. H. Tyson

SECOND YEAR in the Western Conference and second place in the Conference basketball race! In a sentence this describes the success of Ohio State’s squad for the season of 1914. Although it was possible to get only six games with Western Conference teams Ohio demonstrated to any dubious members of the “Big Nine,” that she is a worthy opponent. For five out of these six games were turned into victories. Two each were taken from Purdue and Indiana and an even break was secured with Chicago.

Although three defeats were registered against the team in the Ohio Conference games, undoubtedly the quality of basketball played by the Ohio teams was not as high as was that of the Western Conference. The defeat handed to Denison strengthens this point of view for Denison was generally admitted to have one of the strongest teams in the state. Ohio State took one game each from Ohio Wesleyan, the University of Akron, and Western Reserve, while two games were lost to Oberlin and one to Ohio Wesleyan. Notre Dame was also defeated on the first western trip.

Because of the great interest shown by the student body and as only two members of the squad, Trautman and Richmond, will be lost by graduation, Director St. John has bright hopes for next year unless handicapped by eligibility rules.
"FINEST BASKETBALL FLOOR IN AMERICA"

It's in the Coliseum, State Fairgrounds, Columbus, where 6,000 rooters can watch with ease the Scarlet and Gray basket tossers.
Basketball

COACH HAROLD C. OLSEN will start his sixth season as mentor of the Ohio State University cage squad this year. He has been putting the prospective members of the quintet through the preliminary turns for four weeks already and has thinned the preseason candidates down to thirty in number.

Coach Olsen received his instruction in the floor game at Wisconsin under the well known Dr. Walter E. Meanwell, and is now ranked as at least his former teacher's equal in developing winning basketball teams.

He coached at Ripon College immediately following his graduation and came to Ohio State in 1922. Meeting the team taught by his old instructor for the first time in 1924, Olsen's proteges split the two games, but in 1925 the Ohio State team won both games.

The Scarlet and Gray has always stood among the best teams in the Western Conference winter sport since Olsen started his regime here and an enviable record is claimed by the Buckeyes. In 1925 Ohio swept the Western Conference for its first basketball championship. Besides developing a championship team Olsen has several All-Western players to his credit.

Johnny Minor, one of the Western Conference's greatest cagers was developed by Olsen, "Cooky" Cunningham, now adding laurel's in the professional game, was coached by Olsen, and last year Captain "Bill" Hunt was ranked among the best throughout the country.

The Buckeyes have been without material with real physical qualifications for the center position since the graduation of Cunningham in 1926 and have none coming on this year from last season's yearling group. Captain Robin Bell will have three letter men to work with him on the floor. Ronald Hectarne, Joe Cox, and Fred Shuler are the only basketball "O" wearers eligible for play this season. William Hunt, Arlie Tarbert, and Harold McMillan were the other cagers being awarded the coveted "O" last season.

Fred Grim, Harry Fenner, George Hendrix, George Van Heyde, and Howard Kirn were all members of the varsity squad last year and will be eligible for positions on the first five this winter. Coming up from the ranks of the class of 1930 Olsen will have Jack Evans, Milton Rowley, William Hinchman, Abe Weiner, H. M. Cline, George Deyer, Lorayne Geer, and R. W. Irwin to work with.

Coach Clarence MacDonald of the freshman squad has been a great aid to Olsen in developing material. He has for several years given the varsity mentor good opposition in practice sessions and trained the first year men.

Basketball at Ohio State University is better recognized than at most all other universities in the country. The sport more than pays for its own upkeep here while at all but a few other Western Conference universities it is listed as a losing sport. The Scarlet and Grey cage teams enjoy the support of the student body and many Columbus fans.

In making a prediction for the team's 1928 season Olsen stated that it was much too early to guess but he added that he felt sure he could promise that the team would "make a creditable showing for itself."

"However," Olsen said, "No men with exceptional physical qualifications for the center position have yet reported."

The schedule for the 1928 season is as follows:

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
Basketball Schedule
1927-28

December 10 Ohio Wesleyan
December 17 Muskingum
December 31 Pittsburgh (At Pittsburgh)
January 2 Pennsylvania (At Phil.)
January 4 Princeton
January 7 Wisconsin
January 16 Michigan (At Ann Arbor)
January 19 Northwestern
January 21 Chicago
February 4 Minnesota (At Minneapolis)
February 6 Chicago (At Chicago)
February 13 Indiana (At Bloomington)
February 18 Wisconsin (At Madison)
February 22 Indiana
February 25 Minnesota
February 27 Michigan
March 5 Northwestern (At Evanston)
Athletics at Ohio State University

FOOTBALL

Football was first played here in 1886, although there were no regularly scheduled games on record until 1890. Early football at Ohio State University was typical of the game as it was played in the early days. Facilities were mediocre: equipment was lacking and interest on the part of the student body was lax.

After a few years, however, the sport expanded considerably and the early 1900's found Ohio State playing against such institutions as Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, West Virginia and many Ohio colleges. It was not until 1913, however, that this sport came into its own on the Buckeye campus. In 1913, Ohio State became a member of the Western Conference and entered the "big league." Since that time, Buckeye football eleven have won three Conference Championships and have met the requirements of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Ohio State squads have participated in international games from New York to California and have taken their place among the leaders in this form of Collegiate athletics.

CROSS COUNTRY AND TRACK

Track and cross-country at Ohio State University go back to the earliest days of the institution. A "natural" sport, class days when the school was still young were marked by contests in running, jumping and the weights. It was on May 31, 1884, that the first O. I. A. A. Meet was held at the University. Such events as the 22 pound shot put, the two mile go-as-you-please race, standing high jump, the 50 yard hop and the baseball throw were on the program.

With the introduction of modern equipment and the installation of better facilities, track and field athletics and cross country came into their own at Columbus. Many brilliant individuals and a number of Olympic stars have worn the Scarlet and Gray. Clement Cook and Garret Wykoff were the first two Buckeye track men to represent the United States abroad. They participated in the dashes and distance runs, respectively. George F. Guthrie later made the Olympic team in the hurdles, while in more recent years, world records have been held by Pete Rasmus in the discus throw, Richard Rockaway in the 220 yard low hurdles and George Simpson in the dashes. In 1929, the Ohio State team won the highest honor in the country in track, by taking the National Collegiate title at Chicago in June of that year. Moreover, since Ohio State first entered the Western Conference, no Buckeye hill and dale squad has finished below the first division in the Annual Big Ten Cross Country Meet.

BASKETBALL

First records of basketball at Ohio State are found in 1898 when the Buckeye floor squad took on such teams as North High School, Y. M. C. A. and the Columbus Barracks. In fact, it was several years before the more or less "unorganized sport" grew out of the high school and smaller college class of competition. It is a curious contrast to note that in 1900, Ohio State played Circleville on January 5 and Yale three days later. In 1905, the sport became better organized and what are now Western Conference Schools first appeared on the schedule. In 1913, on its debut into the Big Ten, the Buckeye quintet picked up considerably in both number of games played, student interest and all around ability and power. With the installation of H. G. Olsen in 1923, a notable impetus was given the game. Ohio State has been well near the top in the majority of seasons since that date and has won one Championship.

BASEBALL

The "national sport" was played here as early as 1886 by a group of students who organized themselves under the title of "The Franklinites" and scheduled but a single game. The next year, six contests were arranged and a steady growth has been noted as the years progress. In the Western Conference, Ohio State has won one Championship since 1913 and has been in the first division many times. Moreover, many brilliant stars have risen from the ranks of Buckeye baseball to shine in major leagues in later years.

WRESTLING

Wrestling has been a most popular sport from the standpoint of competition since its introduction in 1920 when the first Western Conference team from Ohio State entered the arena. The following year, Perry Marrison won the Western Conference wrestling championship, repeating in 1922. The next year, Ohio State gained the Western Conference title and twelve months later produced another champion, Harry Steele, in the heavyweight class. Marrison and Steele both made the 1924 Olympic team. Steele taking the Olympic title in his division and Marrison being prevented from competition because of an injury incurred in training. Since these early years, Ohio State mat teams have been of high caliber and productive of many sterling individuals and several champions.

OTHER SPORTS

Although a part of the regular curriculum, intercollegiate gymnastics was not undertaken on a varsity basis until 1925. Fencing came into being in 1909, but suffered a lapse and was not revived until 1925. Rifle shooting first entered the varsity arena six years ago but was not recognized as an Intercollegiate sport until the past year. Polo was introduced in 1913, but this sport also did not attain its true position until three years ago when it became a form of varsity competition. In golf, Ohio State has competed on a more or less extensive basis since 1921, but was not exceptionally strong until 1927, when a professional coach was employed to handle the Buckeye linksmen.

In the above sports, Ohio State won the Western Conference and National championships in rifle shooting a year ago, has taken three Conference crowns in fencing and one in golf. All of these sports are on the upgrade and improvement is greatly noticeable each year.
CAGERS REUNION—Ohio State University cagers from 1899 to 1912 got together for a reunion Saturday at the Denhler-Wallick Hotel. They attended the OSU-Illinois game and were presented to the crowd during the halftime intermission. First row, left to right: Carl Sleeb, 1899; Dr. G. W. Stimson, 1900; G. M. Karshner, 1900; R. L. Hager, 1900; C. R. Sayre, 1900. Second row: Bronis Cornell, 1902; Hanby Jones, 1901; J. S. Stephenson, 1901, H. S. Houghton, 1901, J. E. Buelen, 1900, and W. O. Taylor, 1901.
Ohio State Captures First NCAA Title

Columbus Sunday Dispatch

1871-1971 CENTENNIAL
Columbus Dispatch

Ohio State University, the first NCAA basketball champions, are shown above. Left to right are: Bill Wanger (14), Larry Siegfried (13), Ron Seifert (13), Frank Layden (13), Jim Black (13), Joe Hamilton (13), Joe Ratafia (13), Dick Fritz (13), Bob Franks (13), and trainer John Hintz (13).

Coach Fred Taylor, Jim Allen (21), J. T. Landis (22), Dave Dauber (15), and Bob Hilmann (15) are shown below.

Columbus, Ohio Sunday, March 25, 1964

Page 86
A PARLAY OF
LUKE AND THE RAT

Luke is Ohio State's brilliant Jerry Lucas, and The Rat is OSU's harassing defense. Together they swept through a strong field in basketball's best holiday tournament

by RAY CAVE

The final week of the year is traditionally a time of wine, roses and football hoopla in southern California. But last week the 50,000 fans who rooted and roared at the four-day Los Angeles Basketball Classic could well have argued that the most exciting sports spectacular in their town this holiday season took place on a basketball floor instead of a gridiron, and roses be damned.

Rarely, if ever, has a college basketball tournament had such an impressive field. Of the eight teams playing, five were among the country's best: Ohio State, Southern California, Utah, West Virginia and Purdue. These teams had lost a total of only four games this season, while winning 33. What's more, the four top college centers, Jerry Lucas, Billy McGill, John Rudometkin and Terry Dischinger were on hand to do violent and personal battle with each other. A violent battle it was, too, and by the time Ohio State had overpowered Southern California 76-66 to win the championship Saturday night, even envious opposing coaches were agreed that two things were clear: in Lucas Ohio State has a player in a class by himself; and thanks to its frantic and terrifying defense, the Ohio State team also is almost in a class by itself.

In spite of the summy temperatures that greeted their arrival on Tuesday, none of the visiting coaches were overjoyed to be in Los Angeles. The competition was obviously going to be hotter than the weather. "A man could lose two games here before he knew what hit him," said George King, coach of West Virginia. Forty-eight hours later West Virginia had lost two games.

Even tall and tense Fred Taylor, the Ohio State coach, was thinking of a lot of places he would rather have his team. "By golly," he said, as he wandered fitfully around his hotel room in a pair of parsley-green pajamas the midnight before his opening game against Washington, "we don't know enough about them, and I don't like it."

Lucas was feeling more confident. He was amused to read for the nth time that his knees hurt so badly he couldn't play. He also read that the tournament record for rebounds was 25 in one game, and he made plans to change that. Somebody said that he had taken everything but the paint off the backboards in a recent game at Wake Forest. "Maybe I'll get the paint here," he said.

Wednesday morning the Ohio State team visited a movie studio. Wednesday night it played as if it had stars in its eyes, making a horrid 13 errors on offense against Washington. Few teams could have survived this, but the Ohio State defense, led by tigerish John Havlicek, worked so hard that it repeatedly got the ball back before Washington could score. One phase of this defense is called "The Rat," a full-court press that gives the harassed rival player with the ball about as much chance as a steak in a wolf pack. The Buckeyes used The Rat to advantage and won 59-49.

But Fred Taylor wore his anti-movie-studio look after the game. At heart he doesn't like such distracting things as tours. "We set basketball back 30 years," he said. "We kept fiddling around on offense and bouncing the ball on the floor." It is a Taylor axiom that you should run on a basketball floor, not bounce a ball on it. Pass. Don't dribble.

Chastised, Ohio State came back the next night to crush UCLA 105-84. Lucas made it a one-man show. Tearing the ball off the backboards as if he were ripping down walls, he got 30 rebounds, equaling his own career high. That was more than the entire UCLA team could get. He made eight of eight free throws and 11 of 13 shots. Only four of his shots came following passes from teammates. He chose instead to set them up with return passes virtually every time they threw him the ball. Lucas received a standing ovation as he left the game. Minutes later, UCLA's John Wooden, a coach for 15 years, appeared in the Ohio State dressing room and introduced himself to Lucas. "I want to tell you that you are the most unselfish athlete I have ever seen," he said. "Our team played its very finest," he continued as he walked away, "but Lucas was magnificent. It was a pleasure to lose to such a man. I have never said such a thing before. I never expect to again."

Someone more immediately concerned with Lucas was Forrest Twogood, coach of the USC team that was now to face Ohio State in the finals. Twogood was as dazed as Wooden. "The greatest performance I ever saw," he said. "Most star players always want the ball, but Lucas is like a man who gets drunk without drinking; he scores 30 points without getting the ball. We'll all have better teams for having seen him play."

USC's trip to the finals had been more testing than Ohio State's. Like Ohio State, the Trojans are strong at center, where their wondrous Russian, Rudometkin, pirouettes his way to seemingly impossible baskets. They also have a strong defense led by Ken Stanley, an intensely competitive counterpart to OSU's

ON WAY TO RECORD, Lucas protects ball grimly after grabbing rebound against UCLA as teammate Havlicek (No. 5) blocks for him.
Havlicek, and an outstanding guard, Chris Appel, who drives for the basket like a lion charging through a forest. This combination brought USC victories over Purdue and Utah.

The final game figured to be a stunning defensive battle, and if Ohio State’s offense stuttered, as it occasionally does, USC had a chance. Twogood knew his team couldn’t stop Lucas, but he hoped Lucas wouldn’t shoot much. He had reason to hope. Lucas averages only 12 shots a game, compared, say, to McGill’s 25. (“Do you wish Lucas would shoot more?” a local reporter naively asked Fred Taylor. “Is Los Angeles big?” answered Taylor.) If Lucas didn’t score excessively, perhaps the good USC defense could stop the rest of the team, as Cincinnati did last year in giving Ohio State its only loss in 47 games.

Five minutes after the final game began in the beautiful and packed Los Angeles sports arena it was obvious that Twogood’s fond hope was merely a dream. This was the night that Lucas decided to shoot. In a five-minute stretch early in the game he gently arched in five consecutive shots from more than 15 feet out. Then he moved in for a hook and three straight layups, giving Ohio State a 14-point lead. USC’s Appel cut beautifully through the Buckeyes, and Rudometkin twirled his level best, but the closest the Trojans could get was two points. Though the rest of Ohio State’s offense did have trouble against USC, its defense was as grudging as ever, and Lucas’ 38 points carried the team to victory. In taking 26 shots Lucas equaled his all-time high as a college player. He had shot often enough to win a classic classic. When 38 sportswriters cast their ballots for the tournament’s most valuable player, every vote was for Lucas.

The win left Ohio State one of only four major undefeated teams in the country, but that same Saturday night, a continent away, Cincinnati, the national champion, was winning another holiday tournament in most impressive fashion in New York. It was beginning to look like the NCAA championship would have the same finalists as a year ago. Basketball fans would trade all the roses in California to see that match.  

END
In Gopherland

By Gary Bruell

It was a perfect game in every respect up to that moment. It was beautiful. It was great defense, good clutch shooting, fine rebounding. It was perfect. When 0:36 came around, it wasn't.

You see there was this fight and it was what most people might say, "just one of those things." It was anything but "just one of those things." It was a disgrace, it was uncalled for, it was a dedicated mess.

At least from the TV standpoint, it looked that way and usually your TV doesn't lie, it speaks the truth. The camera is focused on the foul line. There is a mad Minnesota player. He has just been called for a foul. He slugs Luke Witte. Luke falls to the floor. "See, this mad Minnesota player. See him go mad in front of 13,000 people in the arena. See him go mad at an innocent Ohio State bench. See the policemen. Wait a minute. Do not see the policemen. There are no policemen. Where are the policemen?

Now see this mad Minnesota player beat on an Ohio State player. It looks as though there is blood coming out of the Ohio State player. See the Ohio State bench clear and seek out refuge. See the Ohio State coach look disgusted and confused. See Athletic Director Ed Weaver talking to some Ohio State players giving them advice. See the TV cameras dim. See nothing. What happened?

The fight broke out after Witte fell to the floor in a struggle for a rebound under the Ohio State basket. According to coach Fred Taylor, "Witte got the basketball and was knocked down. A Minnesota guy went to apparently help Witte up and swung at him instead." The melee really exploded after Minnesota's Clyde Turner was ejected at the game's end for a "flagrant personal foul."

This act proves that collegiate sport is indeed a big business. Watching a grown man go crazy is not as amusing as you would think. It makes your stomach turn and your head turn away. There is no place for violence on a collegiate level or any sport level for that matter.

The University of Minnesota has been having it's problems as of late. Up until a few weeks ago, there was no athletic director. Their football attendance this past season faltered and the entire sport scene was going down the drain. Up until this season, basketball was a minor league sport at the school.

So to perk up its basketball program, the University of Minnesota hired Bill Musselman, a highly successful coach at Ohio's Ashland College. Musselman brought dignity and a winning spirit to the school. He was a staunch disciplinarian from the beginning. One event particularly comes to mind. In the beginning of the season, he suspended center Jim Brewer for not hustling. Apparently, Brewer learned his lesson at least up until the game because he returned to the Gopher lineup.

Going into the game with Ohio State, Minnesota was sitting on top of the world. With six straight victories, an astonishing defensive average of 57.7 and a national ranking to go with it, basketball was a highly regarded division on the Gophers athletic program. It certainly is a shame that this act of stupidity could have occurred.

Big Ten Commissioner Wayne Duke was at the game which is unfortunate both for Minnesota and the Big Ten. Surely the incident can not, confirm any reasoning of the Big Ten's development of the college player on a sportsmanship-wise level.

What happens from here on in is not of major consequence. The University of Minnesota and their fans should not be slapped on their rear ends and told to act like good little boys. They should know how to control their emotions or they might not make it through the season, let alone their next game.
Hornyak, others sensed it coming

By Gary Bruell and Scott L. Powers

Ohio State basketball players and Big Ten officials believe the outbreak of the Ohio State-Minnesota game Tuesday night was a regretful incident.

Center Luke Witte, who suffered a concussion during the fight, said the affair is a shame. According to Witte, Minnesota's Corky Taylor had accused Witte of spitting in his face, but Witte said, "I would never spit in anyone's face under any circumstances."

The trouble broke out after Witte was fouled by Gopher player Clyde Turner. Turner was then ejected from the game for what officials called a flagrant foul. Suddenly, Minnesota players began swinging at Ohio State players and some fans came onto the floor.

Witte had cuts and bruises around his eyes and over his face. The impact apparently caused him to forget what happened.

"I just saw the rerun of the game for the first time today," he said. Witte said he hasn't been able to sleep well because of the pain, and that his head still "doesn't feel real well."

Forward Mark Wager, who also suffered a concussion, said he too has no memory of what happened. Wager said he is still physically sore. He declined to comment further.

Guard Allan Hornyak expressed dissatisfaction with police arrangements for the game.

"There was no security anywhere and no protection at all," he said.

Hornyak said the Minnesota team was angry because they "thought they should have won." He also said that at first he thought order would be restored.

"It was a great game up until the fight," Hornyak said. "I was over at the scorer's table when it started and saw people coming from everywhere. I sensed something was coming."

Wardell Jackson, a forward, said that at the beginning of the second half he sensed something might happen.

"I didn't get hit. I tried to stop some of the punching," Jackson said. "This is the worst incident in basketball I have ever seen."

Forward Bob Siekmann said, "I think that the refs and the players could have handled it if the fans had stayed out of it. None of us really knew what happened to Luke and Mark until we got home and saw the films."

Malcolm C. Moore, president of the University of Minnesota, spoke to President Fawcett early Thursday. Fawcett said Moore was upset over the affair and had "serious regrets" about it. Fawcett declined to comment on the affair.

Jeff Gordon, sports editor of the University of Minnesota student newspaper, the Minnesota Daily, said there should be an automatic suspension of the players involved.

"The fight was sickening. There is no place for this type of behavior on the intercollegiate level," he said.

Gordon said the officials should have warned the players to keep cool prior to the second half. "I sensed a problem when Jim Brewer and Luke Witte didn't shake hands for the second half tipoff," Gordon said.

Gordon also said Minnesota fans thought the Ohio State players were taking "cheap shots" at the Gophers. "I expect that if the Big Ten does not take any action on the matter, the University of Minnesota will," Gordon said.

Minnesota held a closed practice in Williams Arena Thursday afternoon. Usually the news media are allowed in; but Minnesota coach Bill Musselman kept everyone out.

Richard Schultz, head basketball coach at Iowa, the next team to play at Minnesota, said he does not plan to take special precautions for dealing with the Gophers.

"Hopefully, this will be the only time an incident like this would happen," he said.

Iowa played Ashland College last year when Musselman was head coach at Ashland. Schultz said Ashland used the same warmup drill that Minnesota now uses.

Musselman has his players busy at their end of the court during pregame so they are not thinking about what's going on at the other end of the court, he has told fans.

Schultz declined to comment on the Ohio State-Minnesota game because, he said, all the facts aren't in.

The Minnesota pregame warmup consists of Harlem Globetrotter-like drills accompanied by rock music. The purpose of the drill, Minnesota athletic officials said, is to get both the players and the fans "up" for the game.

The person who does most of the fancy pregame warmup is known as George the Juggler. Last year George...
Gov. calls fight brutal

By Associated Press

Gov. John J. Gilligan has called on Big Ten Athletic Commissioner Wayne Duke to use "strong and forceful action" in disciplining University of Minnesota basketball players.

He referred to a melee between Minnesota and Ohio State University players at the end of a game in Minneapolis Tuesday night.

"I've never seen anything as disgraceful, brutal, as what took place on the floor for three periods at Minnesota that night," Gilligan said. The game was stopped with 36 seconds to play and Ohio State leading 50-44 when fights erupted on the playing floor.

Meets with Taylor

The governor, who conferred with Ohio State basketball coach Fred Taylor before a mid-morning news conference on a bill signing, said he agreed with the coach that the scuffle was "a public mugging."

"Gilligan said Ohio State center Luke Witte may be out of action for the Michigan game Saturday night.

Gilligan said strong punitive action should come from the Big Ten commissioner who came to Columbus to discuss the matter with Ohio State officials.

Forgot athletics?

Gilligan said if the Big Ten commissioner does not discipline the Minnesota players Ohio State should "for all practical purposes forget about intercollegiate athletics."

The governor said he watched the game on local television. He said he has not yet conferred with the Minnesota governor but added he is sure he was as shocked about this as I was."
Duke to rule today on basketbrawl
OSU, Michigan to play as scheduled

By Steve Snapp
1-28-72

Big Ten Commissioner Wayne Duke said Thursday he had not yet made any decision concerning the fight which erupted during Tuesday night's Ohio State-Minnesota basketball game in Minneapolis.

Duke, in Columbus to view films of the game in which three Ohio State players were hospitalized when fans and players emptied onto the court in a wild free-for-all, spent the afternoon conferring with OSU Athletic Director J. Edward Weaver and basketball coach Fred Taylor on the Minnesota episode. Duke also spoke with several team members, including Luke Witte and Mark Wagar, both of whom suffered concussions in Minneapolis and will not play Saturday at Michigan.

Following that meeting, Duke told reporters he hoped an announcement on action to be taken would be made sometime today from the Big Ten Office in Chicago.

Duke said, "I don't have anything to say at this time in as much as I have just completed my investigation of all the players and films involved. I hope you realize that I have a responsibility to other schools in the conference and before a decision can be made, they must be consulted. That, hopefully, will be done by noon tomorrow (Friday)."

Duke would not say what form the announcement would take. As commissioner he may suspend any of the players or teams involved.

Duke said he did not know if it would be possible to postpone the Michigan game until a later date when the Ohio State team was fully recovered.

"I have heard that Michigan coach Johnny Orr made the suggestion to coach Taylor," he said. "But no formal request has been made by either institution. If it were, I would advise that in such an unprecedented situation that the other schools in the conference be consulted.

"You have to realize that even though this is an unusual case, consultations still have to be made," Duke continued. "You just shouldn't arbitrarily change schedules in a situation that could benefit one or both teams involved."

Taylor confirmed that Orr had made the offer despite later reports from the Michigan athletic department that no such offer had been made.

"I talked to John (Orr) today and he offered to postpone the game until Witte was able to play," Taylor said. "I told him it was a marvelous gesture but that I would have to talk to Ed (Weaver) first."

Late Thursday night Weaver said the decision had been made to play the game as scheduled.

"Fred and I talked for several hours and decided that this goes deeper than just a basketball game," Weaver said. "The whole league is involved in our decision."

Duke, who along with Weaver was in Minneapolis for the game, claimed his visit there was purely routine and that he had not made the trip to investigate Minnesota's crowd behavior which has come under attack from several Big Ten coaches this year.

"I felt this was a good opportunity to fulfill some of my obligations as commissioner," Duke said. "This was a key conference game, and I thought it would also be a good chance for me to meet some of the new members of Minnesota's athletic department."
Wigton/Behind the headlines

Big Ten Commissioner Wayne Duke blew it.

The basketball attack at the University of Minnesota last week was the most important collegiate issue of the week.

It transcends the world of sports. What happened at Minnesota was not an emotional temper display during an athletic event, as most members of the world of jockdom would have you believe. It was a physical attack on human beings and humanity.

Wayne Duke is apparently so tied up in the world of sports he cannot see the forest for the trees.

Look at the Minnesota incident, then consider these words Howard Cosell said last February:

"Isn't sport part of life? Shouldn't it have the same treatment as all other elements of human life?"

"Should it be for everyone a privileged, tiny sanctuary removed from real life where every athlete is a saint and every game a coronation?"

"The mere fact that some people get a surcease on a Saturday afternoon is not sufficient to cover up the wrongs that exist in sport."

Sp Duke suspended for the rest of the 1972 season the two Minnesota players primarily involved. It was a chicken way out; he did not face the situation head-on as he should have.

The minimum penalty that should have been levied is a total suspension of the University of Minnesota from basketball competition for the remainder of this season. It is hard to believe Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen were not at least suspended from NCAA sports permanently.

But the incident did not involve the actions of only Taylor and Behagen.

What about Dave Winfield, the Minnesota player who is clearly shown in films pummeling Mark Wagar's head? What about those other players chasing Buckeyes around the floor trying to get in a few licks? What about the team that did not try to restrain its own members from beating the Buckeyes? What about those Minnesota fans who joined in the assault?

And what about the Minnesota coach who showed no apparent effort to restrain the beatings inflicted by his team and then had the audacity to term the suspension of the two players "a bit harsh"?

If Bill Musselman really believes the action taken was "a bit harsh" there is no position for him in collegiate athletics.

Musselman's lack of decisive action, lack of discipline and lack of comment on the situation has already deemed him unfit for collegiate coaching.

But there is still hope Minnesota will not get off with the wrist-slap issued by Wayne Duke. Perhaps the University of Minnesota will take action, or perhaps the NCAA will do something.

It is inconceivable everyone is going to brush the issue aside and make only an effort to keep it from repeating. It already happened. We all know Luke Witte could have been killed. And Minnesota should be penalized.

The only beneficial note from the Minnesota incident has been sounded for the criminal society. Anyone planning a crime knows where to commit it now — in the athletic arena. Because he may get off scot free.

Wigton, a sophomore in journalism, is in his second quarter as assistant city editor and has served as assistant sports editor.
Legal counsel to be available to injured basketball players

By Mike Balduf and A.C. DiFrancesco

Legal counsel will be made available to injured Ohio State basketball players who wish to file suit resulting from injuries in Tuesday's game at Minnesota, according to Ohio State Athletic Director J. Edward Weaver.

Weaver was responding to wire service reports which said, "Coach Fred Taylor suggested injured players should file civil or criminal suits."

However, Taylor denied Sunday that he had called for any specific action, "All I said was that we should seek legal counsel," Taylor said.

Taylor added that Luke Witte and Mark Wagar have a "good chance" of playing in Tuesday's basketball game here against Iowa.

Witte and Wagar suffered brain concussions at Minnesota. They sat out of the Michigan game Saturday while Ohio State lost, 85-78.

Mark Minor, one of the injured players, said Sunday he did not plan to take any legal action. Witte and Wagar could not be reached for comment.

Big Ten Commissioner Wayne Duke announced Friday that Minnesota players Corky Taylor and Ron Behaghel would be suspended for the rest of the season.

Taylor said he didn't know whether the suspensions were made by the Big Ten or by Minnesota. "I don't think anybody knows," he said.

Duke said the University of Minnesota will continue to investigate the incident.

Taylor, Weaver, and University of Michigan basketball coach John Orr have urged additional investigation.

Weaver, who is attending a Big Ten Athletic Directors meeting in Chicago today, said, "The entire basketball program at Minnesota should be examined from top to bottom."

Duke said the Big Ten meeting will review game administration including crowd control, security, and pregame and post-game formats.

Taylor said no formal apology had been received from the University of Minnesota, but that Minnesota coach Bill Musselman approached him after the game and asked about Luke Witte's condition.

Taylor replied, "It's none of your business. Get away from me."

Minor said Musselman visited him in the hospital after the game and was "very apologetic."

Assistant coach Robert Burkholder said Musselman said he was "sorry."

Burkholder replied, "Yes, I'm sorry too."

Taylor refused to comment on the severity of action taken against Minnesota players. "I don't know what the word 'suspension' means. It's an academic question."

Burkholder commented that since investigations were incomplete "Our opinion would be premature."

Taylor claimed there were "no overt acts of aggression by any Ohio State player." He said his players tried to "hold back" people involved in the incident. He said he has never advised his players to do anything in a violent incident occurs except to "Attemp to stop it."

Taylor said he agreed with Governor Gilligan's description of the incident as a "public mugging."

Taylor said Minnesota's controversial Harlem Globetrotter's style program warmup was "kind of funny."

"But," he added, "if it's so funny, and not meant to be psychologically damaging to the other team, they ought to take it off the road with them."

Taylor claimed Minnesota hesitates to include the pre-game show at away games because it alienates their opponents' home fans.

The loss to Michigan while Witte and Wagar sat on the sidelines left Ohio State in second place in the Big Ten. Minnesota and Michigan now share the lead.

Mark Minor was asked how he would feel if Minnesota won the Big Ten basketball title.

"I hate to even think about that," said Minor.

The Ohio State Lantern
Minnesota suspensions opposed by black group

By A. C. DiFranco

A group of about 150 people entered the University of Minnesota administration building Monday and demanded the reinstatement of suspended Minnesota basketball players Ron Behagen and Corky Taylor, according to Nick Coleman, editor of the University of Minnesota Daily, the student newspaper.

Coleman said the predominately black group was sponsored by the Afro-American Action Committee (AAAC). The group included Behagen; Bob Murphy, another Minnesota player; and Earl Craig Jr., a Minnesota instructor who is prominent in local peace movements and black politics at Minnesota. Craig was an unsuccessful challenger to Hubert Humphrey in the 1970 senatorial elections.

According to Coleman, Josie Johnson, the only black regent at the University of Minnesota, was also present.

Eugene Eidenberg, acting vice president for administration at Minnesota confirmed Coleman’s account of the events. Minnesota president Malcolm Moos was in conference with students and not available for comment.

According to Eidenberg, Moos spoke with the group of protesters inside the administration building.

The group criticized Moos for apologizing to President Fawcett. Moos replied that he “did not apologize. I said we are all concerned about the incident.” Eidenberg emphasized that Moos did express deep concern over the incident at the game in which several Ohio State players were injured.

Eidenberg confirmed that Moos had told the protesters an appeal of the suspensions would be made to the Big Ten if it would be successful.

There has been much confusion as to who actually suspended Behagen and Taylor.

Eidenberg explained Monday night that the two were originally suspended for an indefinite period on Thursday by Minnesota coach Bill Musselman, but on Friday they were suspended for the remainder of the season by Big Ten commissioner Wayne Duke.

Moos said if any legal action was taken by Ohio State against Minnesota players “we will defend them.”

He added, “It is wrong to single out two individuals here for what is a corporate responsibility,” according to Eidenberg.

He said no arrests were made. “The group was in no way a violent one.”

In a press release issued before Monday’s events, Fawcett stated “I have talked with Moos, who shares my concern for the safety of players and protection of intercollegiate sports.”
OSU players could face action by Minnesotans

By A. C. DiFranco

The president of the University of Minnesota has indicated that action might be taken against Ohio State basketball players involved in the disturbance during the Minnesota-Ohio State game January 25.

Three Ohio State players were injured during the fight, which prompted officials to end the game 36 seconds early.

President Malcolm Moos was quoted Tuesday by the Minnesota student newspaper, the Daily, as saying the action could come from the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Committee. Moos was unavailable for comment Tuesday night.

In other public statements, Minneapolis-area black leaders criticized disciplinary actions taken against Minnesota basketball players Ron Behagen and Corky Taylor by the Big Ten.

Josie Johnson, the only black regent at Minnesota, attended a demonstration at the Minnesota administration building Monday against the suspensions of Behagen and Corky Taylor and said public and official reactions to the game incident have "very strong racial overtones."

Gleason Glover, executive director of the Minneapolis Urban League (MUL) and a part-time instructor at the University of Minnesota, said, "this incident has generated smacks of racial overtones in view of persistent references to 'hoodlum actions', 'barbaric music', and related remarks closely associated with the black experience."

Johnson also said the phrases used to describe the incident, including "public mugging," were to "all of us who are black, immediately known" as racially motivated.

Johnson described the suspensions of Behagen and Taylor as "the most severe penalties in the history of the Big Ten."

At a press conference Monday with Behagen, Behagen's mother, and Corky Taylor, Glover said "whereas the Minneapolis Urban League does not condone the action of any basketball players involved in this incident, the unprecedented action" taken

against Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen has caused grave concern among large segments of black Twin Cities residents and black residents throughout the Midwest."

Glover blamed "political pressures exerted by the governor of Ohio, the circus-like atmosphere created by the news media, and the continued cry for blood by coach Fred Taylor" for making impossible a "fair and just decision on the part of Big Ten Commissioner Wayne Duke."

"The severity of commissioner Duke's actions becomes obvious when compared with the thug-like actions of Ohio State football coach Woody Hayes" at the 1971 Michigan-Ohio State football game, Glover charged. "Based on Duke's decision Friday to suspend Behagen and Taylor, Hayes should have been suspended and his contract terminated," Glover added.
Shocknessy calls basketball ‘attempt to commit homicide’

By Thomas Niehaus

The now infamous brawl at Minnesota was described by Trustee Chairman James W. Shocknessy Friday as "an apparent attempt to commit homicide."

Shocknessy made the statement during a 30-minute review of the Jan. 25 incident. J. Edward Weaver, director of the Department of Athletics, told the trustees about the incident and about the actions that have been taken so far.

Two players, Luke Witte and Mark Wagar, were hospitalized as a result of beatings they suffered during the brawl, and Mark Minor was injured. Two Minnesota players were suspended for the remainder of the season by Big Ten commissioner Wayne Duke.

Up to now, "everything that should have been done has been done," Weaver said.

He said he was satisfied with the actions that have been taken, on the basis that he "knows the investigation is continuing by both the commissioner's office and the University of Minnesota.

"We are in a waiting period, a period I hope doesn't involve too much time," he said.

Shocknessy said he was watching the game on television when the incident occurred and found it "strangely reminiscent of that Sunday morning in Dallas, Tex., when millions of Americans saw President Kennedy killed."

"On that evening in Minnesota, a challenge was offered to us in education," Shocknessy said.

He said he thought Governor Gilligan was "charitable in his characterization" of the incident. Gilligan called it a "public mugging."

"We cannot overlook the fact that the incident may have been the result of a lot of failures by a lot of people," Shocknessy said.

"I am not passing judgment," he said.

Athletics are "the highest echelon of sports in the University," Shocknessy said.

Shocknessy said his remarks were not to be construed as criticism of Weaver.
Reinstatement suit says Big 10 rules omit fights

By A. C. DiFranco

The possibility of a court order overruling the suspensions of University of Minnesota basketball players Ron Behagen and Corky Taylor received "guarded optimism" Sunday from Corky Taylor's attorney Ron Simon.

Simon also commented there would "definitely not" be any legal action against Ohio State or its players and coaches involved in the fight at the Minnesota-Ohio State game January 25.

Behagen and Taylor, who were suspended for the remainder of the season for their part in the fight during the last 36 seconds of the game, filed a motion Friday in United States District court to grant a temporary restraining order against the Big Ten's suspension.

U. S. District Court Judge Earl Larson denied the temporary order Saturday morning.

Larson set Friday for a formal hearing on the restraining order.

Simon said Behagen and Taylor are suing the Big Ten partly as a result of "not being provided with a formal hearing or an opportunity to present their side of the story."

He said neither of the two players were called by the Big Ten or the University of Minnesota Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Inter-collegiate Athletics (TCIAC) to present a rebuttal of charges against them.

Even if the court overrules the Big Ten suspension, however, Simon says Behagen and Taylor could still be suspended by another group, including the TCIAC.

At the hearing Friday Simon said he will try to prove "the Big Ten doesn't have the authority to suspend players for unsportsman-like conduct."

"The Big Ten never issued any written statement as to what rule had been broken, or what the accusations were" against Behagen and Taylor.

Simon claims the Big Ten regulations do not cover fighting or unsportsman-like conduct, which the two players have been accused of.

Simon added "the inflammatory nature of news coverage resulted in far greater punishment."

Simon cited Ohio State coach Fred Taylor's "overkill" statements and statements by Governor John Gilligan and other public figures as turning public opinion at Minnesota against Ohio.

Simon claimed Minnesota coaches and players avoided commenting on the fight at the request of Big Ten Commissioner Wayne Duke. Simon said Ohio State did not abide by Duke's request.

"Since people in Minnesota kept quiet for a few days, the charges from Ohio went unrebuted."

Charges of racism, according to Simon, would be very hard to prove. He said he had "very strong" personal opinions concerning the charges of racial overtones, but would not comment on what they were.

Concerning the rumors of legal action by Minnesota players or others against Ohio State players involved in the incident, Simon denied any plans were known to him.

"I have been very close to this situation, and nobody I have ever talked to has ever talked about any action. I'm sure Behagen and Taylor have no malice toward Ohio State. Any action like this would be hypocritical."

Simon thought proposed bills in the Ohio legislature to ban future Minnesota-Ohio State games are motivated by people who "want to make some political hay."

He was, "quite amused" by Ohio State Athletic Director J. Edward Weaver's comment, "I am deeply concerned about a member institution challenging the decision of the commissioner."

Simon claimed Weaver's statement was "typical of the old school of thought that is outmoded thinking in this day and age."
By A.C. DiFrancesco

A federal judge in Minneapolis will rule today on a motion to bring a preliminary injunction against the Big Ten for its suspension of two University of Minnesota basketball players involved in a fight at the Minnesota-Ohio State game Jan. 25.

Ron Simon, attorney for suspended player Corky Taylor, said Monday the motion, if granted, means Taylor and Ron Behagen will be reinstated with the team and will be able to play the remainder of the season.

"If the motion is denied, Taylor and Behagen are out for the season," Simon said. No appeal was planned in case of a court denial, he said.

However, a third possibility, that the injunction will be granted with provisions for the Big Ten to reconsider the suspensions, would probably "in my estimation, result in Taylor and Behagen being suspended again," Simon said.

At a court hearing in Minneapolis Friday, the players' attorneys argued that the suspensions were handed down by the Big Ten prior to a hearing with the players.

Simon said the Big Ten suspensions came at the same time as suspensions by the University of Minnesota Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Inter-collegiate Athletics (TCIAC).

According to Simon, however, TCIAC did not suspend the two from practicing with the team. The ban on practice, Simon said, was stipulated by the Big Ten. He said the practice ban was "further punishment" and outside the authority of the Big Ten.

Byron Gregory, attorney for the Big Ten, said in court Friday, "We can't have a federal court next to every basketball court every time someone feels he hasn't been heard."

Gregory said taking the matter "out of Big Ten hands would emasculate the commissioner's office and the conference."

In court Friday, Taylor and Behagen said they were not given a chance to properly explain their actions.

During the game Jan. 25, when Ohio State player Luke Witte was fouled and knocked to the floor, Taylor, according to his affidavit, "extended my hand to assist him. At this time he spit at me and I lost my temper and kneed him in the groin."

Taylor said Big Ten Commissioner Wayne Duke "apparently reached the conclusion Witte had not spit at me, based, I believe in some parts, on what I said in answer to his questions. I tried to make this clear to Mr. Duke, but probably I am unable to express myself as well as I would like, especially under these circumstances when I was nervous."

Behagen claimed, "Mr. Duke questioned me in such a manner that he was telling me what I had done rather than asking me to tell my story."

In closing remarks at the hearing Friday, U.S. District Court Judge Earl Larson asked Gregory, "Don't you agree that where substantial penalties are to be imposed, there has to be a specification of charges, notice of the charges, and a hearing?"

Attorneys for Taylor and Behagen claim none of these things were provided.

TCIAC, which originally recommended suspension of the players for the season, is now urging reinstatement, according to Simon.
Appeal by Behagen, Taylor uncertain

The Ohio State Lantern

By A. C. DiFranco

Suspended University of Minnesota basketball players Ron Behagen and Corky Taylor said Sunday they had not decided whether to appeal the Big Ten's decision Friday to uphold their suspensions.

Seven Big Ten athletic directors voted unanimously Friday to uphold the earlier suspensions, which were challenged in federal court by Behagen and Taylor.

U.S. District Court Judge Earl Larson on February 21 ordered the Big Ten to give Behagen and Taylor a new hearing, based on the players' suit asking for a temporary injunction against the Big Ten for violating their right to due process.

Any appeal to the Big Ten decision must be announced by Wednesday, according to Reed Mackenzie, an attorney for Behagen.

Behagen and Taylor said in a telephone interview Sunday they had not conferred with their attorneys about possible appeals.

"In view of the politics involved, it might be a farce to appeal the Big Ten decision," Taylor added. He claimed there was a "lot of pressure on (Big Ten Commissioner) Wayne Duke by the news media and others" to keep Taylor and Behagen suspended.

Behagen charged that Ohio State has more influence in the Big Ten than other members, and denied that influence against Minnesota.

Behagen and Taylor claimed their suspensions were, in Taylor's words, "part of an overall effort to slow down the Minnesota basketball program.

Taylor claimed statements against Minnesota basketball coach Bill Musselman were also part of the "overall effort."

Behagen and Taylor talked about the incident at the Minnesota-Ohio State basketball game January 25.

In the last 36 seconds of the game, Ohio State player Luke Witte was on the floor and Taylor extended his hand to Witte. At this point, Taylor claims Witte spit at him.

Witte was cleared of the spitting charge in the Big Ten hearing report released Friday. "In our opinion, Mr. Witte did not spit on Mr. Taylor," the report said.

But Taylor, who maintains Witte did spit at him, said the spitting was "something I just couldn't accept happening to me." Taylor admits to kneeling Witte in the groin following the alleged spitting.

"Later the kneeling was called an unsportsmanlike act," Taylor said, "but I started out extending my hand to help Luke Witte up, what I consider to be a very sportsmanlike act."

Ron Behagen, on the Minnesota bench at the time, left the bench and came toward Witte.

"I didn't kick Witte in the head. I tried to kick him in the head, but I tripped and my foot landed on his neck," Behagen said. "I admit I tried to, and I admit I was wrong for this."

"I grew up fighting like this," Behagen said. "When a fight breaks out, you fight the best way you know how. I was supposed to be the team captain, and I got up to help my teammates.

"Corky Taylor and I became the fall guys because we were using our feet and knees," Behagen claimed.

Taylor claims he and Behagen were the only players suspended because "my actions and Ron's were shot all across the country on television and Sports Illustrated (magazine)."

Behagen attributes the incident to unfriendly name-calling between teams at the half.

Behagen said at the Big Ten hearing last week that athletic directors told him he should have forgotten about anything said 35 minutes earlier in the game.

"But how could I forget something that happened 35 minutes ago?" Behagen said, "when black people in America still remember the injustices of 400 years ago?"

Both players said they had no hard feelings toward Ohio State players.

"I respect the abilities of Ohio State players as I would any other opponents," Taylor said.

"I look at basketball as an art," Taylor said. "I'm a competitor in that art. I'm still trying to beat the other team. I can appreciate any animosity against an opponent in the game, but I can't appreciate the statements made after this game."

Behagen said, "Where were all these people with their dramatic statements about violence after the Kent and Jackson State shootings?"

Behagen and Taylor said they hope to play for Minnesota next season, and will work out by themselves now to stay in shape.
Minnesotans plan suspension appeal

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A University of Minnesota committee said it would appeal the suspension of two University basketball players to Big Ten Conference faculty representatives.

The Twin Cities Campus Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics said late Monday it had sent a telegram to Roy A. Larmee of Ohio State, chairman of the faculty representatives, telling him of the decision to appeal. Larmee is a professor of educational administration.

Larmee said Monday night, however, "I have not heard from them. We have had no communication whatsoever."

The conference athletic directors upheld the suspensions of Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen last week after a hearing in Minneapolis. The suspensions resulted from a brawl during the Minnesota-Ohio State game Jan. 25.

Minnesota faculty representative Max Schultz said the telegram was sent to Larmee with copy going to Big Ten Commissioner Wayne Duke in Chicago.

Schultz said the committee hoped the appeal, backed by the University's central administration including the president and vice president, would be heard no later than Friday.

"I have no idea what the appeal procedures would be," Larmee said from his Columbus home. "This would be determined by the Big Ten office, and I am sure league attorneys would be involved."

Minneapolis requested as appeal site

The date and location of an appeal hearing on the suspensions of two Minnesota basketball players has not yet been determined.

The Twin Cities Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (TCIAC) sent a telegram Monday to Ohio State's Roy A. Larmee, chairman of the Big Ten Faculty Representatives, about TCIAC's decision to appeal.

The season-long suspensions of Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen were upheld last week by Big Ten athletic directors in a meeting in Minneapolis.

Larmee would not comment on the hearing.

"I don't want to disqualify myself by commenting," he said. "This is a personal decision not to comment. I have not been advised by anyone."

Michael D. McClure, director of the Big Ten Service Bureau, said Tuesday he didn't know if the hearing would be moved to Minneapolis from the Big Ten's Chicago headquarters.

Ron Simon, attorney for Taylor, said TCIAC requested that the appeal hearing be moved to Minneapolis. He said the two players will present the same testimony they gave at the Friday Big Ten hearing.

Simon said the upcoming appeal will be the last legal move available to lift the suspensions. The players were suspended following a brawl during the Minnesota-Ohio State game Jan. 25.
Big Ten faculty upholds Minnesota suspensions

3-9-72

CHICAGO (AP) — The Big Ten refused Wednesday to allow newly-crowned conference basketball champion Minnesota to beef up its NCAA tourney effort and lift the five-week suspension of two Gopher players.

In final action in the effort by Minnesota to free Ron Behagen and Corky Taylor from their sidelinedness because of a game disturbance, the Big Ten policy-making faculty representatives, by an 8-0 vote, wiped out any chance for the Gopher pair to play in the NCAA.

The faculty group also, in a split vote, approved freshman play on varsity football and basketball teams next fall, following NCAA policy.

The faculty group spent three days of studying transcripts, viewing evidence and hearing Behagen and Taylor before sustaining a Feb. 25 verdict maintaining the suspensions by league athletic directors in a federal court-ordered meeting at Minneapolis.

The faculty group concluded that the conduct of Behagen and Taylor, who both attacked the prostrate Luke Witte, 7-foot Ohio State center in a game-ending disturbance at Minneapolis Jan. 25, was "unsportsmanlike and in violation of conference standards."

Witte and two other Ohio State players required hospital treatment for injuries received in the melee which occurred with 35 seconds remaining in Ohio State's 50-44 victory.

The faculty group with chairman Roy A. Larson, professor of educational administration at Ohio State, and Minnesota's Max Schultze abstaining from the vote, concluded that any possible provocative circumstances did not warrant the conduct by Taylor in a groin-kneeing of Witte and the stomping by Behagen on Witte's head.

Marcus Plant of Michigan, acting faculty group chairman, said the conference ordered reports on the Jan. 25 fracas by Minnesota and Ohio State filed with Commissioner Wayne DuBose by Monday to ascertain what further "remedial" action will be taken against others who may have been involved in the brawl.

The reaffirmation of the conference's decision to follow all other major conferences in adopting the freshman-varsity policy came on a split vote.

Plant said more than two schools voted against use of freshmen on varsity football and basketball teams, but declined to reveal the exact ballot. Illinois and Minnesota previously announced their opposition.

Big Ten faculty hear final appeal

7-9-72

Big Ten faculty representatives heard testimony in the final appeal by suspended University of Minnesota basketball players Monday in Chicago. A decision by the representatives is expected today.

Ron Behagen and Corky Taylor, suspended for their part in a disturbance at the Jan. 25 Minnesota-Ohio State game, appealed suspension handed down by the Big Ten Feb. 25.

According to Taylor's attorney, Ron Simon, the University of Minnesota Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics seeks to lift suspensions on Behagen and Taylor in time for post season play.

Simon said Big Ten faculty representatives chairman Roy A. Larson, professor of educational administration at Ohio State, and Max Schultze, faculty representative from University of Minnesota, disqualified themselves from voting in the appeal decision.

Briggs said the Big Ten should take action after the university takes some kind of action in matters of this nature."
Bucks vote no for NIT quest

10 Mar 72

The Ohio State basketball team must sit and wait for next season. The players voted down a bid to play in the National Invitational Tournament Wednesday afternoon to be held at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

In what was somewhat of a surprise decision, a majority of the team decided that the season ended Tuesday evening instead of letting it go on over vacation.

For Allan Hornyak, the vote came as no major surprise. "The team has talked about it during the season. I personally didn't want to go." Horn-yak did say however that if the team had gone he would have played as best he could.

"Not winning the Big Ten was a letdown for the team," Hornyak said. "Apparently we felt that there is nothing much to gain by going to the NIT."

Earlier in the day, Indiana University, the league's fourth-place team accepted a berth in the 16-team tournament running March 17-25.

"The squad voted not to go," Coach Fred Taylor said. Although the vote was not unanimous the coach and the athletic department respected the final decision.

Hornyak said he was surprised that Taylor let the team make the final decision.
Silence for Gophers

2-7-73

By James D. MacQueen

Greet Minnesota's Golden Gopher in absolute silence Saturday night. Not a sound when they walk out on the floor. So quiet, you can hear a pin drop as the players are introduced. No boos, no whistles, no catcalls. Just absolute, awesome silence.

It's part of a city-wide campaign which has a two-fold purpose.

The first purpose of the silence campaign is to prevent any incidents from happening in St. John Arena.

Most people in Columbus easily remember how they felt about Minnesota after last year's incident. Most felt there was no lower spot on earth than Minneapolis. The Gopher basketball players were characterized as villains. Coach Bill Musselman lost the respect of the coaching fraternity and most sports fans. Sports Illustrated put the light of disgrace on the entire University of Minnesota.

No retaliation

If there is any type of retaliation during Saturday's game, Ohio State will be viewed in the same light. But, no one can characterize a silent crowd as an unsportsmanlike crowd.

The second purpose of the silence campaign is more practical if you're a Buckeye fan and would like to see them win the game.

Minnesota is going to come to Columbus expecting to be booed. Unfortunately, they're so used to it that it won't bother them a bit.

As defending Big Ten champions and proprietors of Williams Arena, a very unfriendly place to play, they've been booed everywhere they've played. They expect it. They probably even like it a bit.

But if they were greeted in absolute silence — if no one even acknowledged their presence on the court — that might unnerve them completely. A shaken basketball player is not likely to play very well.

Weaver comments

Athletic Director Ed Weaver held a press conference last Thursday to try and influence the direction of media coverage for this game.

"It's a bit ironic that we would call a press conference of this type to soft-peddle an athletic event," Weaver said. "We've given great thought to the playing of this contest, and have decided that so long as Ohio State and Minnesota both remain members of the Big Ten, we shall continue our relationship as normally as possible.

"So far as security is concerned, we have as fine a security as there is in the country for our athletic events and we have no intention to bother it up.

"It seems best to us to depart as little as possible from the norm. We'll do things in the normal way.

TV audience

"This game will reach audiences from 150 some television stations, a national broadcast. In our humble opinion, the greatest thing we could do would be to sell the people of Columbus on the fact that this is the greatest opportunity in the history of our sports to display Ohio State's fine sportsmanship.

"Ohio State has as fine a crowd as any place in the country — sportsmanlike crowds. I have no fear of any incident whatsoever. Since last spring, I have honestly had the belief that if Ohio State and Minnesota were to play another game, it might be the cleanest basketball game ever played," Weaver said.

Weaver encouraged the press to sell the idea of normalcy to the public.

"If you share my feeling that the game should be played under normal conditions — that there is nothing to be gained by any other action — then give consideration to selling it that way."

Unrealistic

Perhaps because he recognized that this was a little unrealistic, or perhaps because he felt that the idea of asking the press to "sell" something to the public was distasteful, Weaver said, "I'd like as little reference to my remarks and to this meeting as possible."

It is unrealistic to pretend that this is just a normal game after what happened in Minnesota. But there is no reason why we at Ohio State have to lower ourselves to the level of the Gophers. That is why the idea of the silence campaign, which is being promoted by other media and several groups like the Rebounders Club, may be so effective.

Weaver seemed to think it might be a good idea when presented by several writers.

Used to boos

"I understand they're used to booping," Weaver said. "I don't expect them to get a round of applause. I think I'd fall out of my seat if they did. It may be true that silence is golden. I understand that several groups like Rebounders have adopted this as their theme for this game — to greet Minnesota in absolute silence.

"If it was so quiet you could hear a pin drop, that might unnerve them quite a bit," Weaver said.

If "Block O" would make a few "Silence, Please" banners, and if everyone would tell his neighbor in St. John Arena to be quiet when the Gophers hit the floor, maybe it would work.

I know that when I see them, I'm going to be still as a mouse.
Four Bucks suspended indefinitely by Taylor

By Greg Kirstein and Duane Alan Whitt

Four Ohio State basketball players were indefinitely suspended Monday by head coach Fred Taylor for disciplinary reasons. Removed from the team prior to Monday's Iowa game were Andy Stiegemoier, junior from Kent, Mark Bayless, freshman from Chillicothe, Steve Wenner, senior from Findlay and Terry Burris, freshman from Whitehall.

Announcement of the suspensions came in the WLUC pregame television broadcast of Monday's game. The announcement said coach Taylor would make a statement on the situation today.

Despite having only eight players available the Buckeyes still won the game, 75-60. Leading 43-36 at the half, Ohio State built leads as big as 16 points in the second period before the Hawkeyes climbed within three at 68-65. But Dan Weston, starting in place of Stiegemoier, made five free throws in the last two minutes of the game to pull the Buckeyes away.

THE THREE remaining starters all hit in double figures, led by Bill Andreas with 22 points. Craig Taylor, playing with two bad knees, scored 21, and Larry Bolden had 16. Weston added 11 points in his first start. Jud Wood, a freshman, started in Bayless' spot.

Stephen A. Snapp, assistant director of publicity for the athletic department, said he did not know what the disciplinary reasons were.

"All I know is that Coach Taylor called our athletic director (J. Edward Weaver) this afternoon and let him know the word (of the suspensions)," Snapp said.

HUGH D. HINDMAN, associate director of athletics, said he knew "nothing at this point." Hindman added he would assume Taylor will have to eventually give reasons for the suspensions to the athletic department.

"Perhaps Mr. Weaver was consulted during the day," Hindman added.

James L. Jones, assistant director of athletics, said he "assumed they (the suspended players) were there (Iowa) and weren't dressed" for the ballgame.

Jones said he had not discussed the situation with Weaver Monday but assumed Weaver had more knowledge of it.

RICHARD L. DELANEY, assistant director of athletics, said he hadn't heard anything about the situation but added Weaver "must know something."

Mrs. William Burris of Whitehall said her son called her to inform her of the suspensions and said he would talk to her more about it Tuesday. Weaver was unavailable for comment.
Players' suspension is still mystery

By Greg Kirstein and
Duane Alan Whitt
2—12—75

The reasons behind the indefinite suspension of four Ohio State basketball players by Coach Fred Taylor Monday afternoon remained unclear Tuesday even though a statement was released by the publicity office of the Department of Athletics.

Senior Steve Wenner, junior Andy Steigemeier and freshmen Mark Bayless and Terry Burris were suspended from the team prior to Monday's Iowa game. The Bucks were left with eight players for that contest.

The statement was released at noon Tuesday after Taylor met with Athletic Director J. Edward Weaver earlier that morning.

THE STATEMENT read: "J. Edward Weaver, director of athletics at OSU, confirmed today (Tuesday) that four members of the varsity basketball team — Mark Bayless, Terry Burris, Andy Steigemeier and Steve Wenner — have been indefinitely suspended from the team for disciplinary reasons. The matter is currently under review by Coach Fred Taylor and the Department of Athletics, and the length of these suspensions will be determined and announced at a later date."

"IN KEEPING with the University-wide policy of maintaining the confidentiality of all student disciplinary records, the department will not discuss the specifics of any conduct infraction on the part of students. We deeply regret the necessity for this action, but fully support Coach Taylor's action, and trust that the outcome of this whole matter will be in the interests of not only the team but also the particular student-athletes who were involved."

Both Weaver and Taylor had been contacted earlier. Prior to the release of the statement, Taylor said he had "no comment to make" and there would not be a press conference Tuesday.

Weaver said, "Before the day is out we will make a determination as to what the extent of the suspensions is."

AFTER THE statement was released, Stephen A. Snapp, assistant director of publicity for the Department of Athletics, said nothing further on the matter was to be disclosed Tuesday. Snapp added he did not know when the "later date" mentioned in Weaver's statement would be.

Bayless had not seen the official statement until contacted by the Lantern at his dormitory. He said he had nothing to say about the suspension, but did single out the word "indefinitely" in a surprised voice as he read the statement.

"We can't say anything right now," Burris said. He added the suspended players were not answering questions because of an order from Taylor.

"HE'S (TAYLOR) supposed to get in touch with us, but he hasn't had a chance yet. He's probably real busy," Burris said.

Burris also said he would be more willing to discuss the situation after it is resolved.

Wenner said he was sorry but wouldn't "answer any questions."

Steigemeier was in his fraternity house Tuesday night. A spokesman for the fraternity said he did not wish to talk to anyone.

Larry Bolden, sophomore guard and backcourt mate of Bayless, said he was in favor of Taylor's decision "without a doubt." Bolden said he had not had a chance to talk to Bayless Tuesday regarding the situation.

BOLDEN SAID, "It was a lot tougher playing without them (the suspended players)." He added, "I think there'll always be problems without some people who can contribute being there."

Craig Taylor, Buckeye center, said he had no comment on the situation. Taylor added he thought the personnel available played as a team in the Iowa game and said "it is hard to tell" the effect of losing the four suspended players.

Fred Taylor said the varsity team would not practice Tuesday and indicated he would start the same lineup in Saturday's Wisconsin game as in Monday's 75-69 victory over Iowa. This lineup included regulars Bill Andreas, Craig Taylor, Larry Bolden, and new starters Dan Weston and Jud Wood.

Team captain Andreas was unavailable for comment.
Officials remaining silent on suspension of players

2-13-75
By Greg Kirstein

The situation regarding the indefinite suspension of four Ohio State basketball players - Steve Wenner, Mark Bayless, Terry Burris and Andy Steigemeier - became somewhat darker Wednesday as no information was released by the athletic department.

While rumors continue to flood the campus, neither Coach Fred Taylor nor Athletic Director J. Edward Weaver issued any type of statement to shed light on the matter.

Taylor said, "I've not finished doing what I want to do (regarding the situation)." He added there would be no statement from him Wednesday.

Taylor added the four players would not practice with the team in Wednesday's closed session. He said any statement delivered will come through the athletic department.

Weaver said there was no new information Wednesday and any statement would come from his publicity department.

"I can't say whether we'll be able to make a statement before Friday or not," Weaver said. He added he cannot be sure of anything until Taylor has made his review of the issue.

Andy Steigemeier was contacted Wednesday afternoon and knew of no new developments in the situation. Steigemeier said he might "possibly" talk to the press when the situation is resolved.

Bayless said, "We still don't know anything and we're not allowed to say anything." He did not know of any meetings.

Checks with five different police departments revealed none of the four players had been arrested. Consulted were the Columbus police, the police departments in both Bloomington, Minn. and Iowa City, Iowa (sites of the two weekend ballgames) and the campus police departments of both the Universities of Iowa and Minnesota.

Media may be hiding information

2-14-75

While the reason for the one-week suspension of the four players remains a mystery to the general public, it appears that at least two members of the Columbus press have information that they are not releasing.

Martin Petree, who broadcasts Ohio State basketball games over WMNI radio, told Lantern basketball writer James Cuffaro that both he and Citizen-Journal reporter Kaye Kessler know the reason for the suspensions. Petree made this statement at basketball practice Wednesday afternoon.

Cuffaro said:

"When the Lantern contacted Petree early this morning, Petree said: "Oh, I said that?"

Petree acknowledges speaking with Cuffaro, but then told the Lantern he has "no idea why the players were suspended." When asked to deny making the statement to Cuffaro, Petree said: "I don't deny anything."

Petree was with the team in the Hotel Curtis in Minneapolis Friday and Saturday nights.

Kessler, also contacted by the Lantern early this morning, denied that he had direct knowledge of the incident that led to the suspensions, but admitted he has more knowledge of the situation than has been published in his paper.

However, Kessler noted, "I'm not going to say how much more."

Kessler said he was not with the team in Minneapolis, but joined them on Monday in Iowa City. The announcement of the suspensions was made immediately before the game with Iowa Monday night.
Offers vague explanation

Taylor reinstates four players

By Greg Kirstein and
Duane Alan Whitt

Ohio State basketball coach Fred Taylor Thursday reinstated the four players suspended Monday but shed only a glimpse of light upon the original reason for the suspensions.

Taylor, speaking at a 4:30 p.m. press conference, said the reinstatement of Terry Burris, Mark Bayless, Steve Wenner and Andy Steigemeier becomes effective Sunday.

Taylor hinted the reason behind the suspensions resulted from the violation of established practices as far as training rules are concerned.

WHEN ASKED by Kaye Kessler, Columbus Citizen-Journal sports writer, if he would stick to his original plan of not divulging the training rule infraction, Taylor nodded in agreement.

Taylor said, "It's been a very difficult week." He added the case had been reviewed "as best as we know how."

"We talked to the four people who were suspended, we talked to their parents, we talked to members of the squad, and trainers and athletic coaches," Taylor said.

He added, "We think we've reached an equitable decision in the violation of long established practices as far as training rules are concerned."

TAYLOR ALSO said the four players were unaware of their reinstatement and would be notified by mail as is University policy.

The players' reinstatement was not effective immediately, because, Taylor said, "I feel that if you're going to reinstate somebody you better make a statement before a ballgame is played, but by the same token, we owe a particular debt of gratitude to those who did play Monday night."

He said the players regretted the affair since he had "never seen people appearing so remorseful."

Steigemeier said he was glad the suspension was over and imagined there was good reason why the reinstatement was effective Sunday.

ASKED IF HE thought the suspensions were fair, Steigemeier said, "Coach Taylor is the coach of the Ohio State basketball team and any decision he makes must be right."

Steigemeier said he did not wish to comment on what the training infraction was and had no further comment on the situation.

Wenner, contacted by the Lantern, said, "I'm sorry. I don't even want to talk to you."

Wenner was then informed of his reinstatement. He said "thank you" and hung up.

When contacted, Bayless had still not heard of his reinstatement from Taylor. Asked if he was relieved to finally have the matter over, he said, "It feels great, that's all I can say, it's great to be back. I love it!"

BURRIS WAS at his family's home in Whitehall when he was told of the decision. "It's good to be back on the team," he said. "That's all I can say."

He was asked whether his being back on the team would cause any tension. "After a while things will go back to normal," he said, "but it's going to take a little while."

He said his teammates have acted much the same throughout the entire situation.

Taylor said the players are eligible to practice Sunday. He added their status on the team is "pretty much up to them."

GARY MELODY, manager of the Hotel Curtis in Minneapolis, where the team stayed from Friday through Sunday, said he had no knowledge of any players causing disturbances nor were local police summoned for any reason.

Al Cameron, desk clerk at the hotel Saturday night after Ohio State's loss to Minnesota, also had no knowledge of actions requiring police to be called.
Fans speak on suspension; opinions cover wide range

By Glenn Duffy
2-19-75
Spectators at Saturday night's Ohio State-Wisconsin basketball game expressed a wide range of opinions about the suspension of four players from the Buckeye squad.

The four, senior Steve Wenner, junior Andy Stiegemeier and freshmen Mark Bayless and Terry Burris, returned to the team Sunday.

One man who expressed a widely held view was William Sayers, a former basketball coach, now an insurance agent in Columbus.

SAYERS SAID, "I have complete trust and faith in (coach) Fred Taylor. I don't think the public has a right to know why they were suspended. If they did something wrong they're lucky to be getting back when they are."

Carl Yearling, a farmer from Columbus, expressed a similar opinion.

"If Freddy Taylor did it, why then it must be alright," he said. "I don't think anyone has a right to know (the reasons). The earmarkings of a great coach is when things go wrong and he doesn't let everybody know. That makes the team stronger."

KATHY KLISHEIMER, a member of the University of Cincinnati women's basketball team, said Taylor was right because "a coach has to stand his ground."

Richard Swope, an attorney from Reynoldsburg, said the athletic department should "definitely" divulge the reasons for the suspensions.

He said, "They talk about the right to privacy, but when you play basketball or football you give up a certain amount of your privacy and the public has a right to know what some of these kids are doing and why they've been suspended."

"SOME OF the rumors I've heard are downright slander and I think it's kind of harmful to them not to know what they did," he said.

Diane Fawcett, a student at Dublin High School, said she thinks Taylor is being secretive "because he didn't have a good reason to suspend them."

Jane Jones, a junior from Columbus, thought the suspensions would have no effect on the team.

She said, "I don't think it could hurt them any more than their record is hurting them already, frankly."

ON THE SUBJECT of Friday's Lantern report that certain members of the Columbus media may be withholding information on the suspensions, Dave Debo, a sophomore from Caledonia, said, "If they're looking out for the better interest of the coach's standpoint, I think it's right. If Coach Taylor thinks it shouldn't be in the open, then it should stand."

Expressing another viewpoint on the subject was Gary Milligan, a worker at the Ohio National Bank, who said, "When the players are kicked off the team and you don't give the reason, especially players that important to the team, well it just isn't right."
1975-76
BIG TEN
BASKETBALL
PREVIEW
CONFERENCE DIRECTORY

University of Illinois – Champaign
Zip – 61820 AC – 217
Head Coach, Lou Henson 333-3400
Asst. Coach, Les Wotulski 333-3400
Asst. Coach, Tony Yotes 333-3400
Asst. Coach, Mark Cowan 333-3400
Head S.I.D., Tab Bennett 333-1390
(home) 359-4784
Asst. S.I.D., Kevin Patrick (home) 352-0744
Asst. S.I.D., Mike Pearson (home) 357-2770
Indiana University – Bloomington
Zip – 47401 AC – 812
Head Coach, Bob Knight 337-2238
Asst. Coach, Harold Andrews 337-2238
Asst. Coach, Bob Welsh 337-2238
Asst. Coach, Bob Donnell 337-2238
Head S.I.D., Tom Miller 337-2421
(home) 352-9800
Asst. S.I.D., Kit Kinzelhoff 337-2421
(home) 353-4990
University of Iowa – Iowa City
Zip – 52240 AC – 319
Head Coach, Lute Olson 352-4912
Asst. Coach, Tony McAndrews 352-3225
Asst. Coach, Floyd Theard 352-4912
Head S.I.D., George Wine 353-3038
(home) 353-3933
Asst. S.I.D., Phil Haddy (home) 352-3012
University of Michigan – Ann Arbor
Zip – 48104 AC – 313
Head Coach, John Ort 663-2411
Asst. Coach, Bill Frieder 663-2411
Asst. Coach, Jim Boyle 663-2411
Asst. Coach, Rick Fife 663-2411
Head S.I.D., Will Perry 763-1381
(home) 971-6438
Asst. S.I.D., Jim Vrekgik 763-1381
(home) 971-2408
Michigan State University – East Lansing
Zip – 48824 AC – 517
Head Coach, Gus Garasah 355-1643
Asst. Coach, Vern Peace 355-1643
Asst. Coach, Pat Miller 355-1643
Asst. Coach, Richard Versace 355-2271
Head S.I.D., Fred Stabiley 352-2334
(home) 352-2334
Asst. S.I.D., Nick Viesta 355-2271
(home) 482-8946
University of Minnesota – Minneapolis
Zip – 55455 AC – 612
Head Coach, Jim Dukich 373-4230
Asst. Coach, Larry Gillman 373-4261
Asst. Coach, Jim Williams 373-4247
Head S.I.D., Bob Peterson 373-5236
(home) 251-5743
Asst. S.I.D., Tom Greenho (home) 757-2124
Northwestern University – Evanston
Zip – 60201 AC – 312
Head Coach, Tex Winter 492-5307
Asst. Coach, Rich Falak 492-5307
Asst. Coach, Walt Perrin 492-5307
Head S.I.D., Jerry Ashley (home) 398-0218
Ohio State University – Columbus
Zip – 43210 AC – 614
Head Coach, Fred Taylor 422-7032
Asst. Coach, Bob Burkholder 422-7032
Asst. Coach, R.J. Werner 422-7032
Head S.I.D., Marv Homan 422-6862
(home) 885-5011
Asst. S.I.D., Steve Snapp 422-6862
(home) 261-1045
Purdue University – West Lafayette
Zip – 47907 AC – 317
Head Coach, Fred Schaus 749-2054
Asst. Coach, Joe Saxson 749-2669
Asst. Coach, Roger Blakeman 749-2637
Asst. Coach, George Faeber 749-2669
Head S.I.D., Greg Kaipping (home) 463-0247
(same) 463-9402
University of Wisconsin – Madison
Zip – 53706 AC – 608
Head Coach, John Powers 262-1911
Asst. Coach, Dave Vander Meulen 262-4599
Asst. Coach, Lamont Weaver 262-1911
Head S.I.D., Jim Mott 263-1811
(home) 233-5009
Asst. S.I.D., Bob Lue 262-1811
(home) 238-3568
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BIG TEN STAFF DIRECTORY
Office: 111 Plaza Dr., Schaumburg, Ill. 60173 – Phone (312) 885-3933

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John Dewey ................................................ Assistant Commissioner (312) 695-2956
Charles D. Henry ......................................... Assistant Commissioner (312) 239-8797
Herman Holzgr .... Supplementary of Officials (312) 259-7188
Jeff Elliot .................................................. Director of Service Bureau (312) 239-8797
John Rosenthal .......................................... Assistant Director of Service Bureau (312) 253-9363
Rosanne Nathanson .................................. Administrative Assistant (312) 864-4516

The Big Ten Service Bureau wishes to extend its sincere gratitude to the Conference Sports Information Directors, their assistants and staffs for the excellent cooperation and assistance in the preparation of this 1975-76 Big Ten Basketball Preview.

ILLINOIS – Tab Bennett ................................ MICHIGAN – Will Perry
INDIANA – Tom Miller .................................. MICHIGAN ST. – Fred Stabiley
IOWA – George Wine ................................... OHIO STATE – Marv Homan
MINNESOTA – Bob Peterson ................................ PURDUE – Greg Kaipping
WISCONSIN – Jerry Ashley .............................. NORTHWESTERN – Jerry Ashley

ABOUT THE COVER – Picture of 1975 Big Ten champion Indiana
1976 BIG TEN BASKETBALL PREVIEW

In many respects, the 1974-75 Big Ten basketball season can best be characterized as the Year of the Hoosiers. Coach Bobby Knight’s Indiana team dominated the conference and the outside competition in rolling to an ungodly record of 34 straight wins and capturing the Big Ten championship by an unprecedented margin of +29 over runner-up Minnesota. Among the highlights of the Indiana season:

- Became the third team in modern Big Ten history to win conference championships in a row.
- Finished the season with a record of 34 straight wins.
- The second school in Big Ten history to compile three straight 20-win seasons.
- Set a Big Ten mark of 21 wins in one year.
- Tied undefeated team in conference history.
- Tied second school in conference history.
- Set Big Ten records for most points (1,570), most field goals (652), and most rebounds (796) in a season.
- Fifth best season field goal shooting percentage in Big Ten history (.53).
- Bobby Knight named Big Ten and NCAA Coach of the Year.

Though the Hoosiers could become only the second team in modern conference history to win at least four straight Big Ten titles, Ohio State took five straight (1963-67). With four of the five starters returning from a year ago, Indiana certainly shapes up as the team to beat, especially since all four were named All-Big Ten honors. Senior Scott May, the Big Ten’s Most Valuable Player a year ago and a consensus All-American forward, is a complete ball player who appears to be totally recovered from a late season arm fracture. Senior guard Quinn Buckner and Bill Wenning make up one of the top backcourt tandems in the league, both ranked among the top ten in assists in the Big Ten but can also put the ball in the hoop when called upon. Junior center Kent Benson (6’11”) improves as much as he did in his sophomore year; he could be the most dominant pivot man in the Big Ten. Major losses from a year ago are Steve Green, an outstanding forward, and senior John Ladowski. Senior Tom Abernathy should do an excellent job in filling the role of Ladowski being equally effective at guard or forward.

PHIL SAUNDERS

Only the width of a basketball ring betw C.J. Kope’s last second shot from upsetting UCLA in the opening round of the NCAA playoffs last year. Kope is gone, along with star guard Joe Johnson, but Michigan is expected to be strong again in ’76 with returning forwards John Robinson and Wayman Britt, one of the few front lines returning in tact from a year ago. They along with guard Steve Groje will be expected to pick up some of the leadership and scoring slack left by the departed veterans. Coach Orr is convinced by many to have had the best recruiting year in the conference with pivot man Paul Hubbard the most highly touted of a talented freshman group.

Veteran coach Don Granakis of Michigan State has only one returning but one that is Terry Furlow, the Big Ten’s leading scorer with a 21.4 average. Little Benny White (5’9”) leads experience in the backline while senior Cedar Miller inherits the center spot from Lindsay Hairson, an All-Big Ten selection in ’75. Only Indiana had a better shooting percentage a year ago, but the Spartans also gave up the most points (52.5/game) and allowed the highest opposition field goal percentage in conference play.

First year coach Jim Dutcher gets to start from scratch at Minnesota where only four letter winners return as a result of graduating seniors and the loss of star forward Joe Rowe. The former Michigan assistant can look to his guards for the foundation of his rebuilding job where senior Phil Saunders and sophomore Osborne Lockhart give him experience, quality players. With a year of Big Ten experience under his belt, 210” Mike Thompson has the potential to become one of the league’s top scorers. Senior Mark Mohr gives the Gophers one of the largest front lines in the conference but with his inexperience, like Hobson, Dutcher is not the stranger to head coaching success, leading Eastern Michigan to national tournament berths in each of his two seasons.

Although listing only two seniors on the roster, the Northwesterners squandered the promised of one. A case in point is guard Billy McKinney, the top scoring backcourt man in the Big Ten a year ago, who, as a junior, has been a team disappointment this year being a relatively small team. Northwestern must work to 6’10” center Jim Killian for greater control of the boards. Coach Tex Winter had an excellent recruiting year which result in freshmen Pete Reese and Bob Kluh pressing for starting berths at forward and center, respectively.

Like a number of other Big Ten teams in ’76, the strength of Ohio State is at the guard spot where Larry Bolden and Mark Bayless both melded among the top ten in assists. Bolden tied teammate Craig Taylor for the number 12 spot in Big Ten scoring averaging 15.7 points per game. Taylor gives the Buckeyes the prototypes Big Ten center at a rugged 6’10” and 355 pounds (5th leading rebounder). Ohio State returns 6’11” Mike Thompson from his 18th year as Buckeye head coach, must find some forwards to replace All-Big Ten selection Bill Andrews.

TOM SCHEFFLER

Purdue’s Fred Schaus is one of four conference coaches who can look forward to four returning starters in ’76. In Bruce Parkinson, a Pan American squad medalist, and Eugene Parker the Boilermakers have one of the Big Ten’s top assist men with Parkinson dialing out a league leading total of 129 in 18 games. Forwards Wayne Walls and Walter Jordan give the Boilermakers experience scoring punch but the two must provide more outstanding leadership of a Purdue team which senior center John Garrett, Tom Schefller seems to have the inside track on Purdue’s post.

Dale Koehler holds the key to whatever hopes Wisconsin has to improve on their eighth place finish of a year ago (5-13 in conference). The senior forward had to split time playing a lot of center for the Badgers in ’75 but was the second leading rebounder in the league (11.1/game) and was the second leading scorer returning this season. Center remains the main problem area for Coach John Powers who hopes Bob Johnson, a JC transfer last year, can adapt to Big Ten play or that 6’10” freshman Al Redd can quickly. Sophomores Bill Pearson and Brian Colbert showed signs of good potential at forward and guard respectively last year and their continued improvement could determine the Badger future.
1975-76 TABLE OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

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PERCENTAGES OF 1975 ROSTERS: 24.5% are freshmen ... 25.2% are sophomores ... 25.8% are juniors ... 24.5% are seniors ... 48.4% are lettermen ... 58.8% of 1975 starters return for the '76 season.

TALLEST PLAYER: Bill Rucks, Illinois, Keith Rathert, Iowa, and Dan McDermott, Purdue, 7-0.

SHORTEST PLAYER: Benny White, Michigan State, and Greg Romano,Ohio State, 5-9.


LIGHTEST PLAYER: Benny White, Michigan State, 148 pounds.

DEAN OF COACHES: Fred Taylor of Ohio State in his 18th Season

ROOKIES: Lou Henson, Illinois, and Jim Dutcher, Minnesota

WINNINGEST BIG TEN RECORD: Bob Knight, Indiana, 50-19=83.3%

WINNINGEST ALL GAME RECORD: Fred Schaus, Purdue, 199-46=75.1%

Overall Career Records, Current Big Ten Coaches

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INDIANA'S SCOTT MAY IS BIG TEN'S 30th MVP

Indiana's Scott May, 6-7, 218 pound forward from Sandusky, Ohio, was honored last year as the Big Ten's Most Valuable Player. The award is presented annually by the Chicago TRIBUNE. May was 10th in league scoring (16.7), 7th in field goal average (55.3%), 9th in free throw average (.78.6%) and was a consensus All-American selection in leading the Hoosiers to the conference championship and the NCAA playoffs.

LAST YEAR'S MVPs

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Michigan State - Lindsay Hairston, C</th>
<th>Minnesota - Mark Olberding, F</th>
<th>Northwestern - Billy McKinney, G</th>
<th>Ohio State - Bill Andrews, F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>*Rich Schmidt, F</td>
<td>*Quinn Buckner, Jr., Indiana</td>
<td>*Scott May, F</td>
<td>Purdue - John Garrett, C</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>*Davis Kiner, F</td>
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*Returns for 1975-76 season

PREVIOUS MVPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1946</th>
<th>Max Michel, Northwestern</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>Jerry Lucas, Ohio State</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Glenn Selko, Wisconsin</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Jerry Lucas, Ohio State</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Murray Wil, Iowa</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Gary Bradski, Ohio St.</td>
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<td>1952</td>
<td>Chuck Darling, Iowa</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Jim Dawson, Illinois</td>
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<td>1953</td>
<td>Don Schreiber, Indiana</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Sam Williams, Iowa</td>
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<td>1955</td>
<td>Chuck Menden, Minnesota</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Rick Mount, Purdue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Robbie Petson, Ohio State</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Jim Cleare, Ohio St.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Jerry Lucas, Ohio State</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Scott May, Indiana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HONORABLE MENTION

Gardner - Rick Schmidt, Ill.; Bob Wilkerson, Ind.; Steve Goote, NIch.; Bobby McKinney, NJ; Larry Bolen, OSU; Bruce Parkinson, Per.; and Bruce McKinney, Wis.


Centers - Mike Thompson, Minn. and Craig Taylor, OSU.
ILLINOIS OUTLOOK

by Coach Lou Henson

Our goal this season for the University of Illinois basketball team is to implement our system. We will work on establishing our fast-break offense, getting our players to rebound the basketball better and above all, to play good defense. We believe that the game is won on the defensive end of the floor. These are the ingredients that every good basketball team has.

We will set goals, but we probably won't be thinking in terms of the number of wins that we might get.

We stress five important factors that must be present in order for us to realize our goals: 1) attitude; 2) team work; 3) shooting; 4) rebounding; and 5) defense. The first two factors, attitude and team work, are particularly important because for a team to be a winner, it must think like a winner. The other three ingredients—shooting, rebounding and defense—must be achieved physically on the basketball court and it is in this area where we have our work cut out for us.

Last season the Illini finished seventh in field goal percentage, tenth in rebounding and tied for seventh in scoring defense. These three figures clearly show why Illinois finished in a tie for ninth in the league.

We believe that if we can master the basics, we can beat anyone on our schedule.

We have told our players that everyone will have an equal opportunity to challenge for a starting position. This competition among the players should make for a very spirited and exciting team for the fans to watch.

Illinois will return six of its 11 lettermen from 1974-75 including four men who started 10 games or more last season. In addition, we have two freshman recruits who we think could lend immediate help.

The major loss, of course, is forward Rick Schmidt who led the team in scoring, rebounding and assists. Probably no one player on the current team can replace his versatility, but we believe that a concerted team effort will fill the void.

The guard situation could be our team's strong suit with both Otto Tucker and Nate Williams returning. Both men are seniors.

Tucker's ability to play defense will fit into our plans very well. His 6-6 frame makes him one of the biggest back court players in the Big Ten and allows him to get a clear shot over his opponents when he flies from the outside. His scoring average is tops among the returnees and he should improve upon that this season.

Our other starter at guard will probably be Nate Williams who ended the season third in both scoring and assists. He will very definitely be a key man in our fast-break offense.

Another young man we're counting on to bounce back is Audie Matthews. At 6-5, he should see service at both guard and forward for us. Audie came to Illinois last year with outstanding high school credentials, but was just not ready physically to play Big Ten basketball. He worked over the summer on improving his stamina and with a little confidence, could be an extremely fine player for us.

Larry Lubin (6-6), an outstanding freshman prospect from Evanston, and sophomore Rick Leghty (6-3) will be in reserve at guard.

As I mentioned before, the major loss at forward is Rick Schmidt. It will be a difficult task to replace him. However, we feel that we have some fine players returning at forward, but all have room for improvement.

Audie Mainwaring, sophomore Rich Adams (6-9) and senior Mike Washington will be the main contenders for the starting berths. Both Adams and Washington will be listed as forward centers and possess good bulk in fighting for positions under the boards. If Adams can improve his rebounding and defense, he could really be a big boost. Washington is an excellent shooter from the outside, but like Adams, needs to better himself in rebounding and defense.

Other men who should see playing time are junior Tim Bushell (6-6) and sophomore Tom Gerhards (6-5). A local boy, freshman Ken Ferdinand (6-7) from Urbana, could make a big contribution this season.

Tom Carmichael, our center last season, has graduated and his replacement will either be Adams or Washington. We feel very fortunate to have two capable players at the same position.

Bill Rack (7-0), our team's biggest player, will be the reserve.

We emphasize both the fast-break and the patterned offense. This is the type of offense that is exciting to the fans and one that players enjoy executing.

We will use a "flush pivot" system where men break from their outside positions to the post. A stationary pivot probably will not be present in our team's new style of offense.

In the past, my teams have been ranked near the top as far as scoring defense and we hope that this team can be the same way. We will use multiple defenses with the basic style being a tight man-for-man set-up.

NATE WILLIAMS

ILLINI ROSTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Ht.</th>
<th>Wt.</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nate Williams</td>
<td>G</td>
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<td>Tom Gerhards</td>
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<td>Rick Leghty</td>
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<td>Mike Washington</td>
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<td>210</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
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</table>

*Indicates Returning Letterman

COACH: Lou Henson (1st Big Ten season)
Big Ten Record: 15-8
Career Record: 240-107 = 69.2% (13 years)

ILLINI FACTS

TOP RETURNING PLAYERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>GFG</th>
<th>FT%</th>
<th>PCT</th>
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<th>Reb</th>
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<td>52</td>
<td>282</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nate Williams</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>10.7</td>
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<td>Mike Washington</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>7.9</td>
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<td>Tom Carmichael</td>
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<td>54</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>131</td>
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ALL-TIME BIG TEN RECORD: 508-378 = 57%, 70 years, 886 games, 6 Championships, 5 Co-championships.

LAST CHAMPIONSHIP: 1963 (1-1-3, tied with Ohio State).

FIELDHOUSE: Assembly Hall (16,128)

1974-75 TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 57,073 games / 8,064 Ave.

COACH: Lou Henson (1st Big Ten season)

1974-75 RECORD (Overall 8-18/Big Ten 6-14)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>W</th>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Ties</th>
<th>W-L Percentage</th>
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<tr>
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<td>L</td>
<td>T</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
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<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>94%</td>
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</table>
INDIANA OUTLOOK
By Coach Bob Knight

Since the question usually arises as to how good this Indiana team will be and what kind of team it will be, I'll deal with it first. Frankly, I don't know. Furthermore, I'm sure this won't be established until we get at least ten games into the season. No two teams are ever alike and each takes time to develop the character and style that its personnel and ability decree.

I'm aware, of course, that because of our four returning starters we will be given a lot of national publicity, but I honestly feel that this will be no handicap—nor advantage, for that matter—to us. Our concern is more simple than that. It doesn't center on specific objectives, such as a conference championship, or winning a tournament. Rather, our goal is to realize every bit of the potential we may have both as individuals and as a team. If we accomplish that, we can accept what those efforts produce without regret.

In assessing this Indiana squad one should begin with strengths we lost rather than those we retain. In Steve Green we lost a scoring leader, a team leader and a young man who contributed greatly to successes of the past three years. John Laskowski had the great facility of coming off the bench to give us an immediate lift. Others we lost made their contributions, even if less recognized.

We will have to compensate primarily in the area of scoring. I feel we have the people who can assume more responsibility for scoring. We can also minimize that loss by improved defense and stronger rebounding. Much of our pre-season emphasis has been placed on those objectives. We are a long way from being what I think we can be in those categories, and our philosophy remains that the cornerstone of our game is defense and that it creates much of our offense.

We have back four of last season's five starters, thus giving us a reasonably set nucleus. We will play a lot of people, as has been our practice, and we feel we have the ability to maintain the tempo of the game.

Scott May is fully recovered from the broken arm he suffered last season and shows no effects, physically, of anything we have seen of him in practice games show him to be again the complete player, a great shooter, defender, rebounder and floor man. Scotty has such great skills that when he scores it seems almost anti-climatical, instead of, as with most players, the climax of the play.

Quinn Buckner and Bobby Wilkerson are the guards, a well-established senior pair. Quinn is in his fourth season as a starter and I hardly need to enumerate his talents. We felt his concentration on basketball last year greatly improved his play. He's a well-rounded player with great awareness of what is going on around him, a team leader who operates the offense effectively and unselfishly.

Wilkerson has grown in inch to 6-7 without any discernible loss in quickness. He's a very unusual athlete, quick enough to play guard, yet with the size and strength to play either the corner or center. The fact that he jumps center for us emphasizes this.

Our only junior starter, Kent Benson, is much stronger in legs and upper body this year and we feel he will continue the steady improvement he achieved from freshman to sophomore years. He's added some weight but it's all muscle. He worked in the summer in some of Dr. Jim Counsilman's isometric devices and believes it has added to his jumping ability.

At Green's forward spot it probably will be Tom Abernethy, a senior who has performed well in clutch assignments over the last three years. Tommy is an intelligent and skilled basketball player and I have no qualms as to his ability to do the job. His quickness and rebounding will help compensate for Steve's greater scoring ability.

We're happy with our bench and won't hesitate to go to it. Wayne Radford performed well as a freshman last year and we used him both at forward and guard. He plays taller than his 6-3 and goes to the basket about as strongly as anyone. Jim Crews, 6-5, is experienced and has fine ability, and we've been working with him some at forward, as well as his normal guard position.

Both Jim Wiaman, 6-3, and Mark Haymore, 6-8, got some experience on them last year and we'll expect much from them this time around. From all indications, we'll receive it.

Our four freshmen will contribute to this season. Rich Valvichias, 6-5, is strong and aggressive and can be a swingman. Bobby Bender is an excellent point guard and outside shooter. Scott Eells is 6-9 and a true forward type, where we want to place him. Jim Roberson, also 6-9, has fine potential. He's a walk-on candidate whose father played football and won a Big Ten discus championship at Indiana.

We have judged the on the squad, which is somewhere around my preference. I like smaller squads. I think you can cover more things with them, play each member more and develop greater togetherness and squad feeling.

BOBBY KNIGHT

HOOSIER FACTS

TOP RETURNING PLAYERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FG</th>
<th>FT</th>
<th>TP</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>REB</th>
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<tr>
<td>Scott May</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent Benson</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>410</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quinn Buckner</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>379</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bob Wilkerson</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>229</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

ALL-TIME BIG TEN RECORD: 459-376 = 549, 68 years, 835 games, 5 Championships, 6 Co-championships.

LAST CHAMPIONSHIP: 1975 (18-0)

FIELDHOUSE: Assembly Hall (17,500)

1974-75 TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 230,218 / 14 games / 16,444 Ave.

COACH: Bobby Knight (5th Big Ten season)

Big Ten Record: 30-10 (83.3%) (4 years)

Careers Record: 195-70 (73.6%) (10 years)

1974-75 RECORD

(Overall 31-1/Big Ten 18-0)

W | 113 | Tennessee Tech | 60 |
W | 74 | at Kansas (OT) | 70 |
W | 98 | Kentucky | 74 |
W | 94 | at Notre Dame | 84 |
W | 90 | Texas A & M | 55 |
W | 92 | Toledo | 70 |
W | 71 | Creighton # | 53 |
W | 97 | Nebraska # | 60 |
W | 98 | Florida # | 84 |
W | 102 | Ohio State @ | 52 |
W | 69 | at Hawaii | 52 |
W | 107 | at Michigan State | 55 |
W | 90 | at Michigan | 76 |
W | 102 | Iowa | 49 |
W | 79 | Minnesota | 59 |
W | 82 | at Northwestern | 56 |
W | 89 | at Wisconsin | 69 |
W | 104 | Purdue | 71 |
W | 72 | Illinois | 57 |
W | 72 | at Ohio State | 66 |
W | 72 | Michigan | 48 |
W | 79 | at Iowa | 56 |
W | 79 | at Minnesota | 54 |
W | 69 | Northwestern | 58 |
W | 93 | Wisconsin | 58 |
W | 83 | at Purdue | 83 |
W | 112 | at Illinois | 89 |
W | 86 | Ohio State | 78 |
W | 94 | Michigan State | 79 |
W | 78 | Texas El-Paso | 53 |
W | 81 | Oregon State | 59 |
W | 90 | at Indiana | 92 |

# Indiana Classic
@ Rainbow Classic
NCAA Tournament

HOOSIER ROSTER

No. NAME Pos. Ht. Wt. Class Hometown
20 *Bob Wilkerson G-F 6-7 200 Sr. Anderson
21 *Qune Bunch (CG) G 6-3 203 Sr. Phoenix, Ill.
22 *Wayne Radford G-F 6-3 194 So. Indianapolis
23 *Jim Wiaman G 6-2 175 So. Quincy, Ill.
25 *Bob Bender G 6-3 178 Fr. Bloomington, Ill.
31 *Scott Eells F 6-9 185 Fr. Hoopston, Ill.
32 *Mark Haymore P-C 6-8 220 So. Cleveland, OH
33 *Tom Abernethy F 6-7 220 Sr. South Bend, IN
34 Rich Valvichias F 6-5 215 Fr. Hammond
42 *Scott May (CC) F 6-7 218 Sr. Sandusky, OH
43 Jim Roberson P-C 6-9 185 Fr. Rochester, NY
45 *Jim Crews G 6-5 195 Sr. Normal, Ill.
54 *Kent Benson C 6-11 245 Jr. New Castle

*Indicates Returning Letterman
IOWA OUTLOOK

by Coach Lute Olson

Well, there's no doubt we had a disappointing season last year, but I firmly believe that if we can avoid another wave of injuries and ailments, this could become a really good team. A few of the things that happened to us last year are:

1. Guard Cal Wulfsberg, who I had intended to be the quarterback of last year's team, injured a knee and was lost for the remainder of the season. The injury came in the season opener, so the people or the team didn't see much of Cal last year.

2. Our other starting guard Scott Thompson contracted mononucleosis after five games. He only missed four games but was unable to regain his stamina or shooting touch for the remainder of the season.

3. At midseason, just when he seemed to be on the right track, our top forward, Dan Frost, broke his left hand and missed the next six games. He was easily our top all-around player last season and six games with him out of the lineup. He returned for our final four games and we won three of them, losing the fourth by only a point to Minnesota. We've got to have him in the lineup for this team to be effective.

Those are the three major mishaps that hit us last season. It's hard to have a team gain consistency when one of your top players is missing from the lineup every game. I definitely think we could have finished higher than seventh in the Big Ten if we could have kept our top players healthy.

Last year was my first season at Iowa. I think I needed a season to adjust to the players and visa versa. Everybody knows what to expect from everybody this season, so things should go much smoother.

Now to go over some of the personnel we have this year.

Dan Frost (a 6-7 senior) had the best average on the team last season with a 14.7 mark. He also ranked third in both team rebounds and assists. He's one player I say can definitely start, if healthy.

Our starting forwards are Larry Parker and Clay Hargrave. Bruce King can go at either center or forward. Parker has started and played quite a bit the last three years. I think he's ready to put it all together this season. He averaged 10.3 last season. Clay Hargrave is only a freshman, but seems to get better each day. He needs to work on his shooting, but is a bonafide Big Ten player.

When I talk about Bruce King, I should talk about Fred Haberek at the same time. Depending on the offense we're playing, they both could be in the lineup at the same time. King was the team's leading scorer last season and has tremendous jumping ability. When Bruce is hot, there aren't many around that can stop him. All he needs is to gain consistency. Fred Haberek may have been our best player at end of last season. He only averaged 9.1 but made tremendous improvement. It's really exciting to watch Haberek and King when they're both at the top of their games.

At the guard spot we've got Scott Thompson and John Hairston as the top returnees. We're also counting heavily on the return of Cal Wulfsberg and the development of freshman Dick Petri.

Thompson was playing superb last season until he got sick. He's an excellent shooter and possibly our best defensive player. He'll be hard to beat out at the wing guard spot. Scotty averaged 10 points a game last year and should be a much higher scorer this season. His big problem is staying healthy all season.

John Hairston is a junior and has looked very good in pre-season drills. He started most games as a freshman, but had an off-season last year. If Wulfsberg doesn't come around, John will become an important link to the team. He already is, of course, but if Cal doesn't make it then the leadership and demands of the point guard spot will rest on John's shoulders.

Cal Wulfsberg is as good as a team leader as there is, that's why it's so important that we get him back at 100 percent physically. He's one of the best passing and assist guards I've ever coached.

Another guard who could see considerable action is Archie Mays. He was our most improved player last season. If he can improve equally as much this season, he'll be a big asset to our team.

Other players that should help us before the season gets too far along are Leon Thomas, Terry Drake, Glen Worley and Mike Gutens. I think one of the strong points of this team will be its bench.

We've got a lot of experience on this team and their goal is to have the best season since the 1970 team. They've got something to prove to the people of Iowa and I think this is the year they'll do it. It's a season we're all looking to with great anticipation.

HAWKEYE FACTS

TOP RETURNING PLAYERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Ht.</th>
<th>Wt.</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dan Frost</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>Jr</td>
<td>Long Beach, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce King</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>187</td>
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<td>Fred Haberek</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-4</td>
<td>195</td>
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HAWKEYE ROSTER

No.

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<th>Wt.</th>
<th>Class</th>
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<td>John Nelson</td>
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<td>William Mayfield</td>
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<td>195</td>
<td>Jr</td>
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*Indicates Returning Letterman

HAWKEYE FACTS

TOP RETURNING PLAYERS:

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HAWKEYE ROSTER

No.

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*Indicates Returning Letterman
MICHIGAN OUTLOOK
by Coach Johnny Orr

In assessing the Michigan team for the 1975-76 season, I would have to say that our optimism has never been higher. We are looking forward to this season with great anticipation. I feel we have the talent to be a contender for the Big Ten championship and our attitude to go along with it.

The fact that we have had two outstanding seasons (22-5 in 1973-74 and 19-4 in 1974-75) back-to-back has aroused enthusiasm in our program. Our team attitude toward winning is very good and we are confident that attitude will be picked up by the new players who are coming in.

Our biggest job this year will be replacing C.J. Kupesic and Joe Johnson, our two co-captains and leading scorers of last year who have both graduated.

We simply don't have anyone of C.J.'s size and strength to fill that void but I do feel we have two pretty good candidates for the pivot position. Phil Hubbard is a 6-foot-7 freshman with great quickness out of Canton McKinley High School in Ohio and he's going to be a super player for us, but he's got a lot to learn and it might take some time. The other man at the pivot is 6-foot-9 Tom Bergren, who is a transfer student from the University of Utah where he was the backup center to Mike Sojourner two years ago. Tom is a good offensive player.

Our strength will be with our returning starters at forwards and guards. I think we will also have some great depth at these positions.

At forward, we have our only starting senior, Wayman Britt, who will serve as the team captain. Wayman is a tremendous competitor and one of the most outstanding players in the country. He has a super attitude and all the players on the team really respect him. He's probably the only forward in the country who can do the things he does. His defense is excellent, he's a great leaper and very, very quick plus he's a good scorer (11.5 points per game over the last two years.)

At the other forward is John Robinson, who developed into a real fine player for us last year. He learned to play defense and that was the key for him, because he's always been a good offensive threat. (He was the Ten last year in field goal percentage, .603). Giving Robinson some good competition for his starting position is Joel Thompson. Joel grew an inch since last year and he's now 6-8 with a whole lot more confidence than last year. He was our leading scorer this summer when the Michigan team toured Egypt for 15 days playing the Egyptian National Team.

Our guard situation is probably the best on the team. Returning as a starter is Steve Grote, who's probably one of the most physical guards and one of the most intense competitors to be found anywhere. In the second half of the Big Ten last year, I definitely think Grote was one of the best guards in the conference. He was the key player in getting us into second place and into the NCAA tournament. Our other guard with considerable experience is Dave Baxter. He started several games for us last year and did a very good job for a freshman; he plays good defense and is a great middle man on the fastbreak. Looking very good and our early practices has been another guard, Ricky Green, who was a Junior College All-American at Virginia Tech. We feel he's an excellent defensive player, very quick and a good outside shooter.

The greatest assets this team will have will be its quickness and depth. I'm sure it's no secret around the league that for us to win, we have to run, We're too tall to outmatch anybody and our bench will be the best we've been here, particularly at forward and guard.

I think this team will improve a great deal as the season goes along. We have some excellent young players who should improve and mature. We had an outstanding recruiting year last year. In addition to Hubbard, who was a consensus high school All-American, we have a forward Alan Hard, the Most Valuable Player in the Detroit Public School League last year, another forward Bobby Jones, an all-state player from Gulfport, Miss., and a guard Tom Staton, an all-state from Farmerdale, Mich. All three of these players were mentioned on some type of prep All-American team. Besides Beggen and Green, we have one other transfer student who helped us. That's Edgar Burch, who started a number of games his freshman year at Duke.

In all we have the only 6-2 guards and two new coaches in our varsity program this year, so it's obvious there is a lot of learning that must take place. Our new coaches are Jim Boyce, a former high school coach in Detroit who was also on the staff at the University of Detroit, and Dan Fife, one of my former captains, who played guard at Michigan four years ago. Together with Bill Frieder, who has been here for two full seasons, we will have an outstanding staff. We will be ready for the challenge of the 1975-76 season.

WOLVERINE FACTS

WOLVERINE ROSTER

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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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*Indicates Returning Letterman

STEVE GROTE

SUGGESTED SCHEDULES

WOLVERINE FACTS

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ALL-TIME BIG TEN RECORD: 370-380 = 493, 58 years, 750 games, 4 Championships, 4 Co-championships.

LAST CHAMPIONSHIP: 1974 (12-2, tied with Indiana)

FIELDHOUSE: Crutier Arena (13,608)

1974-75 TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 97,397 / 13 games / 7,492 Ave.

COACH: John Orr (8th Big Ten season)
Big Ten Record ........ 63-39 = 61.8% 7 years
Career Record ........ 149-99 = 61.1% 10 years

1974-75 RECORD (Overall 19-4/Big Ten 12-6)

W 64 Toledo
W 71 Tennessee
L 67 at Southern Illinois
L 61 at Dayton
W 84 Virginia Tech*
W 66 Gonzaga
L 62 Western Michigan #
W 71 at Eastern Michigan #
W 86 at Illinois (2 OT)
W 85 at Ohio State
L 76 Indiana
L 79 at Michigan State
W 75 at Iowa
L 58 at Minnesota
L 75 at Wisconsin (OT)
L 75 at Indiana
L 48 at Indiana
W 96 Michigan State
W 89 Iowa
W 67 Minnesota (OT)
W 69 at Northwestern
L 68 at Wisconsin
L 65 at Michigan State
L 76 at Michigan (OT)
W 77 Illinois
W 83 at Ohio State
L 70 at California (OT)
L 103 Michigan Invitational*

* Motor City Classic
© NCAA West Regional
MICHIGAN STATE OUTLOOK
by Coach Gus Ganakas

We'll be seeking our fifth straight winning season as we head into 1975-76. The record a year ago was 17-8, and that was our best since the 1966-67 team which won 16-7 and tied Indiana for the Big Ten title with ten wins and four losses in the conference.

It'll be difficult to match the 17-9 record. It's always a battle to be a contender in the Big Ten. To have the good season we must have a strong team effort.

We'll have six lettermen returning and they include one starter. Gone are another six lettermen and they include the other four starters.

Our one proven great coming back is Terry Furlow (6-5). He won the Big Ten scoring title last winter with a 21.4 average and he made the All-Big Ten first team as selected by the Associated Press.

Our major loss is center Lindsay Hairston. He was the Big Ten's leading rebounder the last two years and also made the All-Big Ten first team two straight years. We've also lost first-string guards Pete Davis and Bill Glover along with Jeff Tropp, a starter at forward as a freshman, who's transferred to another school.

We have several veterans who'll be trying for the front-line spots to go along with Furlow, who's a fixture at the one forward spot. Senior Cedric Milton (6-9) has the good shot at center, with senior Lovelle Rivers (6-5) and junior Edgar Wilson (6-5) contending at the other forward spots.

In the backcourt, the inside track belongs to senior Benny White (5-8) and junior Bob Chapman (6-2). Wilson can drop back and play guard as well.

We're going to be short on overall experience, in proven big men and in balanced scoring. Our strength is our exceptional speed and quickness.

The team will be fast and quick as it was last year, but there is an advantage that last year if we used Edgar Wilson at forward to go along with White and Chapman at guards, Milton at center and Furlow at forward. We're slight of size in terms of height and weight and as in the past, we have to be concerned about our reboucing, especially since Hairston is gone.

Some immediate help could come from Greg Kelser (6-6), a freshman, who's looked good at all positions, especially at forward. He could sub for White and then we could go with Chapman and him at guard if we wanted to, which would give us a more powerful type of club. He even could be a replacement at center, most effective on defense.

With Rivers we have an experienced pivot who could help. In freshman Milt Wiley (5-11), we have a point guard who can back up White. A junior college transfer, Paul Stoll (6-2) is the same guard type and size as Chapman and maybe even stronger and can help. Another transfer we have is Dan Riewald (6-5). He looks strong defensively and also could be called upon.

We've got some size in another freshman, Tanya Webb (6-8), as well as another transfer, Rick Holzken, who goes 6-10. These fellows give us some bulk we've rarely had.

Furlow is without question our premier player. We look to him for positive leadership on the court. He's exceptionally talented on offense, and he's showing strong improvement on defense. Terry has worked extremely hard on all phases of his game. He's determined to be the best there is.

We're using the motion game on offense for the second straight year. It's a free-wheeling, random movement system with no set plays and its permits a high degree of individual play.

There is a lot of ball and man movement but little dribbling and little outside shooting. Our players seem well suited for it. We used it a year ago and set an all-time Spartan field goal percentage record. On defense, we'll use a multiple system, utilizing a variety of sets depending on the situation.

We have another rugged schedule to face. There's the arduous 18-game round-robin Big Ten slate. We also meet, on the road, Eastern and Western Michigan, two fine Mid-American Conference teams. For a national toughie, we've added a road game with North Carolina State. We'll also take part in the Virginia Commonwealth Invitational along with Southern Mississippi, CCNY and the host Virginia Commonwealth team. We also make our annual stop at Detroit's Cobo Arena to play the University of Detroit.

SPARTAN FACTS

TOP RETURNING PLAYERS:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Ht.</th>
<th>Wt.</th>
<th>Class</th>
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SPARTAN ROSTER

No. | NAME | Pos. | Ht. | Wt. | Class | Home Town |
---|------|------|-----|-----|-------|-----------|
12 | Milton Wiley | G | 5-11| 155 | Fr.    | Bellefonte, IL |
15 | Kevin Vandenbosch | G | 6-4| 182 | Jr.    | Sterling Heights |
21 | Paul Stoll | F | 6-2| 185 | Jr.    | Bath |
22 | Lovelle Rivers | F | 6-5| 185 | Jr.    | Southfield |
23 | Benny White | F | 6-6| 183 | Fr.    | Detroit |
24 | Cedric Milton | F | 6-9| 195 | Sr.    | Denver, CO |
25 | Terry Furlow | F | 6-6| 183 | Fr.    | Detroit |
32 | Greg Kelser | F | 6-6| 183 | Fr.    | Detroit |
33 | Edgar Wilson | F | 6-5| 183 | Jr.    | Saginaw |
34 | Ricky Nade | F | 6-4| 187 | Sr.    | Saginaw |
41 | Daniel Reiswald | F | 6-6| 183 | So.    | Bloomfield Hills |
42 | David Jordan | F | 6-5| 210 | So.    | Detroit |
43 | Robert Chapman | G | 6-2| 185 | Jr.    | Saginaw |
45 | Tanya Webb | F | 6-8| 222 | Fr.    | Augusta, AR |
52 | Rick Holzken | C | 6-10| 220 | Jr.    | Gaylord |

*Indicates Returning Letterman

COACH: Gus Ganakas (7th Big Ten season)  

FIELDHOUSE: Jenison Field House (9,791)

1974-75 TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 67,202 / 12 games / 5,561 Ave.

1975-76 RECORD

Overall: 17-9 (Big Ten 10-8)

W | 82 Central Michigan | 78
W | 92 Eastern Michigan | 50
W | 92 Western Michigan | 59
W | 91 at Northern Michigan | 59
W | 86 at San Francisco* | 78
W | 62 at Long Beach State* | 74
W | 72 at Detroit | 69
L | 68 at Purdue | 93
L | 55 Indiana | 107
L | 88 Ohio State | 84
W | 86 Michigan | 78
W | 71 at Minnesota | 82
L | 79 at Iowa | 83
L | 79 at Iowa | 83
W | 105 Wisconsin | 86
L | 54 Northwestern | 50
L | 60 at Illinois | 60
L | 101 at Ohio State | 83
L | 76 at Notre Dame | 73
L | 84 at Michigan | 96
W | 86 Minnesota (OT) | 81
W | 90 Iowa | 78
L | 96 at Wisconsin | 103
L | 66 at Northwestern | 67
L | 66 Illinois | 82
W | 84 Purdue | 82
L | 70 at Indiana | 94

* Cable Car Classic
MINNESOTA OUTLOOK
by Coach Jim Dutcher

We will be facing a major rebuilding job this season with only four returning letter winners. The loss of Mark Ollernding to San Diego of the A.I.A. was a tremendous setback. We will be a very young team with six of our eight scholarship players being freshmen and sophomores. Although we return an average of only 24.2 points per game we do have some talented players. We do not have any senior lettermen, but people counting Minnesota out are wrong. We have some talent, and we'll make a run for it.

GUARD

Our strength is at our guards where we have three quality players. Phil Saunders has been a two-year starter and will provide our oncourt leadership. Phil has an excellent grasp of the game and is an outstanding outcourt shooter. Osborne Lockhart is our quickest player and participated in twelve varsity games as a freshman. Osborne will benefit from a faster style of play. Ray Williams, a 6’3” junior College All-American, is an exciting offensive performer with exceptional jumping ability. Our guard corps will also be strengthened by the addition of Tony Dungy, starting quarterback on the football team. Tony was a letter winner two years ago.

CENTER

I feel like Mike Thompson, a 6’10” sophomore, could be one of the top centers in the conference. Mike has excellent quickness and displays a variety of shots. He has exceptional timing and was one of the top shot blockers in the Big Ten. Mike was invited to participate in the Pan American Games but decided to return to school for the beginning of the semester. The experience of playing against some of the best big men in the country last year should help him turn into one of the Big Ten leaders.

FORWARD

Our fourth letterman is 6’10” sophomore Dave Winney. Dave did not log much playing time last season but is a fine shooter and rebounder. Dave is the only forward with any game experience and will be counted upon to assume much of our rebounding responsibility. The presence of Winney and Thompson assures us of one of the bigger front lines in the League.

Our other starting forward will probably come from one of four freshmen: 6’8” Gary Korkowski, 6’7” Chris Weber, 6’7” Dave Carroll, or 6’5” Bill Zagar. 6’4” Craig Carlson was also a member of last year’s varsity squad but did not earn a letter.

SUMMARY

I’m hopeful we can overcome our lack of experience with strong defense and good offensive execution. I prefer to play man-to-man defense but the personnel on this year’s team will dictate our ability to utilize that style. Offensively, we will look for the fast-break whenever possible. When the break is not there we will strive for good spot discipline.

We have two starting forwards earlier and we will have to have a solid first if we hope to do well. Due to our lack of depth, our success will be tied to our ability to stay out of foul trouble and our ability to avoid injury. Basketball is a team game. It is not possible to put certain individuals above others or to promote an individual over the welfare of the team. Whether it’s the number 10 man or the leading scorer, the manager or the equipment man, everyone must be in it together. Together, a team can be successful. How quickly the team can adjust to a new style of basketball under a new coach will also go a long way toward determining our success this season.

GOPHER FACTS

TOP RETURNING PLAYERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>FG</th>
<th>FT</th>
<th>TP</th>
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ALL-TIME BIG TEN RECORD: 439-438 = .501, 68 years, 877 games, 3 Championships, 3 Co-Championships.

LAST CHAMPIONSHIP: 1972 (11-3)

FIELDHOUSE: Williams Arena (18,025)

1974-75 TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 219,047 / 13 games / 16,841 Ave.

COACH: Jim Dutcher (1st Big Ten season)
Big Ten Record . . . . . . . none
Career Record . . . . . . . 231-120 = 65.8% (13 years)

GOPHER ROSTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Ht.</th>
<th>Wt.</th>
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*Indicates Returning Letterman

1974-75 RECORD (Overall 18-8/Big Ten 11-7)

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* Pillary Classic
NORTHWESTERN OUTLOOK
by Coach Tex Winter

Unlike last year, I'm more inclined to adapt a 'wait and see' attitude. I misread the situation at that time and predicted an outcome which we were unable to attain. That is a mistake which I don't want to repeat.

Included among our 20 defeats were seven losses by four points or less. Two of these losses were in overtime and another seven point setback came in double overtime. However, the aspect of Northwestern basketball that really pleases me is that there is more talent available here than anytime since I came here. In Billy McKinney, we have one of the best guards in the Big Ten, if not in the country, who is still a junior with two seasons of competition under his belt. But we are still in the building stages of our program. The team is very young as it only has two seniors. Our shooting will be improved this year. With Billy, Bob Svet, and Jim Wallace, we have three guys who can put the ball in the hole. We know what McKinney's capabilities are and Wallace, who utilizes good shot selection, can be a tremendous asset inside. Svet, who was an excellent outside shooter in high school, has a year of experience under his belt and should complement McKinney from the outside.

We don't have the physical size to be a rugged rebounding team, so that area is a quest marketers. The answer to that problem, of course, lies with Jim Wallace who is instrumental to our success. The one year layoff hindered his development more than originally anticipated. He played smarter basketball toward the end of the season and reduced his foul tendencies. He certainly is a real key for us, but being a senior, he has to deliver quickly as time to develop his potential is rapidly diminishing.

Nine lettermen, including three starters, are among the returnees who hope to reverse last season's misfortunes and provide the impetus for a revitalized cage season.

A majority of our strong play for the past two seasons was supplied by guard Billy McKinney. McKinney, a 6-0 junior, was the top scoring backcourt in the Big Ten in '72 with a 17.4 average and was 18.2 overall. A second team all-league selection, McKinney will again be the primary source of the Northwestern offense.

Senior guard Tim Teasley, who started 20 contests, has the edge to be McKinney's running mate in the backcourt. Although he hit only at a 6.6 rate, Teasley, at 6-1, paced the team in assists.

However, the central figure in any vision of our success rests on the large shoulders of center Jim Wallace. The 6-10 pivotman was the key to Northwestern's hopes last year, but proved to be, after missing the 1973-74 campaign completely, a mild disappointment.

After scoring and rebounding at an 8.8 clip as a sophomore, his junior performance fell to 7.6 and 7.0. Another alarming concern was Wallace's ability to attract fouls.

He received early exits in eight of 26 games and averaged only 28 minutes per contest. The team leader in field goal percentage (448) and rebounding, Wallace will have to accumulate more game and more time to prove steadier if Northwestern is to benefit from his potential.

With the loss of regular forwards Willie Williams and Greg Wells, we are minus our runners up scorer and second and third leaders in rebounders. Williams was second in points (14.2) and caroms (6.3) while Wells was third in rebounding (5.7).

The prime candidate for one of the spots is Bob Svet. While starting nine contests during his freshman year, Svet demonstrated that he is a Big Ten caliber forward. Although he averaged only 4.4 points and 3.2 rebounds, the 6-8 sophomore had single game highs of 19 and nine respectively.

Juniors Brad Cartwright, a two-year letterman, and David Fields will also vie for starting berths. At 6-6 and 6-9, the duo were used in reserve roles last year.

Jerry Landis, who could press Teasley for his starting spot are Bob Hildebrand a 6-1 junior, and Hilton Hale, a 6-4 sophomore. Both were spot starters and either, with a strong pre-season showing, could be in the starting line-up. Hildebrand excels on defense and is a solid floor leader. Hale, plagued by ill health throughout his frosh year, demonstrated enough potential to be considered a prime candidate for the regular berth. If needed, Hale also could play forward.

A backup at center could come from either Fields or sophomore Chris Wall, Wall, at 6-10, has limited experience, but is a fine passer and excels at hitting the open cutter. This appeals to me because these features are instrumental in my triple post offense.

The freshman class - on paper - is the finest group of prospects that we have recruited in three seasons. While I don't want to be too over-optimistic as to which frosh can play right away, two or three of them could play prominent roles immediately.

Leading the quintet of freshmen is prep All-American Pete Boesen. A 6-8 forward, Boesen was a standout and one of the most sought after prospects in the country.

WILDCAT FACTS

TOP RETURNING PLAYERS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>FG</th>
<th>FT</th>
<th>TP</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>REB</th>
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<tr>
<td>Billy McKinney</td>
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<td>473</td>
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<td>209</td>
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<td>Tim Teasley</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>6.6</td>
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ALL-TIME BIG TEN RECORD: 324-512 = .388, 68 years, 836 games, 1 Championship, 1 Co-championship.

FIELDHOUSE: McGraw Hall (8,800)


COACH: Tex Winter (3rd Big Ten season)

Big Ten Record . . . . . . . . . . 7-25 = 21.9% (2 years)

Career Record . . . . . . . . . . 348-211 = 63.2% (22 years)

BILLY MCKINNEY

WILDCAT ROSTER

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<th>No.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Pos.</th>
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<th>Wt.</th>
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*Indicates Returning Letterman

1974-75 RECORD (Overall 6-20/Big Ten 4-14)

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I think two things are readily apparent about this year's Ohio State basketball team: First, we have three excellent returning starters in guards Larry Bolden and Mark Bayless and center Craig Taylor. Second, graduation has literally wiped us out at forward, almost to the extent that we have no experience at all. What does that mean in terms of this season? It means that our three returnees will have to play better than ever for one thing. And it means our inexperienced players will have to develop in a hurry.

Based on our first month of practice, I expect both of those things to become a reality. We have had good practice sessions and I definitely feel that we can improve upon last year's 14-14 record and our disappointing 8-10 Big Ten mark.

One of our problems a year ago was that we didn't play well when it came to fundamentals. We made some mistakes that never should have happened and as a result lost a number of games that we might have won. We have worked hard this year to cut out those errors and I think we are going to be a better team.

We won't be a big team, but we will have respectable size. And I think it will be a very quick team. Offensively, we have some fine shooters, especially at guard. Our defense will be aggressive and quick. We have some players with exceptionally quick hands and we expect to cause a lot of turnovers and force other teams out of their patterns.

Our leader, on and off the court, is Craig Taylor. He's our captain this year and one of the hardest workers I have ever coached. Craig's a rugged 6-10, 235 and he will give us a lot of muscle inside.

We will look to Craig for more points this year. He has developed an excellent hook shot with either hand and I look for him to improve last year's 15.5 average. Craig played on two bad legs much of last year and still outplayed just about everyone he faced. I think this year, now that he is healthy, he will be one of the best centers in the Big Ten.

Of course, a center can't score unless he has the ball, and that's where our guards come in.

Larry Bolden and Mark Bayless are a fine pair of backcourt men. Both ranked near the top in the Big Ten last year in assists, so they know how to get the ball to the open man.

Larry is starting his third year as a regular and the 6-0 Cleveland junior really makes things happen. He averaged 16 points a game last season and led the team in playing time. He is a fine driver who can either take it to the basket or dump the ball off at the last minute and he has a good outside touch.

Mark is only a sophomore but he complements Larry very well. He moves well without the ball, has a good outside shot and is a whiz of a passer. At 6-2, he can guard the other teams' top offensive back court man.

Jud Wood is our third guard and he is going to see a lot of playing time. Jud started slowly last year, but really came on late in the year. He is an excellent quarterback and may be our best outside shooter. We need to get him shooting more this year.

We also expect help from Mike Daugherty, a transfer from Georgia Tech who gives excellent depth at guard.

Both Mike and Jud are 6-3, so they could see some time in the corner this year if we run into foul difficulties.

We have three players who are contending for this year's starting spots: Chance Hammond, a 6-6 junior; Terry Burris, a 6-6 sophomore; and Fred Poole, a 6-5 freshman. Right now, it's difficult to say who will start. The important thing is that all three are exceptionally quick and all will see a lot of action.

Chance played in 19 games for us last year, but didn't really see a lot of playing time. He has had an exceptional fall practice though and is the most improved player on the squad. He is extremely strong and can get the ball if we need it.

Terry showed signs of greatness last year and I am hoping we can get him playing on a more consistent level this year. He has the natural ability to be a great player.

Fred Poole has been a very pleasant surprise. He has a lot of poise for a freshman, gives us good rebounding and will score a lot of points because of his ability to take the ball to the basket. You will see a lot of him before he graduates. Basically, that's our team and I think it can be a pretty good one with hard work. I think we may surprise a few people this year.
Purdue Outlook

by Coach Fred Schaus

Totally, I feel this 1975-76 team will be the quickest team that we've had in all positions in the four years I've been at Purdue. We've got good depth in all positions. I know everybody is putting a question mark on our center spot, but we feel that we don't have any doubt about any center up front. We'll be trying to capitalize on that speed and quickness by doing more pressing, at least half court pick up and press from both man to man and zone standpoints. We feel this club has the ability to score because we feel we can be a reasonably good rebounding team.

This year we're going to run more of a perimeter type offense, at least with our perimeter people becoming more totally involved in the defense. Certainly, the centers will be very important individuals in the offense. They will be doing a lot of screening and picking inside to help the shooters get free and, in many instances, opening opportunities for themselves to score.

Bruce Parkinson, of course, is "Mr. Everything" as far as our basketball team is concerned. You have to go no further than our pre-season scrimmages to see what Bruce means to us. Regardless of what combination of players Bruce plays with, his team almost always without exception wins in those scrimmages. That has to tell you something. The guy is a winner.

By his own admission he did not have the kind of year consistently that he was pleased with last season. I have to feel that this year coming up, his senior year, will be the type of super year he and everyone following Purdue basketball wants him to have.

Eugene Parker appears to be much stronger this year and he has matured in his thinking. Obviously the year of experience under his belt is going to be very helpful. He's a very mature thinking individual for a young man of his age and that's going to help him with his basketball. He makes good decisions instinctively out there on the court and is a great complement to Parkinson at guard.

One of our freshman guards this season is "Mr. Basketball," Kyle Macy from Peru. Everyone realizes Kyle's great shooting ability and scoring totals, but a lot of people have noticed that one of his greatest assets is his ability to pass the basketball.

Macy is unbelievable as far as seeing the floor and knowing where all nine players and probably the two officials are at all times. Very few players have that ability. Buy Kyle is an excellent passer and makes things happen out there like Parkinson does.

Jerry Sichting is our other freshman guard and again he is a little like Parkinson. He was an all-state football quarterback and obviously he's very strong. He also is perhaps the quickest guard we have including Parker. He has amazing-ly quick hands and lateral movement defensively. He has a bundle of assists in high school and still averaged around 21 points a game.

At forward, let's start with Walter Jordan, who certainly will lead one of the key guys up front. Walter is perhaps the best, the most consistent and biggest scoring threat we have in the whole lineup. Obviously, from that standpoint, he's going to be very, very valuable to the team.

Wayne Walls is as quick as any corner man we've had here and he, like Walter, has gained weight. That quickness was personified in his play as a defensive specialist and rebounder last season.

I feel that year of experience is going to be tremendously helpful for both Jordan and Walls. They made a lot of freshman mistakes last year in a lot of tough key games where they were put under the gun so early in their college careers. I thought they responded very well.

The next corner man, Gerald Thomas, will be one of our co-captains. He's a fine, fine rebounder and has excellent timing on his jump. There are others that may jump higher than Gerald but none that time their jumps more consistently than he does.

At center, Tom Schefller has two years of experience and has played a lot of minutes totally over the past two years, so he has somewhat of an edge over the other two men because of that game experience. He is an excellent rebounder and a fine defensive player.

Next, we have Michael White, who was academically ineligible the second semester. He's in great shape academically now and has grown from an inch to 6-8. Michael is one of the strongest people I've ever seen at his age and his height on a basketball court.

Dan McDermott, who was red-shirted a year ago, has picked up added weight to go along with his 7-2 frame. He's probably the best shooter among the centers although he really has not played a lot of competitive basketball. He didn't play much until his senior year of high school.

Boilermaker Facts

Top Returning Players:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Ht.</th>
<th>Wt.</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
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<td>Kyle Macy</td>
<td>G</td>
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*Indicates Returning Letterman

Boilermaker Roster

100-199 = 75.1% (9 years)

1974-75 RECORD

1. Michigan State 86
2. Minnesota 54
3. Iowa 54
4. Wisconsin 49
5. Northwestern (OT) 47
6. Illinois 67
7. Indiana 104
8. Ohio State 93
9. Michigan 67
10. Iowa 72
11. Wisconsin 64
12. Northwestern 69
13. Illinois 91
14. Indiana 83
15. Ohio State 72
16. Michigan 93
17. Michigan State 84
18. Minnesota 72
19. Missouri 74
20. Arkansas 102

Boilermaker Stats

1974-75 TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 164,450 / 12 games / 13,705 Ave.

Coach: Fred Schaus (4th Big Ten season)

Top Big Ten Record: 29-17 = 63% (3 years)

Career Record: 195-66 = 75.1% (9 years)

1974-75 RECORD (Overall 17-11/Big Ten 11-7)

W 98 Indiana State 80
W 104 Iowa 77
L 73 at California 76
W 91 at San Diego State 87
W 94 at West Virginia 83
W 114 at Kentucky 91
W 66 Florida State* 69
W 80 at Kentucky 92
W 93 Michigan State 86
L 51 at Minnesota 54
W 63 at Iowa 54
W 88 Wisconsin 49
W 73 Northwestern (OT) 47
W 86 at Illinois 67
W 71 at Indiana 104
L 87 at Ohio State 93
W 75 Michigan 67
L 107 Iowa 72
W 69 at Wisconsin 64
L 55 at Northwestern 69
W 114 Illinois 91
L 82 Indiana 83
W 84 Ohio State 72
L 76 at Michigan 93
W 82 at Michigan State 84
W 100 Minnesota 72
W 87 Missouri 74
W 86 Arkansas 102

*Louisville Classic

#1 at Commission Invitational Tournament
John Powlas

When you speak of season prospects, Dale Koehler's situation by far carries the key. It did in the 1974-75 season with its being only 59 minutes of action in the first ten league games, with the injured, not only the Big Ten, but the total season record for Wisconsin. An off-season operation proved to be successful, and he has shown no effects of ill effects to date. He could be far by far the best player Wisconsin has ever had, and his statistics have proven this out in his previous three years.

There are 14 returning players of the 17 from last year's squad. Many now have new positions. Several are from last year's freshman and sophomore class.

Brian Colbert (6-0), guard, from Zion, Illinois, started each of the 26 contests in the 1974-75 year. The experience gained from the freshman year along with additional physical maturity appears to have contributed to more consistent shooting in the perimeter areas. Brian shows outstanding quickness with and without the basketball and should add a quicker tempo type of play both offensively and defensively in the guard position.

Returning with Brian at the guard position are two other people who started at one time or another throughout the year as well as contributing from the bench are 6-4 senior Tim Paterick, and 6-2 junior guard Bob Falk. Both possess consistent outside shooting, and they are the stronger, physical type guard than that of Brian. 6-2 junior Bill Smith, and 6-5 junior Jim Czajkowski, and senior 5-11 Mark Lotzer will give depth. In addition to a host of others is Jim Smith, 6-2, a transfer from Jacksonville University where he started 18 of their games as a freshman. Jim adds to the quickness of Colbert and Falk and is by far the best outside shooter of the entire guard group without question, he could be a key factor in the back court play.

Along with Koehler's return in the front line at the forward positions is the sophomore Bill Pearson, who started on and off as a freshman a year ago. Bill has the good quickness to be a factor both offensively as well as defensively as his jumping ability has been a contributing factor for the rebounding in the front line. He was a high jumper with the track team in the spring season and was a high school state champion at a 6-6 effort.

There are several others who return with experience from the 1974-75 season. They are 6-8 Pete Boy, 6-6 Emir Hardy, 6-6 Buddy Pauzette, and 6-2 Rick Placzek, who missed last year because of a knee operation. To date Pia has shown signs of ill effects because of continued fluid mounting on the knee and any contributions he would make would be a bonus as it appears that his services are quite limited.

Two individuals who have been used in practices to date as swing type people between the guard and forward position have been junior Bill Smith and sophomore Dean Anderson, brother of all Big Ten performer Gary two seasons ago. Both have performed well in practice. Anderson has been outstanding. Without question he will be used at both positions in game play.

The perimeter positions (guard and forward) at this point have shown more quickness as a total group than we have had in the previous 8 years. This should allow for more pressuring defense and give the quickness with speed to increase the opportunities for the fast break. The middle position could be classified as a questionable one. Returning from last year is reserve post man Bob Johnson. His adjustments after the one year from junior college to Madison have appeared to have come about. The two now comes of the freshman class are both classified as centers. One is 7-0 Mark Newburn, whose basketball should be more for the second and third year in contributions. If there is any contribution as a freshman, he too would be classified as a bonus. 6-10 Al Rudd, who was the State's Prep Player of the Year of the Wisconsin Press Association would be a definite factor if all things considered come about. He is big, physical, and talented. He has never been called upon to do the multiple things which are required especially in our league. Each day a new experience and the games will, of course, be no different. Competition should help to improve his play. It is hoped that he and Johnson can split the post position with primary factors being considered defensively and rebounding.

In summary, the basic individuals who will play are primarily young as far as class in school. With previous game experience, it is hoped that the maturity along with the experience will help to improve the play for this season. Game competition should call for a multiple people playing and the competition guard wise could prove to be for any one of four to start and play. From there the front line should be Koehler, Pearson at the forward spots, with Rudd of Johnson serving in the middle. Injuries were a factor with last season's team with Placzek never dressing for a game and as mentioned in the beginning Koehler seeing less than 60 minutes playing time in the first ten games. If all factors remain consistent, without question, we should be more competitive.

Dale Koehler

BADGER FACTS

TOP RETURNING PLAYERS

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>G</th>
<th>FG</th>
<th>FT</th>
<th>TP</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>REB</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dale Koehler</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>Brian Colbert</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>121</td>
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<td>20</td>
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ALL-TIME BIG TEN RECORD: 447-437 = .506, 70 years, 877 games 6 Championships, 7 Co-championships

LAST CHAMPIONSHIP: 1947 (3-3)

FIELDHOUSE: Wisconsin Fieldhouse (12,204)

1974-75 TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 82,981 / 15 games / 5,532 Ave.

COACH: John Powlas (8th Big Ten season)

Big Ten Record: .38-64 = .375 (7 years)

Career Record: .78-92 = .459 (7 years)

BADGER ROSTER

<table>
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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Ht.</th>
<th>Wt.</th>
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<th>Hometown</th>
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<td>165</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>G</td>
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<td>170</td>
<td>So.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Bill Smith</td>
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<td>Jr.</td>
<td>Fond Du Lac</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>*Rob Johnson</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>Al Rudd</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>240</td>
<td>Fr.</td>
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*Indicates Returning Letterman

1974-75 RECORD (Overall 8-18/Big Ten 5-13)

W 71 Ohio State       62
L 60 St. Mary's        62
W 86 Iowa State       84
L 67 Stanford         88
L 79 Brown            68
L 78 at Vermont*      86
W 89 at Georgia (OT)* 91
L 46 Minnesota       61
L 66 at Northwestern  69
L 49 at Purdue        69
L 56 at Illinois      72
L 67 Ohio State       69
L 69 Indiana          89
L 87 at Michigan State 105
L 73 at Michigan (OT) 75
W 86 Iowa (OT)        85
L 62 Marquette       69
L 64 Purdue           91
W 76 Illinois        70
L 70 at Ohio State    76
L 58 at Indiana       93
W 103 Michigan State  96
W 70 Michigan         68
L 68 at Purdue        75
L 68 at Minnesota     66
W 94 Northwestern     70

*Midwest Classic
### SUMMARY OF STATISTICAL TRENDS

**FINAL OFFICIAL 1975 TEAM STATISTICS**

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<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Pts.</th>
<th>Opp.</th>
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<th>L</th>
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### FIELD GOAL AVERAGES

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### FREE THROW AVERAGES

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<td>5. Michigan State</td>
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<td>10. Iowa</td>
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### FINAL OFFICIAL 1975 TEAM STATISTICS (Games Averages, Conference Games Only)

| Points Scored | 155.2 | 161.0 | 171.3 | 165.0 | 147.6 | 155.0 | 150.6 | 148.1 |
| Field Goals Att. | 295 | 401 | 372 | 372 | 372 | 372 | 372 | 372 |
| Field Goals Made | 216 | 306 | 337 | 337 | 337 | 337 | 337 | 337 |
| Field Goal Pct. | 73% | 73% | 73% | 73% | 73% | 73% | 73% | 73% |
| Free Throws Att. | 53.9 | 38.3 | 33.7 | 37.7 | 37.7 | 37.7 | 37.7 | 37.7 |
| Free Throws Made | 28.6 | 21.1 | 27.0 | 27.0 | 27.0 | 27.0 | 27.0 | 27.0 |
| Free Throw Pct. | 56.8 | 72.1 | 73.0 | 70.3 | 65.1 | 69.3 | 70.5 | 70.5 |

### TOP 30 SCORERS IN THE BIG TEN IN 1975

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>FG</th>
<th>FGA</th>
<th>Pct.</th>
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### INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

**FIELD GOAL AVERAGE**

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**FREE THROW AVERAGE**

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<td>200</td>
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<td>220</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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**REBOUNDING AVERAGE**

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**ASSET AVERAGE**

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(ALL CAPS Indicate Senior in ’75)
**IV.A. BASKETBALL SECTION**

(These are all-time records, based on Conference games only.)

**INDIVIDUAL RECORDS**

**Most Points, One Game**

- 61, Bill Hustin (Indiana, Purdue) vs. Iowa, 2-28-70 (72 FG, 7 FT)
- 57, Dave Schellhase (Purdue) vs. Mich., 2-19-66 (23 FG, 9 FT)
- 55, Jimmy Rayl (Indiana) vs. MSU, 2-22-63 (25 FG, 10 FT) and vs. Minn., 1-27-62 (24 FG, 10 FT)
- 53, Dave Doansey (Illinois) vs. Ind., 2-16-63 (22 FG, 9 FT)
- 52, Dave Schellhase (Purdue) vs. Iowa, 1-27-60 (22 FG, 9 FT)
- 52, Terry Dischinger (Purdue) vs. MSU, 2-25-61 (13 FG, 14 FT)
- 50, Terry Dischinger (Purdue) vs. Wis., 1-7-61 (16 FG, 16 FT)
- 49, Gary Bradd (OSU) vs. Ill., 2-10-64
- 49, Rich Falk (NU) vs. Iowa, 2-12-65
- 49, John Johnson (Iowa) vs. NU, 2-24-70
- 48, Jerry Lucas (OSU) vs. MSU, 2-21-61
- 46, Gary Bradd (OSU) vs. MSU, 1-27-64
- 46, Cassie Russell (Mich.) vs. NU, 3-3-66
- 46, Rudy Tomjanovich (Mich.) vs. Ind. (Overtime), 1-7-69
- 47, Don Schluender (Indiana) vs. OSU 1-18-54 and 3-5-55
- 47, Terry Dischinger (Purdue) vs. Ind., 2-10-62
- 47, Gary Bradd (OSU) vs. Pur., 1-25-64
- 47, Bob Freeman (OSU) vs. MSU, 1-31-56
- 46, Terry Dischinger (Purdue) vs. Minn., 2-17-62
- 46, Terry Dischinger (Purdue) vs. Ill., 1-6-62 and vs. Mich., 3-4-69

**Pre-1960**

- 45, Dick Ives (Iowa) vs. Chicago, 2-5-44
- 45, Richie Freeman (OSU) vs. Ill., 3-25-56, and vs. MSU, 3-5-56
- 41, Robin Freeman (OSU) vs. Ind., 2-4-56
- 41, John Moe (OSU) vs. Mich., 3-4-56
- 39, Andy Phillips (Ill.) vs. Chicago, 3-1-43
- 38, Paul Ebert (Ohio) vs. Mich., 2-25-52
- 37, Julius McCoy (OSU) vs. OSU, 2-28-56
- 35, George Millo (Minn.) vs. Iowa, 3-25-57
- 34, Joe Rayfield (NU) vs. Ill., 3-8-58

**Consecutive 40-Point Games**

- 6, Gary Bradd (OSU), Jan. 25 to Feb. 15, 1964, (47, 48, 42, 40-OT, 49, 40)
- 2, Terry Dischinger (Purdue), Feb. 17 & Feb. 24, 1962 (45 & 46)

**Most Points a Game, One Season**

- 39-6, Rick Mount (Purdue), 1970 (550 in 14)
- 35-2, Rich Mount (Purdue), 1959 (493 in 14)
- 33, Gary Bradd (Ohio State), 1964 (474 in 14)
- 32-2, Cassie Russell (Michigan), 1966 (465 in 14)
- 32, Terry Dischinger (Purdue), 1962 (499 in 14)
- 31-2, Robin Freeman (Ohio), 1965 (495 in 14)
- 31-1, Jimmy Rayl (Indiana), 1965 (494 in 14)
- 31-2, Dave Schellhase (Purdue), 1966 (491 in 14)
- 31, John Johnson (Iowa), 1970 (443 in 14)
- 31, Elroy Tomjanovich (Michigan), 1970 (444 in 14)
- 30-6, Gary Bradd (OSU), 1963 (443 in 14)

**Most Field Goals, One Game**

- 27, Rick Mount (Purdue) vs. Purdue, 2-28-70
- 23, Jimmy Rayl (Indiana) vs. MSU, 2-22-63
- 23, Dave Schellhase (Purdue) vs. Mich., 2-19-69
- 22, Dave Doansey (Illinois) vs. Ind., 1-25-60
- 22, Rick Mount (Purdue) vs. Iowa, 1-17-70, and vs. Mich., 1-31-70
- 21, Rudy Tomjanovich (Michigan) vs. Ind., 1-7-68 (Overtime)
- 21, Rick Mount (Pur.), vs. Iowa, 2-6-69 and vs. Mich., 2-16-69
- 20, John Tidwell (Michigan) vs. Minn., 3-6-66
- 20, Jerry Rayl (Indiana) vs. Minn., 1-27-62 (Overtime)
- 20, Terry Dischinger (Purdue) vs. Ill., 2-17-62
- 20, Gary Bradd (OSU) vs. Wisconsin, 2-24-66
- 20, Cassie Russell (Michigan) vs. NU, 3-5-66
- 20, John Johnson (Iowa) vs. NU, 2-24-70

**Most Field Goals a Game, One Season**

- 15-8, Rick Mount (Purdue) 1970 (221 in 14)
- 15-6, Rick Mount (Purdue), 1969 (194 in 14)
- 13-5, Cassie Russell (Michigan) 1966 (162 in 14)
- 12-9, John Johnson (Iowa) 1970 (181 in 14)
- 12-7, Rudy Tomjanovich (Michigan) 1970 (179 in 14)
- 12-4, Gary Bradd (OSU) 1964 (174 in 14)
- 12-0, Fred Brown (Iowa) 1970 (168 in 14)
- 11-7, George McGinnis (Ind.) 1970 (164 in 14)
- 11-6, Robin Freeman (OSU) 1965 (163 in 14)
- 11-5, Rick Mount (Pur.) 1968 (161 in 14)
- 11-4, Dave Schellhase (Purdue) 1966 (160 in 14)
- 11-2, Mike Robinson (MSU) 1975 (156 in 14)
- 11-1, Tom Konda (Minnesota) 1969 (154 in 14)
- 11-0, Gary Bradd (OSU) 1965 (154 in 14)
- 11-0, Don Freeman (Illinois) 1987 (154 in 14)

**BIG TEN "TOP TEN" CAREER SCORING LEADERS**

**Players**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
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<th>Seasons</th>
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<td>1964-66 (3)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,950</td>
<td>1965-67 (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purdue</td>
<td>1,979</td>
<td>1960-62 (3)</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>1,896</td>
<td>1968-70 (3)</td>
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<td>Michigan State</td>
<td>1,751</td>
<td>1972-74 (3)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1958-60 (3)</td>
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**NON "TOP TEN" SCHOOL CAREER SCORING LEADERS**

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**BIG TEN "TOP TEN" SEASON SCORING LEADERS**

**Players**

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**NON "TOP TEN" SCHOOL SEASON SCORING LEADERS**

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### All-Time Conference Standings (1905-1975)

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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>58d</td>
<td>793</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>779</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michigan State</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>258</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northwestern</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>40g</td>
<td>446</td>
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</table>

**Totals:** 4,175 games

- a=Missed 1905-06 season
- b=Missed 1905 Conference
- c=Missed 1912-13 season
- d=Missed 1905, 96, 16, and 49 seasons
- e=Missed 1945-46 season, dropped one basketball competition in 1905-06 season
- f=Missed 1946-47 season
- g=Missed 1947-48 season

**Big Ten Playoff Games** (not included in above totals):
- 1908—Chicago 18, Wisconsin 16 (played at Purdue, 4,812 stnd.)
- 1909—Ohio State 85, Iowa 81 (played at Purdue, 4,812 stnd.)
- 1975—Michigan 75, Indiana 67 (played at Illinois, 15,109 stnd.)

### All-Time Team vs. Team Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Wins</th>
<th>Loss</th>
<th>Tied</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Games</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>157</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>375</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan State</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
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<td>28</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purdue</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Totals:** 220 games

All-time conference records through 1975

### Big Ten in NCAA Tournament

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.800</td>
<td>252</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.750</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purdue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.250</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.700</td>
<td>205</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>167</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>856</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michigan State</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>135</td>
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**Total:** 71 games

### Big Ten Teams in NCAA Finals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Finish</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Oregon 46-Ohio State 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Indiana 66-Ohio State 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Wisconsin 59-Washington State 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Ohio State 65-California 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Illinois 61-Ohio State 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Illinois 67-Santa Clara 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Indiana 69-Kansas 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Ohio State 75-California 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Ohio State 70-Ohio State 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Ohio State 71-Ohio State 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Michigan State</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Michigan State 100-Kansas 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Ohio State 89-Houston 85</td>
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<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Purdue</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>U.C.L.A. 92-Purdue 72</td>
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<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Indiana 97-Providence 79</td>
</tr>
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### Big Ten in Collegiate Commissioners Association (CCA) Tournament

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Purdue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Totals:** 4 games

### Big Ten In National Invitational Tournament (NIT)

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Michigan State</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.500</td>
<td>1.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.500</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Totals:** 2 games
1975-76 BIG TEN NON-CONFERENCE BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Dec. 29 ILLINOIS @ Nebraska

Dec. 29 NORTHWESTERN @ Nebraska

Ohio State @ Butler

North Carolina @ Purdue

De Paul @ Wisconsin

South Dakota State @ Minnesota

Augustana vs. Iowa

Indiana vs. UCLA vs. St. Louis

Dec. 1 Kentucky @ Northwestern

Central Michigan @ Michigan State

Kent State vs. Illinois

Dec. 4 Vanderbilt @ Michigan

Nebraska vs. Iowa

Dec. 3 North Dakota State vs. Wisconsin

Dec. 4 Purdue vs. Rutgers @ Madison Square Garden

Missouri (Rolla) vs. Illinois

Dec. 4 Ohio U. @ Northwestern

Purdue @ W. Virginia

Loyola, Chicago @ Illinois

Michigan State @ Eastern Michigan

Michigan @ Tennessee

N. E. Louisiana @ Iowa

New Mexico @ Illinois

North Dakota @ Minnesota

Dec. 8 Ohio State @ Penn State

Dec. 8 Northern Illinois @ Wisconsin

Iowa @ Bradley

Indiana @ Florida St.

North Dakota State vs. Illinois

Canisius (Buffalo) vs. Michigan

Dec. 9 Northwestern @ Valparaiso

Loyola, Chicago @ Minnesota

Dec. 10 San Diego State @ Purdue

South Carolina @ Michigan

1975 TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Dec. 19-20 Indiana hosts Indiana Classic

(With Virginia Tech, Georgia, Oregon)

Dec. 19-20 Michigan hosts Michigan Invitational

(With Miami, D., Southern Illinois, etc.)

Dec. 26-27 Minnesota hosts Pillow Classic

(Penn State, Butler, and Creighton)

Dec. 26-30 Iowa hosts Rainbow Classic at Horseshoe, (Iowa)

(with Southern California, Yale, Arizona, Hawaii, Connecticut, Holy Cross, and St. Peter's)

Dec. 26-29 Indiana in Holiday Festival at New York

(with South Carolina, Villanova, Temple, St. Bonaventure, St. John's, Manhattan, and Columbia)

Dec. 26-31 Northwestern in Far West Classic at Portland

(With Colorado State, Duquesne, Florida State, Oregon, Oregon State, Texas Tech., and Washington)

Dec. 29-30 Purdue @ Indiana

Dec. 29-30 Ohio State @ Notre Dame

Dec. 29-30 Wisconsin @ Marquette

Dec. 29-30 Wisconsin vs. Marquette

Dec. 29-30 Wisconsin vs. Marquette

Dec. 29-30 Michigan in Las Vegas Holiday Classic at Las Vegas

(with Houston, La Salle, and Nevada-Las Vegas)

1976 BIG 10 BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

(Conference Games Only)

Jan. 3 (Sat.)

Illinois vs. Iowa

Indiana @ Ohio State

Michigan @ Northwestern

Michigan State vs. Wisconsin

Purdue vs. Minnesota

Jan. 4 (Mon.)

Iowa @ Michigan State

Minnesota @ Northwestern

Northwestern @ Indiana

Ohio State @ Wisconsin

Jan. 6 (Wed.)

Purdue vs. Iowa

Jan. 8 (Thurs.)

Illinois vs. Minnesota

Michigan @ Wisconsin

Michigan State @ Northwestern

Jan. 10 (Sat.)

Indiana @ Iowa

Iowa @ Minnesota

Northwestern @ Illinois

Ohio State @ Michigan State

Wisconsin @ Purdue

Jan. 12 (Mon.)

Indiana @ Michigan State

Northwestern @ Purdue

Ohio State @ Michigan

Wisconsin vs. Illinois

Jan. 17 (Sat.)

Indiana vs. Illinois

Iowa @ Wisconsin

Michigan State @ Michigan

Minnesota @ Northwestern

Purdue vs. Ohio State

Jan. 19 (Mon.)

Illinois @ Ohio State

Iowa vs. Northwestern

Minnesota vs. Wisconsin

Purdue vs. Indiana

Jan. 24 (Sat.)

Indiana vs. Minnesota

Michigan @ Purdue

Michigan State @ Illinois

Ohio State @ Iowa

Northwestern @ Wisconsin

Jan. 26 (Mon.)

Indiana @ Iowa

Michigan @ Illinois

Michigan State vs. Purdue

Ohio State @ Minnesota

Jan. 31 (Sat.)

Iowa @ Michigan

Minnesota @ Northwestern

Northwestern @ Ohio State

Purdue vs. Illinois

Wisconsin @ Indiana

Feb. 1 (Sat.)

Indiana vs. Minnesota

Michigan @ Northwestern

Michigan State @ Purdue

Ohio State @ Iowa

Northwestern @ Wisconsin

Feb. 2 (Sun.)

Iowa @ Northwestern

Iowa vs. Michigan

Iowa @ Minnesota

Wisconsin vs. Michigan State

Feb. 5 (Sat.)

Indiana vs. Ohio State

Michigan @ Northwestern

Michigan State @ Purdue

Feb. 12 (Sat.)

Iowa vs. Illinois

Iowa vs. Nebraska

Wisconsin vs. Minnesota

Feb. 16 (Wed.)

Iowa vs. Minnesota

Michigan State @ Iowa

Northwestern @ Wisconsin
1976 BIG 10 TV BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

1976 marks the 22nd consecutive season for the Big Ten Basketball “Game of the Week”, and the third straight year that the TVS Television Network will telecast the league’s series. Last year viewers throughout the Midwest area saw nine excellent league games, while a national TV audience saw Big Ten champion Indiana defeat Ohio State in a close, scrappy game. Several contests went down to the final second, including Michigan State’s overtime win over Minnesota and Iowa’s one point triumph also against Minnesota.

Another outstanding schedule has been planned for the 1976 season, with defending league champion Indiana making two appearances, including a February 7 date with Michigan which will be telecast to the entire nation. All Big Ten teams will have at least one TV showing with Michigan and Purdue scheduled for three appearances. The series opens in January 3 with Northwestern hosting Michigan and runs for ten consecutive weeks through March 6. The final Saturday of the regular season has been designated as a “Wildcard Date” with the game matching the top teams to be shown.

TVS has signed a new agreement with the NBC-TV Network so that NBC affiliates in the Midwest will carry the Big Ten Game of the Week. All but one Big Ten TV game will start at 2 p.m. EST (1 p.m. CST) this year, and will be followed by a game of national interest.

The complete schedule with dates and starting times follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>GAME</th>
<th>STARTING TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Jan. 3</td>
<td>Michigan at Northwestern</td>
<td>1:00 CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 10</td>
<td>Ohio State at Michigan State</td>
<td>3:00 EST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 17</td>
<td>Iowa at Wisconsin</td>
<td>1:00 CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 24</td>
<td>Indiana at Minnesota</td>
<td>1:00 CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 31</td>
<td>Purdue at Illinois</td>
<td>1:00 CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td>Michigan at Indiana (National TV)</td>
<td>1:00 EST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 14</td>
<td>Ohio State at Purdue</td>
<td>1:00 CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 21</td>
<td>Purdue at Michigan</td>
<td>2:00 EST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 28</td>
<td>Michigan State at Minnesota</td>
<td>1:00 CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 6</td>
<td>Wildcard</td>
<td>2:00 CST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

BASKETBALL

Ohio State has, since joining the Big Ten, won 9 outright championships and shared 4 others. In addition, Ohio State has appeared ten times in the NCAA Tournament, winning 21 games and losing 9.

No other Big Ten school has won as many outright championships, has played in as many NCAA tournaments, or has been ranked in the top 10 nationally as often as Ohio State (since 1939).

13 Big Ten Championships (9 outright and 4 shared)
   1 NCAA Championship (1959-60)

Three coaches stand out in Ohio State basketball history:

   Harold G. Olsen (1922-46)
   Lynn W. St. John – Athletic Director (1912-47)
   – Head Coach (1912-19)
   Fred R. Taylor (1959-76)

Eldon Miller was named March 26, 1976 as the ninth basketball coach in Ohio State history. Miller, 38, considered one of the nation's top young coaches, has 16 years of coaching experience, including 15 as a head coach.

Miller coached at Western Michigan for six years, leading the Broncos to an 86-68 record. In 1976 he was named Mid-American Conference Coach of the Year, leading Western to a 25-3 record and the school's first ever conference title.

Prior to coaching at Western, Miller, a native of Gnadenhutten, Ohio, spent eight seasons at his alma mater, Wittenberg, where he compiled a 142-55 record and won five Ohio Conference championships.
BASKETBALL

Coaches' selections of First Team Big Ten Selections since 1925:

Johnny Minor +
Jimmy Hull +
Dick Fisher
Don Grate
Harold Cunningham
Bill Hosket, Sr.
Arnold Risen
Jack Underman
Jerry Lucas * + #
Gary Bradds * + #
Bill Hosket, Jr. *
Dave Sorenson *
Luke Witte
Dick Schnittker * +
Paul Ebert *
Frank Howard *
John Havlicek *
Wesley Fesler
Howard Mattison
Tippy Dye
Bob Lynch
Paul Huston
Bob Donham
Robin Freeman *
Larry Siegfried *
Jim Cleamons *
Allan Hornyak *

* Indicates Ohio State's Top Career Scorers
+ Indicates Big Ten Conference All-Americans
# Indicates Big Ten Conference Most Valuable Player

Professional Players

Active:

John Havlicek
Dave Sorenson
Jim Cleamons
Luke Witte

Retired:

Larry Siegfried
Bill Hosket
Mel Howell
Gary Bradds
Bob Donham
Dick Schnittker
Jerry Lucas
Joe Roberts

College Basketball Coaches

Don DeVoe - Wyoming
Bob Knight - Indiana
Al Peters - Texas Wesleyan

NBA

Joe Roberts - Golden State
SPORTS BULLETIN

THE MILLER GUIDE TO INTERCOLLEGIATE SPORTS/WINTER 1980

Inside Shots
page 3

Rebuilding
A Fallen Champion
page 10

Female Shooting Stars
page 15

The Recruiter's
NO. 1 IS NOTHING NEW TO THE BIG TEN

From John Wooden to Joe Barry Carroll, the conference has seen a long parade of all-star performers.

BY BOB HAMMEL

In Chicago prior to last season, Wisconsin basketball coach Bill Cofield said his third Badger team would be his best, but he wasn’t sure if the standings would reflect it.

“The Big Ten has improved so much in the last three years it’s unbelievable,” Cofield said. “The Big Ten has had the best recruiting in the country the last three years in a row.”

Following Cofield to the speaker’s platform was Indiana coach Bobby Knight, who disagreed with Cofield’s assessment.

In 1940, this Indiana team won the second annual NCAA championship.

Ten team in the finals (Ohio State, beaten by Oregon). In 1940, a Big Ten team would be Cazzie Russell (’66).
"I don't think the Big Ten is any better now than it was when I came into it," said Knight. "And it's no better than it was when I was sitting on the bench at Ohio State. The Big Ten has been the best basketball league in the country for as long as I can remember.

"You can go back to 1939. That was the year of the first NCAA tournament, and there was a Big Ten team, Indiana, won it. In 1941, a Big Ten team, Wisconsin, won it."

So they played the season and both coaches were correct. The Big Ten pulled off a feat never before accomplished as it produced the NCAA and NIT champions. In the NIT, there was another first—the final game was an all-Big Ten contest, with Indiana edging Purdue.

NCAA tournament games by an average margin of 20.8 points, after losing five times in the Big Ten and sharing the league title with Purdue and Iowa. It was, as Cofield predicted, an astounding year and continued, as Knight said, a proud basketball history.

Cofield referred to the "unbelievable" improvement in the past three years. Four years ago, the Big Ten achieved something else never before accomplished by any league: It supplied both finalists to the national championship game. Indiana defeated Michigan in that 1976 final. That's a lofty position from which to make unbelievable improvement.

And yet, there are indications that recruiting picked up noticeably for lower-echelon teams in the league as they benefited from membership in the conference that made the NCAA finals a private affair. Big Ten recruiters not only told high school athletes about the league's recent success, they also talked about the conference's long history.

An All-star Big Ten team could start with a three-time All-American guard at Purdue in the early 1930s, John Wooden. He's the only man to be inducted into the National Basketball Hall of Fame as both a coach and a player.

John Havlicek (above) and Jerry Lucas (right) led Ohio State to one championship and two seconds, while Bobby Knight sat on the bench.
Johnny Kerr ('54) of Illinois, Tom and Dick Van Arsdale ('65) of Indiana, Don Nelson ('62) of Iowa, and dozens of local favorites who were all-conference. And there really was no room for George McGinnis ('71) of Indiana or anyone from the current crop, such as Joe Barry Carroll of Purdue, Mike Woodson of Indiana, Ronnie Lester of Iowa, Kelvin Ransey and Herb Williams of Ohio State, Wesley Matthews of Wisconsin, and Kevin McHale of Minnesota.

The league’s all-time best team may have been Knight’s 1975-76 Indiana club, which finished the season unbeaten. The Hoosiers defeated UCLA (twice), No. 2-ranked Marquette, Notre Dame, Kentucky’s NIT champs, Alabama, St. John’s (twice), NCAA runner-up Michigan (three times), plus the Russian Olympic team along the way.

If Knight wasn’t distinguishing himself on the bench as Indiana’s coach, he was (well, most of the time) doing so on the bench as a player with Fred Taylor’s Ohio State powerhouse of 1960-62. Lucas and Havlicek were the hub of that group, which won the NCAA title in 1960 and advanced unbeaten to the finals in 1961 before being upset by Cincinnati. Ohio State was national runner-up to Cincinnati again in 1962.

The Buckeyes’ record was 78-6 for three years, the best mark until May, Benson, Quinn Buckner, Bobby Wilkerson, and the rest of the Indiana crew went 84-6 for three. Ohio State won 32 straight games, a record for a Big Ten team until Indiana put together streaks of 34 and 33 in its two big years. The Buckeyes won 27 straight Big Ten games, another record until Indiana won 37.

However, the conference also had national champions with Indiana in 1940 and 1953, Wisconsin mater and coached his eventual successor, the late Branch McCracken, who was the only man to coach two NCAA championship teams from the Big Ten (Indiana ’40 and ’53). Dean himself went to Stanford and coached an NCAA champion (1943). Another Meanwell protege, the late Everett Case, was a successful Indiana high school coach before going to North Carolina State. Among Case’s recruits at N.C. State were Vic Bubas and Norm Sloan of Atlantic Coast Conference fame. The Meanwell shadow extended far and long.

Another famous coach, Ward “Piggy” Lambert, picked up the pace of the game with a fast-break attack at Purdue, featuring guard John Wooden. Lambert’s teams were Big Ten champions or co-champions nine times. Wooden took Lambert’s fast break and built on it for his remarkable run of 10 NCAA championships in 12 years as UCLA coach.

Basketball was also used as an off-season conditioning program by some notable athletes. Northwestern’s Otto Graham probably was the greatest football-basketball doubler, but 1940 Heisman Trophy winner Tom Harmon of Michigan also played some basketball. One of his predecessors at Michigan, Bennie Oosterbaan, was an All-American in basketball and football, and later coached both sports at Michigan.

The tradition of football players

**WHIZ QUIZ**
Test your command of stars, statistics, and outstanding moments in conference play.

1. Who was the last player to score more than 50 points in a conference game?
   a. Terry Furlow
   b. Freddie Brown
   c. Scott May
   d. Fly Williams

2. This player was his basketball team's MVP, high-jumped in the Olympics, and led the Big Ten in punting, all in the same year. Who was he?
   a. Jesse Owens
   b. Bob Beamon
   c. Dwight Eddleman
   d. Quinn Buckner

3. Indiana's Mike Woodson needs 322 points in Big Ten play to break the scoring record of what player?
   a. Cazzie Russell
   b. Scott May
   c. Jerry Lucas
   d. Marv Johnson

4. The Big Ten scoring record is held by Purdue's Rick Mount, who scored 61 points against Iowa in 1970. The second-place record of 57 points was also established in that game. Who set it?
   a. Bruce Parkinson
   b. Rickie Green
   c. Kyle Macy
   d. Dave Schellhase

5. This player wrote a best-selling novel and was his school's basketball MVP in 1962. Who is he?
   a. Robert Browning
   b. John McFhee
   c. Peter Gent
   d. William Shakespeare

6. Name the football All-American who was his basketball team's MVP three times but never won the award in football.
   a. Otto Graham
   b. Ron Kramer
   c. Pete Elliott
   d. John Havlicek

7. Who were the two Big Ten basketball All-Americans who coached Rose Bowl champions?
   a. Fielding H. Yost and Ara Parseghian
   b. Hank Stram and Lenny Dawson
   c. Bennie Oosterbaan and Pete Elliott
   d. Woody Hayes and Bo Schembechler

8. Which athlete helped his team to a Rose Bowl victory and three months later outscored Bob Cousy in an NCAA tournament game?
   a. Dick Schnittker
   b. Casey Jones
   c. Billy Cunningham
   d. Alex Groza

9. What was the only Big Ten team ever to average 100 points a game in league play?
   a. Indiana
   b. Iowa
   c. Illinois
   d. Michigan

Basketball-baseball is another double that has involved some big names. They include Frank Howard of Ohio State, who set home-run records with the Washington Senators, Lou Boudreau of Illinois, and Dave Winfield of Minnesota, now with the San Diego Padres. Big Ten basketball's past has been grand, and its present is exciting. And with Clark Kellogg, the top high school guard forward in the country, deciding to attend Ohio State, and Isiah Thomas, the No. 1 prep guard in the nation, opting for Indiana, the future looks to be equally impressive.
A TALE OF TWO TRADITIONS

Once St. John's and Ohio State were champions, but scandal and disenchantment tumbled them from basketball's pinnacle. Now the rebuilding strategies of two remarkable coaches are starting to pay off.

BY TIM WENDEL

Hundreds of people were gathered outside the old Madison Square Garden in downtown Manhattan the night of December 29, 1960. Most were looking for the Christmas gift that had not shown up under the tree a few days earlier—a ticket to the Holiday Festival basketball tournament and a chance to see St. John's play Ohio State.

Both teams were a collection of All-Americans and other famous names. The St. John's Redmen coach and left him disillusioned and disinterested; within four years the Buckeyes were in the Big Ten basement.

Yet both teams managed to preserve their basketball traditions and rise again. Today, St. John's and Ohio State are nearing the heights they reached on that December eve in 1960. This is the story of how they rebuilt.

St. John's University stands on a hill at the intersection of two boulevards in Queens. The Manhattan skyline beckons, scores. Two St. John's players were among many who were implicated in the scandal.

At the time of the gambling furor, Lou Carnesecca was an assistant coach at St. John's. Carnesecca, now head coach, has a caricature on the wall of his office. In the lower right-hand corner, above the artist's signature, are the words "To Lou (The Best) Basketball Survivor." It was Carnesecca who was at the forefront during the school's effort to save its basketball program.

It was not an easy task. Many
were coached by Joe Lapchick, now a member of the Basketball Hall of Fame. His team featured the best that the New York City playgrounds could offer, highlighted by the shooting of All-America forward Tony Jackson and the playmaking ability of guard Kevin Loughery.

Their opponent, the Ohio State Buckeyes, had won the National Collegiate Athletic Association championship the year before in San Francisco and was rated No. 1 in the nation. Coach Fred Taylor's team included four holdovers from that championship team: All-America center Jerry Lucas, John Havlicek, Larry Siegfried, and Bobby Knight. A crowd of 18,499—one of the largest ever for a college game in New York—watched Ohio State rally from a 13-point first-half deficit to win, 70-65.

If either school had known what the future held, they would have wanted to stop time and hold on to that winter evening forever. It was the pinnacle; for both schools there were dizzying falls ahead. St. John's came face-to-face with the world of gambling, and as a result found itself competing, for the first time, against larger universities for the services of the New York basketball player. More than a decade later, a bloody brawl during a game shocked Ohio State's head coach as a无名氏 serve away. Built by the Vincentian Fathers, the school comprises only 13 yellow-brick buildings on a tiny 107-acre campus. Administrators joke that it covers "one acre more than the Vatican." A commuter school, St. John's has no dormitories and no fraternity row, only a long basketball tradition. While teams like North Carolina and UCLA recruit on a national basis, St. John's tradition with players is primarily from the New York City area.

The Redmen's teams and stars have reflected the times. The Wonder Five of the early 1930s, a squad which lost only four games in three years, was made up of Jewish schoolboys from Brooklyn. In the late 1940s, St. John's was led by the Irish backcourt of Al and Dick McGuire. The school ushered in the era of the black star in the early 1960s with forward Tony Jackson.

Basketball, New York City style, seemed invulnerable in the spring of 1961. But as Ohio State went to the NCAA finals for the second consecutive year, St. John's had to struggle to keep its basketball program alive in the wake of the 1961 point-shaving scandal. Gamblers were bribing players throughout the East (and in other regions as well) to play below their ability, in order to affect the final game.

New York-area schools—among them New York University, City College of New York, and Long Island University—reacted to the bad publicity from the scandal by either de-emphasizing basketball or, in some cases, dropping it altogether. And wealthy schools in other states, sensing a vacuum, moved in to recruit the playground athletes.

"Prior to that time outside schools didn't recruit in New York," Carnesecca says. Before 1961 St. John's only competition for players was with crosstown rivals. But then teams like JCLA, North Carolina, and Maryland, armed with colorful brochures and offers of free room and board, convinced many players to leave New York. "Now they come from all over, and what has happened is that the competition has become much more keen," Carnesecca says.

While other New York schools played down basketball and silently watched larger universities gobble up their best prospects, St. John's counterattacked. "Instead of de-emphasizing basketball at this time, we re-emphasized basketball," says Carnesecca. Instead of ignoring the scandal, St. John's used it as a lesson and stressed that basketball could teach young men morality. "Just because you have a couple of people hold up a bank..."
are you going to shut the bank down?” Carnesecca asks.

A scrapbook of newspaper clippings about the scandal became required reading for basketball team members. The athletic department brought in policemen and the FBI to lecture players on “the evils of gambling.” The talk is still held today.

The results were not immediate. St. John’s fell to a 9-15 record in 1963. The team quickly recovered, winning the 1965 National Invitation Tournament, but then leveled off to a steady but unspectacular plateau. The Redmen fared poorly in NCAA competition, and rarely advanced past the first round of post-season play.

But the quick fix was not the expected outcome of the St. John’s game plan, which was this: to attract the city’s best players by being a strong, visible force in the New York City community. It was a strategy geared for the long haul.

One sure way to be visible, win or lose, is to put on a show, and that is what Carnesecca does. A colorful coach on the court and an outspoken person off it, he is a dream come true for reporters on the New York dailies. Many spectators are drawn to St. John’s games just to cheer on his antics.

In one game, Carnesecca was constantly up off the bench encouraging his team. The referee, with a basketball tradition, but still wants to stay close to his family.

Carnesecca teaches clinics and directs summer camps to stay in contact with the playground players. It pays off. “I knew Lou because I went to his camp a couple of years ago in high school,” says Reggie Carter, a starting guard on this year’s team.

Evidence of Carnesecca’s success is that three playground all-stars left the New York City area, then came back to play for St. John’s. Carter spent one year at Hawaii, Bernard Rendler returned from Notre Dame, and Curtis Redding came home from Kansas State. “I had to travel more than a thousand miles to find out my heart belonged to Brooklyn,” Redding says.

“It’s really an amazing thing,” Carnesecca says. “I tell high school kids who are thinking about going out of town. ‘Fellows, isn’t it strange that three kids left here and then came back?”

The real test of Carnesecca’s stay-at-home philosophy came three years ago when St. John’s was in the running for the services of Wayne McKoy of Bayside, New York, one of the most sought-after high school players in the nation. St. John’s had been one of the finalists for the last big man out of New York, Lew Alcindor (alias Kareem Abdul-Jabbar), but the tall center from Power Memorial in Manhattan decided to attend
irritated by Carnesecca's conduct, ordered him to stay in his seat. A few minutes later, Carnesecca again became caught up in the game and started following his team downcourt, yelling instructions. The referee, deciding he'd had enough, turned around to assess Carnesecca with a technical foul. Thinking he was near the team bench, the coach quickly sat down—in the lap of a bewildered woman. The crowd roared and the referee, also laughing, forgot about the technical.

A 1950 graduate of St. John's and originally from Manhattan, Carnesecca sells players on his school with the same philosophy he discovered nearly 30 years ago: stay in New York because that is where your roots are.

St. John's helps its cause by sinking its own roots deep into New York City basketball. The Catholic and public high schools annually hold their championships in the Redmen's Alumni Hall, and many players hear about St. John's in the newspapers or on television.

"People know us," Carnesecca says. "We can't bring a kid down and dazzle-dazzle him for 48 hours. We don't have a meeting with the governor. The kid knows us. He has been coming here to see our games, playing his high school ball here. We're looking for the kind of kid who wants to go to a school..."
The players and fans rioted and attacked the Ohio State team. For nearly two minutes the hometown team and fans madly chased and pummelled the Buckeyes. When order was restored, center Luke Witte and substitute Mark Wager lay unconscious on the floor.

arena. Next to the photographs are showcases honoring the university's varsity sports. Although the shrine to Buckeye basketball is one of the largest, it has been neglected. Dust litters the bottom of the case, and a dead moth lies in the corner. There are 15 trophies in the case, but none since 1971.

Hidden behind the 1961 national championship trophy is a small plaque to Fred Taylor. The Buckeye coach from 1958 to 1976, Taylor directed Ohio State to 297 victories, and to the NCAA finals in 1960, '61, and '62. While St. John's was struggling back to national prominence, Taylor's Buckeyes remained a perennial powerhouse throughout the 1960s and into the early 1970s. Ohio State won the Big Ten title seven times, and its players were named to the conference all-star team 27 times.

But Taylor left Columbus as a loser, not a hero.

Now the manager of a golf course in New Albany, Ohio, Taylor sits behind a large desk surmounting the Buckeyes' course of action. Taylor wanted assurances that such an incident would not happen again, while Weaver and the Big Ten said the suspensions were sufficient.

"I had the feeling in my own mind that nobody was really concerned with it," Taylor says. "If I had had the courage of my convictions, I would have quit coaching at the end of the (1972) season."

Instead, Taylor remained as coach for another four years, even though his heart was no longer in the game. Ohio State not only fell in the Big Ten standings, but top high school players from the state of Ohio such as Scott May, Bo Lamar, Ed Ratleff, Kevin Grevey, and Phil Hubbard enrolled elsewhere.

Some, like Lamar and Ratleff, did not measure up to Ohio State's entrance requirements, but others were lost because Taylor was lax in his recruiting efforts. A rumor surfaced that Taylor was prejudiced and refused to recruit blacks. The truth was he had little desire to recruit anybody, black or white.

ers who could rebound and score. He enlisted the support of the Ohio State alumni association, the world's largest. Miller asked graduates to telephone top prospects. Others chatted with prospective players who were waiting at airports for connecting flights to Columbus. The new coach underlined Ohio State's basketball tradition and brought in former Buckeye greats Jerry Lucas and John Havlicek to talk with interested players.

"We went out and talked to the best people available in high school, and some of them wanted the opportunities here," Miller says. "It is really quite simple. We have a great program to sell, we have a great university to sell."

Meanwhile, at home, Miller patched up differences between the basketball office and the athletic director. He, unlike Taylor, also used the football department to his benefit. Photographs of the football coaching staff and of the stadium packed with cheering fans were included in a slide show scoring record, imitating the fabled Buckeye stars, Ohio State finished last for the second straight year. Realizing Ramsey needed more assistance, Miller intensified his search for talent and focused his attention on Columbus high school star Herb Williams. Ohio Class A AA player of the year, the 6'10" center considered Michigan, UCLA, and Maryland before deciding to stay home and play for Ohio State.

Williams had been watching Miller's recruiting efforts and liked what he saw. "I was looking at the recruiting years everyone was having and Ohio State, by far, had the best," Williams says. "That pulled me a lot, plus my mother and my father wanted me to stay in town so they could see me play."

LAST December, St. John's and Ohio State were among the four teams participating in the Holiday Festival in New York's new Madison Square Garden. The tournament was supposed to showcase the Duke Blue Devils,
rounded by golf paraphernalia. The only reminder of 23 years in basketball is a nameplate he received at a basketball banquet.

As Muzak flowed from a speaker in the room, Taylor quietly talked about the incident that eventually caused him to leave coaching—the 1972 brawl at Minnesota. The game in Minneapolis was for first place in the Big Ten. With only 36 seconds left, and the Buckeyes holding a 50-44 lead, the Minnesota players and fans rioted and attacked the Ohio State team. Police security was meager, and for nearly two minutes the hometown team and fans madly chased and pummelled the Buckeyes. When order was restored, Ohio State center Luke Witte and substitute Mark Wager lay unconscious on the floor. Both were hospitalized.

"It was sickening," Taylor says. "It destroyed my real feeling about intercollegiate basketball."

Two Minnesota players were suspended for the remainder of the season, but little else was done. Taylor was incensed that the Big Ten did not demand more police protection for upcoming games at Minneapolis and that his school had not received an apology. Taylor and Ohio State athletic director J. Edward Weaver argued about "He lost his drive," says an Ohio State spokesman. "That game had a lasting, demoralizing effect on him, and as a result the program suffered."

In 1976, Ohio State finished last in the Big Ten. The next year Taylor was completing his tenure in the intramural office and Eldon Miller was the new basketball coach.

Miller had dreamed of playing basketball for the Buckeyes, while growing up in Gnadenhutten, Ohio. But talent did not equal expectations, and Miller played at Wittenberg University, about 40 miles away. After graduation, he became assistant coach at Wittenberg, then head coach the following year. In eight years at Wittenberg, Miller compiled a 142-55 record. In 1971, Miller took over the basketball program at Western Michigan and patiently rebuilt the team from a Mid-American Conference doormat to a team that narrowly lost to Marquette in the 1976 NCAA regionals. A week after that game, Miller was named head coach at Ohio State, where he began solving a new set of problems.

"We had tremendous difficulty rebounding the ball, and we had a lot of trouble defending close and scoring close," he says. "These are the first two things needed to have a great basketball team."

Miller began searching for play-shown to basketball recruits.

"We like to have our recruits come in and visit when they can watch football in the stadium," Miller says. "We want them to see winning football in the stadium. We sell a lot more of them on days when we win than on the days we lose."

Miller not only had to sell Ohio State to recruits, he had to convince the people of Columbus that his team was worth supporting. Like Carneseca, he went into the local community. He talked about his team to anyone who would listen. During his first year and a half on the job, Miller made more than 200 speeches to the people of Columbus about his up-and-coming team.

The new approach worked. Sellouts became the rule again and excellent players were entering Ohio State. Kelvin Ransley, one of the top high school guards in the nation and an Ohio native, ignored his first impressions that Ohio State was merely a football factory and joined the Buckeyes.

"Coach Miller is determined to bring basketball back at Ohio State," Ransley says. "I’d heard about the team with Lucas and Havlicek, and the idea of bringing the school back to the level of that team was something I could relate to."

Although Ransley set a freshman rated No. 1 at the time. The experts predicted easy victories for Duke, but the final results were very different. In the opening round, Ohio State came from being 17 points down to end Duke’s perfect season. And in the consolation game, St. John’s rallied from a 19-point deficit to defeat the Blue Devils.

"That game let us know we could play with anyone in the country," Ransley says. And Carter adds, "At the halfway mark of the season that was a very special game. That game showed us what we could do."

By the end of last season, the Redmen had battled their way into the finals of the NCAA Eastern Regional, losing by two points to Penn. Meanwhile, the Buckeyes finished one game behind the three teams tied for the Big Ten crown, and placed fourth in the NIT. During the off-season, the teams had banner recruiting years, and a Top 20 ranking is being forecast for both.

College basketball has not only survived, but it is something to cheer about again in New York and Columbus.

Staff writer Tim Wendel reached his basketball pinnacle on an intramural team called Dogfood, which is still rebuilding.
Boys of winter

John Havlicek

And yet it was the end too. There would be no more national championships, only wrenching title-game losses to the University of Cincinnati, first 70-65 in overtime and then by a decisive 71-59.

Fame on the courts and off

Still, the wins and losses were only part of the story of this thinking man's basketball team. From its ranks would come professional basketball's best all-around player, a best-selling author, a college coach of the year, a deputy state finance director.

The sun shone brightest in those years on Lucas, three times the Big 10's Most Valuable Player, leading scorer in the 1960 Olympics for the gold medalist Americans, 1961 Sports Illustrated Sportman of the Year.

Three times a Middletown High School star—and president of his junior and senior classes—and three times as a collegian, Lucas led his team to tournament finals. Three times they won, three times they lost.

A 3.4 point-hour student in Ohio State's former College of Commerce and a member of Beta Gamma Sigma, the business honorary comparable to Phi Beta Kappa, Lucas at first insisted pro basketball was not for him. But he went into the pros anyway—and became the fifth-best rebounder in National Basketball Association.

Strong forward Joe Roberts, the only senior regular on the 1960 team, played and then coached in the NBA. Guard Mel Nowell performed for the Chicago Packers, and irrepressible guard Larry Siegfried reached the height of his pro career as Havlicek's running mate at Boston.

Roberts left the pro coaching ranks last year and is in real estate business in Oakland. Nowell, like Roberts a Columbus East alumnus, was deputy state finance director in the first administration of Gov. James A. Rhodes and now handles public relations for the Smoot Construction Co. in Columbus.

Siegfried is living in Shelby, his hometown, and hopes to reenter coaching. Like Lucas, his life has become church-centered.

Mount Vernon's Richie Hoyt, a starting forward in 1961, is a trucking company executive in Connecticut. The man who replaced him the next year, Doug McDonald, a Fostoria native, is principal at Columbian High School in Tiffin.

Was their greatness really appreciated?

Two 1959 starters who relinquished their jobs to Lucas and Havlicek and gave the 1960 team great firepower off the bench were Dick Furry of Columbus West and Howard Nourse from Springfield. Furry, an honors business graduate, is a paint company executive in Cleveland. Nourse is athletic director at John Wesley College in
Will we ever see their likes again?

By William V. Merriman

They were the boys of winter, 20 winters ago. Uncommonly nimble of mind and body both, they were the best ever in Ohio State basketball.

They dismembered opponents with a spine-tingling precision that at once mirrored the contrasting styles of their sophomore superstars—gentle, brainy, eerily unmotivated Jerry Lucas and the bionic, exuberant John Havlicek.

Coming from seventh place in the Big 10 the previous year, they took the 1960 conference title by a comfortable two games over Indiana and blew past NCAA tournament foes by 19, 17, and 22 points to reach the national finals in San Francisco’s Cow Palace.

Calm, quiet, they ruled their league

Facing defending national champion California for the title, they still went into the game, recalls their second-year coach Fred Taylor, “calm, quiet, businesslike—just as they always were.”

California, the country’s top defensive club, never knew what hit it. The Buckeyes missed only 3 of 19 first-half shots, went an unreal 33 for 46 from the floor for the game, and won the national title by a record-breaking 20 points, 75-55.

That was only the beginning. The next two seasons, they ruled their league as no team ever had: 27-1 in the Big 10, 53-3 overall.

But his greater fame has come as an author, first of “The Memory Book,” which details his methods for such feats as memorizing 500 columns of the New York phone book, then “Remember the Word,” a manual for memorizing the Bible. A born-again Christian, he has formed Memory Ministries, a nonprofit corporation which teaches his memorization methods.

Leaving his mark on the NBA

A second fiddle to Lucas in college, Havlicek left an indelible stamp on the NBA. He played more games and took more shots than any other player, finished third in total points, sixth in assists—and was a perennial defensive all-star.

An ironman who missed only 33 games in 16 pro seasons and scored more than 1,000 points all 16 years, Havlicek helped the Boston Celtics to eight league titles.

“Havlicek is all bone, muscle, and heart—mostly heart,” Fred Taylor once said.

An all-state quarterback at Bridgeport High, the 6’5” Havlicek was a seventh-round draft pick of the Cleveland Browns and the last receiver cut from the team in 1962.

He now lives in Weston, Mass.—he recently sold his home in Upper Arlington—and works as a manufacturer’s representative, manages a Wendy’s territory, and does color commentary on CBS telecasts of the NBA.

Buckeye coaches Indiana to league records

Part-time starter Bobby Knight of Orrville turned out to have the best basketball brain of the lot, at least based on his college coaching record. Head man at Army at the age of 24, Knight has guided Indiana to 182 wins against only 49 losses. His team won the 1976 NCAA title.

His Hoosiers of the mid-1970s also wiped out two of the Buckeyes’ proudest league records—27 Big 10 wins in a row, 32 counting nonconference games. Indiana stretched those records to 37 straight in the Big 10 and ’74 overall.

Owosso, Mich.

Backup guards Gary Gearhart from New Lebanon and Columbus’s Dave Barker are in business, Gearhart in the Lima area with Josten jewelry and Barker with the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce.

Their coach, Fred Taylor, who manned the pivot for the Big 10 champion Buckeyes of 1950 and later played pro baseball, went on to 297 wins and seven league titles in his 18-year coaching career at Ohio State. He now manages The Golf Club in suburban Columbus.

Looking back 20 years, Taylor doubts now that the true greatness of his powerhouse teams was appreciated completely.

“They never lost a Big 10 game with the chips on the line,” Taylor says, “and remember, in those days even a title tie would have cost them a trip to the tournament, since the team longest removed from tournament competition would go.”

They played ‘like the devil’

They also withstood classroom pressures at a time when instead of averaging grades to determine eligibility, players were ruled out of competition if they failed even one credit hour.

They were a team that ran on all cylinders on the floor, but Taylor admits there was a fair amount of personal friction among players.

“There were some different personalities involved, and some of the men did not particularly like each other,” he recalls. “But they could forget their personal problems once they took the floor and would play like the devil.”

They were unmatched winners, 78 times in three years. They were Ohio State’s boys of winter.

William V. Merriman is OSU’s former director of communications services and is now with Battelle Memorial Institute.
OSU player accused of vandalism

Troy Taylor may have hoped to get in some extra practice before Ohio State University's final home basketball game this past season; what he got was a court date.

The 21-year-old Buckeye guard is charged in Franklin County Municipal Court with criminal mischief for allegedly cracking the glass in a door to St. John Arena on Feb. 25. The Buckeyes lost that night to Michigan.

A report filed by OSU Police Officer Deborah L. Selby says she watched that Saturday afternoon as Taylor knocked on the arena's southwest doors but failed to get in.

"He then turned around and began kicking the door glass, causing the glass to crack near its bottom, sending spider-web cracks throughout its entirety," Selby said. Damage was estimated at $145.

Taylor tried unsuccessfully to open several other doors before he finally got a key to the arena from the university's ice rink next door, Selby said.

Taylor has pleaded not guilty. His lawyer, John W.E. Bowen, has asked for a non-jury trial. The case is assigned to Judge Steven B. Hayes.
Coaches had no doubt about 1960 team

By Elizabeth McBride
Lantern staff writer

If there was ever a doubt that the 1960 OSU basketball team would win the NCAA championship, it certainly did not exist in the minds of the coaches.

It was clear early on that the team was quite special, said 1960 coaches Fred Taylor and Frank Truitt.

"It didn't come as a shock to anybody," Truitt said. "We knew that we were going to be very good," agreed Taylor.

And both men had every reason to be confident.

After all, their starting team consisted of what were to be five of the best players in the history of collegiate basketball.

Sophomore center Jerry Lucas, sophomore forward John Havlicek, sophomore guard Mel Nowell, junior guard Larry Siegfried, and senior center Joe Roberts formed the starting team that, according to Taylor, created an enthusiasm for basketball where there had been none before.

"They made basketball fans," said Taylor, who himself had been a Buckeye basketball player just ten years earlier.

In 1950, the team had won the Big Ten championship, ending it's season with a 22-4 record, Taylor said. But the accomplishment went virtually unnoticed. He said, "It was almost like, 'so what?'"

Ten years later, however, OSU basketball was the object of adoring fans to the bleachers of St. John Arena.

This was due to the spirit of the team, Taylor said.

"Their style of basketball was up-tempo. They made (the game) enjoyable," Taylor said.

"They were very charismatic," Taylor said. "They became very role oriented in their play — they were very unselfish. They made the viewers aware of how important basketball was."

Capturing OSU's one and only national title did just that. The team ended its 1960-61 season 27-2, sweeping both the Big Ten and NCAA championships.

The team went on to a 27-1 season in 1961 and completed the 1962 year 28-2. But while both seasons saw a Big Ten championship for the Buckeyes, the team surprisingly failed to win the NCAA again, and finished second in the nation both years.

"It was a jolt we didn't win it," Taylor said. The team had outstanding seasons each year and expected another national title. But this year at the end of both seasons kept another NCAA championship from the Buckeyes.

The team went into the last game of the 1961 season undefeated, against the University of Cincinnati. The game should have cinched the NCAA for the Buckeyes, Truitt said. But the game went into overtime, and a forty-five-minute wait in the locker room drained the team's energy.

"They were all fired up and ready to go," he said. But the wait was enough to take the team's spirit. "They thought too much about what they had to do instead of going out there and doing it."

The 1962 season was also a year for a national championship, Truitt said. But Lucas hurt his knee in the last three minutes of the final game, against Louisville. This, Truitt said, was a main reason that OSU lost the national title.

However, the Buckeyes of 1960-62 have nothing to be ashamed of. Three Big Ten championships and an overall 72-8 record mark one of college basketball's finest teams.

Lucas, Havlicek and Siegfried were All-America in 1960, 1961 and 1962. The three men lost only six games in their college careers and they never lost at St. John Arena, said Bill Myles, associate athletic director.

But the team's magic didn't end on the court or with the fans. The fact that three of the starters were sophomores made the other players work even harder to retain spots on the team, Taylor said.

Although the starters were the best of the team, he said, the second string members showed fantastic abilities during practices.

"John Havlicek pushed (co-captain) Dick Furry into some of the best practice sessions he ever had," Taylor said.

And the Buckeyes still reap the benefits of the talented members of the 1960-62 teams for several years.

"The momentum carried on for two years afterwards," Truitt said. The Buckeyes won the Big Ten championship in 1963 and 1964 — the result, he said, of having practiced with an NCAA championship team.

All five members of the starting team graduated, and all five went on to play professional basketball.

Truitt said he is proud to have been a part of these men's careers. "It's great when you know you supported these kids when they were growing up."

Both coaches agreed that the 1960 NCAA title won't necessarily be the last one for the Buckeyes. With a little luck and a lot of work, a future Buckeye team may someday mirror the spectacular 1960 season.

It's not impossible, Truitt said. "It'll happen sometime."
Search for Miller's

By Brian P. Davis
Lantern staff writer

The OSU athletic department will soon begin a nationwide search to replace ousted basketball coach Eldon Miller.

Athletic Director Richard M. Bay said he hopes to hire an established coach with a proven record. However, he said, all applications will be considered.

This leaves the future of OSU's assistant coaches — Todd Landrum, Randy Ayers and Jim Cleamons — in doubt. Bay said their contracts will not be renewed.

None of the three have experience as a head coach, but Cleamons is a former Ohio State and NBA star.

Former OSU basketball player Dave Jones, who played under coaches Miller and Cleamons the past four seasons, said Cleamons would be an excellent choice to replace Miller.

"I think Coach Cleamons is a logical replacement," Jones said. "He has Ohio State contacts, he's been around the program for a few years and he knows the ropes. I think Coach Cleamons would be a better choice than trying to bring someone into a situation like this. It's a tough situation to coach here."

But speculation from an article in Tuesday's Columbus Dispatch has Tennessee Coach Don DeVoe leading the list of possible candidates. DeVoe played under former OSU Coach Fred Taylor from 1962 to 1964, and later became a graduate coaching assistant under Taylor.

DeVoe, a candidate for the Ohio State job when Miller was hired 10 years ago, was unavailable for comment.

Coaches from around Ohio could also be possible candidates.

Ohio University Coach Danny Nee has had success with his program, taking the Bobcats to the NCAA tournament the past two seasons. Nee said he won't even consider anything until the season is over.

"We talk to our players about loyalty, responsibility, and commitment and about not having distractions in their lives," Nee said. "This is a perfect opportunity to show them by example what I mean. My first responsibility and commitment is to Ohio University. My loyalty is to my basketball players."

Nee said, "After the season is over, if there are any opportunities to improve myself both personally and professionally, I will certainly look into them."

Another Ohio coach who might be considered for the job is Akron University's Bob Huggins. The former Buckeye assistant coach has drastically improved the Akron basketball program and has a 15-6 record so far this season.

Cleveland State Coach Kevin Mackey is also a potential candidate. He would not say whether he will seek the Ohio State job.

"I think you always have to be interested in bettering your own program," Mackey said. "And as far as any coach, to a certain degree, it's the American way to do the best you can for your family and yourself."

Don Donoher from Dayton and Ralph Underhill from Wright State could also be potential replacements for Miller.

The Columbus Dispatch mentions several other possible candidates who have done well at schools without the national reputation of Ohio State.

These include: Gary Williams, Boston College; Paul Westhead, Loyola Marymount (La.); Jim Crews, Evansville; Lee Rose, South Florida; Charles Moir, Virginia Tech; and Rick Huckabay, Marshall (W.Va.).

Huckabay, who coaches at a Division IA school, said it would be difficult for him to get the job.

"I don't think I'd have the clout to get a big name job like that. I think they'd have to think enough of me to want me to come and apply for it. I mean anybody in my situation would like to be at Ohio State," he said.

Huckabay said he doesn't think Ohio State will consider many coaches that will be asking for the job. He said Ohio State is a select university that can choose just about whomever it wants to head the program.
successor to begin

Eldon Miller said at Tuesday's press conference that he was fired and did not resign. Miller's position will be vacated June 30, and the search for a new head basketball coach will soon begin.
Longer term possibility for new coach

By Margaret Newkirk
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State’s next basketball coach may be offered a multi-year contract instead of the standard one-year contract, President Edward H. Jennings said Tuesday.

Jennings said a multi-year contract will be "a matter of negotiations with the individuals we interview."

Athletic Director Richard M. Bay refused to comment on the situation.

Last week, ousted basketball coach Eldon Miller said the one-year contract, the standard contract for all OSU faculty, is a barrier to recruitment.

Miller said the contract surrounded OSU coaches with an air of job instability that made it difficult to recruit.

Otto Breitenbach, athletic director at the University of Wisconsin, agrees that longer contracts help universities retain and hire qualified coaches and players.

Wisconsin’s head coaches all have four-year contracts.

"I think it's a factor in recruiting players because unfortunately some people would use it negatively. They might say, 'look, how do you know that coach will still be there when you're a senior,' to get a player to go to their own school," Breitenbach said.

The University of Michigan is the only other Big Ten school using one-year contracts. Michigan basketball coach Bill Frieder said he doesn't think the short-term contract has hurt his recruitment. Michigan and Indiana are currently leading the Big Ten conference.

"Our best recruiting year was the 1981-82 season, when our record was 7-20, and rumors of firing were flying," he said.

Frieder said the athletic director was supportive and made a special attempt to quell rumors.
Gary Williams’ style
intense and fast-paced

By Todd M. Romain
Lantern staff writer

Staunch Ohio State basketball fans may not recognize the Buckeyes when they hit the hardwood of St. John Arena next fall, following the hiring of new head coach Gary Williams as successor to Eldon Miller.

Williams, known for his intense coaching style, fast-break offense and full-court press defense at Boston College, should be quite a contrast to the conservative Miller, who will leave his position June 30.

But will the new coach change his game plan in coming to a school that has traditionally played with a conservative offensive and defensive philosophy?

Not a chance.

"Any time you go into a new situation, you have to adjust to the people you play against," Williams said. "But in terms of how I like to play, I don't see why that has to change at all.

Williams said the OSU players will have to make adjustments to his style.

"But I think it's a style that players like to play," he said. "If you're a player, you enjoy the full-court game and you enjoy running, fast-break type basketball.

In signing with Ohio State, the former Boston College coach said he was most impressed by Ohio State's commitment to its basketball program and looks forward to coaching on the Ohio State campus.

"I like the idea of coaching in what is primarily a college town," Williams said. "I've been on the east coast banging my head against the wall with the Celtics, and before that I was in Washington (D.C., home of the NBA's Washington Bullets).

Williams' Boston College teams lived in competition with the Boston Celtics during each of his four seasons with the Eagles. Not only did the professional competition hurt Boston College in terms of fans, but each year the Eagles also played several games at the Celtics' home arena, Boston Gardens, essentially a neutral site because of its distance from the school's Chestnut Hill, Mass., campus.

Another problem that plagued Williams at Boston College was recruiting. Massachusetts, where high school basketball is second to hockey, did not give Williams the recruiting base many of the other Big East coaches had.

"The problem in Massachusetts is that it's a big hockey area that you lose half the athletes to hockey," Williams said. "This year there were only two Division 1 scholarships in the whole Massachusetts area, so there's just not that much basketball played at a level that can help you at a Boston College or Ohio State.

"I'm looking forward to getting out there and really getting involved in Ohio, because traditionally Ohio has been a great high school basketball state," he added.

Ohio State Athletic Director Rick Bay looks forward to seeing Williams in Ohio as well.

"There were a lot of things I liked about Williams when I interviewed him," Bay said. "I thought his image and the chemistry we had would fit well here at Ohio State.

Williams was given a five-year contract, the first multi-year contract ever given to an Ohio State coach. Bay said the long-term contract was "vital and mandatory."

He said. "We would not have been able to get Gary, or any other top-notch coach, without a (multiyear) contract."

Williams agreed, saying it would have been difficult for him to leave Boston College without a multiyear pact.

"You have to be confident that you can coach," Williams said, "but at the same time (the contract) helps your decision because its very difficult to leave a secure situation to go to a situation that wouldn't be as secure."

Bay said he realized the media had a job to do, but emphasized that it did not help in the job search process.

"The media in some ways dictates who will negotiate or drop out," Bay said, adding that coaches who are rumored to be interviewing for a position are often pressured by their own school officials. The pressure often results in coaches fearing that they might put their current jobs in jeopardy by interviewing for an open job, Bay said.

"No news coverage at all, although it is not possible and may not be desirable, would have given us a greater opportunity to get a top-notch coach," he added.

Williams will be making trips back and forth between Boston and Columbus, until his daughter finishes her high school sophomore year in June.
NIT win team's

By Greg Mende
Lantern staff writer

NEW YORK — Eldon Miller sat patiently in his seat at Madison Square Garden watching the consolation game of the 48th annual National Invitation Tournament between Florida and Louisiana Tech.

He was also waiting for one of the two teams he coached at the time, the Ohio State Buckeyes, to try and become the first OSU basketball team to win a post-season tournament since 1969’s national championship.

“Those are the kinds of games that you coach for,” Miller said. “I’ve been very fortunate. I’ve had so many great players that I’ve been in a lot of tournaments.”

One of those players, sophomore guard Curtis Wilson, was waiting also. And he knew all too well what was at stake.

“Coach has never won the Big Ten, the NIT or an NCAA game past the regionals,” Wilson said. “This would be a feather in his cap.”

Wilson and his teammates were determined not to let their coach down.

Consequently, Miller left the Garden floor a conquering hero on the shoulders of his players after their 73-63 victory over the University of Wyoming.

After three cracks at the NIT, and four at the NCAA’s, Eldon Miller had finally won a championship.

“It’s a hell of a feeling. There’s nothing like it,” Miller said.

Miller can now assume his full-time duties as coach of the University of Northern Iowa after posting a career record of 176-118 at Ohio State.

“I had 10 great years at Ohio State, but I didn’t like the fact that I was on a one-year contract,” Miller said. “I felt I couldn’t build the program the way I wanted to with a one-year contract.”

Senior forward Brad Sellers said, “Why not send him out a winner? He’s worked hard, he’s done a lot for the university and a lot for us personally.”

Miller tried to downplay the role that his unique job situation played in inspiring his team.

“I think the real story is what the kids are doing,” he said. “I’m doing what I want to do, and Ohio State’s doing what they want to do and we’re parting as friends.”

OSU Athletic Director Rick Bay echoed Miller’s sentiments during the excitement of the Buckeyes’ title.

“There’s nothing I would have rather had happen than for him to be able to ride out of Columbus on a white horse with an NIT championship in his pocket,” Bay said.

That championship was largely due to the play of Sellers, who was named the tournament’s most valuable player. In the semifinals against Louisiana Tech Monday, Sellers tied an OSU and NIT record with nine blocked shots while scoring 23 points to lead the Buckeyes to a 79-66 victory.

Sellers continued his dominance in the championship game, scoring 17 points and grabbing 12 rebounds.

“Feels good to win the NIT,” Sellers said. “I think we played one of the toughest schedules in the country. When times got rough for us back at home, I think the people
gift to Miller

and when you combine those two things, it's awfully hard to be denied," Eagles said.

Miller said the development of young players such as Wilson and freshmen Jay Burson, Kip Lomax and Jerry Francis has resulted in the team's recent success after a 14-14 regular season.

"The reason our younger kids are scoring more is that they're a little older. They're not really freshmen who haven't been in the heat of battle before," Miller said. "What we have really is the evolution of a lot of new players. Some of them are just starting to assert themselves."

Wilson is a prime example. He who averaged 6.5 points during 28 regular season games but scored in double figures in all five NIT contests.

"Curtis has always had the talent," OSU assistant coach Randy Ayers said. "He just needed the experience."

Junior forward Clarence McGee said the recent balance in scoring was needed to take the pressure off of Sellers and Hopson.

"Basically, Brad and Dennis did most of the scoring before. Now it's starting to even out and I think that's helping the team," McGee said.

Sellers also credits the team's success to the younger team members.

"We've got a lot of young people who we've started to involve," he said.

Burson is another neophyte who has grown up. But he said the team's unity was the most important improvement.

"I think everybody put their personalities aside and tried to be more of a team than during the regular season," Burson said.

Hopson agrees with Burson's theory. "We're all playing together and I think that's what brought us here," he said.

Francis said he looks for that unity to continue in 1987.

"I figure we have a great chance under a new coach with a new program," Francis said. "It should be a challenge for us."

Miller said his team has "had to put up with a lot of things that teams really shouldn't have to put up with and they've handled it very well.

"I think the results speak for themselves."
Cleamons to stay at OSU as top assistant

By Suzette Beigel
Lantern staff writer

Jim Cleamons will be staying at Ohio State.
After weeks of not knowing who basketball coach Gary Williams
would select to be on his staff, the
decision was made Wednesday to
retain Cleamons as an OSU assis-
tant coach.

Cleamons, from Columbus, was
previously an assistant under
Eldon Miller who was fired
February 3. Williams began the
new position April 1.

Cleamons led Linden High School
to the 1967 state title and played for
Ohio State leading the Buckeyes to
the 1971 Big Ten title.
He also played nine years in the
National Basketball Association.

Williams said he chose Cleamons
as his top assistant because he was
one of the "outstanding assistant
coaches in the country."

He has "very good name iden-
tification," Williams said.

Because of his background and
knowledge of Ohio high school
basketball, recruiting will be a
priority of Cleamons, Williams
said.

Because Williams coached at
Boston College, he said he is not as
familiar with Ohio as Cleamons is.

So Cleamons will be expected to
carry more Ohio recruiting responsi-
bilities than when he was under
Miller.

In Thursday's Columbus
Dispatch, Cleamons said he had
"an edge on someone coming from
the outside" because of his Ohio
background.

Cleamons, out of town for
recruiting purposes, could not be
reached for comment.

As for other assistants, Williams
said he has possibilities in mind and
names will be mentioned next
week.

Randy Ayers, part-time assistant
under Miller, has not ruled Ohio
State out as a possibility. He said he
had an interview with Williams and
feels compatible with the new
coach.

Ayers is also looking at positions
in Colorado, Virginia, and Miami
(Fla.), and said he will make his
decision next week.

Todd Landrum, Miller's top
assistant, is a candidate for Capital
basketball coach (replacing Dave
Grube). Landrum is not expected to
stay at Ohio State.
OSU to elevate Ayers to full-time assistant

By Mark Zeidler
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Barring unforeseen 11th-hour complications, Randy Ayers will become a full-time assistant basketball coach at Ohio State, according to sources close to the program. He may be named as early as Friday.

The vacancy was created when Rick Barnes left in April to become head coach at George Mason University. Ayers served as a part-time assistant the previous four seasons.

Buckeyes coach Gary Williams said he will begin interviewing for one volunteer or graduate assistant coach after the full-time assistant coaching position is filled.

Meanwhile, the spring national letter of intent signing period ends Friday, and Williams said he doubts if he will use his final scholarship.

Williams made the decision after Allegany Community College point guard Rudy Archer decided to attend Maryland.

"We've had a great recruiting year," Williams said. "A lot of magazines have been saying it's one of the top three in the nation."

OSU signed Cleveland St. Joseph's Treg Lee, Wehrle's Eli Brewer and Maine Central Institute's Perry Carter.

"We're looking at high school juniors right now," Williams said. "We'll probably bank the scholarship and use it in November or next spring."

Ohio State will recruit 6-foot-11 center Bill Robinson of Canton McKinley and Eric Riley of Cleveland St. Joseph, and point guard Mark Baker of Class AAA state champion Dayton Dunbar.

At its winter meeting, the NCAA cut the number of basketball scholarships at Division I schools from 15 to 13.

But Williams said he believes the NCAA will vote to hike the number to 14. If that happens, the Buckeyes will have four grants to offer next season.

"You need that many scholarships because players get injured and some transfer," Williams said.

Williams will soon learn whether Lee will meet academic eligibility requirements for incoming college freshmen. Under NCAA guidelines, high school seniors must have a 2.0 grade-point average and score at least 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test.

St. Joseph Coach Mike Moran said Lee is close to a 2.0, and Lee's test scores will be known soon.

Lee is the first Ohio Class AAA player of the year to sign with the Buckeyes since Clark Kellogg, also a St. Joseph alumnus, in 1976.
BUCKEYE CAGERS GET PERSONALITY

By Steve Snapp
OSU Sports Information

After what must have seemed like an eternity, Gary Williams is doing what he likes best—coaching basketball.

Since being named in April as Ohio State’s new basketball coach, Williams’ time has been spent organizing his staff, speaking to alumni groups, contacting high school coaches in Ohio and around the country, and recruiting.

All are vital to the success of any basketball program and Williams realizes that only too well. But on-the-floor coaching is his bread and butter, so Oct. 15, the first day the NCAA allows practice, was a day he looked forward to with great anticipation.

“From April to early October all I could do was talk to our players off the court,” said Williams. “And while that is certainly important from the standpoint of getting to know them, I wanted to see what they could do as basketball players. I’m glad practice is finally here.”

Williams places heavy emphasis on pre-season practice. “It’s really the time you form the personality of the team,” he says with conviction. “What you do between Oct. 15 and the first game can really dictate what you do the rest of the year.”

Williams has definite ideas about the personality of his first OSU squad.

“I want our players to show emotion and enthusiasm and to show our fans that they are excited about playing basketball at Ohio State,” says the man who directed Boston College to a combined record of 76-45 and three postseason tournament appearances during his four-year stay there.

Williams doesn’t like to talk in terms of numbers when it comes to wins in his first year with the Buckeyes. “I think what is important this year is that we establish a style of play,” he says.

As he has done throughout a highly successful career that began at American University and then bloomed at Boston College, Williams plans to exercise an up-tempo style of play at Ohio State.

“We will run a fast paced, intelligent offense and an aggressive, full court defense,” he says. “I think the players and the fans will enjoy it.”

The new coach concedes a shortage of bodies could be a Buckeye shortcoming this year. There are just nine players on the roster.

“Lack of depth will be our biggest problem,” Williams predicts. “We have six players who have experience but our three reserves haven’t seen much time. They will have to come through.”

Williams isn’t waving the white flag, though, not by a longshot. “We will come after you with the players we do have,” he promises.

One of those players is Dennis Hopson, a 6-5 senior who is being accorded all-America recognition this year.

Hopson was the Buckeyes’ leading scorer a year ago with a fancy 20.9 average. He is one of four starters returning from last year’s 19-14, NIT championship team.

A forward his first two years and a guard much of the time last year, Hopson will in all likelihood spend time in both the front and back courts during the upcoming season, especially since Williams has been known to employ a three-guard offense from time to time.

Hopson, 6-1 Curtis Wilson, who played superbly in the NIT, and six-foot sparkplug Jay Burson, who is coming off a fine freshman year, are the backcourt veterans. Also back is 6-5 junior Scott Anderson. All four can shoot and should
Lesson from New Coach

Deans Hopson is one of four returning starters for the Buckeyes.

benefit from the new 1993 three-point line, although Williams' first preference is to get the ball inside.

Up front burly sophomore Jerry Francis (6.1), hard-working Keith Wesson (4.1) and John Anderson will provide the seasoning. Francis is a muscular 6-5, while Wesson and Anderson (hurt much of last year) stand 6-9. Depth will come from 6-9 Joe Dumas and 6-7 Tony White.

"We will be an interesting team," says Williams. "Not real big, but competitive."

The Buckeyes preview their talents Nov. 19 against the Yugoslavian National team. Tip-off time is 8 o'clock in St. John Arena. "They can play," declares Williams. "They play Kentucky the night before they play us, so we had better be ready."

The regular season opens Nov. 29 when Bucknell comes to town to kick off a six-game homestand for the Buckeyes.

Williams promises plenty of excitement.

"I know I am excited," he says. "I probably won't spend much time in my chair."

1986-87 Ohio State Men's Basketball Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Opponent</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 19</td>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>BUCKNELL</td>
<td>8:07 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 2</td>
<td>WESTERN MICHIGAN</td>
<td>8:07 p.m.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>SIENA</td>
<td>8:07 p.m.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>OHIO UNIVERSITY</td>
<td>8:07 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>BOWLING GREEN</td>
<td>8:07 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>HOWARD</td>
<td>7:07 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>at Dayton</td>
<td>8:07 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19-20</td>
<td>at Gator Bowl Tournament,</td>
<td>8:05 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jacksonville, FL</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>vs. Jacksonville</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>vs. Virginia Tech or Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>28-30</td>
<td>at Aloha Classic, Honolulu, HI</td>
<td>9:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>TBA</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>vs. Arkansas</td>
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<td>29-30</td>
<td>vs. California, Florida, Hawaii</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Wisconsin or Kansas</td>
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<td>Jan. 4</td>
<td>INDIANA</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>at Michigan</td>
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<td>4:08 p.m. + or &amp;</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>at Michigan State</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>NORTHWESTERN</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>WISCONSIN</td>
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<td>at Minnesota</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>at Iowa</td>
<td>8:08 p.m. +</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 2</td>
<td>PURDUE</td>
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<td>ILLINICIS</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>MICHIGAN</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>MICHIGAN STATE</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>at Wisconsin</td>
<td>9:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>at Northwestern</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>IOWA</td>
<td>8:05 p.m.</td>
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<td>at Minnesota</td>
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<td>at Illinois</td>
<td>8:07 p.m.</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>at Purdue</td>
<td>8:08 p.m. +</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 4</td>
<td>FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>at Indiana</td>
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<td>4:08 or 2:08 p.m.</td>
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All times listed E.S.T.
- WTBN-TV Telecast
- Big Ten Network Telecast
- ESPN Telecast
All games on WBNS Radio
Assistant coach named next week

By Gina Koehler
Lantern staff writer

The full-time assistant basketball coach for Ohio State will not be named until "early next week," OSU Head Basketball Coach Gary Williams said Wednesday.

The Columbus Dispatch reported Wednesday that Randy Ayers, part-time assistant for the past four seasons, could be appointed to the full-time position as early as Friday.

Williams said, "The Dispatch story wasn't accurate."

Over 100 people have applied for the position, but only four or five are being considered, Williams said.

A need for an assistant coach was created when Rick Barnes left that position in April to become the head coach at George Mason University.

Barnes' departure gives Ayers a chance to stay at Ohio State in a coaching capacity. Because of an NCAA rule, part-time assistant coaches are no longer allowed.

Williams said Ayers is considered a good candidate because of his strong recruiting experience as assistant coach at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

"Recruiting is a big part" of the full-time assistant's job, Williams said.

Ayers could not be reached for comment.

Buckeye sophomore forward Tony White said of Ayers, "He understands what being a player is all about. He understands the adversity players sometimes face. As a coach, he tries to help you out if you get into a situation."

"Our coaching staff really works well together. They have things tight. We wouldn't have been in the NCAA playoffs with out the staff," White said.
Team unity key to 1960 basketball championship

By Scott Doig
Lineman sports writer

"There had not been a basketball championship of any kind at Ohio State since 1950 and I thought the Ohio State team should go three or four years without at least a Big Ten title," said Fred Taylor, coach of the 1960 Buckeyes. "We felt we had a team in 1960 that could win a national championship, and we were right."

The 1960 Buckeyes started one senior, two juniors and two sophomores. This blend of youth and experience led the Buckeyes to the school's only basketball national championship. The five starters had a combined average of more than 150 points a game in high school.

The mix started with two highly-recruited high school players from Ohio — sophomores Jerry Lucas, from Middletown, and John Havlicek, from Lansing. The two were the heart of the team.

Lucas, a 6-foot-7 center, had a great intense season for the Scarlet and Gray. He led the nation in scoring (25.3) and shooting percentage (63 percent), as well as leading the team in scoring with a rebound percentage of 57 percent.

Lucas averaged only 31 minutes a game in his career at Ohio State, but was a consensus All-American all three years. "I never saw a player with the ability Jerry Lucas had," Taylor said. "He had marvelous timing, like a big cat. When he came down with the ball he was always in position to go back up again. Lucas had the ability to get the rebound and kick the ball out to start the fast break and had the speed to get down the floor to be in the fast break himself." Taylor considered a big boost for the Buckeyes' half-court offense. "It was impossible to throw a ball to Lucas because he caught everything," Taylor said. The players knew if they were open in the offense that Lucas was going to get them the ball and that made them work harder to get open.

Havlicek, a 6-foot-5 forward, averaged 12.2 points a game in 25.3 minutes, but his defense and rebounding were his strongest attributes. Taylor said, "I have never seen a man play defense like John. Nothing ever seemed to get him down. His defense was legendary. Havlicek was an offensive player on the other team and John would cut that player's average in half.

Havlicek averaged 25 points a game at Bridgeport High School, but played the quickest way to crack the Buckeyes' starting lineup was by playing defense. The Buckeyes had a lot of people and I figured I could get the coach's attention by playing good defense."

The season started with the Buckeyes ranking third in the country with a rebound recovery percentage of 57. The Buckeyes were a slashing-type rebounder and Lucas used his power, Taylor said. "Roberts and Furry were very good at getting in good rebound position and that really enabled us to control the boards." The Buckeyes were ranked third in the country with a rebound recovery percentage of 57.

The Buckeyes ranked third in the country with a rebound recovery percentage of 57. The Buckeyes were a slashing-type rebounder and Lucas used his power, Taylor said. "Roberts and Furry were very good at getting in good rebound position and that really enabled us to control the boards." The Buckeyes were ranked third in the country with a rebound recovery percentage of 57.

The Buckeyes finished the regular season with a 20-3 record, second best in the country. They scored 100 or more points four times and eclipsed 90 points 12 times.

Ohio State was placed in the Midwest Regional of the NCAA Tournament, breeching through the first three games by an average of 30 points a game.

The Buckeyes faced the University of California in the NCAA Championship at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, Calif. The heavily favored Bears went into the game with a 25-1 record and winners of 24 of 44. The Bears were riding an 18-game winning streak.

The 1960 team had a great mix of kids that went out of their way to help each other," Taylor said. "And that is what makes a championship team."
Basketball assistant has an

By JAMES D. TOUVELL
Lantern sports writer

Basketball Coach Gary Williams has been recruiting from his old school.
Williams' target of interest was not a basketball star, but a young, Boston College assistant coach who had spent five years involved with the Eagle basketball program.

Paul Bruzeau, 28, worked with Williams for four years in Boston and has a coaching philosophy very similar to the Buckeyes' head coach.

"Like Coach Williams, I prefer an 'up-tempo' game, running, pressing, dictating tempo and forcing the action," Bruzeau said. "I think the players like to play that way," he said. "The fans have dictated that they want (a fast game). That's why there's the 45-second clock in college basketball."

Williams said it will be beneficial to the Buckeyes to have Bruzeau on their staff because he is familiar with their style of play.

"He comes in here knowing the system," Williams said. "That will make his transition easier."

Bruzeau became the third Buckeye assistant coach on Sept. 9. His duties will include everything that is normal for an assistant coach with the exception of recruiting off campus, Williams said.

Because of an NCAA rule which restricts programs from using more than two assistant coaches for off-campus recruiting, Bruzeau will not be able to make personal off-campus contact with the recruits. However, Williams said Bruzeau will still be able to help recruit through telephone calls and letters.

"I will be involved with daily practices with Coach Williams, scouting opponents, pre-season conditioning, weight lifting programs and academic monitoring," Bruzeau said.

Bruzeau said he met Williams

'upbeat' approach

when he was an assistant coach at Boston College and when Williams later returned to coach the Eagles, he promoted him from graduate assistant coach to a full-time position.

Bruzeau, an economics major who is working for his master's in marketing, said he first started to get involved in coaching while in high school. He began coaching in a YMCA league and from there he instructed summer camps, so when he started school at Boston College he decided to get involved in the Eagle athletic department.

"Coaching is something I've always wanted to do and for a while it was just a hobby. Then I got into the position to make it a profession," he said.

Bruzeau said his relationship with Boston College and head coach Jim O'Brien was positive, but he felt he needed a change.

"I had been coaching five years in the Big East," he said. "It was a good opportunity to come to a small program and one that I feel very comfortable about."

"I want to be a head coach. That was as big of a factor of coming to Ohio State as any," Bruzeau said. "Just from talking to people and observing the business, it's good to work at different places to get a broader base and broader knowledge."

"I do want to be a head coach somewhere down the line. You get hired from programs that are successful and I'm very confident Ohio State can become a successful program."

Williams said Bruzeau's experience in the Big East and the way in which he interacts with the players will make him a strong addition to the staff.

"He'll have to do battle with the people we do in the Big Ten and his experience in the Big East will help us," Williams said.

"I've always felt he's done a great job with the players. He's like a players' coach," he said.
‘X’ marks the spot

OSU basketball player Joe Dumas, a junior from Irvington, N.Y., practices Monday in St. John Arena while wearing his irregularly manufactured jersey. Dumas was recently said to be academically ineligible, but is still allowed to practice with the team. "I guess they'll have to fix it before the season starts," said Dumas, who will be eligible in January.
Basketball practice begins

Depth concerns Williams

By TOM ANDREWS
Lantern sports writer

For many students classes begin at 8 a.m., but for the 11 members of the men's basketball team, class began yesterday at 7 in the morning.

"The waiting's over, and it's time to get down to business," Coach Gary Williams said.

The first official practice for the 1987-88 season got underway with the players' mouths shut and eyes open as they listened to the coach's instructions.

"It's a lot easier this year because they've been here before," Williams said after the early morning practice.

Only two of the players have not practiced with the team before. Randy Doss, a 6-foot-5 sophomore swingman who was ineligible last season because of Proposition 48, and Perry Carter, a 6-foot-8 freshman forward, Proposition 48 is an NCAA minimum entrance requirement.

Four starters return from last season's 20-13 team that finished in sixth place in the Big Ten with a 9-9 record. Curtis Wilson, a 6-foot-1 senior, and Jay Burson, a 6-foot junior, return at the guard positions. Jerry Francis, a 6-foot-5 junior, returns at one forward position with John Anderson, a 6-foot-9 senior, at the center.

Also eligible this season is junior Grady Mateen, a 6-foot-11 transfer center from Georgetown.

Depth in the backcourt is Williams' major concern for this season. "You have to go with what you have. We have our starting guards back. (Senior) Scott Anderson is going to get an opportunity this year. It's nice to see him get a chance to play," he said.

Anderson, a 6-foot-5 guard, said he's ready for the opportunity.

"I haven't played much before, but it's a different situation this year. I'm going to play against quicker guys, but I think my height will help me defensively. It's my senior season and I'm looking forward to it. I think everybody is," he said.

Senior co-captains John Anderson and Wilson are ready to assume leadership roles.

Anderson said he's anxious for the season to begin but has to wait for his knee to heal. He injured it this summer but said he should be able to start running Saturday.

Wilson said, "Last year I was worried about what we could do. Now I know we have some players that can play."
All mine

Grady Mateen grabs a rebound at practice as Perry Carter, left, Scott Anderson, center, and Jerry Francis watch. They will have an intrasquad scrimmage after the football game in St. John Arena.
by Steve Snapp
Associate Sports Information Director

The sounds of bouncing basketballs fill the cavernous corridors of St. John Arena these days. So does the voice, often strained, of Gary Williams, the Buckeyes' second-year coach.

This is Williams' favorite time of year: the time when a team acquires its personality. For Williams, it's a time to teach, to shape, to form. And he puts his all into every practice, one moment admonishing, the next praising. Always encouraging. When the two-hour-plus session concludes, coach and players alike are drained.

"I expect my players to give me everything they have every minute they are on the floor," says Williams. "In return, I do the same. It's only fair. It's my obligation to them."

Williams has four starters back from a team that far exceeded the expectations of the preseason experts. The Buckeyes were 20-13 last year, scoring upset wins over top-rated Iowa and nationally ranked Kansas and Florida during the regular season, and topping Kentucky in the first round of the NCAA tournament. Gone, however, is All-America Dennis Hopson, who averaged 29 points and 8.2 rebounds per game. He was money in the bank for the Buckeyes.

But Williams, who coached this past summer at the World Juniors Championships in Italy, has a solid nucleus returning. Guards Curtis Wilson and Jay Burson are coming off their best years. So, too, are forward Jerry Francis and center John Anderson. And with top reserves Tony White and Scott Anderson both returning, life-after-Hopson might not be that bad after all.

"We will certainly miss Dennis both as a player and as a leader, but if we work hard and come together as a unit, this team will be very competitive," says Williams, who owns a career record of 168-100 in nine years on the collegiate level. "We have good players returning. They are a year older and should be just that much better. And we have some new players who are going to help us."

This year's new faces are 6-11 junior Grady Mateen, 6-8 freshman Perry Carter, 6-5 sophomore Randy Doss and 6-0 frosh James Bradley.

Mateen, a transfer from Georgetown, and Carter, one of the nation's most sought after prepsters last year, are expected to aid in Williams' quest for better rebounding and inside defense this year.

Doss and Bradley will add some desperately needed depth in the backcourt. That was one of Williams' biggest concerns when practice opened Oct. 15. "We are thin back there," he says. "That worries me."

Thom, not to expect to see the Buckeyes play the same kind of aggressive, fullcourt basketball that Williams introduced to OSU fans last year.

Wilson and Burson should provide the outside firepower for the Buckeyes. The 6-1 Wilson averaged 14.3 points a game last year, while the six-foot Burson averaged 12.5 points per outing and shot a team leading 51 percent from the field.

Both do other things. Wilson handed out five assists a game and had a school record 74 steals last year in his first season as the starting point guard. He picked up some invaluable experience over the summer as a member of the U.S.A. team that played in the World Games in Yugoslavia. The scrappy Burson, Ohio's all-time leading high school scorer, had a game high eight rebounds against Georgetown. He's also had five blocked shots last year. That's tops among Williams' returnees.

Francis (11.2 points and 5.0 rebounds a game last year) and John Anderson (6.9 and 5.2) will do most of their work inside, although Francis has slimmed down from 225 to 210 pounds and will play some small forward this year, the spot occupied by Hopson last year. He is a step quicker at his new weight. Anderson missed the first 10 days of practice due to a preseason knee injury, but the prognosis is for full recovery. He's coming off a great year. In fact, he may have been the most improved player in the Big Ten last year.

"We can use a lot of different combinations up front this year," says Williams. "We couldn't do that a year ago."

Fans can see some of those combinations immediately following today's football game, when Williams previews his team in a full scale scrimmage in St. John Arena. It's also an opportunity to see the new million dollar scoreboard that hangs from the St. John Arena rafters.

The Buckeyes open their season Nov. 22 against the Athletes in Action.
Williams reviving basketball interest at OSU

By BRUCE HOOLEY
STAFF WRITER

COLUMBUS — The location of St. John Arena has everything to do with calculation and nothing to do with coincidence.

Completed in 1956, two years after the second of Ohio State's four national championships in football, the home to Buckeye basketball lies just off Woody Hayes Drive, no more than a post pattern away from Ohio Stadium.

Literally and figuratively, St. John Arena has always existed in the shadows of Ohio State football.

Fred Taylor couldn't change that despite a 1960 national championship, two second-place NCAA finishes and seven Big Ten titles in 18 seasons. Eldon Miller couldn't change it, either, despite recruiting top talent early in his 10-year stay and winning an NIT championship in his final season.

But last year, in his first season, Gary Williams loaded St. John Arena and the Buckeyes' basketball program onto his back and moved them out of the darkness and into the limelight.

Long accustomed to high expectations fading into low results, OSU faithful eagerly embraced a coach who prodded a memorable season from what promised to be a forgettable one.

OSU's 20-13 finish, which included an NCAA tournament victory over Kentucky and a narrow loss to heavily-favored Georgetown, has roused fans' dormant enthusiasm and prompted the highest season ticket demand since 1979.

That year marked the debut of Cleveland's Clark Kellogg in a Buckeyes uniform, fueling hopes for a Big Ten and NCAA championship.

But Ohio State never realized those goals under Miller, a saggy-jowled, double-chinned sad sack unable to inspire in 10 years the vibrancy Williams fostered almost instantly.

"Eldon was very low-key and our other
**CONT’D FROM PAGE 13**

most visible coach, Earle Bruce, was too,” said Rick Bay, OSU’s former athletic director and the man who hired Williams. “Neither one was a high-profile guy, so we were looking for a change in that regard.”

Almost immediately, Williams grabbed Ohio’s basketball community by its sweat socks. At the state high school tournament in Dayton, just days after his hiring, strangers streamed to Williams’ table in a downtown hotel, disrupting his lunch with their endless good wishes and encouragement.

One man wondered if Williams’ contract provided the use of a car. If not, the man told him, “just let me know and I’ll make it right.”

“I didn’t realize the people of Columbus and throughout Ohio were that anxious for basketball to succeed,” said Williams, who begins his second season at 8:07 p.m. tomorrow when Ohio State hosts Missouri-St. Louis.

“They can talk about Ohio State being a football school all they want, but there’s a great basketball tradition here. After the bowl game and Jan. 1. we’re on the show in town.”

In many ways, Williams craved Ohio State more than it coveted him. Despite his success in separate four-year coaching stops at American University and Boston College, he never achieved top billing on the marquee.

Winning a school-record 24 games at American in 1991 and following it with 21 victories the next season still couldn’t displace crosstown rival Georgetown as the dominant program in Washington D.C.

At Boston College, where Williams fashioned two 20-plus victory seasons and three post-season tournament bids, his program remained on the fringe of the New England sports market.

“I always wanted to coach at a school where the interest was there,” Williams said. “Boston has some great people and some good fans, but the area doesn’t have the interest in basketball of Ohio.”

“There were so many things that deflected from the program at Boston College — the Celtics, ice hockey — and that made it tough. I remember one year we lost on a last-second shot in the NCAA in a game that would have put us into the final eight. The next year at our opener, 1,800 people showed up.”

By contrast, Ohio State drew more than 10,500 for Sunday’s exhibition with Athletes in Action. Clearly, success agrees with once-staid St. John, which shed its mortuary mood as Williams exhorted his Buckeyes and their backers with equal parts coaching and charisma.

But beyond the lure of people in the stands, Ohio had something more appealing to Williams. Namely, its people, or potential people, in uniform.

“When I was thinking about this job, I knew about the high school talent Ohio produced every year,” Williams said. “I also knew there had to be a reason those players weren’t going to Ohio State. That concerned me. I wondered why it was going to be different if I came here.

“I talked about that a lot with the people who knew the situation and they all told me not to worry. The possibility was there. I just had to take advantage of it.”

“Williams’ recruiting harvest has since soothed skepticism of his ability to attract top players. He signed two Ohioans in April — St. Joseph’s Treg Lee and Columbus Whirl’s Eli Brewster — and recently obtained commitments from three other in-state standouts to attend Ohio State next year.

“Throw in national recruits like Maine’s Perry Carter, who might start this year, and New Jersey’s Chris Jen, a future Buckeye, and expectations are already building for the school’s first Big Ten championship since 1971.”

“Ohio State is in good hands with Gary W.,” said Dick Vitale, the basketball analyst for ESPN and ABC. “He’s a flat-out star in the coaching profession. He hasn’t quite gotten to the level of the giants yet, but within the next five-year period, you’ll see him climb to the plateau with the (Bobby) Knights, the (Dean) Smiths and the (John) Thompsons.

“He combines all the tangibles with all the intangibles. He’s a fighter, a scrapper and he has the knowledge of all the technical aspects. Now, he’s answered all his critics in the one supposedly weak area he had — recruiting — because he’s finally got a viable program to sell.”

Vitale, who telephoned Bay to recommend Williams, believes Williams operated at a recruiting disadvantage at Boston College because of other Big East schools’ proximity to prime recruiting areas. Georgetown is located in Washington D.C., Syracuse in western New York, St. John’s in New York City and Villanova in Philadelphia.

“Gary was going to the dance with the little heavy-set opera singer at B.C.,” Vitale said. “Everybody else was going with Cybil Shepherd dressed in all her finery. Now, Gary is going to the dance with a pretty lady and the party is a lot more fun.”

Miller also attracted top talent in his early years at Ohio State, but the stream ran dry after Kellogg.

“Getting Lee and Brewster was a key situation in my career,” he said. “Now, the next step is getting the good players we have to play well and excel in the classroom. If that takes place, we’ll be in a good situation.”

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**BIG ONES WHO GOT AWAY**

1986 — David Minor, 6-8, Cincinnati Purcell-Marian, Indiana (quit team this week).

1985 — Rick Calloway, 6-6, Cincinnati Withrow, Indiana; Jerome Lane, 6-6, Akron St. Vincent-St. Mary, Pittsburgh.

1984 — Gary Grant, 6-3, Canton McKinley, Michigan; Byron Larkin, 6-3, Cincinnati Moeller, Xavier; Grady Mateson, 6-11, Akron Central-Hower.

1983 — Cannard Johnson, 6-9, Cincinnati Taft, Western Kentucky.

1982 — Ron Harper, 6-6, Dayton Klaer, Miami of Ohio; Mike Giomi, 6-9, Newk, Indiana (transferred to North Carolina State after two seasons).

1981 — Greg Stiles, 6-9, Hamilton, Iowa; Brad Sellers, 6-10, Warrensville Heights, Wisconsin (transferred to Ohio State after two seasons).

1979 — John Paxson, 6-2, Kettering Alter, Notre Dame; LaSalle Thompson, 6-10, Cincinnati Withrow, Texas.

1978 — Dwight Anderson, 6-3, Dayton Roth, Kentucky.
A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Fifty tournaments ago James Hull took the floor for the Buckeyes. A lot has changed since then. Especially for the sport of college basketball.

Story by Dick Kimmins
THE WAY IT WAS WHEN CAPTAIN HULL PLAYED FOR THE BUCKEYES

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

By DICK KIMMINS

VOICE OF THE BUCKEYES:
That bucket puts the tail fins up by eight.
Boughner tosses the ball in to Hull. Hull is past the midline.
Passes to Baker at the top of the key. In to Schick in the middle.
The big Connecticut Buckeye turns, shoots. Rejected by that big Oregon center!
The ball rolls free to the top of the key. Boughner dives for the ball.
So does Oregon's John Dick. Boughner has it, fips to Hull. Hull drives to his left.
Hull looks like he's ready to let fly with his patented underhand shot from 15 feet. No! It's a fake.
Hull, the Ohio farm kid and Buckeye senior captain, drives to his left past the Oregon giants.
He's free in the middle. Shoots underhand. It's GOOOOOOOO!!!!
Hull has 14, leads his team.
The Bucks have pulled to within six with three minutes to go. 32-38.
Nobody is leaving this old gym in Evanston! The Bucks are pressing. What a game!

THAT'S WHAT it could have sounded like 50 tournaments ago. Way back in 1939. But that was the first year of commercial radio and nobody much cared about it back then. Not even the players realized the significance of what they were doing. That was the beginning—the first game of what has become the country's premier sports event. This year's conclusion is Monday.
N 1939 OHIO STATE won the Big Ten, defeating Indiana in the final conference game at the state Fairgrounds for the championship. Oley Olsen was the Buckeye coach and, like most of his colleagues, was very concerned about the National Invitational Tournament that had begun only a year earlier at Madison Square Garden in New York. Olsen and his colleagues were worried about alleged heavy betting on the new NIT. Why not have a real national championship tournament?

“Before the national collegiate championship tournament, there was only the conference champions,” explains Jim Van Valkenburg, NCAA director of statistics in Mission, Kan. “It was the coach-
A Night to Remember

Continued from page 33

cs, not the NCAA, who decided to put on that first tournament.

"It was an eight-team tournament, with the champions of the East to meet the champions of the West in the final game. No one had more to with the original concept than Olsen of Ohio State and Phog Allen of Kansas."1

The western championship game that year was at the International Exhibition Hall on Treasure Island, near San Francisco, Oregon, known as the "Tall Firs" because its front line was six-foot-four, six-nine and six-four, defeated Oklahoma 55-37. The "average" player in those days was but six-foot-one.

The eastern championship was at the Palestra in Philadelphia. Ohio State defeated Wake Forest in the semi and defeated Villanova 53-36 in the regional finals. The Buckeyes made the trip to Philadelphia by car.

"We drove there in two old Packards," recalls Hull.

The championship game was set for the old gym in Evanston on March 27, 1939. The final drew 5,500, a packed house. Hull says, "We didn't really want to go," Hull says.

"But Oley said he was in a pickle. He said he had been chairman of this coaches committee that put the tournament together and here he had his team in the championship. So we drove to Chicago."2

The Oregon team was the tallest ever seen on a court at that time. It was an experienced group, featuring John Dick as its high-scoring guard.

"Back then it was an honor to play at the school. Now players are looking to be a star."

The Buckeyes featured Dick Boughner and Robert Lynach as guards, Hull and Richard Baker at the forwards and John Schick at center.

Boughner would later become an optical equipment dealer in Pennsylvania. Lynach would become a dentist. Baker would become a director of Hershey Foods Inc. and national managing partner of Ernst & Whinney. Schick, now retired, would stay in Ohio and work as a juvenile corrections officer in Akron.

Others on the team included Jack Dawson, William Sattler, Charles Maag, Jedd Mees, Gilbert Mickelson, Robert Stafford and Don Scott. Scott was killed in World War II and later would have the Ohio State airport renamed in his honor.

Hull was a farm boy, all-Ohio as quarterback of his high school team and all-Ohio in baseball and basketball as well. He was recruited by Southern California in his senior year in high school, but his parents reminded him it was a long way to California and they wanted to see him play. He decided to enter Ohio State—no scholarship, no grant-in-aid, no fanfare.

"About a hundred guys showed up to try out for the team that first year," Hull remembers. "I was very discouraged because I made very little progress.

"I had this underhand shot and Oley didn't want me to use it. Finally my high school coach, Red Armstrong, told Oley to leave me alone and Oley did. It was a good way to fake, anyway. So I went back to my old ways and made the freshman team."

He made the varsity his sophomore year and finally made it onto the the court against Minnesota.

"Oley put me in and when I got the ball I took a book shot. Oley yelled me right out of the game and really gave it to me. He said he took me out because he thought I was a showoff. But I said: "Coach, it went in." He said he didn't care."

By his senior year Hull had become the Buckeyes' leading scorer. He scored 327 points in 23 games that year; he was 65 for 131 shots from the floor and scored 14 in the championship game. Dick scored 15 to lead Oregon to a 46-33 victory and the national championship.

The championship game, despite the packed house, was a monotonous affair. NCAA records indicate that each team ended up paying $2,531 for participating.

Each of this year's Final Four teams will receive $1.15 million, regardless of whether it wins or loses. Last year's鞑靼 Killeen event. Just being invited to the NCAA—64 teams started—was worth $211,000 this year.

The post-season baseball championship was a money loser until 1942—two years after the NCAA took over its management—when champion Stanford received a check for $93,755 as its share of the proceeds.

"Now the proceeds from the entire tournament pay our expenses for all other NCAA championships—tennis, golf, swimming, track—everything else," says the NCAA's Van Valkenburg.

When Hull and his team returned from the '99 tournament, there was no cheering crowd at the airport, no pep rally on campus, no television interviews. Just back to school.

Later in the spring, recalls Hull, the alumni gave the '99 team a banquet. He doesn't remember the menu. He does remember the team.

Dick Kimmins is a reporter for Business First.
Banquet honors basketball team

By Brian J. Dulay
Lantern staff writer

Jay Burson, a six-foot, 150-pound guard, was named the most valuable player on the 1987-88 Ohio State basketball team at the annual appreciation banquet Tuesday.

Burson, who led the Buckeyes in scoring with an 18.9 points-per-game average, also finished first on the team in steals with 66 and led the squad in playing time with an average of 37 minutes a game.

The junior from New Concord was selected in a vote taken by his teammates. He said much of his success was due to the help he received from his older teammates.

"I’m going to really miss the seniors," he said. "I had the privilege to play with them for three years."

John Anderson, Pat Garverick, Scott Anderson and Curtis Wilson were all seniors on the team that finished 20-13 overall, 9-9 in the Big Ten and runner-up in the National Invitation Tournament in New York.

Wilson, who played point-guard for the Buckeyes, received a statistical award for most assists. His season total of 188 broke Kelvin Ransey’s school single-season record of 177, set in 1980.

OSU head coach Gary Williams said Wilson was often overlooked as a key ingredient in the team’s success.

"Curtis started at point-guard every game I’ve coached at Ohio State," Williams said. "He was very durable."

Tony White was chosen by the coaching staff as the team’s most improved player.

White, a 6-7 junior forward from Pataskala, started 26 of 33 games this season, and finished second on the team in offensive rebounds with 78.

Jerry Francis, a 6-5 small-forward, was voted the most inspirational player by his teammates.

A junior from Columbus, Fran-
Buckeye journeys overseas

By Joe Mischler
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State basketball player Jay Burson didn't have a typical summer vacation.

For two weeks in mid-August, Burson played on a National Invitation Tournament All-Star team that traveled to the Soviet Union, Sweden, and Finland.

"The culture was very different and the way they played basketball was very different," said Burson, a 6-foot, 158-pound guard. "The games get very physical."

"They let you get away with murder," he said. "Players were traveling and there was a lot of banging going on inside, but most of the time, the refs just let it go."

The team spent a long, hectic week traveling across the Soviet Union.

"We were always on the go," said Burson, a senior from New Concord. "Ride four hours to each game, get off the bus, change your clothes, a few minutes to warm up, then before you know it, you're out there playing."

The NIT team, which finished the trip 7-1, was coached by Jack Powers, former head coach at Manhattan College and a member of the NIT selection committee.

"Jay always plays hard, and he's a very intelligent ball player," said Powers. "That's why I chose him as team captain for several of the games."

Although he felt the trip was a good experience, Burson said it wasn't much fun being halfway around the world, and making long bus rides through a cold and rainy country.

He said the most difficult part of the trip was adjusting to the food and drink.

"Half the time I didn't even know what I was eating," he said. "It didn't look like anything I'd eaten before. And you can't drink warm Pepsi."

The team spent the final few days of the tour playing in Sweden and Finland.

"They were both interesting places," Burson said of the countries, "but by the time we got there I was so sick, hungry and tired that I didn't get to enjoy it much."

OSU head coach Gary Williams was glad to see Burson make the trip.

"It was a great educational experience for him," Williams said. "Very few people have the opportunity to go overseas while they're still in college."

"And as far as basketball goes," Williams said, "playing with different players against different teams can only help Jay as a basketball player."

Burson said he has no regrets about making the trip, but doubts that he'll ever return to the Soviet Union.

"I'm glad I got to go, and I think everyone should if they get the chance," he said. "It's a learning experience and it makes you appreciate America a lot more."
Delay in the action

The 1988-89 Ohio State men's basketball team takes an unexpected break during picture day yesterday in St. John Arena as a youngster moves out of the picture and away from the limelight. See story on Page 3 D.
Buckeyes show off designer duds

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sport Reporter

It didn't rival St. Laurent unveiling his winter line. It lacked the drama of the mini-skirt's doomed comeback.

Still, Mr. Gary made a fashion statement yesterday.

Ohio State basketball coach Gary Williams sent out his third Buckeyes team in new uniforms for the annual picture day ritual in St. John Arena.

"They're cut bigger," Williams said, "and they're more gray. The (scarlet and gray) stripe on the bottom of the legs are new. I took some heat on that."

Surely it's a coincidence, but Williams is fielding a bigger-cut team in the new threads.

OSU has eight players 6 feet 7 or taller, three more than last season, topped by 7-foot freshman Bill Robinson and the 6-11 senior Grady Mateau.

"We've got different dimensions to throw at you," forward Tony White said. "We can put a quick team on the floor for running, a big team for rebounding."

"It's definitely going to be interesting, because if we put everything together properly, only we can stop ourselves. The tools are all there to do what we want..."

Patience will be required in the tool shop. Four freshmen and two newly eligible sophomores must be led through patterns that are second nature to four returning starters and veterans such as Mateen and Joe Dumas.

"We'll have to take our time with them and do some things slowly for a while," White said.

Williams said, "The quicker they learn things, the better they'll be. We'll be grabbing the freshmen a lot for a little extra instruction. We might have them show up during a free period to walk through some things."

After 2½ hours of hoopla, noise and give-aways in St. John last night, Ohio State ran through a 20-minute practice that started at 12:01 a.m. today, the first allowable date for practice drills.

Another workout is scheduled to begin 10 minutes after the conclusion of the Purdue-OSU football game today.

The season competition is the end of a yearlong exile for sophomores Treg Lee and Eli Brewster. The pair lost one season of eligibility and couldn't practice with OSU after falling below NCAA academic minimums.

"It feels good to put on this scarlet and gray," said Lee, a 6-8 forward from St. Joseph High School in Cleveland.

"Eli and I were talking about it in the locker room, getting dressed. It's just so nice to be part of the team visibly, even though the guys kept telling us we belonged."

Lee, who competed in a Cleveland summer league that included Dennis Hopson, Brad Sellers, Ron Harper and Mark Price, doesn't expect the layoff to damage his performance.

"I think it would hurt a guy who doesn't have good habits working out on his own, but I was given a good practice program back in high school," Lee said.

"There's only so much you can gain from watching other people play, but where it helped me is growing as a person, I'm more mature than I was a year ago. It helps you face reality, too."

OSU freshman Chris Jent signs autograph for Bart Freiberg

Guard Jay Burson toured the Soviet Union, Sweden and Finland during the summer with a team of National Invitation Tournament all-stars and returned as the grumpy gourmet.

"In Russia, all we had every day was so-called beef, so-called potatoes, bread and warm Pepsi, because you couldn't drink the water," Burson said.

Burson said the beef and potatoes "didn't taste like any I'd ever had before," but that the bread "was all right."

Asked if there were any vegetables, Burson said, "Nothing I recognized."

After weeks of weightlifting and sprint work, OSU ended its off-season conditioning with the traditional mile run Thursday. Burson won as expected, but 6-8 freshman Steve Hall nearly beat White for second place and big-man honors.

"I didn't take him over until the last lap," White said. "Steve really has good wind."

Hall said, "I always liked distance work. When I was younger I did it to relax."
Midnight rings in basketball season

As the clock struck 12:01 a.m. Saturday, OSU fans got their first glimpse of the 1988-89 basketball team as they dribbled onto the floor of St. John Arena.

Midnight Mania, an idea Coach Gary Williams drew from the University of Kentucky, gave 6,000 to 7,000 cheering fans a taste for the style of play the Bucks will show this season.

"It was a big kick-off to the basketball season and the coaching staff was very happy. It gave the people who might not get a chance during the year to see some of our team players play," said Steve Snapp, director of Sports Information.

The inner-squad scrimmage lasted 20 minutes and set the scarlet team against the gray team. The gray team came out on top, but as Williams told the crowd, this game was fun for everyone and got the season off on a good note.

The Buckeyes have seven first-year players and each are looking to make their contributions to this year's team.

Snapp said he had not discussed the possibility of making this an annual event with Williams yet, but was optimistic with Saturday's turn out.

"This is a pretty good foundation to start with and I could see us doing this again," Snapp said.

The scrimmage was preceded by a game that pitted all-stars from Q-FM-96 against a combined team from WBNS 10-TV and 1460 WBNS-RADIO.

The Famous Chicken made an appearance as a guest referee during the celebrity scrimmage.

Getting the last word, the referee hands out technical "fowls" to the chicken and his followers.

Taking time out from the game, Archie Griffin and Dave Kaylor sign autographs for waiting fans.
Jay Burson leads the 1988-89 Buckeye Basketball team onto the court for their first official practice of the season.

The Famous Chicken lends a helping mouth to the referee.
Ferry Carter and Tony White fight for the rebound with Grady Mateen.

Bill Robinson makes his mark early by demonstrating his reverse dunk during the pre-game.
INCLUDING
MEN & WOMEN'S
BIG 10 PREVIEW

NIKI LOWRY
& an outlook on the
Women's team
entering the Big 10
Buckeyes on roll entering Big 10

Coach parlays youth, experience into road victories, confidence

By Brent Lalonde
Bulletin staff writer

Based on its solid pre-Big Ten season, Ohio State has to be considered as one of the top teams heading into the conference play of the 1988-89 season.

The Buckeyes, despite playing only three home games, managed to fashion a 9-2 record before last night's match-up at Indiana.

But head coach Gary Williams is reluctant to attach the favorite's tag on any team in the Big Ten.

"I don't like to pick anybody," Williams said. "But I think we can play with anybody in the conference."

And the Buckeyes have already proved they can play with anybody in the nation.

In the season-opening Maui Classic, the Buckeyes were nipped in the opening round 97-93 by Oklahoma, a team that opened the season ranked No. 4 by the Associated Press.

Ohio State was the sixteenth-ranked team in the nation to start the season.

Williams said the Buckeyes accomplished numerous things through the first 11 games.

- Playing time for the young players, like Proposition 48 sophomores Treg Lee and Eli Brewster, and freshmen Jamaal Brown, Chris Jent, and Bill Robinson.
- The team was able to develop a winning attitude, a must with a team with six total newcomers, including four (Brown, Lee, Jent, and Brewster) who see significant playing time.
- The Buckeyes have already played in arenas that are tough to play in, including Madison Square Garden in New York City and South Carolina's Carolina Coliseum.

"Those are tough places to play," Williams said. "I think it will give us an advantage when we travel to the different gyms in the Big Ten.

"Each place we play it's a new experience and I hope that playing eight road games will make us better."

Williams, who has posted identical 20-13 records in his first two seasons at Ohio State, said the Buckeyes need to avoid injuries to have a chance at a successful Big Ten season.

"We need to stay injury-free," said Williams. "It is true of any team in the conference. A loss of a key player can have an affect on the team."

Williams admitted he is looking forward to a return trip to the NCAA post-season tournament after advancing to the championship game of the National Invitational Tournament last year. But that's not his No. 1 goal.

"I want to make this team the best that it can be and to have each player play to his maximum ability."
Intensity: Williams patterns scrappy squad after himself

by Jim Oliphant
Gusen staff writer

"I know what I'm doing," you maintain. "I think it's important that you can face yourself. That you're proud. That you don't cheat."

That's important to you. Staying clean. You mention it repeatedly. Help the kids. Get them through school. Do it right. That's why you can still use the overnight letter companies. You haven't had a bad experience with one like say, Kentucky. That's why you don't seem to mourn the loss of local Lawrence Funderburke, who's reportedly headed for Bob Knight's Indians' boat camp.

"He's a great player," you say of the suspended Werble star. "The question has always been: Will he fit in? Hasn't anywhere he's been. Maybe when he goes to college, I like the players right now in our program. Attitude's important: Attitude. Hustle, Defense. Don't we always hear that about your teams? Ever since you've been at American University, where you won 20 games twice without even having your own gym to play in. That's how you were when you played at Maryland, because you've said yourself that you weren't that good. But you never stopped moving. And you still haven't. From Americans to Boston College in Ohio State. A career that has been as fast-moving as the offensive scheme you love as much.

"That's me," you say. "That's the way I enjoy playing the game. Pressure defense. It's a great way to play, for the player that can play it."

And on the sidelines, it keeps your mind moving. "You're watching a trend in the game. You're trying to get a feel. Who's fresh? Who's tired? Where can you get an edge? You're making sure you're playing in your style. You would like to get to the point where other teams have to react to you."

"Is this Buckeye team, to all eyes, your prototypical team?"

"We're getting close," you say. "I like the way our guys play. We're just a couple of players away. There's one class that's not here. The junior class. That's when I got the job. In April (1966)."

As a roundball school, Ohio State's been rising ever since. You've seen what that kind of prominence does for schools. You turn to the campus when Doug Flutie won a Hall Mary Heisman Trophy. OSU coach Gary Williams signals a play to his players during the Buckeyes 84-62 victory over Lafayette. Williams has guided the Buckeyes to a 40-26 record and two post-season tournament appearances in his two seasons.

"In the heat of battle, Gary Williams is a force of nature as powerful as any summer squash. You scream. You wave your arms. You sweat. Gary, you look like a AMA-approved burnout candidate."

Gary? At 43, you're still relatively young. Say that right now, pro ball holds no interest for you. You have no interest in going anywhere. Except back to work. But you're smart enough to see the grind.

"Sometimes you can't get off the treadmill and go merry-go-round," you say. "There's more to do now outside the actual coaching. It takes up more of your time. After the season, there's an important recruiting season. Then, the alumni groups want you to speak to them. Then there's another recruiting season in the summer. All of the sudden, you look and it's September and you really haven't slowed down for the season yet."

"I just want to be a good basketball coach. Every year I coach, I become a better coach. When I stop being a better coach, that's when I should say it's time to stop. It's when you lose that drive."

You're still driving, Gary. Just let us enjoy the ride.
Burson survives in land of giants

Attitude, talent help 6-0 guard pour in points

By Aaron Portzline
Bulletin staff writer

Jay Burson has spent his collegiate basketball career in a land of giants, and despite his 6-foot frame, has continually made himself look like one of them.

Ohio State's point guard, using every inch of his body, has turned other people's doubts into an extremely successful 3 1/2 years as a Buckeye.

Burson, who came to Ohio State as the leading scorer in Ohio high school history (1,018 pts, hasn't stopped pouring in the points.

"I just try to get the most out of my body and the most of my ability and I get some advantages that way," said Burson.

He recently set an O.S.U. record by hitting nine 3-point goals, en route to 37 points against St. John's in the ECAC Holiday Tournament at Madison Square Gardens in New York. The Buckeyes won the tournament.

"I knew I was shooting pretty well and they were playing their zone. So that gave me a lot of time to stand out there and aim up. I think they were worried about our guys inside, which left me open on the outside."

Despite his successes in tournament games, Burson prepares for them like every other contest.

"I didn't approach those games any differently than I do any other games," said Burson. "I went in there with the idea of playing well and the whole team wanted to play well."

"I played real well there (the Gardens) before, and it seems like I'm always comfortable there."

Burson entered his senior year as 14th on the Ohio State career scoring list (1,226), third in steals (156) and ninth in assists (233).

Burson's career high was a 38-point effort against Oklahoma in the Maui Classic, a game which the Buckeyes' lost 97-93. The next evening, Burson scored 24 points and hit a driving layup with three seconds left, giving Ohio State a 72-70 win over DePaul.

"He had a lot of success in Hawaii, but the reason he did so well up there (New York) was because they were giving him his shot," said head coach Gary Williams.

"He didn't come out shooting real well, but he stayed with it and all of a sudden he made a couple. That's Jay," added Williams.

Burson has started 62 games, second only to Jerry Francis (76). But he isn't ready to consider himself the team's leader.

"I think I've been around here a long time and I've hopefully earned some respect," said Burson. "I've been here for four years and you learn how to play and how not to play."

"I think we've got good leadership from all of the seniors," said Williams. "Obviously, what he does on the court is big and the players respect Jay for his efforts."

Burson has overcome some serious health problems, as well.

After his freshman year, he suffered a double concussion and a broken collarbone while playing a pick-up game.

Following his sophomore season, he deeply cut his middle finger.

Twice named Class AA Player of the Year at John Glenn High School in New Concord, Ohio, Burson only dreamed of playing in such confines as the Gardens.

"I always had a dream of playing in big places, but I never realistically thought about it. I just concentrated on being the best I could at the moment."

Burson spent last summer touring the Soviet Union with the National Invitational Tournament All-Star team, and was again a success. He averaged 14 points per game.

But Burson still sees room for personal improvement.

"I think I can always get better, and I'm always trying to get better. Every game I think I learn some things about how to be better for the next game," said Burson.

As the Buckeyes battle for a conference championship, Burson will keep entering the land of giants with little fear.

"I can't wait," he said, "I'm ready to go."
“Grandpa” Francis thrills fans

By Anthony Brown

As a man thinketh, so shall he be.
If he thinks he is defeated, he will be.
... as a man thinketh.

Senior forward Jerry Francis, a 6-foot-5 inch, 210-pound senior from
Wehrle High School in Columbus, fits this profile.

Francis has made a name for himself because he seems to always
get the job done, although he doesn’t possess the great athletic
ability of some other players.

Perhaps that’s what makes him a
St. John Arena favorite.
It isn’t because of crowd-pleasing,
rin-rattling dunks? “There is always
somebody who can outjump me,” said
Francis, who has dunked once during
his career.

Maybe it’s his trademark, fell away
jumpshots? “There is always somebody
who can outshoot me,” he said.

Then what makes “Grandpa” Francis,
as he is affectionately called by
teammates, such a fan favorite?

It’s his work ethic, and a philosophy
he has lived by since his freshman
year in high school.

“I’m not going to let anybody
outwork me. That’s what gets me
over,” Francis said. “It’s not the skill,
it’s the will.”

Everybody has talent, but they may
not have the desire to use it. If I was
6-8, I’d probably be lazy,” he said.

Francis’ work on the court causes a
chain reaction among his teammates.
His hustle and determination respond
to a stimulant and turn emotion into
excitement, which transcends into
points, rebounds, steals and assists.

Francis, voted the “Most Inspirational
Player” by his teammates last year,
is undoubtedly Ohio State’s
emotional leader.

His spark ignites the 14th-ranked
Buckeyes.

“Francis is one of the major reasons
why I came to Ohio State,” said Chris
Jen, a 6-6 freshman from Sparta,
N.J. “He gets people fired up. I felt
if I played like him, I would easily be
more accepted (by the team).”

Francis said he gets the trait from
his mother.

“I’ve always been a great competi-
tor,” Francis said. “I got that from my
mother. She’s a very fired up person,
and what she says goes. When I was
younger, if I did something she didn’t
like on the court she wouldn’t cook
me dinner.”

Although he rarely went without
dinner, Francis is still starving for a
victory over the Indiana Hoosiers.
During his first three years at Ohio
State, the Buckeyes have tasted vic-
tory against every other Big Ten foe.

“I want to beat them this year. To me
it’s like the Ohio State-Michigan
football game,” Francis said. “It’s
something personal.”

For a brief time last year, Francis
lost a bit of his love for the game. His
feelings had been hurt.

“I had to overcome humility,” he
said. “When Dennis Hopson left,
everybody just overlooked me as a
replacement. Nobody thought that I
could do it.”

“I thank Coach Williams for believing
in me,” Francis said. “He could
have gone with a lineup of Grady
Matsen, Perry (Carter) and (Tony)
White. Or he could have signed a
down or fouled, he was ready to
square off. That side of him, however,
is gone.

“I stepped looking like that, because
my mother told me nobody would hire
me for a job if I always looked mean,”
said. “In high school, I found out a
lot of people never approached me
because they thought I was mean.”

Evidently, Treg Lee, a 6-8 forward

“Everybody has talent, but they may
not have the desire to use it. If I
was 6-8, I’d probably be lazy.”

Jerry Francis

In his freshman season, Francis
used to get so pumped up during the
games that everytime he got knocked
care about you as a person and not
as an all-star,” Lee said. “Basically,
his friendship got me here. He was
the most influential person to me as
far as a player was concerned.”

“Some guys would tell recruits not
to come to their schools, because they
thought their jobs might be in
jeopardy,” Francis said. “I always
wanted to get the best players so I could
become a better player and (play on a)
national championship team.”

One day, Ohio State will record
“Grandpa” Francis’ last rebound and
jot down his final basket and he will
begin his quest to become a college
coach.

“I would like to be remembered as
an overachiever,” he said. Most of us
miss out on life’s big prizes — The
Nobel, Oscars, Emmys, and Pulitzer
Prizes — but we’re all eligible for
life’s small pleasures.

And for four years we have been
pleased by the play of one Jerry
Francis.

As a man thinketh.
Carter out to prove 1st season no fluke

By Brent Lalonde
Bulletin staff writer

Improvement.
That's what Perry Carter, Ohio State's 6-foot-8 sophomore forward/center, will be gunning for as he prepares for the Big Ten season, which began last night for the Buckeyes with a trip to Assembly Hall against Indiana.

"All I want to do is improve upon last season. That's my No. 1 personal goal," said Carter, who averaged 9.8 points and a team-high 7.2 rebounds per game as a freshman last year while shooting 54.0 percent from the floor and blocking 27 shots.

Carter helped the Buckeyes post a 20-13 record and a trip to the National Invitational Tournament finals a year ago, where they lost to Connecticut 72-67 in the finals at Madison Square Garden.

OSU center Perry Carter dunks over Nebraska's Richard van Peelgeest in the Buckeyes 103-76 victory over the Cornhuskers. Carter is averaging 13.8 points and 8 rebounds per game.

"We want to be a better team and to maintain our level of intensity. But we don't want to get too high or too low. We have been playing well so far this year and I am happy with what we have done."

— Perry Carter

Carter, who is averaging 13.8 points and 8.2 rebounds per game through the Buckeyes' (5-2) first 11 games, said he is more confident heading into his second trip through the rugged Big Ten season than he was at this time last year.

"I have been able to score a little this year and I have more confidence," he said.

Senior guard Jay Burson said, "Perry is a big force inside who takes up a lot of space. We need his rebounding and scoring to be successful. He knows how to play."

Carter had season-highs last year of 26 points in a 86-73 win over Old Dominion and 14 rebounds in a 86-89 win over intra-state rival Cleveland State. Both marks came during the National Invitational Tournament.

"When you get to play some you start to feel confident," said Carter, who could lead the conference in rebounding this year, "I am not hesitant any more."

Coach Gary Williams noticed the same things in the Buckeyes 82-76 loss to the same Soviet National team that won the Olympic Gold medal last spring. Carter was pitted against Arvidas Sabonis, a 7-foot-4 center, who was a first round pick of the Portland Trail Blazers of the National Basketball Association two years ago.

"Perry really looked confident against Sabonis," Williams said after the game. "He's really worked hard to improve his moves inside the lane."

Carter will be trying to help the Buckeyes maintain the intensity that guided them to a successful pre-Big Ten season.

"We want to be a better team and to maintain our level of intensity. But we don't want to get too high or too low," Carter said. "We have been playing well so far this year and I am happy with what we have done."

"Perry Carter is the quintessential power forward," said college basketball analyst Dick Vitale in the Blue Ribbon College Basketball Yearbook. In the same book, Ohio State coach Gary Williams said "If Perry can score more, that would help a lot. He rebounded as well as any freshman I have seen in the Big East or Big Ten."

Carter came to Ohio State from Meine Central Institute in Pittsfield, Me., where he averaged 24.3 points and 18.7 rebounds per game as a senior.

Carter transferred to Central Institute prior to his senior year at Gonzaga High School in Washington D.C. because he would have turned 19 just before the school year started, thus making him ineligible.

As a junior, he teamed with Mark Tillmon, who currently plays for Georgetown, to lead Gonzaga to a 28-4 record.

Carter credits playing against tough competition around the country in helping make himself one of the top sophomores in the country.

"I have played against some pretty good players," Carter said. "It is not just the competition in Washington, but the competition in the whole country."

Barring injury, Carter should have no problem improving on his numbers from last season.
White's success easy to explain

Determination helps player become starter

By Michael Williams
Bulletin staff writer

"Working...That's how Ohio State forward Tony White describes himself. Working to improve, working to be the best player he can be."

"I'm always working," said the 6-foot-7-inch senior. "That's the key I think, no matter how much talent you have, it's really how hard you work. I may not shoot the ball well everyday, but I'm going to continue to work."

Entering the Big Ten season, White has worked himself into a prominent role on the Buckeyes' basketball team.

Coach Gary Williams said White has developed into a strong defensive player during his final season and has contributed greatly on the offensive boards.

"He's really been steady and has become a very good defensive player with his positioning and the way he uses his size," Williams said. "Tony rebounds as well as any of the other people we have. He's probably the best offensive rebounder on the team."

Last season, White had 151 rebounds and averaged 7.8 points, nearly doubling his output during his sophomore season in which he had 84 rebounds and averaged 4.5 points a game.

This season White is averaging 10.5 points and 4.8 rebounds.

"I just try and move toward the ball whenever I get up and to keep moving while everybody else is standing around watching the shot," said White, describing his knack for grabbing loose balls.

"I've gotten stronger in the last few years and gained more experience overall," White said.

A perfect example of White's prowess came in the Buckeyes 103-76 win over Nebraska, when he scored a career-high 21 points. Four times in the first half he scored on follow shots as the Buckeyes opened up a big halftime lead.

But White still isn't completely satisfied with his rebounding. He said he needs to work even more on his inside game and consistency to become a complete player.

"I need to get in on the rebounding a little more often," he said. "I'm a little off and on sometimes. I need to be more consistent."

Senior forward Jerry Francis, who has played with White for three years, said he can see a vast improvement in White's inside game.

"He has gotten much more aggressive and is moving better, effectively," Francis said.

Francis said White's devotion to lifting weights last summer has helped keep his weight up, thus allowing him to muscle more effectively for position which translates into rebounds.

White said Ohio State entered the season confident they had the talent to compete with the nation's top teams. Although White wants to improve statistically this season, his main goals are directed toward the team's success.

"I wanted to improve my scoring average and to rebound better, but most of my goals were team goals," he said.

"We knew we would have a good young team and a good team overall. We just have to work hard to bring that potential out for a successful season."

White said he expects the Buckeyes to battle perennial national powers Iowa, Illinois, and Michigan en route to a Big Ten Championship.
Williams uses youth to spark Buckeyes

OSU freshman Bill Robinson (54) blocks a shot during the Buckeyes 84-62 victory over Lafayette. Robinson, an honor student at Canton McKinley High School, wants to become a veterinarian.

Freshman Jamaal Brown of Arlington, Texas scores on a layup in the Buckeyes 103-76 romp over Nebraska. Brown has started each game this season, primarily because of his defensive play.

Sophomore guard James Bradley tries to maneuver around Jamaal Brown during an OSU practice. Brown, who transferred from Miami University, has already scored more points this season than he did all of last season.
The Bop's Back In Ohio State Basketball

The Small-town Boy

The Uptown Coach
The Bop's Back In

The Small-town Boy

His kind may not pass this way again. In about three months, Jay Boyd Burson will dribble around the last dubious defender, make a steal to silence the final heckling spectator, create a shot or a pass that converts the last skeptic. The moments are pouring into memory like quicksilver, and Ohio State basketball fans are trying to savor every one.

If Burson remains 6 feet tall and still weighs about 155 pounds, why does he seem to be growing?

"Sometimes you hear people say, 'One in a million,'" said Ron Hoyt, the man who coached Burson through a frenzied, storybook high school career. "I don't know if any kid his size will ever do

Stories By Mike Sullivan
what he did. Sometimes you look back and it seems like a miracle.

"And he's still doing it. He takes 18 stitches in his mouth, and a few days later he's scoring 38 points against Oklahoma. As far as I'm concerned, the guy is not getting enough publicity."

Forget publicity. Sondra Burson wants games. She has already begun to store them away against the day when her son is no longer in motion, a blur of speeding sneakers and twitching blond hair, chasing the ball or making it obey his commands.

"I really have mixed emotions this year," said Mrs. Burson, the secretary at Jay's alma mater, John Glenn High School in New Concord. "I was ready for it to begin, but I know that once it begins it has to end.

"It doesn't seem like 10 years could come and go this fast. I should just enjoy this season, but I really struggle with the letdown that's going to come. I enjoy Jim's team, and I get attached to his players and their parents. But nothing's the same as your own flesh and blood."

Pay attention now. This is pure Ohio, and sometimes it gets ahead of itself. Jim Burson, Sondra's husband, is the head basketball coach at Muskingum College in New Concord, a town of 2,000 located about 70 miles east of Columbus.

When he isn't busy winning games (312 in 21 seasons) or taking his team to the NCAA Division III Tournament (four appearances), Jim can be found with a highlight pen. He's making lines through a schedule of Ohio State games, superimposed on a list of Muskingum games. Now he's picking up the telephone. He's asking an opposing coach to reschedule. Please.

"I was born and raised in Marysville," Jim Burson said, "and I grew up with this image of Ohio State that was sort of 'Wow, if you could only get there and play!' I shot Robin Freeman jump shots when I grew up. Now I see kids shooting Jay Burson jump shots. It's an amazing transition."

Just how amazing is a matter of debate as so much of debate as of splendid confusion: a crazy quilt of eye-popping statistics, overflowing gymnastics on frigid February nights, rural culture and state history, culminating in a mass puppy love that has stereotyped Jay Burson as, well, a tyke.

"After the last couple of years," Jay said, "I'm hoping one of these days I'll be thought of as a pretty decent basketball player, not a little guy. But if you look like me, you've got to put up with it."

Let's get small. Would-be dervishes, elves, gnomes and super-pixies sit in the stands and fantasize. They are kidding themselves.

"So many people have always misread Jay," said Hoyt, who spent eight seasons at John Glenn and now coaches at Norwayne High School in Canton. "He is a complete basketball player. He can handle the ball, pass, rebound and play defense. We had very hard drills, and in four years he never lost a foot race or took a minute off practice. It wasn't a sometime thing. He did it every day and paid the full price."

Long before high school, Jim Burson resem-
bers, there was a drill called the daily dozen: "Dribbling, passing, shooting, agility, jumping. Twenty minutes at a real intense level. Spot-passing off a wall. Fifty dribbles right and left; spin, crossover. When he weighed 140 pounds, he bench-pressed 260."

As a freshman who started on the varsity for the John Glenn Little Muskies in 1981-82, Jay averaged 18 points. The next season, when he averaged 40 and led the nation, his 921 points fell one shy of the school's career record, set from 1970-74 by Jay Addy.

In each of his last three high school seasons, Jay scored more than the 719 points his father had totaled in his entire high school career, a mark that still ranks him ninth on Marysville's all-time list.

In four seasons Jay scored 935 points, more than any schoolboy who ever dribbled a ball in Ohio. But he also had 592 assists, 436 rebounds and 411 steals. The more he scored, the harder opponents tried to stop him. That bred mental toughness, a process his father had initiated.

"Jim and I ganged up against Jay on their back patio," said Brent Miller, a Columbus attorney who grew up next door to the Bursons. "I was in seventh grade and he was in third, but he was already so good. It was an 8-foot goal with a hill sloping down behind it, and sometimes Jay disappeared down that hill. But we never let him cry. He learned to bounce off people and keep going."

Sondra would point out striking features of the Bursons' modest home on Friendship Drive, such as an unmowed lawn and cluttered garage. They'll be here forever, Jim liked to say; this kid won't. "So I mowed the lawn and cleaned the garage," Sondra said.

"Jay would shoot in Muskingum's gym before grade school started and return to watch the college team practice. His hero was Myron Dukowski, a Division III athletic and academic All-American. Dukowski, one of four siblings to play basketball at Muskingum in the 1980s, drowned in a fishing mishap while working on his master's degree at the University of Montana in 1984.

"I had spent a lot of time with Myron the summer he died," Jay said. "He was a good person, fun to be around, and he taught me a lot. If he got hit or cussed at in a game, he channeled his aggression into trying to win."

"When I was a little kid in the 1970s, there were some great guys who played at Muskingum — Gene Ford, Pete Liptrap — who probably see their shooting styles in some of the shots I take."

In his first three seasons at Ohio State, including a freshman campaign in which he played less than half the time, Burson scored 1,266 points — the 18th-highest total in Buckeyes annals — and added 321 rebounds, 233 assists and 155 steals. This season he is on a schedule that will place him at least fifth on the OSU scoring list when his career ends.

Everyone should get so small.

"We get a lot of letters here in the basketball office from kids who like Jay," said Ohio State coach Gary Williams. "Children aren't intimidated by his size. But if you put Jay out in the general population, he's taller than the average person."

One of only five games Burson started under Williams' predecessor at Ohio State, Eddie Miller, came in Boston Garden on Jan. 18, 1986, against a Boston College team coached by Williams. His 10 points that night were the top output of Burson's freshman season. But they made no special impression on Williams, who put Burson in the OSU starting lineup for the next season's opener and has left him there ever since.

"I do remember that Jay played very well against us — he hit his first shot, in fact — but we were more worried that night about Brad Sellers and Dennis Hopson," Williams said. "When we opened practice the next year, I didn't know what to expect. But I knew about Jay's points in high school, and those guys always have fascinated me."

"Michael Adams, who was 5-9, broke all the scoring records in Connecticut, but nobody recruited him, including Boston College. After BC didn't get the guard they wanted, they signed Michael at a playground all-star game. He's playing for the Denver Nuggets today. When a guy scores a lot of points, you have to be aware of him."

Williams described a play Burson made to end a practice one day this season. The team that gave up the final basket would have to run laps. As Burson left his feet, 6-8 Treg Lee rose in his path.

"Jay took his body to an almost horizontal position and made the shot," Williams said. "I think there are things you can't teach. A great scorer can lean a little bit and change his body position."

Outsize but never out hustled, Burson is dwarfed by Soviet players.
"It has nothing to do with guys who are pure shooters in practice. Scoring in a game is a different thing. Jay has a great feel for the ball when he shoots it. Like Larry Bird, he can change his shot. Most players cannot put the ball in the basket once their shot has been altered."

Lives have been altered by the coach’s son who Jay walked through the big man’s game. Or have they?

Jay has survived a nearly fatal brain injury and earned second-team all-Big Ten recognition, but he describes himself as a “couch potato” who occasionally goes fishing or attacks his 11 handicap on the golf course.

Jim Burson still coaches his team at Muskingum College, where he was the school’s last three-sport letterman 26 years ago, and teaches Sunday school as an elder in the New Concord Presbyterian Church. Principal Don McKendry, Sondra’s boss, still administers John Glenn, a school with an enrollment of 700 in a town that seems to have gone back to sleep after the mania of 1962-63.

Or was that all a dream?

"It was very, very exciting and, from a principal’s standpoint, very hectic," McKendry said. "Every game home or away was packed 1 1/2 hours before the jayvee game started. That occurred essentially for three years—full house, sold out. There were a lot of upset people, but I’d go through it again.

"I’ve been involved in the Muskingum Valley League for 26 years. This is the league’s 50th year, and there’s never been anything like it. Our athletic department got well, and so did a lot of others. Morgan High School, for example, made $10,000 on the four games Jay played there."

Jay scored between 48 and 61 points in 16 different games. He was the youngest ever to score 5,000 points, then 2,000. Finally, the state record beckoned. He passed Jerry Lucas (Middleton) with 34 points against Maysville Dec. 21, 1984. Against Philo on Jan. 18, 1985, in a game moved from Philo to the Muskingum College gym, he scored 42 points and leapfrogged over the three legends in front of him—Bill Schaebo (Patriots), Mike Phillips (Manchester) and Rex Leach (Vienna).

The game was stopped after teammate David Adams made a steal and passed to Burson for the record-breaking basket in the third quarter. His parents were called onto the court and were joined by Sen. John Glenn and Leach, the deposed recordholder.

"It was such a relief to Jay," Sondra Burson recalled. "On the videotape, it shows him kind of dropping his head." Maybe he was thinking about the postgame pizza.

"We’d go to Earl’s Village Pizza after almost every game," said Adams, a senior at Ohio University who was drafted last spring as a pitcher by the St. Louis Cardinals. "And it wasn’t just the five starters, it was the guys who didn’t play a lot, too. We all felt the same about each other."
Burson

"You say you played with Jay and people say, 'Gosh, that must have been terrible. You guys never got to play.' But Jay created opportunities for the rest of us. It took us until our junior year to stop standing around and watching him."

Although Burson has entertained bigger crowds and proved himself at a level where many felt he didn't belong, simpler times still beckon.

"Those were my friends I was playing with," he said. "We enjoyed each other. They got me the ball and never complained. They were awful good guys to play with.

"If you went looking for one of us, you'd probably find all of us. You'd find us downtown or watching a Muskingum game. Those times with my friends after the games were fun. Now, when a game or a practice is over, nobody seems quite as close. I don't know why, it's just different in college."

College was not only different for the star-turned-substitute but a disappointment during the first eight months. Then it almost became a tragedy.

Playing in a pickup game in St. John Arena on the afternoon of Thursday, May 5, 1986, Burson, soaring for a layup, caught an elbow on the side of his head. Knocked unconscious in midair, he crashed to the floor head first, striking the back of his skull and fracturing a collarbone. Later, as he stopped breathing and had a seizure, a shoulder was separated during efforts to stabilize and move him.

"The Lord brought him through," said Dr. Robert Murphy, Ohio State's team physician. "The elbow which had stunned him left Jay with no ability to soften the subsequent blow. He really got a very severe injury to the brain. It is the worst concussion I've seen in 37 years of practice, and to come back like he did, 99 percent, is amazing.

"Even after he came out of the unconsciousness and stupor, which lasted three or four days, he had tremendous memory loss. Six weeks later he was unable to do simple calculations in psychological testing. There were significant Inabilities, so many subtle things, and the whole process took six months. To me, it was surprising he got his coordination back. The truth is, Linda Daniell was the biggest factor. She attended him, arranged for the rescue squad, made all the calls."

Daniell, the co-head trainer for OSU women's athletics, gave Burson mouth-to-mouth resuscitation when he stopped breathing.

"I was in my office and heard frantic screaming from the players on the court," Daniel said. "I've been here since 1971, and it was by far the most serious situation I've encountered. Jay was a very fortunate young man. We were all blessed."

"That was two weeks after I got the job," Williams said. "It made me appreciate being at a large university. The ambulance drove right into the field house and onto the court, and a neurosurgeon was waiting at University Hospital."

Burson had gone to St. John with no plans to play that day.

"I was supposed to see a teacher, so I went over just for a team meeting," he said. "We didn't have
the meeting, and they only had nine guys for a
game. So I guess God had it planned for me; every-
thing fell into place the wrong way for me."

As the summer lengthened, Jim Burson won-
dered how God's plan would work out.
"Imagine your son is suddenly this almost silly kid,
like he's 12 again, watching cartoons and
coloring and looking at comic books," Jim said. "He
says 'Hi, Dad!' with a big smile, but his concen-
tration and his interest just aren't there. He had lost 50
percent of his abilities to read and memorize.

"The doctors told us it would take time. Every
prediction they made was right. All of a sudden
there would be a breakthrough. "Dad, I think I'd like
to go to the gym with you today." By the end of the
summer, he could concentrate on reading for 10
minutes.

"Back at school, they set up a special study
table, with a half hour of study and a half hour of
rest. He had no fear on the court — it never affected
him that way. On Oct. 15 they gave him the OK to
play.

"The entire OSU community treated us like
family. I guarantee you they all cared about him
whether or not he ever played again. You can't pay
for a feeling like that."

The 1986-87 season opener Burson started
under Williams. 181 days after his brush with
death, was the first of 68 starts in a row he
would make as a sophmore and junior.
"It was tough to come back," he said. "I had to
think about what it really was worth, how badly I
wanted to do it. I decided I wanted to help the team
whatever way I could."

Jamie Burson, Jay's sister, who, at 25, is three
years older than he, was not surprised.

"Jay is a fighter," said Jamie, a Muskingum
graduate who teaches elementary physical educa-
tion in Sarasota, Fla. "He started hanging around
the gym so young, he's never been intimidated by
anything.

"We carried those basketballs on every vacation
we ever took. He and Dad were constantly playing.
When Jay's team or Dad's team would lose a game,
Mom and I would say, 'Well, you've still got us.'
Sometimes I'd feel a little bit jealous. But then
I'd remember how hard he worked. Jay has got some
class. He's not one to be flattered in a big group. He
doesn't put himself above everybody else.

"It gives me goosebumps to think about it —
how much he loves that game."

Stop by St. John one last time, big sister. The
geesebumps that will be ending too soon are just
beginning."
Ohio State Basketball

The Uptown Coach

Do not ask what makes Gary run. Rather, if you seek enlightenment about the 10th man to serve as head basketball coach at The Ohio State University, ask what makes Gary walk that way.

Gary Williams has a springy, wired kind of stride. It's a street walk, or a boxer's walk: up on the arches, ready for action.

"There is just a level of intensity there in Gary that never really changes," said Stan Pawlak, who was a teammate of Williams at Collingswood (N.J.) High School. "He was extremely quick on the basketball court. To this day, strictly in terms of lateral movement, he is probably quicker than any of his players at Ohio State."

Photos by Tim Revell
When Williams leaves the St. John Arena court at halftime, shoulders rolling as he walks behind his team, you expect that at any moment he will bounce into the air, fly straight over the players' heads and crash through the door of the locker room.

Williams, 43, does not fly through locker room doors. He merely punches them. Hard. But that has not discouraged the growing belief among Buckeyes basketball fans that their coach could fly, all right, if he wasn't so busy leading them back to the promised land.

The promised land is the Final Four, also known as the semifinals and final of the NCAA Tournament. The 51st edition will be staged in Seattle's Kingdome April 1 and 3.

There was a time when the elite gathering seemed to be an unofficial spring break for the Ohio State program, which had a team represented under coach Fred Taylor four times in a glorious run of nine seasons (1950-52, 1954). Even today, after a dry spell that includes one Big Ten championship in two decades, only three schools have more Final Four appearances than Ohio State—UCLA (14), North Carolina and Kentucky (nine each). The Buckeyes and Kansas have eight.

The bad news is that Kansas caught up with OSU in Final Four trips and moved ahead in NCAA titles, 2-1, by capturing the championship last spring.

The good news is that Williams is building a program strong on talent but free of the impracticality that landed Kansas a three-year NCAA probation and is about to bring Kentucky crashing down.

"He's what basketball is all about, as far as I'm concerned," said Jay McMillan, Williams' teammate at Maryland from 1964-67. "The idea that desire and heart, not just talent, make you a winner. The way he coaches is the way he played — 110 percent all the time. He hated to lose."

Hating to lose drove Williams-coached Ohio State teams with mediocre talent to 20-13 records in each of his first two seasons.

Hating to lose radiates from his sideline style — crouching, roaming, chattering to his players, urging at the referees — and culminates in a unique ritual, the St. John love-in. It happens before every home game. The Buckeyes run onto the court and receive a hearty ovation. Two beats later, when Williams strolls toward the bench, the noise level seems to treble.

"I think it's the students more than anything else," Williams said. "At a good college arena like Duke, the students are near the floor. When I came here (in 1986), ours were in the balcony. I went to Rick (former athletic director Rick Bay) and said, 'We've got to change this.'"

"We turned the arena around, and it was OK to cheer again. Before, the word was that Ohio State was the easiest place to play in the Big Ten. Once we got the students moved, the other people could see that it was OK to jump up and down and go crazy. That's the way college basketball is supposed to be. I think I just let the students know I appreciate them."

Not everyone appreciates the famous Williams
intensity. For the casual fan or basketball neophyte, it can be exhausting even to watch it. For a referee, it is grounds periodically for a technical foul. Yet Williams never loses track of the game and never embarrasses the school with physical incidents or profane tantrums. As Pawlak observed, the level remains the same.

"I was his assistant at Woodrow Wilson High in Camden (N.J.) in 1970 and '71," Pawlak said. "There were times when I literally had to keep him in his seat."

"Gary dies with every game," said John Smith, the head coach at Collingwood when Pawlak and Williams played there in the early 1960s. "But he's always known there was another game. So he revives. Somehow, by the start of the next game, he comes around."

Iowa head coach Tom Davis claims to have no emotional scars from eight years on the bench with Williams, who served under Davis as assistant coach for the Maryland freshman team (1968) and the varsity teams at Lafayette College in Easton, Pa., (1972-77) and Boston College (1978).

"Believe me, that intensity isn't manufactured," Davis said. "People used to think I was encouraging him to be active on the bench, but that's just Gary. You should have seen our Maryland freshman season with Gary and the other grad assistant, Joe Harrington, who's now the head coach at Long Beach State. They'd be after those referees at the same time."

What Williams is after is excellence in a game that has nurtured him since childhood. In conversation he is calm, reflective, often humorous.

"I do talk a lot during a game, but it's not to our players," he said. "I'm always encouraging them to talk on defense and to stay in the game. The big thing you're going for is respect. You come into a new conference and you don't know anybody."

"It's just the way I've always been. I come up from being a player who wasn't real talented, just to stay on the court, I had to be the guy who dove on the floor after loose balls. So it's no special effort to me to be intense coaching a game for 40 minutes."

Returning Ohio State to glory, on the other hand, is a special effort. This may be a watershed year for Williams, who is finally in a position to rest his starting fives. Or, the big breakthrough might not come until the 1989-90 or 1990-91 seasons, as many experts expect. Either way, recruiting will play a major part.

The freshmen signed by Williams each of the last two years were ranked among the 10 best recruiting crops in the nation. His current group, headed by Jim Jackson of Toledo Maumee, is a safe bet to make it three straight.

Dominating the annual chase for Ohio's rich harvest of high school talent was a priority to Williams when he left Boston College to succeed Eldon Miller at OSU in April 1986.

"The two people I talked to about the job were John Havlicek (former Buckeyes and Boston Celtics great) and Dave Davitt (Big East Conference commissioner)," Williams said. "They sort of verified my feelings that this was a place where it had been done before, but that you had to catch up to some programs that had moved ahead."

"With me, the job is the thing, and it's more of a feel than anything else. I took the job before I set foot on campus. I felt we could be competitive here. Not have any advantages as in Indiana or an Iowa, but be competitive, which is all I want."

The steady stream of blue-chip Ohio prospects, starting with Treg Lee and EJ Brewster two years ago, is bringing that about.

"You had to go out and turn it around so the Gary Grants and the Todd Mitchells weren't leaving Ohio," Williams said. "If it wasn't a good basketball state, then you wouldn't worry about it. That's why Treg and EJ were so important — they were the two best coming out of (Ohio high schools) in '87."

"We did things right. We didn't bring 10 junior-college transfers in here. It takes longer, but you build a much more solid program. We're getting good people and good students. It's harder to go that way, because every school wants the complete package. But, once you have a good base of people, you attract others. Kids feel either comfortable or uneasy when they visit a school. We were fortunate that Jerry Francis, Tony White and Jay Burson were already here. They're the guys our recruits saw — good people who are going to graduate."

**Fortune** has had a way of shining on Williams. He could have been headed for trouble coming out of grade school. A painful divorce left him and his brothers, Douglas and David, to be raised by
their father, Bill, a World War II veteran who worked at the Federal Reserve Bank in Philadelphia. But, two teacher/coaches at Collingswood, Neil Thompson and Smith, took a special interest in him.

He wasn't a great scorer in high school, but he won a scholarship to Maryland and married Collingswood's prettiest cheerleader, Diane McMillan. Their daughter, Kristin, is a freshman at Miami University in Oxford.

He captained a team that dragged home with a disappointing 14-11 record in his senior season at Maryland. But he played for a coach, Bud Milliken, who instilled in him with discipline Milliken had learned from Hall of Fame coach Henry Iba and a fascination for the strategies of the game.

Jay McMillan, no relation to Diane, is a physician in St. Joseph, Mo., and the older brother of former Maryland great Tom McMillan. He remembers a frustrated college team that went a combined 22-25 after the promise of an 18-8 record in 1964-65, when he and Williams were sophomores.

"Our talent never really came together, and we lost a lot of close games," McMillan said. "On the other side of the coin, all the guys were students-athletes. We were sort of the outskirts of the Atlantic Coast Conference in that period. You might say the northernmost ACC schools were B-rated.

"We were a relatively irreverent bunch. We liked to have our fun. Gary had a pithy, quasi-sarcastic sense of humor. He could bring you down six pegs with an incisive comment about your behavior or what you were wearing or how you played. He was a business major, quite studious, and I would have predicted the stock market for him. It's a great thing for college basketball that he went the way he did."

Williams, a passer and defender, took fewer shots in one of his varsity seasons (61) than Burson launched for Ohio State in the Buckeyes' first four games this season (64).

After losing his starting job late in his junior year, Williams worked on his shooting all summer. As a senior he won his job back, averaged a career-high seven points and set a Maryland record by sinking 10 straight field goals in a three-game span.

"It helped me that I was never guaranteed a position," Williams said. "I have a feel for players in those situations, the guys who are not secure in their jobs."

Nothing in Williams' career paralleled the luck that accompanied his baptism in high school coaching.

"When I left Maryland, I got the junior-varsity job at Woodrow Wilson, an inner-city school in Camden," Williams said. "Jobs were hard to get then. There were a lot of career high school coaches, and it was a big thing in South Jersey as far as respect. I was excited."

He should have been. Art Dipatri, the varsity head coach, left after one season. Williams got Dipatri's job, at the age of 23, with four starters returning for the 1969-70 season.

"During that summer, a kid named Harold Slinger moved to Camden," Williams said. "The fun-
ny thing is, he was from Columbus, Ohio. Harold was 6' 8". He gave us the center we needed. We went 27-0 and won the state championship."

Sullinger, who later started at Iowa, had played as a sophomore and junior at Columbus Eastmoor under William "Red" Courtney. The move to Camden came when his parents divorced. His mother, Betty, was a Camden native. Her sister Poyllis was the mother of Woodrow Wilson's point guard, Ricky Brown.

"The first seven guys on that team played college ball," Sullinger said. "Tyrone Medley, who was the other guard with my cousin Ricky, played at Utah State and was the first black assistant attorney general in Nevada history. He's now a judge in Salt Lake City."

"I had good tools, but Gary showed me I had a heart. That's what he brought out of me. He was the reason we went undefeated. The night he was named coach of the year, his daughter was born. He left the banquet, and I took his trophy home with me."

In the state tournament semifinals, Woodrow Wilson had fallen behind Elizabeth High School, led by future Notre Dame star John Shumate, by 17 points at halftime.

"Gary looked at us," Sullinger recalled, "and said, 'Right now we are 25-0, but people are going to remember this game and this game only. Are you going to let them leave here thinking we're like this?'"

"As we left the locker room he grabbed me and said, 'Listen, I don't care what you do, but I want you to control the defensive boards the rest of this game. If you don't and I know you could have, you'll have me to deal with. When the third quarter ended, we were up by 10. We won by 20-something.'"

The beat went on. A year later Williams balked at accepting an assistant's job at Lafayette, where Davis had been named head coach, because the contract called for him to coach the soccer team.

"I started thinking about how many good high school coaches never got the chance at a college job," Williams said, "and two days later, Tom called back and urged me to reconsider. I had to learn soccer drills just to walk on the practice field. But it was good for me."

Six years later Williams turned down the head basketball job at Lafayette to accompany Davis to Boston College and recruit at the big-time level. After one season, his seventh straight as a college assistant, he was named head coach at American University in Washington, D.C.

In four years at American and four more as Davis' successor at Boston College, Williams won 148 games. He was hooked as never before.

"Basketball is a game where you're always getting new ideas about how the game can be played," Williams said. "A coach is all I've ever wanted to be. I don't see myself as anything else."

"The thing I value most is my relationship with the players. I yell at them a lot, but I feel I'm pretty honest with them, that they know I respect how hard they work. Once a kid makes that kind of
commitment, he can do it again in other areas of his life.

"I don't care to be known as the best coach. I hope people might think of me as a good coach, with everything that goes into that."

When a prolific scorer named Boo Bowers went out with a knee injury early in the 1989-90 season, Williams redesignated the club around all-purpose sixth man Marv Nickens, and American finished 24-6.

"That showed we teams are funny things, that you can overcome a lot if you're really together," Williams said.

He took Boston College to the Big East regular-season title in his first season and to the NCAA Tournament Round of 16 twice.

"Gary has always had a motivational quality with his players — I'm not quite sure what it is — but I've never seen kids not play hard for him," Pavlik said.

"He seems to walk on water a little bit. To have Harold Sullinger suddenly appear, for example. Things work right for him. But people see the big-time coach in the Big Ten situation with the shoe contract. They don't see the years of hard work, winning games at American without much talent, living in the D.C. area on a meager salary."

At Ohio State, Williams delivered more than expected almost from the start. His first team upset Iowa in Iowa City when the Hawkeyes were ranked No. 1. After the Buckeyes received a surprise NCAA bid, they won their opener against Kentucky 91-77.

Such could have been more traditional. Taylor's last three Final Four teams had knocked off Adolph Rupp's Wildcats in Mid-west Regional games in '81, '82 and '83. It was a connection with the past Williams enjoyed making.

"Beating Kentucky gave us some credibility," Williams said. "Because it's close to here, and people classified it as great.

"Even with the things Fred Taylor did, people in Ohio seemed to put Kentucky up at some other level. Hey, I knew from back East that Ohio State was considered right up there with Kentucky or anyone else. But people lose sight of that."

"At the start we weren't sure of winning 10 games. We went from that to our players knowing — having absolutely no doubt in their minds — they were going to beat Kentucky."

"Gary was a ninth-grader in my first year of teaching, 1959," Thompson said. "I coached freshman football, basketball and baseball, and he was the star in each sport. He was kind of like a son.

"He always wanted to go one-on-one with me after basketball practice. I commuted to Philadelphia, and almost every night I'd get into the car with my knees aching so badly I could barely lift my feet to the pedals. I'd say to myself, 'No more, Gary, no more.' But he'd bug me so much we'd go at it again."

Pavlik, who would later break the scoring record at Penn, remembers playground summers that, in a sense, never ended for Williams.

"We would hitchhike into Camden in the heat of the day and play all afternoon," Pavlik said. "Or we'd play at Audubon — that was the best playground ball in South Jersey — and later in Philadelphia, when guys like Walt Hazzard and Wally Jones would be around.

"Gary and I played eight million games of one-on-one. He had a hell of a hard time beating me, but he never played one game or one point any differently, whether we were 12 or 25 or 30 years old."

Basketball filled a void in Williams' life. So did people who were coaches.

"When my parents were divorced my freshman year, it was traumatic, maybe even more so back then," Williams said. "Neil Thompson spent a lot of time with me. So did John Smith, the varsity coach. I had meals at his house. Those men cared about me more than the average coach would have cared. That shaped my approach to coaching."

Smith noticed that wherever Collingswood played, Gary's paternal grandfather, Herb Lilly, was always in the stands watching.

"When I found out he was getting to all those places on public transportation, I made sure he rode in the bus with us," Smith said.

It all came together for Smith the night Pavlik, the scorer, and Williams, the passer and defender, helped Collingswood bring mighty Camden High to its knees.

"We beat Camden 74-68 when Gary was a junior and I was a senior," Smith said. "In eight years I beat them once in 17 tries. But that was one more time than a lot of South Jersey coaches."

"Gary was the spearhead. With his aggressiveness and his defense, he wouldn't let us lose. The game was played Feb. 20, 1962. I remember it, because that was the day John Glenn became the first American to orbit the earth."

Glenn, of course, had grown up in New Concord, Ohio, where part of Rt. 33 would be renamed Friendship Drive after his Mercury space capsule.

Jim Burson, then a junior on the Muskingum College team, would move into a house on Friendship Drive with his wife, Sondra. They would raise a son, Clay, who would play for Ohio State.

But that bit of luck was waiting for Gary Williams in another story.
Burson is in hospital

Broken bone in neck could end his career

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

"Jay Burson was admitted to Ohio State University Hospitals yesterday with a neck injury that threatens to end his career.

He is the fifth-leading scorer in OSU men's basketball history.

THE INJURY to Burson, a senior guard from New Concord, Ohio, was described by Dr. Robert J. Murphy, Ohio State's team physician, 'as a fracture of the body of the fifth cervical vertebra.

Murphy said the fracture occurred during Ohio State's game Monday night against Iowa in Iowa City, and was revealed by tests yesterday afternoon.

Ohio State did not practice Tuesday. Burson visited Murphy complaining of stiffness in his neck yesterday morning.

"The injury does not involve Jay's spinal cord," Murphy said. "His future as it pertains to basketball will be determined during the next 24 to 48 hours."

However, Murphy said Burson definitely will miss the game against Northwestern on Saturday night in Evanston, Ill.

Burson played 36 of the 40 minutes in Monday's game, an 83-75 loss, and led all scorers with 25 points. He left the game with 35 seconds remaining after colliding with Iowa guard B.J. Armstrong. The collision floored Burson for about three minutes.

IT IS POSSIBLE, however, that the fracture occurred earlier in the game, when Burson was fouled by Iowa forward Ed Horton on a drive to the basket with 12:11 left in the first half.

Murphy said Dr. Gary Rea and Dr. Edward Kosnik will review the test results today and that a press conference will be held in St. John Arena at 3 p.m.

In 1986, Burson, who is 6 feet tall and weighs 156 pounds, was hospitalized for three days and spent four months at home recovering from a double concussion suffered during a pickup game after his freshman season.

Burson became the career scoring leader in Ohio high school basketball by scoring 2,598 points at John Glenn High School in New Concord.

A three-year starter for the Buckeyes, he led the team with an average of 18.9 points last season, when he was named second-team all-Big Ten. He was averaging a team-high 22.1 points this season.

With 1,756 points, Burson needs 179 to pass OSU's No. 4 career scorer, Kelvin Ransey.
Burson suffers fracture

Doctors examining neck injury; playing eligibility undetermined

COLUMBUS (AP) — OSU guard Jay Burson was hospitalized Wednesday with a neck injury he suffered during Monday's game against Iowa, a team physician said.

Dr. Robert Murphy said Burson, a senior who is the Buckeyes' leading scorer this season, suffered a fracture of the body of the fifth cervical vertebra, tests at University Hospitals revealed. The injury does not involve Burson's spinal cord, Murphy said.

Burson was scheduled to undergo further testing and his condition would be evaluated within the next two days, Murphy said. Ohio State has scheduled a news conference for Thursday afternoon.

OSU Coach Gary Williams said Wednesday night that Burson had complained of a stiff neck during the halftime of the Buckeyes' 83-75 loss at Iowa City, Iowa.

"Burson said it felt stiff at halftime and we put some heat (treatment) on it," Williams said. "And he went out and played a great second half. It's one of those things that when you stop playing it starts hurting."

Williams said he was not sure how Burson was injured but indicated Burson might have been hurt during one of his lay ups.

"He did get hit a couple of times going in for the drive but that's just the way Jay plays," Williams said. "It happens a lot to Jay. It's not anything Iowa did, it's just part of the game."

Williams would not speculate on whether Burson would be available for Saturday's game at Northwestern.

"We won't know until he's been evaluated (Thursday)," Williams said.

Burson, a 6-foot, 156-pound guard from New Concord, Ohio, has averaged 22.1 points per game for the 16th-ranked Buckeyes this season. He has averaged 18.9 points in 11 Big Ten games to rank fourth in conference scoring. He is fifth on Ohio State's all-time scoring list with 1,756 points.

Jay Burson

Burson has led the Buckeyes to a 17-7 record this season, 6-5 in the Big Ten.

Burson is the all-time leading boys' scorer in Ohio high school history. He scored 2,598 points for John Glenn High School in New Concord from 1961-85.

His father, Jim Burson, is head coach at Muskingum College in New Concord.
Burson's OSU career is over

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Jay Burson's basketball career at Ohio State has been ended by a bone fracture in his neck, Dr. Robert J. Murphy confirmed yesterday.

But Murphy, the team physician, said Burson could begin conditioning when his recovery is completed in late May, "and there is no reason, if he so desires, that Jay could not play basketball again."

"Jay is going to need a halo traction brace, which he will wear for three months, to keep his head in one position 24 hours a day," Murphy said at a news conference in St. John Arena.

"OBVIOUSLY, he is going to be out the remainder of this year. He is very comfortable and in good spirits. The brace will be fitted (Friday), and it will go home to New Concord Saturday. He'll return next week, both to school and the team."

Dr. Gary Rea, a neurologist at University Hospitals, where Burson was admitted Wednesday, called the injury a "fracture that requires three months of total immobilization of the head and neck to heal. At that point it becomes an orthopedic problem. He was very lucky. Neurologically he's totally normal. The major component of the damage is bone."

Burson, a senior who led OSU this year in scoring with an average of 17.1 points a game, was injured at Iowa Monday night. He ends his career as the all-time Buckeyes leader in steals (231), fifth in points (1,756) and games played (122) and sixth in assists (329).

Burson urged to quit taunting foe, Page 1 E

As he spoke, coach Gary Williams paused three times to regain his composure. The news conference also was attended by Burson's parents, Jim and Sondra.

"WHAT JAY gave us as a player was, I think, pretty obvious," Williams said. "As a team, our concern is Jay's ability to recover and go on with his life."

"When I saw him (Wednesday night), you know how he is, his concern was how the team was going to respond and how they'll keep moving on."

"If we can do anything for Jay, it would be to be the best possible team we can and take it as far as we can. That's what Jay wants and what we want."

"We'll be thinking about Jay because we know how important this season is to him. There should be sympathy for Jay but not for us. We'll be as good as we can be and hopefully do a great job."

ELI BREWSTER, a sophomore, will start in Burson's place when the 16th-ranked Buckeyes (17-7) play at Northwestern Saturday night.

Dr. Sheldon Simon, chief of orthopedics at University Hospitals, said: "Not only the bone but ligaments as well were damaged when his head was pushed down (against his chest)."

"At the moment, it looks stable. We want it to heal in place, and the tissue takes three months to heal. It's a 'teardrop' or chip, fracture of the fifth cervical vertebra."

Burson's neck injury

Murphy said that vertebra, known as C5, "frightens us in sports medicine. I've dealt with two C5 fractures at Ohio State, and both times the patient became a quadriplegic."

"So, as tough as this is for Jay and Gary Williams and the team, he's going to be perfectly normal. It's very touchy, and we're all very fortunate. He's a joy to behold when you know what could have happened."

BURSON SENT word that he prefers not to be interviewed until he returns to school. Part of the halo traction brace will be screwed into his skull, but he's expected to walk and function normally.

Williams said he already has worked on recruiting Burson as a bench jockey.

"We want him with our team as quickly as possible," Williams said. "Initially, it's going to be tough for Jay to watch any basketball game. But as an amateur psychologist, I think it will be good for him."

"We'd love to have him back for Michigan (at St. John Arena Thursday)."
Burson's final season cut short

Coach announces vertebra fracture during emotional press conference

By Steve Helwagen
Lantern staff writer

OSU guard Jay Burson, the fifth-leading scorer in Buckeye history, has had his college basketball career effectively ended by a fracture bone in his neck, OSU team physician Dr. Robert Murphy announced during a press conference Thursday at St. John Arena.

"It is obvious, Jay is out of basketball for the remainder of the year," Murphy said.

OSU Coach Gary Williams paused several times during the press conference to fight back tears, spurred by Burson's injury.

"What Jay gave us as a player is pretty obvious to those who saw our games," Williams said. "Our concern is for Jay to recover and go on with his life.

"As a team we have to rally together now, but nobody should have sympathy for our team. The sympathy should lie with Jay."

Burson, the team's leading scorer this year with a 22.1 average, was injured on a breakaway layup in the first half of Monday's game against Iowa. Hawkeye forward Ed Horton slammed Burson, who fell to the floor and slid into the basket support.

Burson continued playing and finished the game with 25 points. Dr. Sheldon Simon, Chief of Orthopedics at University Hospitals, termed Burson's injury as a "teardrop fracture of the fifth cervical vertebra (C-5)."

"The vertebrae above and below it came and crushed the fifth cervical vertebra," Murphy said.

Murphy said Burson was experiencing some slight pain in his neck after the game. The following day the pain had not subsided and Burson contacted Murphy.

"We did a series of tests on Wednesday - an X-ray of the spine, a CAT scan of the head and neck and an MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), which provides us a fine look at the head and neck," Murphy said.

"Jay showed no neurological (spinal cord) damage, but we found he did have a fracture of the C-5 vertebra," he said.

Burson's college career has ended, Dr. Robert Murphy sits on his left while Jay's father, Jim Burson sits on his right to help answer questions.

Ohio State head basketball coach Gary Williams fights back tears at a press conference in St. John Arena to announce that senior guard Jay points.

Ohio high school history with 2,368 points, scored 1,756 points in 132 games (14.4 average) at Ohio State. Murphy said it was decided, after consultation with neurologists Gary Run and Edward Koznik at University Hospitals, that Burson's would require three months of total immobility to heal.

See BURSON: page 2

"We presented the idea to Jay that he will need to wear a halo traction brace for three months," Murphy said. "The device will keep his head in place 24 hours a day. Most patients get used to it after three to four days."

Burson will be fitted for the brace today and will be discharged Saturday morning to return home to New Canoe. After clearance from the doctors, Burson will return to school next week.

Murphy said Burson's parents and the doctors agreed that Burson would not meet with the media until he returned to Ohio State next week.

Murphy said Burson was lucky that there was no damage to the spinal cord and the chances are good he may make a full recovery.

"The C-5 fracture is one injury that frightens us in sports medicine," Murphy said. "It is the most common cause of quadraplegic and total paraplegic paralysis. We have had a couple of C-5 fractures before (at Ohio State) and they've all resulted in quadraplegic," Murphy said. "It's a very tough situation. Jay is fortunate."

"If everything goes as expected, he should be well within three months. There is no reason why he can't play basketball in the future if he so desires."

Burson, who has started all 90 games Williams has coached at Ohio State, is the only player in OSU history to amass over 200 steals and 300 assists. He is the career steals leader with 204.

Jay's father, Muskingum College basketball Coach Jim Burson, said Jay lives on "the edge" and it drives him to compete at the major college level.

"He challenged the Big Ten to play and if he had to do it again, injury or no injury, he'd challenge them again," he said.

"Jay said to me, I don't want to finish it like this," Jim Burson said. "Jay's word is he hopes the Buckeyes play hard and he hopes he gets a chance (to play professional basketball)."

Williams believes Burson has earned a chance to play professional basketball.

"I hope he gets an opportunity to play again," Williams said. "I hope that by raising his game to a new level, he will be ready with the other players."

"He has a condition," Williams said. "As he recovers he will want to see what he can do. It may be a motivator for him."

OSU co-captain Jerry Francis was subdued in speaking of Burson, who he has played alongside for four years.

"The only thing I'm concerned about is I want him to have good health, so 10 or 15 years from now he can do the things he wants to do," Francis said.

"He's meant a lot to this program. Me and him and Tony (White) are the overachievers," Francis said.
JIM JACKSON
HIGH ACHIEVEMENT, HIGH EXPECTATIONS
Courting Success

JIM JACKSON — he's one of the hottest names in Toledo. He's also considered one of the country's best high school basketball players, bursting onto the scene his freshman year and compiling four outstanding seasons at Macomber-Whitney High School.

In today's cover story, Blade staff writer Dan Firestone follows the happenings in the young prep star's life on and off the court, including his recruitment by Ohio State University, and how he deals with the pressure of trying to live up to the expectations of others.

Mr. Firestone also talks with Ohio State coach Gary Williams about Jackson's future as a Buckeye.

The cover photo of Jim Jackson at Macomber is by Bruce Sinner, Blade staff photographer.
JIM JACKSON
HIGH ACHIEVEMENT,
HIGH EXPECTATIONS

By DAN FIRESTONE

"I saw Jim Jackson when..." That's what they want to be able to say.
"...when he was just a high school player."

Like the six grade-schoolers lingering outside the entrance of the Waite Fieldhouse locker room, looking for an autograph after most of the crowd is long gone.

"Michael Jordan, Isiah Thomas," they respond when asked to name their favorite basketball players.

"Jim Jackson," one adds. "Yaaaaa!
the rest agree.

The word is that he's Toledo's best ever. Ohio's "Mr. Basketball." Wait until he's in college, they say, wait until he's a pro. Talk about pressure.

Macomber's Jim Jackson: High achievement, even higher expectations.

The kids waiting outside the locker room came with their parents from the suburbs of Toledo to see a game between Macomber and DeVilbiss. People who normally wouldn't be here, or at any high school game for that matter, come because they want to see Jackson play.

Jackson is probably the most talked-about high school athlete in Toledo's history, simply because the buzz around town started so early in his career. When he was a freshman, many were marking him as the best player around. A few years later, he was tagged as not only the best in Toledo or Ohio, but as one of the finest prep players in the country.

At 18 years old, Jackson had to begin learning to deal with being in the spotlight. His body, his ability raced ahead of his age. He was that good, that young.

"Jim has an abundance of God-given talent, a great desire to excel, and a strong family background," his coach, Bart Schroeder, said. "With all of that, he's just flourished."

Jackson was first team all-district as a freshman, first team all-state since his sophomore year, winner of Ohio's inaugural Mr. Basketball award (voted to the state's top player by the Associated Press) as a junior, and now is ranked the nation's second-best high school player.

At 6-feet, 6-inches, and 220 pounds, the senior is intimidating on the court. You might expect the same self-assurance off the court, but his teenage shyness takes over when it comes to discussing more than basketball. Jackson is always polite, but reserved. He's already aware that he's being judged publicly. The attention has been constant through his high school career, making him more than another good basketball player...

Jim Jackson signs an autograph for a young fan.

Dan Firestone is a staff writer for The Blade.

(Turn To Page 22)
basketball player. In Toledo, he's a celebrity.

"It doesn't bother me too much," he said. "You just try to be nice and speak to whoever it is" — even when he stood listening to strangers tell him where he should go to college, before he announced he would attend Ohio State University.

"With that, everybody kept saying to sign early and take the pressure off. It didn't matter to me. It took some pressure off my parents maybe."

**HIS PARENTS HAVE** tried to strike a balance between all the hoopla over his basketball talent and the academic portion of his life. It seems to have paid off — Jackson is a B and C student.

Macomber-Whitney might be a vocational high school, but Jackson has always taken college-prep courses. He hopes to eventually have a career in business, and the emphasis Ohio State put on graduating was, he said, a big factor in his choosing the school.

"I'd like to own my own business or be in accounting someday," he said. "I'm not going to base my life on playing pro basketball."

"We know he can play basketball," his father, James, said. "We want to see what else he can do. We want him to get his degree. The NBA would be icing on the cake, but there's never any guarantees with basketball. I'm just as proud that his teachers say he's a good kid in class. We've never had anything come back negative."

His father passed along to Jim his soft-spoken demeanor as well as his height. The elder Jackson, a bus driver for TARTA, was a fine player on a Scott High team that reached the state tournament in 1960. His mother, Sandra, is a secretary for Libby-Owens-Ford.

Jackson's only sibling, Kimberly, also a Macomber grad and five years older, has never even seen him play — the

*(Turn To Page 24)*
JACKSON (Continued)

moved to Washington, D.C., after high school.
"I wish she could have, but it just never worked out with her schedule," Jackson said. "She was going to try and come to Myrtle Beach [S.C.] when we played there this year [in a holiday tournament], but she couldn't do it."
"I send her all the clips," his mother said. "And we show her tapes of some games when she comes home."

THE TELEVISION SET in the Jackson home on Woodstock Avenue is tuned to an Ohio State basketball game. The sound is turned down, but Mrs. Jackson doesn't need to hear the game — she knows what's going on.

"Jay Burson, Tony White, and Jerry Francis are all seniors. Grady Mateen, he's the sixth man, is a senior, too. He's from Akron Central High, same team Todd Mitchell and them [St. Francis] played in the 1983 state tournament," she says, before rattling off three more names, including the high schools they attended. "That Greg Lee is really coming on. He's from Cleveland St. Joe and had to sit out last year. But he was Ohio's player of the year. Jim's sophomore year."

Mrs. Jackson's done her homework, too.
"I'm not too athletic, except maybe on the sidelines," she says with a cheerleader motion. "I jump around a lot."
"And make a lot of noise," Mr. Jackson chirses in.
"Jim is just like him," Mrs. Jackson says, pointing to her husband. "He doesn't worry about too much."

On the court, Jim also gets compared. It could be the similar build or the style of play, but one name comes up over and over — Magic Johnson.
"I hear it," he says. "I might throw a pass like Magic Johnson, but it's just one aspect of his game I like. I like a lot of players."
"It's a little bit too much. It tends to lead people on. They want more. If I only score 20 points, they say I had an off game."

Jackson will be playing with a wealth of talented players at Ohio State, a top 20 team this year. But sharing the spotlight with other great players won't be a problem. For all the individual accolades, Jackson is known as a team player.

In fact, he actually seems enthralled with getting his teammates involved, especially through his passing skills, maybe his greatest asset. The Maccorme have won at least 17 games in each of his four years, and if ever a player had the ability to pick nights for scoring 40, 50 points, he's one.

But Jackson is most often around his average, this year above 30 points a game while hitting 60 percent from the field. He's increased steadily from his 16-point average as a freshman and surpassed 2,000 career points. Add to it 11 rebounds and 8 assists a game with some of the sharpest passing you'll ever see in a high school game.

"He wants everyone involved," said David Smith, another starter for Maccorme, which earned a No. 1 ranking in the state this year. "Even before the game, he's very vocal getting everyone pumped up. With all the attention he gets, being All-American and stuff like that, he tells us, 'Don't let that get to you. He's always worried about the team.'"

"His passes are so crisp," said teammate Donnie Dobbs, shaking his head as he remembers a few. "He makes the level of everybody's game go up."

YOU CAN DRIVE right by the corner of Monroe and 18th streets near downtown and not realize the golden brick structure is a high school. Maccorme has no set district and students come from all over the city.

Inside there's even less of a feeling that the state's No. 1 basketball team plays here. Actually, it only practices here. The Maccorme team stopped playing home games in the 500-seat gym even before Jackson arrived. The halls are bare of any rah-rah signs, except for a tiny one hanging on the second floor.

But it's in these halls that Jackson has formed his closest bonds. Tony Ross, a senior, is probably as close as anyone; he's known Jim since they both were in kindergarten at Nathan Hale School.

"He can act different around me than other people," Ross said, "because they might think if he does something, he's trying to act like the top dog. See, they expect him to be that way. Nobody can say Jim is conceited. He's considerate and tries to be friendly to everybody."

The two stuck by each other through grade school, finding something to do every day — football one afternoon, basketball another, baseball the next.

"In fifth grade I had to talk him into trying out for the basketball team. He didn't think he was good enough," Ross said, smiling. "Tell you the truth, I was better than him then."

"But he has a natural gift. Jim just gradually pulled away from all of us. In the eighth grade, when he got a dunk in one game, I just said, 'Wow! That's when it hit me that he was really good.'"

The desire to achieve set in. Jackson didn't have a hoop at home, but he'd find one, walking to the grade school or asking his father to drop him off at the YMCA downtown. At times, he even dragged his best friend out of the house to shovel snow at the Rose driveway so they could shoot around.

Jackson wanted to concentrate on basketball, although he did try football as a freshman and scored 18 touchdowns playing what else, with his size) tight end.

"I have a feeling if he would have wanted to play football, he'd be in the same situation now, just a different sport," Ross said.
In a recent game, Jim Jackson finishes a slam dunk ... grabs a rebound ... and goes up for another basket.

Coach Schroeder was at a basketball camp following Jackson's eighth-grade season when he first spotted his soon-to-be star.

"I didn't even know his name before that," he said. "I never, never go to an eighth-grade game unless maybe it's the city championship."

When told Jackson was going to attend Macomber, Schroeder's smile went ear-to-ear.

"Only a coach knows what that smile means," he laughs. "But to be honest, I'm never overly impressed by anything. I didn't see him again until fall."


"I'm going to play you in the varsity game tonight," he tells the freshman, who is hesitant because of the way the upperclassmen might react.

But in the season opener at Willard that night, after playing part of the junior varsity contest, Jackson sits on the bench during the varsity game. With five minutes left, he enters and scores six points in a losing cause. Walking off the court, Schroeder tells the JV coach, "He's not with you anymore."

The next game, at Elyria, Schroeder reads off the starters, including the name Jim Jackson. Running the team from the point guard spot, he scores 31 points. Everyone expected "that eighth-grader from DeVaux Junior Highs" to really be something. That night, they find out he is.

This story doesn't really need any "what if..." but imagine what if Jackson had led his team to the state title as a freshman?

It almost happened.

The Macmen lost a memorable 71-67 game in the Class AA regional final that year at the University of Toledo's Centennial Hall — to eventual state champion Oberlin.

One moment stands out in the final frenzied 30 seconds as the Macmen, trailing by two points, caused a turnover with their full-court press. As a teammate brought the ball past halfcourt, Jackson's hands were extended high in the air. The ball went across court to another teammate, and Jackson jumped and waved underneath the basket, still calling for the ball. Not many players, especially freshmen, coaches will tell you, want the ball in a situation like that.

But not many freshmen have played like Jackson.

He finished with 25 points, including four slam dunks. It wasn't enough to reach the state tournament, but it shot his name across Ohio and around the country's basketball circles — to those who hadn't heard already.

Gary Williams, the Ohio State coach who successfully recruited Jackson to play the next four years in Columbus, was coaching at Boston College at the time. Even there, he knew of Jackson.

"When a guy starts on the varsity as a ninth-grader, word gets out," Williams said.

There have been plenty of highlights since the Oberlin contest:

- Sophomore year: The Stall Game. Macomber's 6-4 center Ed Colbert is out with mononucleosis and Schroeder's tactic is to play a slow-down offense against St. Francis, a team ranked in Ohio's top 10. Jackson scores eight points, including the game-winner, with 13 seconds left in a 13-11 victory.


The city championship: Jackson leads the Macmen with 25 points and 29 rebounds in a victory over St. John's.

- Senior year: At the Beach Ball Classic in Myrtle Beach against nationally ranked Archbishop Malloy High from New York City with Kenny Anderson, the one player rated ahead of Jackson in the country — Jackson scores 35 points and grabs 20 rebounds, although Macomber suffers its first loss.

IT'S NO WONDER, then, that the media swarmed to the press conference in Macomber's library last Nov. 2, the day Jackson announced his decision on which college he would attend.

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JACKSON

After a two-year process of narrowing prospective colleges to 16, then 5, it’s well-known that only Ohio State and Syracuse remained under consideration; Jackson had dropped Georgetown a week earlier. The two were the only schools Jackson visited, but he heard from others, plenty of others.

“If there are 254 Division I schools, we heard from at least 252 of them,” said Schroeder, who handled the recruiting details. Jackson insisted that schools contact him through Schroeder. If any of them slipped by and called his house, he politely told them, “Next time, call Coach.”

A few weeks before, Jackson had talked about his selection process.

“I’m not the stay-home type,” he insisted, but added he’d dropped North Carolina and Nevada-Las Vegas as prospective schools. “People keep saying I’ll get homesick, but I don’t think I will. If I go far away, that’s my decision.”

At the press conference, looking every bit the high school student in jeans and a Nike T-shirt, and with Tony Ross standing by his side, Jim announced that he will attend Ohio State. The formal announcement completed, each TV station grabs Jackson for more air time. One puts him live on the noon news, another asks him to tape the segment outside.

The phone rings in the library — the Ohio State student newspaper is requesting an interview. About the time the local media leave the school, a helicopter from a Columbus TV station lands across the way.

BACK IN COLUMBUS, a few people already had begun celebrating. Jackson had called OSU assistant coach Randy Ayers, who was in charge of most of the recruiting details, about a week earlier.

“With Jim here next year, this place will be crazy,” Ayers says while unlocking a door on the floor of an empty St. John Arena, where the Buckeyes play their home games.

Ayers could relate somewhat to Jackson’s situation, having been Ohio’s player of the year while he was in high school.

“It really was an unbelievable feeling when Jim called because you think you’re doing everything right but you never know. It was just like winning a big game, but this one lasted longer than most.”

Overtime, maybe?

“What, triple overtime.”

Just what does it take to win one of the nation’s prize prep players?

The Buckeye staff sent more than 500 letters in four years to Jackson or his parents regarding basketball and the university. And like all the schools that remained in contention until the end, someone would call each week — on designated nights — when contacting the player was allowed.

“My friends at camp said recruiters called every night. I said we don’t have that problem. I set it straight right away,” Jackson said.

“I guess you just try to build up a trust,” Ayers said. “Sometimes, you talk about other things, music, academics . . . but it seems to always comes back to basketball.”

Calls started coming to Ohio State four years ago to then-head coach Eldon Miller’s staff about a talented eighth-grader in Toledo. Ayers was a part-time assistant for Miller.

“Rick Barnes (another assistant then) was the first to see him play as a freshman,” Ayers remembers. “He came back and said, ‘We’ve got to get him. We’ve got to go after him hard.’

“I know Route 33 as well as anyone in Columbus. Even if you jump in the car just to watch practice, you drive 2½ hours to Toledo, watch a two-hour practice and you can’t even talk to him during certain times because of NCAA rules. Then you get in the car and drive back.

“But if I’m telling Jim Jackson that Ohio State really wants him, then I better be there, and I think we were more than anybody. There were 21 days past July we could be on the road and I spent 16 days watching Jim — the Nike camp (Princeton), the Five Star Camp (Pittsburgh).

“One night I drove to watch a summer game at Sylvania Southview and Jim didn’t even play but I thought he might. He was just in the crowd.”

The next day Jackson’s AAU summer team left for Las Vegas. Ayers did the same.

The halls of St. John Arena are plastered with huge posters of OSU sport legends. Just when you think you’ve seen every shrine, another pops up at each turn of the hallway for the second-level athletic offices.

Williams has occupied his office in the southeast corner for just three seasons, but that has been long enough to successfully recruit some of the state’s best talent. When he came to OSU, he made a list of the top 10 Ohio players to recruit. Jackson, having finished his freshman year, was on the list.

Jackson wasn’t high on going to Ohio State until Williams’ arrival — certainly, watching ex-Bowsher star Dennis Hopson excel in his program didn’t hurt.

Toledo’s best player isn’t headed to a program on the downside by any means, with Williams’ recruiting classes raised among the nation’s best each year. With three starters from this year’s team graduating, but other strong candidates riding the bench,


JACKSON

Williams can contemplate how Jackson might be used next year.

"Now and then, I'll be sitting on the bus looking out the window and thinking about next year. You daydream a little.

"Pure guard, maybe small forward," he said of Jackson. "I think he can play the small forward defensively because he's strong, but (at 6-6) can he play the 6-2, 6-3 guard who can really go with the ball? We won't know until we get him down here.

"But he'll handle the ball, especially the fast break. Any time you have someone with the ability to pass like Jim, you use it."

Jackson's ability to hit the outside shot consistently, especially the three-pointer, hasn't been tested much. He hasn't been pressed to do so in high school — halfway through the season, the Maroons as a team had only attempted 20 three-pointers.

Williams said he's never had a player who hasn't even arrived on campus get so much attention.

"When he came down here, people would stop us on the way to the game (pointing in the direction of the football stadium) and ask him for an autograph. On my Thursday night radio show, people in Columbus call about him. It's remarkable how he handles it.

"As a staff, we spent more time on him than any player I've ever recruited. That's all right, though. In basketball, one or two players can make the difference."

AFTER THE announcement, there was a delay of a couple days before Jim actually signed, accepting Ohio State's scholarship offer. His parents said they just wanted a lawyer to look over the scholarship's terms, but that didn't stop rumors from flying.

"Recruiting is amazing with rumors," Williams said. "People would call from Toledo and say John Thompson was there and we heard Jim is going to Georgetown."

"I just talked to Jim the night before. You have to believe in what you know and your relationship with the player. People would say Jim was down at Kentucky's campus. Things that are totally untrue."

Williams understands the hysteria behind recruiting, and he knows that many fans are now subscribing to newsletters that at one time were just for coaches.

"It's like the second season. If that's what people are interested in, fine. It's part of what makes college basketball so popular. But it makes it crazy."

Dave Bones, of Waterville, a scout for major colleges the past 33 years, publishes a newsletter still mainly for coaches.

"I don't put up a great deal of stock in scouting, but more on overall play," said Bones, who for that reason ranks Jackson as Toledo's all-time best on a list of great players like Howard Kinnives (Woodward, '60), Kelvin Ranney (Maumee, '76), Ray Wofford (Scott, '69) and Truman Claytor (Scott, '75). His opinion is based strictly on high school careers.

"I probably shouldn't say this because I've made a living at it, but there is too much emphasis on recruiting. As far as fan interest anyway, I think the media is giving the fans too much about it. The build-up is too much."

Jackson's fast start as a freshman certainly enhances his rating with national publications now. Like most polls, familiarity improves status.

"I would agree that the top 20 or so are about even," Bones said. "The top two or three (ranked players) from the last couple of years haven't even fared that well. I hope Jim doesn't just assume he will, or he could find it difficult."

Jackson will step from being the big gun on the court to having to find new ways of making his mark, especially in the Big 10, where he'll find opponents bigger and more definitely better.

It's a challenge he's welcoming, all the while knowing what others expect.

"If I get to Ohio State and I don't do something right away, everyone will say it was all talk," he says. "You know, when I was younger, I read magazines that mentioned All-American high school players. I told myself I'm going to be in there. They're going to mention my name."

"Now, when I hear my name (on TV) or see my name in the paper, it doesn't affect me too much. I still have some things to prove."

So maybe he won't be the next Magic Johnson. He shouldn't have to be. What he's accomplished already is sure to prompt someone down the line to say:

"I saw Jim Jackson when..."

That much you can expect.
1989 National Invitation Tournament

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Head Coach: Lou Carnesecca
Assistant Coaches: Brian Mahoney, Ron Rutledge, Al LoBalbo
Graduate Assistant Coach: Ron Stewart
Trainer: Ron Linfoote

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*Letters won

Head Coach: Gary Williams
Assistant Coaches: Randy Ayers, Fran Fraschilla, Paul Brazeau
Graduate Assistant Coach: Tom Souder
Trainer: Mike Bordner
Managers: Dave Goldstein, Lenny Roberts, Larry Hoezee, Ed Kurt, Joe Bias, Kevin Richards, Matt O'Leary

GAME NOTES: Tonight's third-round NIT showdown between Ohio State and St. John's is a rematch of last December's ECAC championship game in Madison Square Garden. After that game, both teams headed home to begin their respective conference schedules. But after tonight's game, one team goes home and the other goes back to Madison Square Garden for the semi-finals of college basketball's oldest postseason tournament... The Redmen come into tonight's game with a 17-13 record. Their first two NIT wins came at the expense of Mississippi (70-67) and Oklahoma State (76-64). Both games were played in the Redmen's Alumni Hall. As he has been doing most of the year, forward Jayson Williams paced St. John's against Oklahoma State with 27 points. He's averaging 19 points a game in a superb junior year... The 19-14 Buckeyes, who are seeking a third straight season of 20 or more wins, have been paced in their first two NIT games by sophomore center Perry Carter, who has 32 points and 23 rebounds. Carter has had support from freshman guard Jamaal Brown (31 points, 11 boards, 9 assists) and senior forward Jerry Francis (29 points and seven assists).
### St. John’s University

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### The Ohio State University

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Burson receives MVP award

By Steve Helvagen
Special to the Lantern

For the second year in a row, OSU guard Jay Burson walked away with the Jerry Lucas Most Valuable Player award. He received it during the Men’s Basketball Banquet at St. John Arena Monday.

Burson, a 6-foot-1 senior from New Concord, led the team in scoring with 22.1 points per game before he was sidelined with a fractured neck he received during a game at Iowa on Feb. 13. He also had a team-high 96 assists and 49 steals this season.

"It's been a great four years here," Burson said. "My only regret is that I couldn't play in the last seven or so games this season. I'm glad to miss this place, but I know that it is time for everyone here to get on to bigger and better things."

Burson, who leaves Ohio State as the school's fifth-leading scorer (1,736 points in 122 games), was also named as the Player of the Year by the OSU Radio Network and in his honor the Kroger Co. presented a $7,000 check to the athletic department.

"It was great coaching Jay," OSU coach Gary Williams said, "because every year he got better and raised his game to a higher level."

Williams reflected positively on the season that saw Ohio State finish 19-15 overall, but go 2-8 after Burson's departure.

"We reached a good level of play and we were ranked in the Top 25 over two and a half months. That's what I remember most about this year."

Junior Perry Carter, a 6-foot-8 sophomore from Washington, D.C. who averaged 14.2 points per game, received awards for leading the team in field goal percentage, 58.2 percent (196-of-338), and in rebounding average, 8.1 per game.

The Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity initiated an award this season for the MVP of the Michigan game (which the Buckeyes lost 89-72 on Feb. 23). Carter had 26 points, 19 rebounds and three assists in that game to earn the award.

Senior Joe Dumas, a 6-9 forward from Irvington, N.Y., was voted by his teammates to receive the John Havlicek Most Inspirational Player award. Dumas, who scored 91 points in his four-year career, overcame academic difficulties to become eligible last year and was a steady influence this year.

"Joe had a lot of ups and downs in his career here," Williams said. "But, this year he was a constant. He helped incorporate the younger players into the program and that is important."

Freshman Jamaal Brown, a 6-foot-4 guard who was the only player to start all 34 games, received the Most Improved Player award.

Brown averaged 4.8 points in the season's first 23 games, but averaged 9.7 per game in the last 11 contests including double-figure performances in the three NIT games.

"To his credit, Jamaal improved as much as anyone could from Oct. 15 to March 15," said Assistant Coach Fran Fraschilla, who presented Brown his award.

Senior Jerry Francis, a 6-5 forward from Columbus who averaged 12.1 points per game, received an award for the team's highest free throw percentage, 82.1 percent (80 of 94). Francis led the Big Ten in free throws with a 92.7 percentage in conference games.

"Jerry brought the work ethic to this team," Williams said. "You need people like him to go out each day in practice and work hard."

Senior Tony White, a 6-7 forward from Pataskala, became the first recipient of the Fred R. Taylor Award for Academic Excellence. White was a two-time member of the Academic All-Big Ten team.

"Tony was a great team player," Williams said. "He is entering law school this fall, hopefully here, and you have to respect a thing like that."

Williams instituted the award to salute Taylor, the Ohio State coach from 1959-76 who saw 106 of his 112 letter-winners graduate. All five seniors received plaques from the Fast Breakers Booster Club, including Oredy Mateen, a 7-foot forward from Akron. Mateen averaged 8.5 points and 4.8 rebounds per game this year.

"Grady will be remembered for making the big shots to win games, like his dunk against Michigan last year," Williams said.

"He's also a solid student and has been accepted unofficially to Howard University's Medical School."

Williams announced next season's schedule at the banquet.

"We will probably open the season at DePaul in the Preseason NIT which really annoys me," he said. "The NIT has promised we'll have a second round game at home, though."

Williams said that Ohio State will play North Carolina State in the Pepsi-Light Tournament in Charlotte in early December. Oklahoma and Pittsburgh will also compete there.

The Buckeyes will host Louisville and South Carolina in non-league games and will compete in the Sugar Bowl Classic (with La Salle, Florida and New Orleans) over Christmas.

"Then, we'll have 18 games in the Big Ten. It was the nation's top league this year and I see no reason why it won't be next year," he said.
Halo brace removed from Burson’s neck

Lantern staff reports

The removal of the halo brace Monday that former OSU basketball player Jay Burson has been wearing since February, has revealed “excellent healing,” said team doctor Robert J. Murphy in a press release from the OSU sports information department.

Burson, who sustained a broken neck in a Feb. 13 game at Iowa, had the brace removed at University Hospitals and will wear a neck collar for the next four weeks. He will then begin rehabilitation.

Burson, 22, was not available for comment and will hold a press conference at 10 a.m. today. He reportedly left for his home in New Concord, Ohio immediately after having the brace removed.

The first team all-Big Ten guard has said he wants to pursue a professional basketball career. He told the Lantern in March, “I’ve had a lot of adversity (in my career). I’ve had to prove that I could play, and my goal is to play again. I might not have gone on if I could have finished the season, but I wasn’t ready for it to end . . . not like this.”

The neck injury was not Burson’s first injury in his career. He suffered a severe concussion during a pick-up game in the summer of 1986, and still can’t remember the injury and the following three days.

The following summer, he severely cut the middle finger on his shooting hand while lifting weights. The injury required several stitches, but Burson was ready to play by the beginning of the season.

Burson averaged 22 points and four assists per game in his final season as a Buckeye. He is the fifth all-time leading scorer in Ohio State history with 1,756 points. He ranks sixth all-time in assists (329), first in steals (204), and fourth in games played (122).

During Burson’s career, Ohio State won the National Invitational Tournament in 1986, beat Kentucky in the 1987 NCAA tournament, and beat several top-ranked teams in the country.
Burson braces for future
Basketball, business careers for ex-OSU player

By Mike Sullivan
 Dispatch Senior Reporter

Former Ohio State basketball star Jay Burson made an apology yesterday that probably wasn't necessary, then declined to apologize for his budding business career.

The halo traction brace Burson had worn since Feb. 17 to protect a fracture and ligament tear in the fifth cervical vertebra of his neck was removed Monday.

"I'm sorry I didn't feel like talking (to the media) yesterday," Burson said at a news conference in the office of his attorney, Brett Adams.

"I had to deal with getting those things (four surgically implanted screws) out of my head. Those 1 1/2 minutes were the most pain I've felt in my life. If somebody had asked me right then if I'd ever want to play basketball again, I would have said, 'No way.'"

But with a day to think about it, Burson said, he still wants to give professional basketball a try after a gradual rehabilitation program this summer.

"I think I've got a chance," he said. "I'll never know until I get out there and play again. If I don't make it, then that's just what happens and the way God had things set up. I'll go back to school and get a job like everyone else."

Burson has signed a one-year commercial contract with Krueger and also endorsed a basketball being marketed in his name by Mikaas.

A source close to the Burson family said Jay stands to make closer to $10,000 from those ventures rather than the "six-figure income" mentioned in some reports.

"I've tried to make myself a little on the one hand, and do things that will help people on the other hand," Burson said. "I've been able to make some money for myself and for some charities."

"I'd give it all back to be able to play the last seven games of his senior season. Growing up, I've always had enough money to be happy. I'm a business and marketing major at OSU, and I just wanted to get into the real world a little bit and see what things are like."

Burson acknowledged he was stung by a cartoon in the OSU student newspaper, the Lantern, that portrayed him being showed with money as he said, "Thanks millions."

"If I was that person at the Lantern, I might be mad," Burson said. "But I would hope they would see that person knows I'm not trying to hurt anybody."

"I've got to get on with my life and it seems some people are upset at me. I must have made some mistakes, because some people overestimate the kind of money I'm making. I've done twice as many charity things."

Burson, 22, playfully parried questions trying to pin him down on his income.

"I'm happy for Leanne, because she's the one that pays it all and spends it all, not me," said Burson, who revealed that he has become engaged to his girlfriend, Leanne Lehman.

When asked whether he made closer to $10,000 or $20,000 for a speaking engagement, Burson said, "That's ridiculous. People are trying to guess what I'm making. With everything I do, I have a chance to make some money. You have the same chance if you go out and do things."

The Youngstown Pride of the World Basketball Association, a league for players 6-feet-5 and under, has drafted the Jr. Burson. He also would be an obvious target of the Columbus Horizon, which will begin play in the Continental Basketball Association this fall.

"I've never seen the NBA play," Burson said. "It would help me get to the NBA. I'd take a look at it. I'd play in Europe if I thought it would be a steppingstone to the NBA."
Ayers finds youth prevalent on first OSU team

By Steve Helwagen
Lantern sports editor

When practice opens on October 15, OSU Basketball coach Randy Ayers will find a team with no seniors and plenty of youth. But Ayers is not overly concerned.

"We recruited these players with the idea that they would come in here and contribute," Ayers said. "They want to play against the best competition."

Ayers said he plans to retain the up-tempo, pressure style of his predecessor, Gary Williams.

"We will be very up-tempo," Ayers said. "We will push the ball up the court with every rebounding opportunity."

Ayers will have several point guard candidates to choose from.

Sophomore Jammal Brown, the only player to start all 34 games last year, finished the season at point guard. Brown, who averaged over six points per game last year, may see time at the shooting guard or even the small forward spot.

"Jammal can play the 1, 2, or 3 spots," Ayers said. "He was a 3-man (small forward) in high school and certainly could make an adjustment to playing out of position." New to the mix at the point guard spot are sophomore Mark Baker, coming off Prop 48 status, and freshman Alex Davis.

"I see a battle between those two young people and also Jammal. They all have an opportunity to play a lot of basketball for us," sophomore Chris Jent and freshman Jim Jackson, a high-school All-American from Toledo, will likely see time at the shooting guard and small forward spots.

"Jackson and Jent are versatile players. Both can play three positions, with Jent as many as six. We like what we can mix things up and give our opponents different looks," Ayers said.

Jarron Lee, a 6-foot-8 junior, returns at power forward, where he started four games and averaged four points last year. Ayers said Lee will be a major factor if he can be consistent this year.

"We think Jarron is ready to take the next step and certainly if he can become more consistent it will be a big help to our program," Ayers said. "He's played in 88 games, the past two years and we feel he's ready to do that. Two we think he has to establish himself as one of the better players in our conference."

Carter averaged 14 points and eight rebounds last year.

"We think Perry has made great strides with his first two years. We feel he is ready to blossom out," Ayers said.

Sophomore Bill Robinson, a 7-foot center, has lost 25 pounds that he put on this summer to get to the 250-pound range.

"Bill figures prominently in our plans," Ayers said. "He was motivated enough to improve his game. He's working hard to improve his game. It would really help to get Bill and Perry in the game at the same time."

Getting his two biggest players in at once might help solve a potential rebounding problem with a smaller lineup.

"I don't think we have a rebounding problem because it is a matter of technique but you also want to be aggressive and go and get the ball," Ayers said. "I also has junior guard James Bradley and two 6-foot-8 forwards, sophomore Steve Hall and freshman Tom Brandewie, to rely on this season."

Ayers is recruiting now for next year, where he will have as many as four scholarships available.

"I would like to add two, possibly three people for next year," Ayers said. "We have a great need for athletic people and inside people to come in and contribute."

Ayers said he is planning on having walk-ons tryouts to fill this year's squad.

"We will definitely keep a walk-on this year," he said. "It's a good way to get the student body involved. We encourage guys who still have some people in their legs or touch in there shot to come out. The tryout will be sometime after Oct. 15."

The season will begin with the annual "Midnight Mania" on the night of Oct. 14. Oct. 15 is the first day the NCAA permits official practice. The Buckeyes will waste no time by conducting a full-court scrimmage sometime after 12:00 midnight.

"That's an exciting and fun time for us," Ayers said. "It marks the end of the preseason practice and the start of the year."

The "Midnight Mania," which coincides with the Indiana home football game earlier in the day,
Midnight Mania opens basketball season

By Steve Helwagen
Lantern sports editor

The Ohio State men's basketball team will open the official practice season with the second annual Midnight Mania celebration Saturday night at St. John Arena.

According to NCAA rules, teams cannot begin regular practice sessions with the coaching staff present on-the-floor until Oct. 15. The Buckeyes will waste no time as first-year head coach Randy Ayers will introduce his team at 12:05 a.m. Sunday.

"This will be an exciting and fun time for us," Ayers said. "It is the culmination of our pre-season practice and marks the beginning of our season."

Midnight Mania is open to the public and will be free of charge. The arena doors will open around 9:30 p.m., with alumni and celebrity games and door prizes drawings planned.

ESPN college basketball analyst Dick Vitale (who has picked Ohio State seventh in the Big Ten and 43rd in the nation in his book "Dick Vitale's Basketball") will make an appearance as well.

The main event, though, will be a 20 minute inter-squad scrimmage involving the Buckeyes. It will begin shortly after midnight — and the players can't wait.

"We are definitely ready to get the season rolling," said Treg Lee, a junior forward from Cleveland. "I think everybody is ready to start the season. Conditioning has been a lot harder this season, but it will definitely pay off in the long run."

The Buckeyes have been working each day in the weight room, on the running track and on the basketball court to prepare for the opening of practice.

"Practice has been going very well," forward Chris Jent, a sophomore from Sparta, N.J. said. "We're in much better shape this year, but the hard work has brought us together as a team."

"We are very anxious to get started. A lot of the polls have underestimated us a little and we want to prove we can play. We look at Midnight Mania as the start of a good thing," he said.

The Buckeyes take the court with 11 scholarship players, eight of which are either sophomores or freshmen. The season is an opportunity for the young team to start on its own path after a 19-15 season and a dismal 6-12 Big Ten record last year.

The team has no seniors, having lost five from last year's squad. Center Perry Carter, a junior from Washington, D.C. who averaged 14 points and eight rebounds per game last year as a starter, was elected the team captain.

"Basically, I'm going to continue to do the things I've been doing here — playing hard, doing what the coach asks and working to become a better player," Carter said.

Sophomore Jamaal Brown, a 6-foot-4 guard from Arlington, Texas, is the only other returning starter. Lee and Jent each saw considerable action last season and are projected as regulars this year.

Guard James Bradley, forward Steve Hall and center Bill Robinson are the only other returnees.

Saturday will mark the OSU St. John Arena debut of Prop 48 sophomore Mark Baker and three freshmen — swingman Jim Jackson, guard Alex Davis and forward Tom Brandewie.

The Buckeyes will host the Poland National Team for an exhibition on Thursday, Nov. 9. The regular season opener will be against DePaul on Wed., Nov. 15, in Chicago in the first round of the Dodge NIT.
The Lantern
Thursday, January 4, 1990

INSIDE

• OSU team previews
• Big Ten previews
• Player profiles on Alex Davis and Mindy Smith

Jim Jackson

Vicki Pullie
OSU men prepare for Big Ten

The OSU men's basketball team has completed its non-conference schedule 6-4 and is looking to dive into Big Ten play this week against Indiana and Iowa. The slow start may be due to two things — youth and an injury.

The OSU team features no seniors, three juniors and four players playing in their first season of Division I college basketball. Three starters graduated from last year's 19-15 squad.

"We are still trying to define roles on this team," first-year OSU coach Randy Avera said. "This is a young club and they will make some mistakes while they learn. We are pleased with their progress thus far."

The injury was to returning starter Perry Carter, a 6-foot-8 center and team captain as a junior. Carter missed the season opener, a 71-53 loss at DePaul, due to a bruised kidney and was slow to regain his form in the early going.

Carter, who averaged 14 points and eight rebounds last season, perhaps showed he has made a complete recovery in last week's Sugar Bowl Classic in New Orleans. He scored 23 points and grabbed 12 rebounds in a 74-62 loss to No. 9 La-Salle and came back the next night to pump in 22 points against New Orleans in the consolation game.

Those efforts landed Carter a spot on the all-tournament team.

"I'm really happy with the way Perry exerted himself down low in the Sugar Bowl Classic," Avera said. "We feel he's ready to make the next step and establish himself as one of the top players in the Big Ten."

Two freshman have wasted no time in establishing themselves as regulars in Ayers' rotation. Alex Davis, a 6-1 guard, and Jim Jackson, a 6-6 forward, have been major contributors during the OSU non-conference schedule.

Davis has been in double-figures in scoring in six of the nine games, averaging 12.7 points per contest. Jackson missed double-figures in scoring at both games in New Orleans — the first ones he's missed this season.

Jackson is averaging 12.2 points and a team-high four assists per game.

Sophomore Chris Jent and Janaaal Brown have each started all nine games at power forward and point guard respectively. They are each averaging six points and four rebounds per game. Both have been helped by a strong bench as Brown is hitting 33.8 percent (19 of 57) and Jent is shooting 31.8 percent (21 of 67) in the early going.

Junior Fred Lee, a 6-6 forward, has been making more of an impact as the season continues. Lee has upped his totals to six points and five rebounds per game and will be counted on to contribute in the middle during the rugged Big Ten season.

Sophomore Mark Baker (a 6-1 guard) and Bill Robinson (a 7-foot center) have also seen considerable time during the non-conference season.

With the departure of junior guard Jim Bradley (who left the team to concentrate...)

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1989-90 OSU Men's Basketball Team

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OSU MEN: from page 2

on his shoulders, Ayers will be counting on Davis, Brown and Baker to stay out of foul trouble and to rotate between the guard spots.

Robinson's 7-foot presence will be needed to give Carter a break or to fill the center spot when Carter moves to power forward for a short stint.

Sophomore Steve Hall, freshman Tom Brandwies, and walk-ons Scott Reeves and Nick Hodiak fill out the OSU roster.

Ohio State's early season losses have been characterized by poor shooting and an abundance of turnovers. The Buckeyes are shooting 43.7 percent from the field and 62.1 percent at the foul line, while averaging 17 turnovers per game.

"The turnovers don't bother me," Avera said. "They are trying to make things happen. Our guys are continuing to improve and the effort is still there."

"This team is still getting to know each other. They've only played nine games together — 11 if you count the exhibitions."

The season began with the loss at DePaul in the first round of the Dodge NIT. Ayers' first regular season win as OSU coach came in a 102-63 rout over Mount St. Mary's (Md.), a win paced by 23 points from Davis.

The Tournament of Champions in Charlotte, N.C. saw Ohio State drop decisions to N.C. State and Oklahoma State. The Buckeyes rebounded with home wins over American, Robert Morris and South Carolina. The win over South Carolina saw the Buckeyes shoot a paltry 33 percent from the floor, but capitalize on 30 Gamecock turnovers.

OSU held a 32-20 lead before succumbing to LaSalle 74-62 in the first round of the Sugar Bowl Classic. The win over New Orleans, a 74-66 decision, saw OSU hold off a late UNO rally.

"We won a close game there on the second night," Ayers said. "We had players hitting the big free throws when we needed them down the stretch."

With the Big Ten season now underway, Ayers was noncommittal in naming a conference favorite.

"Everybody is 0-0," he said. "I have not seen most of league teams play yet, but we know it will be a competitive league season."
Freshman Davis steps in

By Steve Helwagen

OSU freshman guard Alex Davis is one of the most pleasant surprises of the Buckeye’s 1989-90 season.

“We did not think he would be this far along offensively early in the season,” first year OSU coach Randy Ayers said.

Davis, a 6-1 shooting guard from Cincinnati Forest Park, was overlooked by some experts when Ohio State’s recruiting class was named last fall.

Davis played in the shadow of the state’s top player, Jim Jackson, but has wasted no time making a name for himself as a Buckeye, moving to the top of several OSU offensive categories.

Davis is averaging 13.4 points per game and is third on the team in shooting percentage at 61.4 percent (39 of 74) from the floor.

The freshman leads the Buckeyes in free throw shooting (nine of 10 for 90 percent) through the first six contests.

After coming off the bench and scoring six points in Ohio State’s season-opening loss at DePaul, Davis quickly found a niche in the Buckeyes backcourt.

Starting point guard Mark Baker was briefly hobbled by an ankle injury and, when second guard Jamaal Brown was moved to the point, Davis stepped in at the second guard spot and immediately produced.

“I really had no idea I would be playing so much right away,” Davis said. “I knew I would be playing a little bit, but I knew it was going to be tough to move right in.”

Against Mount St. Mary’s on Nov. 27, Davis made his first start in St. John Arena a memorable one. Davis was 8 of 13 from the field and scored 15 points in OSU’s 102-68 win over the Mountaineers.

“It was nice to that in my first game here and it felt great,” Davis said. “But the main thing I was concentrating on was winning the game.”

Ohio State’s next stop was the Tournament of Champions in Charlotte, N.C., and though the Buckeyes dropped both games, Davis made a strong account of himself.

Against North Carolina State on Dec. 1, Davis scored a team-high 19 points. He followed that performance with 11 points the next night against Oklahoma State.

Davis scored nine points against American University and 11 against Robert Morris, before again leading the Buckeyes.

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against South Carolina with 15 points.

Davis got OSU going against the Gamecocks by sinking a three-point goal and then making a steal and scoring to start the game. That win lifted OSU’s record above .600 for the first time in the season at 4-3.

Davis said he used some advice from his high school coach, Forest Park’s Bill Fisher, to find his way to the Buckeye backcourt.

“My high school coach told me to just play hard and to just do things the way I did them in high school,” he said.

The way Davis did things in high school earned him first-team All-Ohio and Division II player of the year honors as a senior at Forest Park.

In his three seasons there, Davis scored 1,945 points and led Forest Park to a 55-21 record. As a senior he averaged 27.6 points, 8.5 rebounds, 4.9 assists, and 4.0 steals.

“We liked Alex right away because he can really shoot the ball and plays good defense because of his quickness,” Ayers explained of the Buckeyes’ decision to recruit Davis.

Davis, in turn, had his reasons for selecting Ohio State.

“Tore were some schools out of state that were recruiting me, but I wanted to stay in Ohio. Georgia Tech was one of them, but I told Coach (Bobby) Crenshaw that I wanted to stay in the state,” Davis said.

Davis’ recruitment marked the first time in nearly 20 years that OSU had signed a player from the Cincinnati area.

Bob Shickman, of Cincinnati Oak Hills High School, played for the Buckeyes from 1971-73 and is the last regular from that area. Robin Freeman, who played for the Buckeyes from 1984-86 and is seventh on OSU’s career scoring list, is the most notable OSU player from Cincinnati.

After deciding on OSU, Davis admitted he had some anxious moments in trying to comply with the NCAA’s Proposition 48 guidelines.

“I had a tutor before and I was struggling with the ACT,” he said. “So I went back to my old tutor and studied every night. I finally passed it on my third try.”

Davis said he thinks he has made a good adjustment to college life.

By his performance in Ohio State’s first set of games, Davis has also made the adjustment to major college basketball.

“Alex has done a great job so far,” Ayers said. “He’s the kind of guy who comes in and works hard every day.”
BUCKEYES IN THE NBA

Ohio State currently has four of its men’s basketball alumni competing in the NBA.

Here’s a look at what they are doing early in the 1989-90 season (The year in parenthesis is the final year that player played for the Buckeyes):

Tony Campbell (’84), a 6-foot-4 guard for the Minnesota Timberwolves, is averaging 23.4 points per game through the team’s first 27 games. Campbell is shooting 48 percent (242 of 505) from the field as the Wolves’ leading scorer. He is also 141 of 171 (81 percent) at the foul line. Campbell had a high-game of 38 points earlier this season against Philadelphia and scored 31 points against Chicago.

Campbell went from the Western Conference champion L.A. Lakers to Minnesota in the expansion draft in June.

Campbell ranks 10th on the OSU all-time scoring list with 1,529 points.

Dennis Hopson (’87), a 6-5 guard for the New Jersey Nets, is averaging a team-high 17.8 points per game through the first 26 games as well as 4.0 rebounds.

He is shooting 41 percent from the field, but 81.1 percent at the foul line.

Hopson was New Jersey’s first round pick in the ’87 NBA draft.

Hopson ranks first on the OSU all-time scoring list with 2,096 points in 125 games (16.7 average). He also set the single-season scoring record in 1987 when he scored 958 points in 33 games (29.0 average).

Herb Williams (’81), a 6-10 center/forward for the Dallas Mavericks, is averaging 8.0 points and 5.5 rebounds through the team’s first 25 games.

Williams is shooting 42.7 percent from the floor (82 of 192) and 67.3 percent at the foul line (37 of 55).

Williams went to Dallas in a trade from Indiana for Detlef Schrempf and a draft pick last year.

Williams reigned as the OSU all-time leader until Hopson broke the record. Williams is currently second on the career scoring list with 2,011 points.

Brad Sellers (’86), a 7-foot reserve forward for the Seattle Sonics, is averaging 5.8 points and 2.0 rebounds per game as a backup for the Sonics. Sellers is shooting 45 percent (55 of 123) from the field and 33 percent (35 of 124) at the foul line.

Sellers went to Seattle in a trade for a draft pick from Chicago prior to the NBA draft in June.
OSU will stage its first Basketball Captains' Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Saturday in the Parke University Hotel. Ayers and OSU's current captain, Perry Carter, will join these former OSU captains:

Ayers preaches patience in NCAA

Will OSU coach stray from up-tempo game?

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

SALT LAKE CITY — Even though there is a generous dusting of white stuff on the brown humps of the surrounding Wasatch Mountains, Randy Ayers and Rick Barnes are doing their part to provide a snow job hereabouts.

When Ayers sends Ohio State (16-12) against Barnes and Providence College (17-11) in an NCAA Tournament opener at 11:44 tonight, lovers of transition basketball will expect a vintage shoot-'em-up, with all throttles open.

But to hear these former OSU assistants tell it, they have mended their ways and even might become ensnared in a (gasp) half-court struggle.

"I don't think we want to get into a 90-point game with Providence," Ayers said. "Our patience is something we still need to improve upon offensively. There are too many times when we fall to score because we don't wait to take advantage of what a defense gives us."

Barnes suggested the Friars have adopted a more settled approach with the ball, and also have backed off somewhat on their defensive pressure to exploit the imposing size of their front line.

The changes revolve around leading scorer Eric Murdock, who surrendered his starting role at guard to Chris Watts eight games ago, and 6-foot-10 center Marty Conlon.

"Our chemistry definitely is better since we've been opening every game with Chris," Barnes said. "Eric always tries to make something happen. Chris understands the game and how to play it patiently."

"Conlon started getting more minutes on the court when we stopped pressing so much," Conlon, a senior who is averaging 14.7 points and 7.6 rebounds, played between 32 and 42 minutes in nine of the Friars last 13 games. He teams inside with 6-11 forward Abdul Shamsid-Deen (8.3 points, 7.2 rebounds) and 6-5 Quinton Burton (11.1, 5.5).

Ayers might be forced to counter that size by bringing 7-foot Bill Robinson off the bench to join 6-8 starting center Perry Carter.

"But first I've got to see how they handle our initial matchup," Ayers said. "We'll open with (6-7) Chris Jent on Conlon. Chris is very aggressive. He has had a way of getting things done for us defensively all year against bigger people."

Barnes said the Friars' main focus defensively will be OSU forward Jim Jackson, the freshman of the year in the Big Ten, who is averaging 16.3 points, 5.5 rebouds and 3.6 assists.

"Nobody can say Jim hasn't lived up to expectations," Barnes said. "Their other players feed off him and respond to him. We'll try to take the easy baskets away from him and use as much help as possible."

Ayers said point guard Carlton Screen is the catalyst for the Friars. Screen, whose 15-point average trails Murdoch's 15.4, has 197 assists and 64 steals.

"Screen has been through it all," Ayers said. "He's a senior and this is his third NCAA. When he isn't scoring, he's creating for his teammates."

Violent storms over Kansas created a travel adventure for the Buckeyes Tuesday when their scheduled six-hour flight from Columbus was stretched to nine hours. They landed in Salt Lake City at 3 a.m.

"We're not going to let the travel or anything else distract us," Ayers said. "We just want to go play the game and win, whether it's by one point or 21."
Buckeyes run out of miracles
OSU cold spell allows UNLV to put 76-65 victory on ice

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

SALT LAKE CITY — Even when Larry Johnson's loose lip set up a five-point play for Ohio State yesterday, it wasn't enough to overcome the eerie silence generated by the Buckeyes offense.

Held without a field goal for a nightmarish 9 minutes, 10 seconds in the second half, OSU fell to Nevada-Las Vegas 76-65 in the second round of the NCAA West Regional.

"I got a little frustrated and said some things I wasn't supposed to say," said Johnson, who led top-seeded UNLV (31-5) with game-high totals of 23 points and 16 rebounds.

Johnson, a 6-foot-7 junior forward, was called for shoving Buckeyes center Bill Robinson near the UNLV basket with 5:06 left in the game.

The Runnin' Rebels led 65-63 at the time. The foul, Johnson's fourth, cost UNLV possession of the ball.

But it didn't appear significant until Johnson mouthed off to official John Moreau and drew a technical foul.

Robinson, a 50 percent free-throw shooter, converted twice in the bonus and Jim Jackson went 1 of 2 on the technical shots.

On the ensuing possession, Chris Jent missed a three-point shot. But center Perry Carter, who led the Buckeyes (17-18) with 16 points and eight rebounds, grabbed the carom and drew a fourth foul on David Butler.

Carter's two free throws in the bonus with 4:17 left made the score 68-65 and conjured the possibility of a second straight miracle comeback by the Buckeyes, who had trailed twice by 13 points.

On Thursday they overcame two 12-point deficits before beating Providence 84-83 in overtime.

"I really thought we were still in the game down inside the two-minute mark," OSU coach Randy Ayers said. "But great teams have a way of winning big games down the stretch, and that's what Vegas did today."

Butler, who had 14 points and seven rebounds, missed two shots after the free throws by Carter.

But the ball was awarded inbound to UNLV after Butler's first miss, and his second one was turned into a follow shot by Johnson, who had seven offensive rebounds. That made it 65-63 with 3:45 left.

Treg Lee's dunk on a pass from Carter made it a five-point game again. Ohio State got the ball with a chance to pull to three when Carter rebounded a miss by Anderson Hunt.

But Carter, after taking an entry pass from Jent, was called for traveling. Guard Greg Anthony's two free throws with 2:34 left put OSU down 67-60.

The Buckeyes got another opportunity after Jent...
fed Carter for a layup and a 67-62 score with 2:06 to go.

But Anthony, who matched Butler’s total of 14 points and added a game-high five assists, made sure that chance was their last one.

Anthony launched a turnaround jumper from left of the key, behind the three-point line, with five seconds left on the shot clock.

When it snapped through the net with 1:22 left for a 70-62 lead, Ayers knew his rookie season as OSU coach — which included nine victories in the last 13 games — was about to end.

“I didn’t think we were out of contention until Anthony threw in that three-pointer,” Ayers said. “He stepped forward and made the play they needed.”

Anthony said the basket, UNLV’s only successful three-pointer in 13 attempts, was a case of creative mischief.

“We wanted to get a dribble-roll off the post, to give us a pick-and-roll or a flare to the ‘2’ or ‘3’ man, but we got totally disorganized,” Anthony said. “I saw 12 seconds on the shot clock and just started working to put something up.”

Ohio State, which came rumbling back from a 29-19 deficit to trail 39-37 at halftime, worked to put something up to no avail in the gut portion of the second half.

The Buckeyes went from a tie at 43 with 16:41 left to a 57-44 deficit with 9:09 to go. Moses Scurry, Johnson and Butler each had an inside basket during the 14-1 UNLV stampede.

Between Jackson’s driving finger-roll with 17:26 left and a 5-foot jumper by Lee with 8:16 to play, OSU went 0 of 15 from the field and committed seven turnovers.

The Buckeyes, who had shot 51.6 percent against Providence, made 34.3 percent for the game — their second-worst accuracy of the season — and 24.1 percent (7 of 29) after halftime.

“Coach Turk (Jerry Tarkanian) made a great move going to the zone,” Ayers said. “We were running our man-to-man offense very well.

“The size of their wing people in the zone bothered our perimeter shooters and led to the kind of offensive lapse we’ve been prone to have at times.”

Mark Baker, whose penetration burned UNLV repeatedly before halftime, had only one of his nine points during a foul-plagued second half. Jackson and Jamaal Brown scored 11 points each for OSU and Lee added 10.

“Early in the game we got good box-outs on the defensive boards and I got into the open floor,” Baker said. “When they went to the zone with those long arms of theirs, we lost our poise a little bit.”
Basketball teams end seasons

No. 1 seed UNLV ousts Ohio State in second round

Compiled by Lantern sports staff

Ohio State 84, Providence 83, OT
The OSU men's basketball team, which accepted an eighth seed in the NCAA's Western Regional, overcame two 12-point deficits in defeating the ninth-seeded Friars in their opening round game on March 15 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

OSU freshman guard Alex Davis scored a game-high 24 points and forced the overtime by sinking a three-pointer with three seconds left in regulation to tie the game at 72-72.

Davis and freshman forward Jimmy Jackson, who added 15 points, combined to score 10 of OSU's 12 points in the overtime.

Guard Mark Baker added 17 points, while center Perry Carter scored 15 points. Bill Robinson came off the bench to score six points and grab a team-high nine rebounds.

Carlton Screen led Providence with 20 points.

UNLV 76, Ohio State 65
The Buckeyes finished Randy Ayers' first year as OSU coach at 17-13 with this loss to the Runnin' Rebels (31-5), the Western Regional's top seed, on March 17 in Salt Lake City.

UNLV All-American Larry Johnson led the Rebels with 23 points and 16 rebounds, while David Butler and Greg Anthony each added 14 points.

Ohio State shot just 24 percent (seven of 29) in the second half and were one of 11 from three-point range for the game.

Carter led Ohio State with 15 points, while Jackson and Jamaal Brown each scored 11 points for the Buckeyes.
St. John Arena attendance remains steady

By Tawnya Berkey
Lantern sportswriter

Attendance figures for Ohio State men's basketball games have remained steady despite the fact that there have been three different head coaches since 1986.

Although tickets for the basketball games have been hard to come by in recent years, that wasn't always the case.

During the 1976-77 season, Eldon Miller's first year as head coach, average game attendance figures dropped to an all-time low for St. John Arena at 7,534. The team's home record that year was 4-9.

As the team's record improved, so did attendance figures. The following season, Miller's team compiled an 11-3 home record, attracting an average of 13,379 a game.

Since then, ticket sales have remained steady, with only a slight drop between the 1981-82 and 1986-87 seasons.

Last year the Buckeyes sold out all home games. This season an average game attendance of 13,009 came to watch the Buckeyes in action.

Men's basketball head coach Randy Ayers attributes the steady sale of tickets to the win-loss records and the public's familiarity with the coaches and players.

"People identify with the players on this team. Mark Baker, Jimmy Jackson and Perry Carter are well recognized in Ohio and people identify with them," he said.
Ayers dedicates '90 season to seniors; looks for leaders

By Shawn Mc Allister
Lantern staff writer

Twelve-year-old Heather Luke's eyes sparkled in awe at the size of the giants she was weaving in and out of.

Luke, a sixth-grader at Columbus School for Girls, was attending her second OSU Annual Men's Basketball Appreciation Banquet. Hunting autographs, she knew many of the players by name.

"That's Jimmy Jackson, and that's Perry Carter," she said. "And that," she added confidently, "is Randy Ayers."

Amidst the more than 300 people attending the open banquet last night, Luke wasn't the only awe-struck person on the floor in St. John Arena. Young and old watched anxiously as the Buckeye head coach took the stand to recap his first year.

This was a banquet of many firsts. The rookie coach also announced the Jerry Lucas Most Valuable Player award would be shared for the first time in the award's history. It was also the first time an OSU head coach could look at his players in front of him and know they would all return to play for him again next year.

Another person contributing to the list of firsts was Big Ten Freshman of the Year Jimmy Jackson. Although he shared the award with junior team captain Perry Carter, he is the only freshman ever to be selected as team MVP.

Jackson, who was also selected to the second-team All-Big Ten, led Ohio State in scoring with 16.1 points per game. He also set an OSU record for total points by a freshman with 482, besting Herb Williams mark of 452.

Carter also had the numbers to show he was deserving of the award.

The starting center led the Buckeyes in rebounding (7.9) and was second in scoring (16.2). He also led the team with 25 blocked shots and in field goal percentage (.541).

Also recognized by Ayers was sophomore reserve forward Steve Hall. Hall, an engineering major with a 3.2 grade point average, was awarded the Fred R. Taylor Award for Academic Excellence.

Sophomore Chris Jent from Sparta, N.J., took home the John Havlicek Most Inspirational Player Award, and sophomore Bill Robinson was rewarded for his exceptional hard work both on and off the court with the Most Improved Player Award.

Sophomore starting guard Jamaal Brown was recognized twice for his defensive effort this season, first by being named Alpha Phi Alpha Player of the Michigan Game, and again by being named Buckeye Defensive Player of the Year.

The coaching staff also presented three statistical awards. Freshman guard Alex Davis was recognized for his team leading free throw percentage (.904) and Carter was recognized for his team leading rebounding average.

Sophomore Guard Mark Baker, who lost his first full year of competition due to Proposition 48 restrictions, was awarded the top assist to turnover ratio award. That award is decided by who has the

That award is decided by who has the
most assists compared to fewest turnovers while in possession of the basketball.

In his closing address, Ayers said although the Buckeyes surprised a lot of people with their 17-13 record, it won't be easy winning that many games next year.

"I've been told by a lot of great coaches the second year is the hardest," he said. "We are not going to sneak up on a team like Indiana like we did this year. Our work is cut out for us."

Ayers dedicated next season to his four returning juniors, Scott Reeves, Nick Hodak, Treg Lee, and Perry Carter.

"Next year I dedicate to you guys," he said. "I believe in dedicating a season to our seniors. I will look to you guys to lead the team. You will be who we look to when we are down, and I expect you to be there for us when we need you."

Ayers also said in getting ready for next season, the work begins right away.

"We've got to get started tomorrow, and we will get started tomorrow," Ayers said. "Buckeye fans, we will not let you down."

The season officially begins Oct. 15.
Buckeyes planning 8-game

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

The Ohio State basketball team will take its act on the road — and across the Atlantic Ocean — when the Buckeyes make an eight-game exhibition tour of Europe from Aug. 23 to Sept. 4.

"I really feel our squad is at the ideal stage for this kind of trip," Ohio State coach Randy Ayers said. "It's still basically a young team, yet we have everybody on last year's roster coming back."

OSU's barnstorming adventure will take it to Belgium, France, Germany and Holland. Ayers said the Buckeyes will play eight games in 11 days.

"It's a great educational experience for our students to see other countries and interact with other cultures," Ayers said. "From a basketball standpoint, we ought to benefit from the games and also the additional practice days.

"We want to be an up-tempo team, and playing under international rules ought to help us in that area."

The NCAA, which allows schools one international trip every four years, also permits 10 practices before departure.

basketball swing through Europe

The Buckeyes will report for their first workout Aug. 18, practice twice each day Aug. 19-22, then hold a final tuneup Aug. 23 before flying to Brussels, Belgium.

The team will travel from Brussels to Antwerp by bus and play its first game Aug. 25.

There will be two other games in Belgium, Aug. 26 in Brussels and Aug. 27 in Bruges.

A day of sightseeing and two more games will be included in a three-day stay in Paris Aug. 28-30.

OSU will travel to Cologne, West Germany, for a game Aug. 31, then play its final two exhibitions Sept. 1-2 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. A farewell party is planned Sept. 3 in Antwerp before the return trip the next day.

"It gives you something comparable to spring practice in football," said assistant coach Paul Brazazu, who is coordinating arrangements for the trip. "But it's even better to the extent that you get to play against other people.

"When we get back, the guys will have almost two weeks before classes start and they begin their preseason conditioning."

Ohio State will take 12 players on the trip, including non-recruited seniors Scott Reeves and Nick Hodak. NCAA rules prohibit freshman signees Joe Reid, Jimmy Ratliff and Jamie Skelton from going.

The Buckeyes' last overseas basketball junket, a swing through Spain in 1982 under former coach Eldon Miller, came one year before Ayers joined the staff as an assistant. Miller also took OSU on a tour of Finland and Sweden in 1978.

In 1986, the opportunity to travel again was lost during the transition from Miller to his successor: Gary Williams.
Men's basketball team to play in Europe

By Diana Clark  
Lantern sportswriter

Although they won't be in class, OSU's men's basketball team will be getting an education in late August. The Buckeyes will be traveling to Europe to compete with several professional teams there. But they will also be doing some exploring of the various countries during the trip.

"This is a great opportunity educationally and athletically," Head Coach Randy Ayers said. "We will get to see different countries and how others live in different parts of the world."

Ayers said the team will be talking with some foreign students on the OSU campus to give them an idea of what to expect.

But the Buckeyes will also need to concentrate on playing basketball. They will be competing in eight games in 10 days in Belgium, France, West Germany and the Netherlands. Ayers said two Americans play on each team and that it will be interesting to see their style of play.

"It will be a great educational experience both on and off the court," center Perry Carter said. "You get a chance to see some of the things that you always hear about and read about in books."

The 6-foot-8 junior said the teams they will be up against are very physical and much like the NBA teams. Assistant Coach Paul Brazeau, who is coordinating the trip, said these teams play in a professional league like the NBA, and the players are paid. "It will be a good experience for these guys because it will give them a feel for what it is like to play at that next level," Carter said.

Ayers said the team is allowed 10 practices before they leave, and that will provide them with an intense training opportunity. "It will give us structured practice to help us in development," he said.

Ayers also said both the practices and the games will give him an opportunity to use different combinations and give the younger players a chance to get some playing time.

Sophomore center Bill Robinson agreed. "It will give us a little extra time before the season to get some things together, to see what we can do, see what we can't do, see who can play what positions," the 7-footer said.

Brazeau said the team will leave from Columbus Aug. 23 for Belgium where they will play in Antwerp, Brussels and Bruges. Then they will move on to Paris to play one game and do some sightseeing. The next game will be in Cologne, West Germany, and they will play their final game in Amsterdam.

He said the NCAA allows a trip like this once every four years. In 1982, the Buckeyes took a trip to Spain with coach Eldon Miller. The team was unable to make plans for such a trip in 1986 because of the coaching change when Gary Williams took over the program.
OSU: Jackson makes the cut

Ohio State's Jim Jackson made the first cut for the U.S. basketball team that will compete in the World Championships/Goodwill Games this summer. OSU's Perry Carter and Ohio University's Dave Jamerson were not selected to advance with the 25-player squad to Duke University for further competition June 15-17.
Ayers says his players have no link to nightclub shooting

Ohio State head basketball coach Randy Ayers yesterday disputed news reports linking unidentified OSU players to a shooting outside a nightclub on Morse Road at 2:40 a.m. Monday.

"A report that some members of the Ohio State basketball team were involved in a shooting early (Monday) morning is totally inaccurate," Ayers said. "There were some players at the site of the shooting mentioned, but they were in a parking lot behind the building.

"Upon hearing the shots, the players got in their car and left the scene immediately. The players had nothing to do with the incident, and they made the right decision in leaving the scene as quickly as possible."

Antonio Q. Sears of Baltimore, Md., was shot in the right foot during the incident at the .3 nightclub, 2411 Morse Rd., said a report filed with Columbus police.

Sears was in satisfactory condition last night at St. Ann's Hospital, a hospital spokesman said.

The incident is under investigation.
Men’s Cagers Ready For Next Level

By Steve Snapp
OSU Sports Information Director

It seems like only yesterday that Ohio State was duking it out with the soon-to-be undisputed champions of college basketball, the Runnin’ Rebels of UNLV. And it wasn’t a bad fight. For the better part of 38 minutes the underdog Buckeyes went toe-to-toe with the heavyweight boys from Vegas. Try as they might, the Rebels never could deliver a knockout punch. Eventually, though, UNLV’s size and experience was too much to overcome and the Rebels escaped with a 76-65 decision in the second round of the NCAA tournament.

Randy Ayers remembers that game too. Remembers every combination that the Rebels threw at OSU, every counterpunch by his Buckeyes. And because of the outcome, rather than in spite of it, the 34-year-old Ohio State coach can’t wait to get back in the ring.

A look at the OSU roster explains Ayers’ eagerness. Not only do all five starters return, all 12 players from last year’s 17-13 team are back. And with two promising freshmen in the fold, Ayers’ second Ohio State team would appear to have all the makings of a championship contender.

“I like the potential of this team,” Ayers says. “With hard work, I think we can be very competitive. I don’t mind the high expectations that everyone has. In fact, I kind of like them because it makes you work just that much harder in an effort to live up to those expectations.”

Having Ayers in their corner certainly won’t hurt the Buckeyes’ title chances. He proved he belonged last year, guiding Ohio State to victories over six teams ranked in the top 20, as well as a win over Providence in the first round of NCAA play. Especially impressive was OSU’s 9-5 finish in February and March after a 1-3 start in December. Not a bad job of getting up off the canvas for a guy with no head coaching experience.

“Our approach won’t change from a year ago,” Ayers says. “We will spend a lot of time teaching and emphasizing fundamentals. And we will stress defense and rebounding. You win championships by being good in those two areas. Hopefully, we can take up this year where we left off at the end of last season.”

Ayers’ cast of holdovers includes two and three, of the premier players in the Big Ten. Six-foot-six sophomore forward Jim Jackson (Toledo, Ohio), last year’s Big Ten Freshman of the Year, and 6-8 senior center Perry Carter (Washington, D.C.) unquestionably belong in that category, and 6-1 junior point guard Mark Baker (Dayton, Ohio) showed flashes of brilliance during the Buckeyes’ late-season surge.

Jackson averaged 16.1 points per game while setting an OSU freshman scoring mark. Carter pitched in 15.2 ppg while leading the team in rebounds at 7.8 a contest and Baker added 9.1 points and 3.6 assists an outing.

Six-foot-four second guard Jamaal Brown (Arlington, Tex.), a two-year starter, and 6-7 forward Chris Jenk (Sparta, N.J.), both juniors, are the other two returning starters. Also back are 6-1 sophomore guard Alex Davis (Cincinnati, Ohio), 6-8 senior forward Treg Lee (Cleveland, Ohio) and 7-0 junior center Bill Robinson (Canton, Ohio), all of whom played in at least 29 games a year ago.

“Experience will certainly be one of the strengths of this team,” says Ayers, whose squad finished sixth in last year’s Big Ten race at 10-8. “But I also like our depth and versatility. We should have some very competitive practices this year.”

Don’t be surprised to see a few position changes this year, like Jackson spending some time at guard or Jenk moving out to small forward. And Ayers would like nothing better than to see Robinson step forward and lay claim to the center position. If he does, Carter will move over to power forward and the Buckeyes can forget about the gloves and go the bare knuckles route.

Also back this season are 6-8 junior forward Steve Hall (Payne, Ohio) and 6-8 sophomore forward Tom Brandewie (Fort Loramie, Ohio), plus a pair of walk-ons, 6-0 senior guard Scott Reeves (Columbus, Ohio) and 6-6 senior forward Nick Hodak (Toledo, Ohio). The newcomers are 6-8 freshman forward Jimmy Ratliff (Middletown, Ohio) and 6-8 freshman forward Joe Reid (Chagrin Falls, Ohio).

A lot can happen between now and the season finale at Iowa on either March 9 or 10. But from the looks of things, the ringside seats in St. John Arena won’t last long.

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1990-91 SCHEDULE
(ALL TIMES EST)

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
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<th>Time</th>
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<td>Soviet Union*</td>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Athletes in Action*</td>
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<td>vs. Mississippi St.*</td>
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Jan. 3 | Iowa | 8:00 |
| 5 | at Michigan | 3:00 |
| 10 | at Northwestern | 8:00 |
| 12 | Wisconsin | 8:00 |
| 19 | Illinois | 8:00 |

* Exhibition
# At Las Vegas
+ At West Palm Beach, Fla., Classic
St. John Arena will be a-shakin'

St. John Arena will be more than a house of noise when Bobby Knight brings his Hoosiers in Sunday.

The Huntington banks will pass out scarlet and gray pompons to any of the 13,000-plus fans attending the Big Ten hoops showdown. The shakers even have a U.S. flag on the handle.
St. John hasn’t hosted one this big since ’62

Believe it or not, St. John Arena has had to wait more than 28 years for a game of the magnitude of today’s Ohio State-Indiana matchup.

Although OSU has been involved in a lot of major regular-season games over the years, by a quirk of fate, almost all of them have been on the road.

A trip down microfilm lane failed to turn up a home matchup similar to today’s No. 2 vs. No. 4; the Lucas-Havlicek teams were involved in several similar matchups, but all were on the road.

In 1961-62, No. 1 Ohio State traveled to Wake Forest, where it ripped the No. 3 Deacons 84-62, and in 1960-61, the top-ranked Buckeyes beat No. 3 St. John’s and No. 5 St. Bonaventure in the semifinals and final of the Holiday Festival in New York.

In December 1962, Fred Taylor’s Buckeyes beat No. 3 West Virginia 76-69 in St. John Arena and the next week were ranked third themselves, but were parked just outside the top 10 with “others receiving votes” when they topped Rod Thorn and the Mountaineers.

That memorable last-day-of-the-season encounter with Indiana in Bloomington for the Big Ten championship in 1980 occurred when OSU was ranked No. 8 and Indiana was No. 12 (IU won 76-73 in overtime), and neither team had records to match the 21-1 and 22-2 marks the teams carry today.

The Buckeyes also lost the Big Ten championship on the last day of the season in both ’82 and ’83, but the games were at Indiana and Minnesota, and again OSU wasn’t ranked this high.

Non-conference games don’t have near the implications of today’s game, but the one that stands out most for recent fans is a visit by Virginia and Ralph Sampson in January 1980.

The Buckeyes, ranked No. 4 at the time, beat the No. 17 Cavaliers 70-65. No. 1 UCLA also beat No. 13 OSU 84-73 here in 1968, and Kentucky was ranked No. 2 when No. 9 OSU visited Lexington and lost 70-64 in 1980.

The unsuccessful search for a game of this magni-
Whew! Brown puts it through

Last-second free throw gives OSU share of title

By Mike Sullivan
Ohio State Sport Report

Send word — that is, if everybody is through checking all available replays — to cities, towns and farms across the frozen land.

"The winter of the Buckeye has come again."

Ohio State finally lowered the boom yesterday on its old tormentor, Michigan State, with a 16-6 run at crunch time in the second half. Then the Buckeyes pushed fate to the outer limits before John Janiss Brown free throw secured a 65-64 victory in St. John Arena.

Brown had one free throw left because his first attempt hit the back of the rim and the score tied at 64, shimmied around the rim and fell away as a sellout crowd of 13,276 gasped in horror.

Second-ranked OSU had one chance left to avoid overtime because the Spartans, who trailed 63-54 with 1:54 remaining, unwound a scrambling rally that started and ended with three-pointers from forward Matt Steigenga.

"Once it got to 63-54, I think our guys started celebrating a little bit," Ohio State coach Randy Ayers said. "We didn't get back after our missed free throws and cover people in the open court."

The Buckeyes had a lot to celebrate.

By improving to 25-1 overall and 15-1 in the Big Ten, they clinched at least a co-championship with second-place Indiana — OSU's 11th title since 1971 — and, in all likelihood, the top Midwest Regional seed in the NCAA Tournament.

"It's your dream to end your senior year with a Big Ten title," said center Perry Carter, who had 10 points and 14 rebounds, the high this season by an OSU player.

"When I came here four years ago, I told myself that if I worked hard enough and was surrounded by great people, it could happen."

Against a feisty, physical rival that had won the last three games in the series by exploiting the Buckeyes' own inexperience, OSU made it happen.

Sophomore forward Jim Jackson had 20 points, 10 rebounds and a game-high four steals. Jackson sank 6 of 9 shots from the field after halftime, when he scored 14 of his points, and played a major defensive role in a 9-of-25 shooting performance by MSU star Steve Smith.

Carter's ownership of the defensive boards gave the Buckeyes an 18-13 rebound margin in the second half, when Michigan State (17-10, 10-7) shot just 40.7 percent from the field.

Forward Trey Lee's 14 points included an 18-foot jumper from the key that wiped out Michigan State's lead with 1:16 left in the game. He also had a flurry of three-pointers and an assist while helping turn a 16-10 deficit into a 21-20 lead in the first half.

OSU's reserves outscored their Michigan State counterparts 9-2 and outshot them from the field 4 of 6 to 1 of 7.

Brown and point guard Mark Baker orchestrated an offense that committed just eight turnovers, the Buckeyes' lowest total of the season.

Please see OSU page 2C
Ayers says No. 1 seed earned during season

(AP) — Ohio State was awarded the top seed for the NCAA tournament's Midwest Regional despite two straight season-ending losses. The Buckeyes play Towson State at Dayton on Friday. Iowa, which beat the Buckeyes 80-69 on Sunday, also landed a berth in the tournament and will face East Tennessee State on Thursday in Minneapolis.

Despite the loss, Ohio State got the Big Ten's automatic NCAA bid because it swept Indiana this season.

"We're happy with the seed and we're happy to be going to Dayton," said Buckeye Head Coach Randy Ayers by telephone from Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

"We feel the (selection) committee rewarded us for our consistency earlier in the season," he said.

Ayers said he's familiar with Towson coach Terry Truax and expects a tough game from the Tigers (19-10).

"They're very well-coached. They will try to control the tempo of the game," Ayers said. "I know about coach Truax and the job he's done."

He said the team would not focus this week on other teams in the Dayton half of the Midwest Regional, including 20th-ranked St. John's and No.25 DePaul.

"I don't worry about that. Every game is do-or-die," he said. "If we don't win on Friday, we don't go anywhere."

Of Sunday's game, Ayers said Iowa appeared to want the victory more, which he said was frustrating in light of what the stakes were for the Buckeyes, who were seeking their first outright crown since 1971.

"I think Iowa hit the boards really well," he said. "It was frustrating because we are usually a good rebounding team. We made a run several times and got it down and they still made the play when they needed it. And nine times out of 10, it was a rebound or a loose ball."

"Iowa has definitely improved," Ayers said. "I think the league's improved from top to bottom," he said. "We are the hunted now. Today we just didn't have enough to win it."

The Hawkeyes' victory was their second major upset of the Big Ten season. They stunned Indiana 80-79 in Bloomington two weeks ago.

"We kept our poise when Ohio State made some good runs at us. I'm very, very pleased with this ballclub," Iowa Head Coach Tom Davis said.

Kevin Smith, a 37 percent free throw shooter, hit three key foul shots down the stretch to help secure the Hawkeye victory.

The Hawkeyes, who had lost their last three home games, scored the first basket Sunday and never trailed.
Ayers, Jackson earn honors as tops in Big Ten
Soph also second-team All-American

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

The second year definitely appears to be charmed for Ohio State coach Randy Ayers and Jim Jackson, the Buckeyes' sophomore forward.

Ayers yesterday was a virtual runaway choice as Big Ten coach of the year in news media balloting, and Jackson was named player of the year by an even wider margin.

"It's a nice honor, really good recognition for our coaching staff," said Ayers, who has guided Ohio State to a 25-3 regular-season record and a share of the Big Ten title in his second year as a head coach at any level.

"(Assistants) Paul Brazeau, Les Fertig, Dave Cecutti and Tom Souder have worked hard all year, assuming responsibilities and taking a lot of pressure off me."

Jackson, a 6-foot-6 product of Toledo Macomber High School, was named player of the year after earning designation as the league's freshman of the year last season.

He is averaging 18.8 points, 5.3 rebounds, 4.2 assists and 1.9 steals per game, shooting 52.6 percent from the field and 77.3 percent on free throws, and also has 20 blocked shots.

"Jim has had an outstanding season," Ayers said. "His consistency has really stood out. He even scored a little more than we thought he would, considering the way defenses have keyed on him.

"He has handled the pressure and the publicity in a thoroughly class manner. Mentally and physically, he has made himself stronger between seasons. He just got into really great shape, and it shows how much difference a year can make."

Ayers received 41 first-place votes, nine for second and one for third to total 142 points.

Illinois coach Lou Henson was second with 61 points (11-9-10), and Indiana coach Bob Knight was third with 47 (1-18-12).

In the balloting for player of the year, Jackson received 17 of 19 first-place votes. The other two went to Indiana forward Calbert Cheaney, also a sophomore.

Jackson, who was named a first-team All-American on Friday by the United States Basketball Writers Association, also landed on the Associated Press second team yesterday and was a first-team pick by United Press International.

OSU sports information director Steve Snapp said the first-team berth on UPI, which is voted by a panel of coaches, was the first such All-American niche for a Buckeye basketball player since Gary Bradds in 1964.

Dennis Hopson made second team in the AP balloting, which is conducted among the news media, in 1987.

Joining Jackson and Cheaney on the All-Big Ten first team were Steve Smith of Michigan State, Jimmy Oliver of Purdue and Patrick Tompkins of Wisconsin. Jackson, Cheaney and Smith were unanimous selections.

The second team consisted of Minnesota's Kevin Lynch, Eric Anderson of Indiana, Andy Kaufmann of Illinois, Michigan's Demetrious Calip and Ace Earl of Iowa.

Center Perry Carter, OSU's senior captain, and point guard Mark Baker both landed third-team berths. They were joined by Deon Thomas and Larry Smith, both of Illinois, and Purdue's Chuckie White.

OSU's Treg Lee and Jamail Brown earned honorable mention. Lee also received honorable mention on the AP All-American team. Indiana's Damon Bailey was Big Ten freshman of the year.

Ohio State, which opens play in the NCAA Tournament against Towson State at 7:40 p.m. Friday, announced that a pep rally will be held Wednesday in St. John Arena.

Doors will open at 5:30 and the pep rally, featuring OSU coaches and players, will start at 6.
**All-American**

OSU sophomore Jim Jackson was named first-team All-America by UPI Monday. Jackson, who averaged 18.8 points and 4.2 assists per contest was also selected Big Ten Player of the Year, and second-team All-America by AP on Monday.
2,000 fans wish Buckeyes luck in tournament

By Rob Malone
Lantern staff writer

The OSU basketball Buckeyes received a royal send-off to the NCAA tournament from about 2,000 fans Wednesday evening at a pep rally in St. John Arena.

The OSU pep band played while the Buckeye cheerleaders led the crowd in chants of "Let's Go Buckeyes!" and "Go Bucks Go!"

Head Coach Randy Ayers was first to the microphone. "You've given us great support all year," he said, adding that loyal fan support was a big reason the Buckeyes had a 15-3 home record this season.

Ayers then introduced all the team's players, coaches, and managers. The loudest cheers were reserved for All-American Jiminy Jackson and long-time crowd favorite Chris Jantzen.

Senior starters Greg Lee and Perry Carter were the only team members who spoke to the crowd. They said they appreciated all the fan support the Buckeyes have received this year.

Lee thanked Buckeye fans for sticking with him through his adversity-ridden years at Ohio State.

"I try to come out and perform for each and every one of you guys," he said.

"We're gonna get after it in Dayton on Friday night."

— Randy Ayers, head coach
OSU men's basketball team

Ayers left the crowd with a promise. "We're gonna get after it in Dayton on Friday night," he said.

The team exited the court amid a shower of cheers and applause. Despite the Buckeyes' two late-season losses, several OSU students at the rally offered their lofty, albeit biased opinions of how far the team will advance in the NCAA Tournament.

"I think they will win the national championship," said Neil Agarwall, a junior from Stow.

Agarwall said the Buckeyes' pressure defense and tournament experience, particularly against UCLA last year, gives them an edge.

Matt Flurmans, a senior from Ft. Loramie, said the Buckeyes could win, but he stopped short of predicting victory.

However, Flurmans said the beginning of the tournament should help the team overcome its late season disappointments. "I think the tournament atmosphere will spark the team," he said.

The lowest prediction was offered by Dean Conant, a senior from Chicago. Conant only predicted a final four trip for the Buckeyes.

Who does he think will win the tournament? Who else? "CXLV will win," he said.

Seniors Greg Lee and Perry Carter high five their fellow Buckeyes during a pep rally last night in St. John Arena. Two thousand screaming Buckeye fans sent the team off to Dayton for the first round of the NCAA Basketball tournament.

The Buckeyes, seeded No. 1 in the Midwest Region, face No. 16 seed Towson State Friday.
BACKING THE BASKETBALL TROOPS

Ohio State University men’s basketball coach Randy Ayers pointed to the radiator of St. John Arena last evening to show those at a pep rally where the Buckeyes’ 1990-91 Big Ten title banner will hang. OSU leaves today for Dayton and its first-round NCAA Tournament game against Towson State. Ayers thanked the crowd for its support and introduced his players. Story, Page 6C.

1,500 at rally wish OSU tournament success

By Bernie Karako
Dispatch Staff Reporter

What price victory?
The Ohio State University basketball team wins 25 games, a share
of the Big Ten championship and the No. 1 seed in the Midwest Regional
of the NCAA tournament and has to travel to its next game by bus.
It has been at least two years
since the men’s Buckeye basketball team used the highways instead of the
skyways to get to a game. But the
trip to Dayton Arena takes less than
1½ hours on the road, and the odds
this season of a tournament champi-
onship — 12-to-1, according to Las
Vegas bookies — are worth the ride.
OSU’s first-round game is at
7:40 p.m. Friday against Towson
State (19-10), the East Coast Confer-
ence champion from Towson, Md.

The Buckeyes are not scheduled
to hit the tournament trail via I-70
until about noon today, so Steve
Snapp, OSU sports information di-
rector, arranged a send-off yesterday
at 5:30 p.m. in St. John Arena.
Officials who have been associ-
ated with OSU sports for 30 years or
longer said they could not remember
the last time a rally was scheduled for
a basketball game.
That holds true for the NCAA
winning basketball team of 1960.
But the celebration got hit with a
foul. A winter weather warning was
in effect.
Snapp said he had been hoping for a crowd of up to 5,000. It was
probably no higher than 1,500, offi-
cials said. Those who showed up
braved traffic, rain, sleet and snow.
The OSU Pep band, Brutus
Buckeye and 13 cheerleaders put on
a 15-minute show.
Coach Randy Ayers thanked the
crowd for its support throughout the
season and noted that the Buckeyes’
home record was 16-0. Nineteen ban-
ners noting Big Ten championships
and top-four finishes in the NCAA
dorn the arena.
“I hope you’re here when we put
a banner up for going all the way,” Ayers said.
He introduced the team and
asked two senior starters, Perry Car-
ter and Treg Lee to talk to fans.
Carter acknowledged the team’s
two losing losses, but he promised,
“We’ll be ready to play basketball.”
That netted him as much applause as
Ayers received.
THE SUBS OF '60
They rode the bench to glory on OSU's NCAA championship team

By Debbie Fleis
Dispatch-States Reporter

Memories of the 1960 Buckeye basketball team: it is better to be a rooster player on a big-name team than to be a big-name player on a no-name team.

Signed, The Subs of '60. They roosted in the shadow of starters Jerry Lucas, John Havlicek, Larry Siegfried, Joe Roberts and Mel Nowell.

But, after 31 years, the view from the bench looks good for David Barker, Gary Milikken, J.P. Landes, James Allen and Howard Nourse.

They were among those players who, for the most part, rode the pine on Ohio State University's 1960 national championship team.

The success of that team, which began NCAA Tournament competition Friday in Dayton, has sparked renewed interest in the 1960s.

LASTING RECOGNITION
Looking back, the substitutes say there is no substitute for a national title.

After all, "only about 300 guys in history can say they played on a Division I national championship team," observed Nourse, who capably served as the backup for All-American center Jerry Lucas.

Despite the absence of individual glory, the college crown left each unforgettably with a lifetime stamp as someone special and someone who earned his place.

If they were overlooked then, they are not overlooked now.

"It has helped me in every job, everything I've been about," said Barker, 55, one of four seniors on the team. "People want to be associated with a winner, they want to be your friend."

"Being a member of that team helped establish me in my business" said Gary Gerhart, 52, who works for a Lima, Ohio, company that makes school championship products. "I still run into school administrators who watched that team."

Cleveland-area businessman Dick Furry, 52, lost his starting job to Havlicek. But people here still remember his name, much to his wife's amusement. "Whenever we go to Columbus, the fan comments. They are never going to forget. The team is mentioned a lot."

Please see SUBS page 2B


Where are they now?
The careers of the players on the 1960 OSU basketball team have been well-documented. Here's what became of the reserve players. Name, age and hometown are listed first, followed by occupation and family status.

- David Barker, 53, Columbus. Owner of David Barker Art Gallery, Columbus. Divorced, father of one.
- John Cedergren, Columbus. Decesed.
- Dick Furry, 52, Columbus. President, Day-Olo Color Corp., Rocky River, Ohio. Married, father of four.
- Richlie Hoyt, 51, Columbus. Vice president,

Gates McDonald Co., Columbus. Married, father of four.

- Bobby Knight, 51, Oreville, Ohio. Head basketball coach, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind. Married, father of two.
- J.P. Landes, 56, Columbus. Middle-school principal, Green Bay, Wis. Married, father of two.
- Nelson Miller, Reading, Ohio. Retired, lives in Monticello, Ill. Could not be reached for an interview.
When word leaks in social gatherings of their past, the subs become instant celebrities. Always, inquiring minds want to know, "What was Bobby Knight really like?"

Some answers about Knight, also a Sub of '60:
- "Knight and I were freshmen roommates, and we remain close friends today," said Gearhart, a reserve guard in 1960. "He is the most intelligent and loyal person I have ever met. I thought he might be a history teacher instead of a basketball coach."
- "Bobby and I hitchhiked to Lexington, Ky., one day just to see a game. That's how intense he was," said Landes, a third-stringer in '60, "Coach (Fred) Taylor thought we were nuts."
- "We were a quiet group," said Barker. "The only guy who spoke his mind was Knight. He clearly indicated he had been supporting assistants more."

CONTINUED SUCCESS

OSU's entire starting five graduated to professional basketball. Lucas and Havlick became stars in the National Basketball Association, where Siegfried also excelled. Roberts and Nowell also had flirtations with pro basketball.

Knight — the brilliant, temperamental Indiana University coach — developed into the most notorious Sub of '60.

The rest scattered throughout the country to live in relative obscurity and fulfill a prophecy from Barker.

"I always had the feeling these people were going to be successful, no matter what they did," he said.

True enough. Landes, 50, is a middle-school principal; Allen a doctor; Nourse a college vice president, Barker the owner of an art gallery.

Participating on the best team in the country "raised their level of expectation about achievement and excellence" in future endeavors, Nourse said.

Had it not gone to the NCAA basketball finals, the team might have qualified for the College Bowl quiz show. The players were Big Ten athletes with Ivy League smarts. "People took their books on road trips and actually used them," said Hoyt.

The team collectively maintained a B average "and we were not taking easy courses," Landes said.

Taylor counts at least seven advanced degrees among his former players. He credits "peer pressure" for the academic excellence.

Said Furry: "When I was a sophomore and junior, we played card games such as hearts or euchre on the road. When this group came along ... we played bridge. My guess is that you won't find many bridge players on college teams today."

DREAM CAME TRUE

Besides intelligence, the players shared another intangible: selflessness. It was particularly important for the subs, some of whom were upperclassmen, to accept limited roles.

Furry, a senior, relinquished his starting job to Havlick, a sophomore. Nourse, another senior, turned over his job to Lucas, another talented sophomore.

"There was no ego factor that had to be dealt with," Nourse said. "The team had the ability to set aside petty things that could have become problems."

In the title game, OSU hit 15 of its first 16 shots and routed California, 75-55. The box score read "Gearhart, 0 points," but Gearhart calls it "the thrill of a lifetime."

"I remember it like yesterday. I have a picture of me carrying Siegfried onto the floor."

Furry called the win an "impossible dream."

Milliken still sounds awestruck by it. "It is hard to believe something like this happened to me. Looking back, it seems like a fantasy," he said.

He continues to wear his championship ring. "Thirty years, and it has not fallen apart," he noted.

Could it be that the lesser lights relish the moment more?

Surprisingly, the players were not especially close off the court, most recalled. They went their own ways; several were married.

Yet they occasionally come together for reunions — including one scheduled in Columbus this year — and have preserved some lasting friendships.

Allen said "I feel like I'm part of a special group." The success of the current Buckeye team "has helped me relive the past."

A national championship was nice but "not necessary" for Nourse to enjoy his athletic experience at Ohio State.

"I have a lot of respect for the program, the way it is conducted and the leadership it provides," he said.

"I think any player there has to recognize that it is a program that is not duplicated anywhere else in the country. Being part of that program was the cake; winning the championship was the icing."
Ohio State sets out on road to Final Four

The National Collegiate Athletic Association Tournament Champions - 1991. For once, this is a dream. For members of the OSU men's basketball team, this dream could become a reality.

Today, Ohio State starts down the Road to the Final Four, the first stop being in Dayton against Towson State.

With a 25-3 regular season record and a Big Ten Co-championship under its belt, this year's team has already left a decade full of memories in the minds of plenty of the Buckeye faithful.

The Buckeyes roared out of the blocks in the pre-season with a 10-0 record. Yet they still had plenty of skeptics. With wins over an Alonso Mourning-less Georgetown Hoyas team, and over weak schools like Delaware State, Youngstown State and Wright State, the jury was still out as to whether or not the Buckeyes were for real.

When Big Ten action was underway, Ohio State responded to its critics by sweeping six straight contests and winning 15 out of the first 16 conference games.

The Buckeyes survived a close call on the road against the Wisconsin Badgers and caught all the right breaks from the officials at home against the Golden Gophers of Minnesota.

The highlight of the year turned out to be in the games against the 'General' - Bobby Knight and his Indiana Hoosiers. The Buckeyes beat the Hoosiers twice this year, first in Bloomington and then in a heart-stopping, double overtime victory in front of a thunderous capacity crowd in St. John Arena.

However, after clinching a share of the Big Ten title, Ohio State could not win the title outright as it suffered two tough, season-ending losses to Purdue and Iowa.

And now, the Buckeyes' fabled 'Dream Season' continues on the road to Indianapolis. It will either be a golden journey into the record books or just another season of hopes and dreams washed away.

The stage is set. The time is here. But the question remains. Will the Ohio State Buckeyes be the team to seize the moment?

Are the Buckeyes number one? These Buckeye fans seem to think so. We'll find out April 1.

Jackson's been featured in an issue of Sports Illustrated, named Big Ten Player of the Year and voted to the first team All-American team by UPI. It has been a great year for Jackson and it may get even better.

Treg Lee goes up to add to his 'dunk-o-meter' total. Lee lifted fans up on their feet all year long with his dunks, including a monstrous tomahawk jam at home against Michigan.
As a well-known sportscaster said when describing Mark Baker, 'he slices and dices, he shakes and bakes.' In a game earlier this year at Wisconsin, Baker did just that by taking the ball straight to the hoop for the game-winning bucket.

Photos by Michael Alwood, Sean Hess and Tom White
Story by Todd Harrell

All eyes were on Jamaal Brown as he takes the last shot against Michigan State. Brown was fouled on the play and made one of his final shots giving the Buckeyes a share of the Big Ten championship for the first time in 20 years.

The Ohio State basketball band was sweet music to the ears of Randy Ayers as his Buckeyes posted a 15-0 home court record this year.
Buckeyes coast past Towson

OSU moves into NCAA 2nd round with 97-86 win

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

DAYTON — Chris Jent had been praised this season for accepting a substitute's role, but his response to an unexpected starting assignment helped Ohio State win its NCAA Tournament opener last night.

Jent penciled into the lineup at forward when Treg Lee was disciplined for missing a team meeting, scored 17 points as the Buckeyes defeated Towson State 97-86, advancing to the second round of the Midwest Regional in the University of Dayton Arena.

Sophomore forward Jim Jackson led top-seeded OSU (26-3) with 24 points. Towson State (19-11) got a game-high 26 points from Chuck Lightening.

"Treg didn't start because he was late, but he'll be back in the starting lineup Sunday," OSU coach Randy Ayers said.

The Buckeyes staged a determined rally after falling behind by 18 points (64-46) with 12:35 left in the game.

They outscored Ohio State 24-11 in less than 7 minutes, pulling within 75-70 on a hanging jump shot in the lane by Lightening.

That was when Jent, a 6-foot-7 junior who matched his career scoring high, went back to work.

Carolyn Gundl, center, and Steve Kushuk, right, members of the Ohio State University band, cheered on the basketball Buckeyes at the start of their NCAA Tournament game last night in the University of Dayton Arena.

First, Jent passed to guard Jamaal Brown for a driving three-point play that boosted OSU's lead to 78-70.

After Larry Brown of Towson State made it 78-72 with a jumper, Jent went up in the left corner and hit his shot from 21 feet put the Buckeyes in front 81-72 at the 4:25 mark.

"Starting didn't make me play with any more intensity," Jent said. "I just tried to help any way I could."

Jackson scoring 24 points for the second game in a row, made 10 of 17 shots from the field and added eight rebounds and five assists.

Brown and center Perry Carter added 15 points each for the Buckeyes who had lost their final two games of the regular season, and Carter had 11 rebounds.

The Buckeyes will play at 12:40 p.m. Sunday against Georgia Tech, which defeated DePaul last night.
How sweet it is for Buckeyes

Carter plays rock-solid game as OSU slips by Georgia Tech and into final 16

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

DAYTON — Let's see if we've finally got this straight. It's not how pretty you look, it's where you are at winning time.

Counting free throws, Ohio State's basketball team missed 53 shots yesterday. But the Buckeyes journeyed back to the hot center of their identity — defense and rebounding — and snatched up a hard-fought Georgia Tech 65-61 in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

And speaking of hot corners, what about Perry Carter?

The senior hit a blazing under the 13,055 spectators in the University of Dayton Arena as top-seeded OSU gained a Midwest Regional semifinal berth in the Final Four. Progress on Friday against St. John's, which defeated Texas 84-76.

Carter earned a career-high 18 rebounds and scored a team-high 19 points. His key-14 shooting from the field included OSU's first four baskets of the second half, three on offensive rebounds.

Later, he slashed under the backcourt for a reverse layup that gave OSU a 57-49 lead — and in last field goal of the game — with 6:07 left.

Mostly, though, the 6-foot-8, 240-pound Carter simply blocked any passing leather spheroid out of the air. In the last 21 minutes, with a 10-point lead stretched to two and All-American Kenny Anderson firing away, Carter vanquished three Anderson misses to preserve the Buckeyes' 27th win in 30 games.

"I got a sense early that the refs were going to let us play," Carter said. "Nothing flagrant, but no lousy-tackles calls either. That's when I have my fun, but I can't lose focus.

And this was no fine game.

With Anderson missing 20 of 28 shots under fierce pressure from Jamal Brown, Jamie Skelton and Mark Baker, the one handsome statistic for the Yellow Jackets (17-13) was a game-high 19 rebounds by forward Malcolm Mackey.

"They did a great job on me," said Anderson, who made 9 of 10 free throws and finished with 25 points.

"And we lost the game," added coach Butch Davis. "We were tentative, and our great strength and tremendous rebounding got us in a hole," Georgia Tech coach Bobby Cremins said.

But even though the Buckeyes never trailed or permitted a tie for the game's final 31 minutes, nothing was secure on a day when each team launched 65 shots and made just 24 (36.9 percent).

In fact, it took the Yellow Jackets just 88 seconds to trim a 27-26 deficit to 25-26 late in the half.

Along came Ohio State, starting a three-point flurry from the right corners for a 30-26 advantage.

A brilliant pass from Jackson to Carter for a dunk, followed by Bill Robinson's rebound basket. Jackson missed the lead to 34-28. Then Jackson came up with a loose ball, dribbled upcourt and fed Baker with a bounce pass for a layup that dropped through the net just as noon struck.

"The first thing I did when I got the ball was look at the time," Jackson said. "I was trying to get as close as possible. Then I saw Mark running on the wing.

After Carter's four basket flurry

Please see OSU page 2E
St. John's hammers Buckeyes

OSU's season comes to an end with 91-74 loss

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

PONTIAC, Mich. — The Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament provided a sour taste for the Ohio State basketball team.

Playing its worst 20 minutes of the season, OSU staggered to a 43-24 halftime deficit against St. John's last night. The Buckeyes never came closer than 16 points after that, losing 91-74 in a semifinal of the Midwest Regional before 29,677 spectators in the Silverdome.

Ohio State, seeded first in the regional, ended the season with a 27-4 record in which three of the losses came in its last five games. St. John's improved to 25-8 and advanced to the Midwest championship game Sunday against the winner of last night's second semifinal, which matched Duke and Connecticut.

Last Sunday, Ohio State's defense had stifled Georgia Tech in a 65-61 second-round victory. But last night, the Redmen behaved as though OSU wasn't even on the defensive end of the court, shooting 60 percent from the field (18 of 30) in the first half.

Meanwhile, the Buckeyes had chronic shooting troubles throughout the first half and left the court shooting 31 percent (9 of 29).

Forward Jim Jackson, who led OSU with 19 points, teamed with guards Mark Baker, Jamal Brown and Jamie Skelton to lead several spirited rallies as the Buckeyes played an inspired second half.

But the improved play was to no avail after St. John's scored on its first six possessions of the second half to take a pair of 24-point leads (53-29 and 56-32).

Forward Malik Sealy led St. John's with 22 points, center Robert Westaarn scored a career-high 21 and guard Chucky Sproling had 15. But the real standout for the Redmen was point guard Jason Bushana, whose quick hands forced repeated turnovers by OSU.

The Buckeyes, who shared the Big Ten championship with Indiana, had to content themselves with a share of the record for the most victories in school history (the 1960-61 team had 27).

Ohio State was the first OSU team since 1950-51 to win two NCAA Tournament games.
Because of public demand, Ohio State said it will put additional seats on sale for the men's basketball banquet April 9 in St. John Arena.

A lower-mezzanine seat and box lunch can be obtained for $7.50 by calling the OSU ticket office at 292-2624. The 700 floor seats for the banquet, which will start at 5:45 p.m., are sold out.
No Sweat for Basketball Bucks

On basketball days at St. John Arena, some of the hardest working Buckeyes on the court aren’t over four feet tall.

They’re the ball boys, the unsung heroes who wipe up the floor, provide balls for the players during warm-ups, and deliver water and towels to officials.

It’s not a job for the vain or for those allergic to manual labor. Ball boys have to get on their hands and knees in front of 13,000 people and mop up the sweat of 10 guys who tend to perspire rather freely.

And it takes some organizational skills, too. There are four towels for the floor and four that the officials use to wipe the perspiration from their faces. “Just so they don’t mix them up,” joked Kevin Richards, senior manager of the team and leader of the ball boys.

Richards—you can call him “Spanky”—is a 23-year-old from Huntsburg, Ohio, who graduated from Ohio State winter quarter. He said 24 ball boys, ranging in age from 9 to 14, worked this year, six at every game.

It’s a lot of fun for the kids, but don’t try to get an application for your youngster; it may be as hard to become a ball boy as it is to get a starting spot on the team. “All the ball boys are related to a coach or a player or an usher, or know someone with a connection to the team,” said Richards.

A few of the ball boys let the position go to their heads and act really cocky and cool on the floor, he said. But for most, it’s an unbelievable honor.

“You can tell the kids who are doing it for the first time. They’re really awe-struck. They scoot around the floor with their towels and try to do everything. It’s funny to watch them.”

All the ball boys go through a two-hour, pre-season training session where they learn their responsibilities, according to Richards. They then show up an hour or so before each game to get ready. There’s no pay, of course, but the job includes perks, such as a free hot dog and drink at games, as well as shorts and T-shirts.

The best perks, though, may be getting to chat with players, coaches, and celebrity announcers. “The players are really good with the kids. They’ll talk to them and tease them a little bit. Some kids ask for autographs,” Richards said. Several years ago, ESPN sports announcer Dick Vitale challenged the ball boys to a pickup game before the teams took the court.

This year the youngsters got a special bonus—the honor of calling themselves Ball Boys to the Stars. Ohio State shared the Big 10 championship and ended the regular season with a 25-3 record. As of press time, the team had won its first two NCAA tournament games. Randy Ayers was named Big 10 coach of the year, and starting forward Jim Jackson was named Big 10 player of the year.

Unfortunately, ball boys don’t get to advance with the team to the championship games. But they have their memories. Someday, they can tell their grandchildren they wiped up the sweat of mega-star Jim Jackson.

—J.G.
Banner season has Ayers excited about the future

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

The phrase has a funny sound that will take some getting used to. Ohio State basketball coach Randy Ayers isn’t complaining.

You see, it’s been one month since OSU won the Big Ten co-championship.

Not 20 years, which was the working figure when the season started Nov. 25.

“It’s been a long time coming for this program and this community,” Ayers said yesterday. “I’m really proud to be part of the team that did it.”

The Buckeyes’ 14th Big Ten title was a focal point of the celebrating last night as OSU hoisted a championship banner during the annual appreciation banquet attended by 900 in St. John Arena.

Ohio State finished 27-4 with a No. 5 national ranking. It tied for first in the Big Ten with Indiana, but claimed the league’s automatic NCAA Tournament berth by virtue of beating the Hoosiers twice.

Seeded first in the Midwest Regional, OSU suffered a 94-71 semisinal loss to St. John’s after defeating Towson State and Georgia Tech. Still, it was the first time since 1968 the Buckeyes had won their first two NCAA games.

“I didn’t dream we’d win 27, I really didn’t,” Ayers said. “I never try to attach a certain number to our goals anyway. But I did believe we’d be capable of competing with anybody if we did the right things.”

Ohio State’s season, which included a 17-0 start, revolved around sophomore Jim Jackson, one of the most versatile players in the country. Jackson’s teammates voted him the Jerry Lucas Most Valuable Player Award.

“Jim is one of those special players who makes his teammates better,” Ayers said. “He does everything very well. He played three positions for us and there were times when he simply refused to let us lose.

“The exciting thing is that Jim can still get better.

Please see OSU page 2C
And his work as a student shouldn’t be overlooked. He just finished his best quarter academically. His name is on the honor board in the locker room this month.”

Jackson’s recognition ranged from being named Big Ten player of the year to Sports Illustrated player of the week to making first- or second-team on all the major All-American squads.

Ayers, 34, wasn’t exactly overlooked. He was consensus Big Ten coach of the year, and six organizations named him national coach of the year.

“That’s all very flattering, but it doesn’t come without a good staff and players who make things happen,” Ayers said.

In the span of his first three seasons, Ayers will go from coaching a team with no seniors, to coaching one with two scholarship seniors, to coaching five seniors in 1991-92 — Mark Baker, Jamaal Brown, Chris Jent, Bill Robinson and Steve Hall.

“That’s going to be different, and it’s going to be good for us,” Ayers said. “I’ve always felt you put a lot of the leadership burden on your seniors. Those five make up as strong a senior class as we’ve had in a long time.”

Ayers paid tribute at the banquet to departing starters Perry Carter and Treg Lee, who will leave huge vacancies at center and power forward, respectively.

“We’re going to have question marks next season,” Ayers said. “Perry and Treg played a lot of good basketball for Ohio State.”

One of the major answers taking shape may come in the form of 6-foot-9 transfer Lawrence Funderburke, who will become eligible when Big Ten play starts in January.

“So far, so good,” Ayers said. “Lawrence had a solid quarter in the classroom, has been working in the weight room and has done everything we’ve asked of him.

“I just hope people don’t put a different set of expectations on Lawrence. He’s a 19-year-old young man, and I think all players should be treated and judged by the same standards. I hope we don’t lose sight of that.”

Ohio State has continued to evaluate inside players among high school seniors, with the possibility of offering one scholarship this spring.

Even with a spring signee, Ayers will be out to sign four blue-chip prospects in November. There has been talk of two high-profile high school juniors — Rodrick Rhodes of Jersey City, N.J., and Jason Kidd of Alameda, Calif. — leaning toward attending the same college and placing OSU at, or near, the top of their list.

“We will always base our recruiting on the state of Ohio and the rapport we’ve worked to build with the coaches in Ohio,” Ayers said. “But you need contributions from national recruits, too. Just look at what Perry Carter, Jamaal Brown and Chris Jent have meant to this program.”

The Buckeyes’ three losses in their last five games — particularly the shellacking by St. John’s — removed any fear of complacency.

In fact, Ayers took some heavy second-guessing for the way St. John’s chewed up the OSU press, and many observers felt the Buckeyes were a stale team the last three weeks of the season.

“As far as some of the narrow escapes we had, I think two things caused it,” Ayers said. “The Big Ten kept getting better, and our timing suffered after Mark Baker’s injury.”

“We knew St. John’s had the athletic ability to attack our press, but they did a better job than we anticipated. We did back off and go to man-to-man pressure. But we couldn’t sustain our half-court defense.”

All told, though, the Buckeyes sustained a full-offseason’s worth of good memories.

This was a team with rotating heroes, one that had five players with 300 or more points, five with 100 or more rebounds, five with 40 or more assists and six with at least 20 steals.

“That says a lot about our balance,” Ayers said. “It was one of our trademarks that a lot of guys contributed in a lot of ways.”
Basketball Buckeyes back to conditioning

By Jeff J. Larker
Lantern staff writer

The Ohio State University men's basketball team has already begun to condition itself for next year when it will defend its co-championship.

The players began last week, lifting weights three days a week for 90 minutes and playing inter-squad games five days a week. The basketball team has continued this workout program for the past two years, when Randy Ayers took over as head coach.

The workout program is continued throughout the season, said volunteer assistant coach Tom Souder. The team had a two week break, plus a week off for spring break, but this portion of the program will continue for six to seven weeks.

Souder thinks a player should be in the best possible shape in order to last through a 40 minute game and the long season of the Big Ten. The conditioning paid off in the double overtime win against Indiana, Souder said.

"Everybody realizes we lost two big people (Perry Carter and Treg Lee) inside. And the big people we have, and the big people we have coming in, also realize that," Souder said.

Dave Langworthy is the strength and conditioning coach for the team. He is successful in working with the players and getting the program set-up, Souder said.

Langworthy said the strength of the team last season enabled players to withstand other team's pressure and physical inside play.

The program received input from the players about the routine workouts, said Langworthy. This helps the program because the players feel it's their program and work harder.

Langworthy added, the guys that need to hit the weights are the guys that increase the most in their strength and endurance. Jimmy Radcliffe and Tom Brandewie have increased their strength 50 percent, Langworthy said.

Each player fills out a card stating the weight amounts they lifted, so Langworthy can see their improvements. He watches every set the player lifts and signs their card to make sure it was completed. He also makes sure if any adjustments to the weight amount needs to be changed the next time they lift.

Langworthy said it is unlikely that someone could burn their muscles out due to hard workouts.

"That concept was like a old myth, your body will always adjust," Langworthy said. The program is not so harsh that a player will not be able to play 100 percent the next day. They lift hard three days a week in the off-season and two days a week after practice during the season, he added.

Jim Jackson, who went from "Freshman of the Year," to Big Ten "Player of the Year," is the best example of weights not hurting a player's shot and how his strength helped him near the basket, Langworthy said.

Chris Jent said if the team failed to train hard, other teams in the Big Ten would have the needed strength at the end of games and at the end of the season to win.

This program is not to build anyone's ego or to make body builders out of the guys, Langworthy said. It is a program from which the team will always be able to quickly recover.

"There are certain core lifts that a lot of people used to equate only with football, but are found in your better basketball programs," Langworthy said. "People didn't think basketball players should squat. People didn't think basketball players should do cleans. People didn't think basketball players needed to bench. For a long time there were programs that were watered down, but with the game becoming so physical, bigger guys like Perry Carter are able to stand out because of his strength."

Other college and high school coaches call and ask what is so different in OSU's program, Langworthy said.

"We really don't do anything so different, that is what makes it so different," he said.
Symbol of OSU's banner year stolen from St. John Arena

By Tim Doulin
Dispatch Staff Reporter

It's going into the record books as a steal. But it definitely was a foul.

The banner commemorating the 1990-91 Big Ten co-championship of the Ohio State University men's basketball team was reported stolen this week to campus police.

The banner, which hung over the side of a beam supporting the balcony in St. John Arena, was discovered missing Monday morning, said Vicki Chorman, coordinator of building services at OSU.

"It looks like somebody just tore it right down," Chorman said.

Only a corner of the scarlet banner was found.

The banner was unveiled at the team banquet April 9. The team shared the Big Ten title this season with Indiana. It was OSU's first men's basketball conference title in 20 years.

Police have no leads in the disappearance of the 6-by-8-foot banner valued at $450, said Richard P. Harp, OSU's deputy police chief.

"However, the banner is large and recognizable," Harp said. "Hopefully, if somebody spots it, they will report its location to us."

Harp suspects that the person who took the banner simply wanted a souvenir.

The athletic department's offices are in St. John Arena, which is open during the day. But Chorman is convinced the theft occurred at night.

"There are too many people here during the day," she said. "We would have noticed somebody taking it down."

About 30 banners marking men's and women's basketball Big Ten, NIT and NCAA championships are hanging in the arena. OSU put the banners up four years ago, and this is the first disappearance, Chorman said.

She isn't sure why the 1990-91 Big Ten banner was the only one taken.

"Maybe they wanted to steal all of them, and someone saw them, so they ran away. You never know," Chorman said.

The university buys the banners. If the banner doesn't turn up, another one will be made, Chorman said. "But not right away," she said. "We don't want to put it up and have it disappear again."
Buckeyes to tour Europe

Basketball team looks for seasoning on road

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Ohio State basketball coach Randy Ayers, an assistant for the U.S. entry in the Pan American Games, and forward Jim Jackson, a strong candidate to make the U.S. squad, are not the only Buckeyes ticketed for a heavy travel schedule this summer.

Ayers said yesterday that a European exhibition tour, canceled last summer, has been rescheduled and will take the OSU team to Belgium, Holland, France and England between Aug. 26 and Sept. 8.

"The timing is good for our program, because we have several younger people who will benefit from the game experience," Ayers said. "We have two inside positions to fill next season. So this trip should mean a lot to (center) Bill Robinson and (forwards) Tom Brandewie and Steve Hall.

"Alex Davis, like Steve, is coming back from an injury that slowed him down last season. Jimmy Ratliff and Joe Reid had limited opportunities as freshmen. Assuming that Jackson is coming off the Pan Am Games (Aug. 3-17 in Havana), he won't play as much as usual. We'll have a chance to start everybody and give them a lot of time."

An exception to that rule will be forward/center Lawrence Funderburke, who has joined the team's unsupervised off-season workouts in St. John Arena.

Funderburke, a transfer from Indiana, enrolled at OSU in January and will become eligible when Big Ten play starts next season.

Although he'll be able to participate in practice when preseason drills begin Oct. 15, Funderburke cannot join the exhibition tour because it comes before his year of residency is completed.

OSU ran afoul of a different NCAA policy last summer. After announcing a trip to the same four countries, it learned that the 1989 preseason NIT had counted as an "out-of-season event," only one of which is allowed per year to any school.

Assistant coach Paul Brazeau, who is planning the trip, said the Buckeyes will play nine games against "first-division club teams" while making tourist stops in Brussels, Amsterdam, Paris and London.

"It gives us something like a spring practice, because we're allowed to have 10 workouts before we leave," Brazeau said. "It's a great opportunity to look at various player combinations.

"The trip itself should be educational and fun. Classes don't start until Sept. 25, so the kids will have plenty of free time left after they get back."

Jackson, one of 17 players to survive the first Pan Am cut from a field of 38 candidates, said he has no fear of getting burned out on basketball.

"I'm in good shape and I feel fresh," Jackson said. "There's a lot of time to rest in between these events. Going to another country is the kind of thing you might never get the chance to do again."

Jackson said experience helped him last Thursday through Sunday at the Pan Am trials in Colorado Springs, Colo. He competed there last summer as a candidate for the U.S. squad that played in the Goodwill and World Games.

"The thin air still caught me off guard a little bit," Jackson said. "But I had a good idea what the coaches expected. You run into guys who don't get a lot of media attention, but who can really play -- guys like Tony Bennett of Wisconsin-Green Bay."

Jackson and the other finalists will report to Purdue University for training camp on July 15, with exhibition games to start a week or so later. The squad ultimately will be trimmed from 17 to 12.

Pan Am coach Gene Keedy of Purdue is being assisted by Ayers and Oregon coach Don Monson. Bob Chipman, coach of Washburn University in Topeka, Kan., is team leader, a combination manager/traveling secretary.

"I like Jim's chances (of making the final cut) simply because he played well," Ayers said. "His confidence level has improved to the point where he knows what his strengths are when he steps onto the court."
**BASKETBALL**

**OSU's Jackson makes Pan American team**

Ohio State's Jim Jackson was one of 12 players named yesterday to the United States basketball team for the Pan American Games.

Grant Hill, Thomas Hill and Christian Laettner, who played on the Duke team that won the 1991 NCAA championship, were also named to the team, which was announced by USA Basketball, the ruling body for amateur basketball in the United States.

Also making the team were Tony Bennett of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Terry Dehere of Seton Hall, Adam Keefe of Stanford, Eric Montross of North Carolina, Tracy Murray of UCLA, Mike Peplowski of Michigan State, Clarence Weatherspoon of Southern Mississippi and Walt Williams of Maryland.

The alternates are Tom Gugliotta of North Carolina State and Byron Houston of Oklahoma State.

The team is coached by Purdue's Gene Keady. Ohio State's Randy Ayers is an assistant.

The Pan Am Games will be Aug. 3-18 in Havana. The U.S. team will open against host Cuba next Saturday.
European jaunt jump-starts season for men's hoop team

By Michelle Hertel
Lantern staff writer

With the basketball season just around the corner, many people are beginning to wonder what fate has planned for the Buckeye men this year.

The team realizes it is going to have to come up with something quite impressive to top last year's Big Ten-winning season. The task is big, but the team is up to the challenge.

Preparation begins with a trip to Europe.

Buckeye Assistant Coach Dave Cecutti said the team trip to Europe, scheduled from Aug. 26 to Sept. 8, will help eliminate some of the worry about next year's team.

"The trip will give us a chance to see what things need to be worked on," Cecutti said.

He said the trip will be great for senior Bill Robinson, because it will give him a jump start on next season. Robinson, a 7-footer, spent last season as Perry Carter's back-up. Thanks to Carter's graduation, Robinson will assume the role of the center.

Cecutti said the coaches plan to work initially on the basic fundamentals of the game during their overseas tour. They will also experiment with some players in different positions.

This experimentation allows the coaches to get a flavor for which mixture of players turns out to be the best recipe for success next season, he said.

The trip will be a relaxed, educational environment, but will also give players a chance to know various kinds of people from a different society, he said.

"It's not going to be all basketball when we go overseas," he said. "It's also important to improve camaraderie."

"There are a lot of question marks going into next year's team," Head Coach Randy Ayers said. "We lost a number of good players like Perry (Carter) and Treg (Lee)."

Junior-to-be Jim Jackson said he is optimistic about the potential of the 1991 Buckeyes recruits. Two in particular, caught the All-American's eye.

"Rickey Dudley is a Carter-type player, but more athletic," Jackson said. "He will work out well."

"Lawrence (Funderburke) can play," he said. He knows a lot about the game and loves to play."

Dudley is a 6-foot-8, 236 pound forward from Henderson, Texas. He spent last season at Virginia's Fork Union Military Academy after failing to qualify under NCAA guidelines.

Funderburke, 6-foot-9, returns home to Columbus after brief stints at Indiana University and a junior college. He is a graduate of Columbus Wehrle High School. The lanky forward is expected to add scoring punch inside and out.

Unfortunately, since Funderburke did not enroll at Ohio State until Winter Quarter of 1991, he will not be eligible to play in games until January of 1992. Fortunately for the Buckeyes, his debut will occur before the brunt of the Big Ten schedule hits.

Also donning the scarlet and gray will be point guard Doug Etzler of Convey Crestview. Antonio Watson of Columbus will reportedly sit this season due to academic problems.

Ayers said that to win basketball games, you have to take the ball to the hole. So it's possible that fans may see a more offensively aggressive team this year.

"We'll be ready to play come this winter," Ayers said.

Jackson makes Pan Am team

OSU's All-American swingman is now a Pan American all-star.

Jimmy Jackson was named to the United States team which will travel to Cuba in August for the 1991 Pan American games.

Jackson, who spends most of his time as a forward for the Buckeyes, will reportedly spend a lot of time playing point guard for the U.S. team.

Purdue Coach Gene Keady is the U.S. coach and is assisted by OSU Coach Randy Ayers.

Coach Randy Ayers said, "We lost a number of good players like Perry (Carter) and Treg (Lee)."

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OSU didn't want to take chance with Jackson

Stress fracture in foot ends his Pan Am run

By Dick Fenlon
Dispatch Sports Columnist

HAVANA — The medical decision — made by Ohio State's team doctors — was heavily weighted toward not taking the slightest of chances. And with it Jim Jackson lost his chance to try to help the U.S. win a basketball gold medal in the Pan American Games.

"How long you going to be out?" Jerome Mincy, of the University of Alabama-Birmingham and Puerto Rico, asked Jackson after the U.S. fell 73-68 in the semifinals last night and Jackson, his left leg and foot in a cast, was hobbling back to the dressing room.

"I didn't want them to put it on to begin

with," Jackson said vehemently.

Jackson, who had been playing the best basketball of his career in the Pan Ams, will probably be in the cast a very short time, said Dr. Jim Nevin, the team doctor of the San Diego Padres who is serving as the U.S. team doctor.

"You don't necessarily even have to put a cast on in this situation, initially," Nevin said. "And they will want to start rehabilitating him when he gets back to Ohio State. He should be in good shape in four to six weeks."

Jackson, who had averaged 18.2 points, made 40 of 59 shots and was tied for the team lead in assists in four wins by the previously unbeaten U.S., watched last night's game from the bench after doctors on the OSU athletic medical staff decided it wasn't worth risking further damage than the stress fracture of the fifth metatarsal.

So they ruled him out of the last two games here. The U.S. denied a gold medal for the second straight night, will play Cuba for the bronze medal or Saturday.

The fast-moving chain of events was triggered when Jackson noticed that his left foot didn't feel comfortable in practice. He thought it was because the shoe he was wearing had a high arch. He remembered that he had landed awkwardly on the same foot while trying out for the Pan Am team in April.

X-rays were negative, but when the U.S. team returned to Miami to practice after routing Uruguay on Monday, a bone scan was run and the small hairline break was discovered. After consultation among physicians at the University of Miami, where Jackson was examined, and Ohio State's doctors, the decision was made to put on the cast and cross Jackson off the Pan Am list.

"I said, 'Wait until it's over, we've only got two or three more days and then do it.'" Jackson said. "But when they talked with the doctors back at Ohio State they ultimately made the decision. I had no say in it whatsoever. Honestly, I never felt any pain at all."

Ohio State coach Randy Ayers, the No. 1 assistant to Gene Keedy on the U.S. staff, said. "It was still up in the air" until Ohio State doctors decided to be safe rather than sorry.

Nevin concurred with that decision.

"You run a minimal risk of a complete fracture when you stretch any stress fracture," he said. "Everybody just felt it was in Jimmy's best interest over the short haul to pull him and immobilize it."

Ayers said he hasn't decided whether Jackson, heading into what is expected to be a dazzling junior season, will accompany the Ohio State team on a brief tour of Europe before the fall term begins. Ayers had decided earlier before the injury to use Jackson only sparingly because of the work he'd put in in the Pan Am effort.

Without Jackson, who had played both point and off guard here and had taken over as the team leader, the U.S. fell apart down the stretch against Puerto Rico after building a 37-39 halftime lead.

Asked if Jackson might have made the difference, the Purdue coach said, "You can't change anything in one day. He was averaging 18 points a game and we got beat by five, so who knows?"
Europe isn't foreign to Jent
OSU forward survived trip with Big Ten team

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

After serving as an advance scout of sorts, Chris Jent has some travel advice for his mates on the Ohio State basketball team.

Pack light, sleep tight, and don't expect four-star meals or hall-of-fame referees.

Jent returned Monday from a 12-day, nine-game exhibition tour of Sweden and Finland with a Big Ten all-star team.

Last night he was in Larkins Hall practicing with Ohio State for another trip, beginning Monday, that will take the Buckeyes to Belgium, the Netherlands, England and Scotland for 10 games through Sept. 8.

"As much flying as Chris has done, he might as well have waited for us and met us over there," OSU coach Randy Ayers said.

Jent, a 6-foot-7 senior forward, said the harrowing aspect of a foreign trip exacts a physical toll.

"We were seven hours ahead when we arrived, and your body doesn't recover in one day," Jent said. "You think you have your energy back, and then the next morning you feel had again.

"With the games in different cities, you get to the point where you're sick of packing and unpacking, especially if you take too much. It's hard to find a laundry. You forget about it and just wear the same clothes."

Jent averaged 15 points and seven rebounds per game for the Big Ten squad, coached by Steve Yoder of Wisconsin. The all-stars lost their first two games to the Swedish National team but finished 7-2.

"We were pretty well homered," Jent said. "In the opener, the fouls were 40 to 9 and we lost by two points, so it was kind of sad. But we adjusted to the type of play. You know a guy will put his head down and charge and there won't be a call."

Among Jent's 11 teammates were Greg Graham of Indiana, Craig Riley of Purdue, Kirk Montgomery of Michigan State and Bob Martin of Minnesota.

"Greg Graham was unbelievable," Jent said. "I knew he was good, but not that good. He never seemed to make a mistake. We all really jelled and got along well together."

Even two weeks away from home, Jent discovered, can make a strong impression.

"You learn to appreciate little things about the United States," he said. "Conversation is difficult. The majority of people speak English, but not freely. They're stubborn about it, and I don't blame them.

"Certain things are hard to come by. Breakfast was always ham, salmon, cheese and a lot of bread. You craved a pancake. The only eggs were hard-boiled. The food was good, but there wasn't much quantity, and it's expensive. If you go for a Big Mac, be prepared to spend five dollars. A can of soda is about $2.50."

Of course, Jent knows conditions won't be identical in the countries OSU is about to visit. And he's still glad he made the trip.

Chris Jent has been busy this summer.

"The competition was good for my game and the whole experience was a positive one," he said. "We spent three days in Stockholm and took a couple of guided tours, and it's a really beautiful city. And we had a little night life, too."

Even seven hours ahead, there's always a little night life eventually.
OSU athletes show talent to the world

Past, present Buckeyes win medals in three international competitions

By Michelle Hertel
Lantern staff writer

Several present and former Buckeye athletes displayed their talents in international competition in the World University Games, Pan American Games, and other international meets this summer.

Perhaps the most visible of the Buckeyes was junior Jim Jackson. Jackson, playing point and shooting guard, helped the U.S. basketball team win a bronze medal at the Pan Am Games in Havana. Jackson, an All-American who led the Buckeyes last season with an 18.9 scoring average, also led the U.S. team with 18.2 points and 3.2 assists per game, before being sidelined with a stress fracture in his left foot.

OSU Head Coach Randy Ayers, an assistant to the U.S. team's head coach, Gene Keedy of Purdue, reflected on his player's performance. "This is a little biased, but I thought he was the best player in the tournament," Ayers said in a recent press release.

"We lost to Puerto Rico by five points and Jimmy was averaging about 18, so I think we had a good chance of winning the gold with him in the lineup."

Susan Gottlieb, 1991 Big Ten Swimmer of the Year, showed her athletic excellence by winning a gold medal in the women's 200-meter butterfly on the final day of Pan Am competition.

Gottlieb, of Shelbyville, Ind., finished her competitive career for the Buckeyes in the spring.

Former OSU diver Karen LaFance dove her way to a Pan Am gold medal by winning the three-meter diving competition. She was a three-time All-American for the Buckeyes from 1985-88.

Mark Bradshaw, an OSU diver from 1982-85, won a silver medal at the Pan Am Games in the three-meter springboard diving competition.

Tia Harding and Diana Ulrich, who both completed their OSU eligibility in the spring, won Pan Am gold medals in the duet division of the synchronized-swimming competition. Buckeye junior-to-be Kim Ochane joined them on the gold medal-winning squad in the team competition.

Gymnast Mike Racanelli, an OSU letterwinner from 1987-90, won the gold medal in the floor exercise at the Pan Am Games and tied for fourth place in the all-around competition. Earlier this summer, he won a gold medal in the World University Games, which marked the first time a U.S. gymnast had ever won a gold medal in that competition.

Former OSU All-American Mark Coleman wrestled his way to a Pan Am gold medal when he defeated Canada's John Matile in the 220-pound weight class of the freestyle division. Coleman won the NCAA Championship in the 190-pound division in 1988.

Mark Croghan, who successfully defended his NCAA title in the 3000-meter steeplechase in May, ran the second-fastest American time ever in that event at the Golden Gala meet in Italy on July 17. He completed his Buckeye eligibility in the spring, but will remain in Columbus to train for the Olympic trials.
Tired Buckeyes feted in Belgium

Basketball team is whisked to banquet after 14-hour trip

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

ANTWERP, Belgium — In the midst of a 2½-hour welcoming banquet last night at the Distelheoek tavern, Bob Hubrecht tried to soften up the Ohio State basketball team with a little international pixie dust.

"Tomorrow you were to play Houthalen, a national-division team," Hubrecht told the Buckeyes. "But of their two American players, one is hurt and the other reported overweight and has been sent home."

"Also, two of their Belgium players are injured. If they are too undermanned, they may bring in a Dutch team instead. But it should be a nice first game for you, to get you loosened up."

Ohio State was loose going on laid-out after a 14-hour trip from Columbus, the last eight hours spent on a direct flight from Chicago to Brussels, Belgium. When the plane landed it was 11:48 a.m. — 5:48 a.m. in Columbus.

After a 30-minute bus ride to Antwerp, one of the world's largest port cities, the Buckeyes sleepwalked to their rooms in the Skandic Crown Hotel.

"We're so mentally out of it, I don't think we'll react to much of anything until tomorrow," senior guard Jamaal Brown said. "All I remember from this afternoon is that I took a walk with Shake (Mark Baker) and it cost us 200 francs each for a hamburger, fries and a pop."

The Buckeyes barely had time to figure the going exchange rate — it's 34.5 francs to a dollar — before Hubrecht, secretary of the Belgium chapter of the International Athletic Foundation, lined up everybody on the hotel lawn for newspaper pictures.

Then he whisked them to the Distelheoek, a cheery bistro hidden in a tree-lined residential neighborhood.

The first evening meal included tomato bisque, huge bakery rolls, grilled chicken breasts and french fries.

The players brightened noticeably, with Tom Brandewie and Jimmy Ratliff playing an impromptu musical duet on the rims of their water glasses, and Baker predicting unprecedented moves at Friday's scheduled visit to a disco in Mechelen.

"Tomorrow, when we take you to the province of Limburg, you'll get out into the country and see some amazing things," said Hubrecht, a native of Belgium who attended St. Louis University. "There are houses 400 years old and the tops of the doors won't come up to your shoulders."

For OSU, arrival day also was one of only two days without a basketball game. The Buckeyes, who play 10 games, won't take another breather until Sept. 5 in Great Britain.

While the players and team manager Joe Bias tried to rest and recover, Coach Randy Ayers led an expedition to the Antwerp Zoo.

Going along were assistant coach Paul Brazeau and his wife, Jane; assistant Les Fertig and wife, Bobbie; assistant Dave Cecutti and wife, Jill; assistant Tom Souder; trainer Mike Bordner and wife, Gale; and Dr. Bob Murphy and wife, Phyllis.

"We took the tram and had a great time," Ayers said. "It's a unique zoo, with a little bit of everything. There were types of monkeys, buffaloes and gorillas I'd never seen before."

Ayers' wife, Carol, is expecting the couple's second child in October, stayed home to get son Ryan, 5, started in kindergarten.

Ohio State couldn't have asked for more of a downhome touch than the guide provided by Sporttours International, which booked the trip. Helping Hubrecht shepherd the Buckeyes around Belgium will be Jack Arnold of Riversiode, Calif., a 1963 OSU graduate.

"This has been more of a hobby for me," said Arnold, who runs a business development with his sons. "I started helping on occasional tours in the late 1970s at the urging of Chuck Osborne, an old OSU fraternity brother of mine from Grandview. Chuck knew I'd want to be in on this one."
OSU players learn a little history, not to mention basketball and Bart

DIDAM, Netherlands — The Ohio State basketball team returns today to Belgium, where it has spent the majority of its time since Aug. 26, and will be honored at a reception in the City Hall at Antwerp.

Another special occasion follows in Antwerp’s Olympia Sports Palace tonight.

The Buckeyes will play Estonia, a newly independent Soviet republic. Estonia last year captured the first-place cup in Russia but now competes with a different, and enormously important, identity.

“I don’t mind admitting I’m not much of a tourist,” OSU guard Mark Baker said. “But I’ve enjoyed all the history we’re learning about and the things we’re seeing.”

By day, Dr. Bob Murphy, OSU’s team physician, sometimes leaves his seat beside his wife Phyllis on the bus and gives heartfelt lectures to the players about the significance of the sites they are visiting.

By night, Murphy becomes a one-man stats service, keeping track of the Buckeyes’ scoring, shooting percentages and fouls.

“I’ve always loved mathematics,” Murphy, 68, said. “If I don’t see a shot, (team manager) Joe Bias helps me out, and sometimes I see a rebound or an assist when Joe’s head is down.”

In Brugge, the Buckeyes shot a video in which Murphy was asked if he is the team psychiatrist.

“Bart, that’s my function, and these kids need it desperately,” Murphy deadpanned.

“They have deep-seated emotional problems which they work out by playing basketball.”

Suddenly, Jamal Brown leaned into the camera shot, draped his arm around Murphy’s head and said, “Hi, Dr. Bob.”

Murphy was asked if that was an example of the problem.

“Oh, yes,” Murphy said, looking severely into the camera. “This one right here is your worst-case scenario.”

But the OSU party’s jovial mood wavered yesterday upon leaving Belgium, a country designed by Walt Disney and Norman Rockwell.

A tour of Amsterdam’s canal system was dizzying. There were antique barges converted into luxury houseboats, and, on the banks, dwellings that once housed the painter Rembrandt.

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The explorer Henry Hudson, and the Holocaust martyr Anne Frank.

But a walking tour downtown included a lot of dirt and noise and a large public square filled with vendors, many taking advantage of the liberal drug laws.

“Belgium spoiled us,” OSU coach Randy Ayers said. “Those few blocks we saw of Amsterdam were more like New York City. In Belgium there is always that neighborhood, front-porch feeling.”

Two hours away, in rural Didam, the atmosphere brightened, even though the Hotel Lienenshof has tiny rooms with no air conditioning.

“Bart Simpson is on this TV!” Chris Jent said, running up and down the hall to alert his teammates. “He’s speaking Dutch.”

Later, OSU bused 10 miles to Doesburg, spotted the home team a 14-point lead and roared back to win 79-76. The game was played somewhere in the space/time continuum, with no scoreboard and no clock.

“Wasn’t that weird?” Ayers said.

“Paul (Brazell) stood the whole time, keeping a stopwatch, and looked over the shoulder of the official scorer to see the little clock.”

A friendly postgame reception in the club’s tavern lasted until midnight.

“Amsterdam is not Holland,” said Loes Herwey, the wife of referee Jan Chris Herwey. “It is a place to be crazy. In Amsterdam, one can walk naked and nobody looks.”

Cees Lammers, a sportswriter for the Amsterdam Daily, said that a fairy tale of sorts has surrounded the Doesburg team, which is playing its initial season in Division One.

“This time last year they were about to fold,” Lammers said. “Their sponsor had no money for expenses or travel. They not only agreed to forgo that, but paid membership dues like regular club members.

“They’re a buddy club, they stick together. Bert Broos of, formerly their best player, came back from a Division One team to help them out. They won this Division Two title, which moves you up to the top level.”

But this summer, their sponsor in the town of Zevenaar, 10 kilometers from here, pulled out completely. It seemed they were dead. Then they found Doeschop, a major medical supply firm, and came to Doesburg.

As the Dutch evening came to a close, another referee, Hans Beishuizen, looked at OSU forward Tom Brandkiewicz and blinked.

“You’re No. 31,” Beishuizen said, his face lighting up. “Yes, you’re the one who looks like Bart Simpson!”

Mike Sullivan reports on Ohio State basketball for The Dispatch.
Buckeyes enjoy frolic in Antwerp park with game of kickball

‘Doc’ Murphy foils Ayers with curve

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

ANTWERP, Belgium — In the shaded greenery of Antwerp City Park, the Malski Belgiës defeated the Souder Spielers 13-8 behind shortstop Chris Jent and second baseman Jamie Skelton.

The game was kickball. A runner was out if the lightweight soccer ball was thrown at him and nailed him off a base.

And with 6:15 left less than three hours away, the Ohio State basketball team clearly was off base yesterday, romping and stomping before the toughest challenge of its exhibition tour.

Not to worry. With a few grass stains and a good sweat worked up, OSU raised its record to 5-1 last night with a 92-87 win over Kalez-Tallinn of Estonia, the 1991 Russian Cup champion.

"I'd rather have them goof off than get hurt," said OSU coach Randy Ayers, a center fielder who was unable to solve the rolled curves of pitcher Bob "Doc" Murphy and went 1 for 6.

Winning pitcher James "Malski!" Brown confounded the Spielers, once making Mark Baker, dubbed "Mickey River" by Ayers, the front end of a double play.

Loosing player/manager Tom Souder allowed four drives to go over his head in left field and also committed the ultimate kickball disgrace, attempting a bunt.

"When we got to the park, I saw Randy trying to talk someone out of a ball," said Murphy, 68, OSU's team physician. "There was a boy kicking one by himself, and I gave him a few coins so we could borrow it."

There were countless charges of base-running interference and even a balk controversy. The longer the game went — and it lasted 45 minutes — the wilder it got.

The manager, Joe Bias, threw out Ayers on the bases with a point-blank fastball between the shoulder blades.

Bill Robinson's right shoe flew 30 feet in the air every time he "batted," and third baseman Paul Breau committed two errors.

"City Park is right in the center of Antwerp," tour bus driver Marcel Van Campen said. "It adjoins our Jewish community."

Small boys in shorts, sneakers and yarmulkes, fresh from the opening of school at their nearby Yeshiva, watched the foolishness wide-eyed.

About 19 or 20 mothers, grandmothers and nannies, each tending an old-fashioned baby buggy, also watched in bemusement from nearby benches.

The Buckeyes' day started three hours away in Didam, Netherlands. They were late for a ceremony in Antwerp City Hall because Van Campen, making a brief "photo-op" swing through a corner of Germany at Ayers' requests, dead-ended into the Lee River.

He ended up in line for a ferry boat. It took 25 minutes, but the Buckeyes floated the Lee with several cars, a motorcycle and a Winnebago.

Van Campen, who is personally keeping braces (suspenders) in style, spread the word around the bus that he chose the ferry route to create a 40-mile shortcut.

Later, he fessed up.

"I didn't know where I was going," he said, spreading his arms and laughing convulsively.

A great chance for an international drag race, touring-bus division, was missed last night when the Buckeyes and Kalez-Tallinn motored to Gent, Belgium, where the teams checked into the Sterling Hotel.

Kalez-Tallinn plays in a tournament today, OSU buses to Oostende and boards the jet-foil — a hydroplane style ocean transport — to cross the North Sea to Dover, England.

The Buckeyes will take their only day off before playing the last four games, beginning Wednesday night in Kingston-on-Thames.

Kalez-Tallinn team manager Rino Soonsik seemed less concerned with President Bush's attitude toward recognizing Estonia than he was with superiors taken by the Soviet Union and the International Olympic Committee.

Tallinn is a city in Estonia, which declared its independence as a republic. So the last thing Tallinn wants is to defend the Russian Cup.

"We would love to compete in the European championships and the Olympics representing Estonia," Soonsik said. "So much depends on what the Olympics (committee) and Moscow say — and if they say it in time (for the 1992 Olympics). But it is coming."
Lessons in European history continue for OSU in England

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

LONDON — Randy Ayers happened to walk into a modern Canterbury tale he won't forget.

Ayers, the Ohio State basketball coach, led a few other members of the OSU travel party into Canterbury Cathedral yesterday afternoon. It was the Buckeyes' first day off after six straight games, and their first day in Great Britain.

"We were stunned by the sheer size of the cathedral," Ayers said. "Then all of a sudden a priest came out and asked us and the other tourists to please be quiet for a few moments.

"He was conducting a brief ceremony of some kind, and he led everybody in the Lord's Prayer. There were about seven of us, and we all said it together. Just to be in the Church of England overwhelms you, but that kind of timing gave us a lifelong memory."

The white cliffs of Dover were the first sight to greet the Buckeyes at the end of a 1½-hour ride across the North Sea from Ostend, Belgium, on the jetfoil, a huge ferryboat with space-age aerodynamics and stewardesses hawking duty-free goods in the aisles.

The party immediately toured Dover Castle, the site of battles and strategies crucial to England's defense for 800 years.

Historians have directed a detailed re-creation of the underground chambers in the castle where Prime Minister Winston Churchill oversaw the evacuation of British troops from Dunkirk more than a half-century ago.

"I've shot so many pictures, I'm going to develop my film one roll per month so I can afford it all," forward Jimmy Ratliff said.

On the way to the London Tara Hotel, OSU's bus drove through Black Heath — where an estimated 7 million corpses were buried when the plague wiped out 90 percent of the city's population — crossed the river Thames and passed Kensington Gardens, whose palace is home to Princess Di when she is in London.

"But of course, you won't be seeing Charles there, because he's never with her," said the bus driver, who obviously has the tabloid spirit.

Jill Cecutti, wife of assistant coach Dave Cecutti, will depart three days early when she flies home Thursday. She doesn't want to leave, but also can't wait to get going.

"I've been keeping notes the whole trip and I have a notebook filled with ideas for teaching a unit on this," she said. "There's no limit to what you can do with it."

Cecutti teaches English and reading in the seventh and eighth grades at St. Paul School in Westerville.
For OSU, it’s not the old pregame routine

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

LONDON — The routine is tried and true. A shoot-around in the morning, to loosen up. A team meeting in mid-afternoon to look at videotape and review strategy.

Then the players head back to their rooms and get off their feet.

Finally, after a clustered (and bland) team meal, it’s off to the game.

That may work in America. Ohio State is playing basketball right now in the Old World, not the new one, and coach Randy Ayers knows it.

Does he ever know it.

During their run-and-fun trap abroad, the Buckeyes haven’t touched a basketball once before reaching a game site. They have sat in no skill sessions during the day.

But they have wandered colorful bazaars, hiked through many of the world’s oldest and most popular tourist meccas and rolled past scenery that turns postcard images into real memories.

They know that Anwerp’s zoo is the oldest in Europe, with a bad-dude cape buffalo who could rip one horn in the Sierro and the other in the Olen-aged.

They know, after a leisurely cruise on the River Thames yesterday, that Christopher Wren spent 35 years masting a cathedral for St. Paul’s Cathedral, that Richard Branson, owner of Virgin Records and Virgin Airlines, has his very own paddlewheel steamboat moored on the north bank; and that Greenwich is where you go to stand at zero degrees longitude, astride the meridian.

“We hope to be a better basketball team after this trip and I think we will,” Ayers said, “but you don’t shut yourself off from a social and cultural experience like this one.

The only change I made, after we lost our second game, was getting to a gym 1 1/2 hours before tipoff instead of an hour. I wanted 30 minutes to tape ankles and to get rid of any sense that we were hurrying.

I think the social interaction has been great for the players, not only among the people in these countries but among ourselves. A lot of our coaches have their wives over here, and it’s probably good for the kids to see them together as people, not authority figures.”

This hand-lettered cardboard sign was nailed to a wooden souvenir shanty on a Westminster street yesterday. The shanty backs up to a statue of a woman standing in a chariot drawn by two horses.

“We apologize to members of the public who are unable to read the inscription on the statue due to the presence of our business,” it is as follows: ‘Boudicca (Boudicca), Queen of the Iceni, who died A.D. 61 after leading her people against the Roman invaders.’”

Right-left-right, preceded by the word “look,” was the first instruction given to the Buckeyes when they stepped off the Jetfoil on Tuesday in Dover.

Second-nature to British pedestrians, it is lifesaving advice to visitors who are not conditioned to cars driving on the left side of the road.

British drivers are slightly less psychologic than their Belgian counterparts, but not much.

At the moment of ignition, otherwise gracious and licentious people become video-game lords of destruction. Speed limit is a contradiction in terms. Blind, two-way curves seem to be regarded as an especially invigorating challenge.

But no pedestrian is run down unless he lingers, expecting a driver to touch the brake.

Compared with roads in Europe, Route 315 is a car wash.

The Buckeyes added a U.S. Marine to their merry band Wednesday night when Tim Jen, Chris’ older brother, made the eight-hour drive from Aberdeen, Scotland, where he is a language expert for the National Intelligence Service.

When Tim Jen explained his pallid complexion by saying that he works 12 feet underground, a player asked what he does down there.

“I could tell you,” Tim said, smiling, “but then I’d have to kill you.”

Bus driver Barry Allen James, pointing out a special feature of a Winston Churchill statue: “It’s actually electrified, to stop the pigeons from droppin’ their droppings on his bald head.”
Grandview grad oversees OSU tour
Manager of sports tour company also attended Ohio State

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

LONDON — To schedule and organize the basketball exhibition tour that has taken Ohio State through three countries in two weeks, OSU paid Sport Tours International — the company Chuck Osborne co-manages — a flat fee of $70,000.

It's up to Osborne, a graduate of Grandview High School and Ohio State, to make sure, not only that the trip goes smoothly, but that some profit is left over.

"We have to figure the cost and the projected profit going in," Osborne said yesterday. "I've had trips where our profit has been more than expected, but there have been cases where we've lost money, too."

Osborne, who lives in Rancho Mirage, Calif., founded Universal Sports Tours in 1976. He merged two years ago with International Sport Tours, based in Milwaukee.

"We arrange both ends, going out (of the United States) and coming in," Osborne said. "During November we'll be managing trips for 17 foreign teams in the U.S., and that is really the crazy time of year."

In May, we'll be taking Marquette to the South Pacific, Tahiti, New Zealand and Australia. Coaches are recruiting with it now. I'm sending out some schools for the second and third times."

Osborne played basketball at Grandview under Bill Wall, now the director of USA Basketball, and Dick Hopkins. Later he followed Wall to MacMurray College in Illinois before transferring to OSU, where he was the 10th man on the nine-man golf team that won the Big Ten in 1961.

"I made the Central Buckeye League all-star team in basketball in 1957," Osborne said. "So did Richie Hoyt and Al Poland of Mount Vernon, and three guys from Upper Arlington — Bill Cook, Bob Butler and a slow forward named Jack Nicklaus."

Osborne coached and taught at high schools in Coshocton, Ohio, Mount Vernon and in California before parlaying an inheritance and real estate deals into the seed money for his touring business. He also had spent 15 years as a basketball official, working the Pac-10 and Big West among others.

"I started under Fred Beeckman, my intramural instructor at OSU, officiating eight games a day — $2 a game, five days a week," Osborne said.

Officiating introduced Osborne to his wife, Andrea, a two-time captain of the English women's Olympic team.

"I was working a game in China in 1979, and Andrea obliged some poor Korean girl right in the chops," Osborne said. "I reprimanded her for it, but we ended up having dinner that night. We were married in 1982, and now we have three children."

Andrea Osborne is the supervisor of woman's officials for the Big West Conference. Chuck has worked all of OSU's games in Great Britain.

"I know I'll never do a Final Four, but I've worked more games abroad than any official alive — 41 countries," Osborne said.

• Buckeyes coach Randy Ayers didn't dump into any members of the royal family yesterday while wandering through Harrods.

"I'm not big on shopping, but that's an amazing store," Ayers said. "I must have spent 3 1/2 hours just walking around London today. The pace seemed a litle fast after Belgium, but now I'm in love with this city."

Assistant coaches Paul Brazeau and Tom Souder, and Brazeau's wife, Jane, toured the Kensington Gardens Palace.

"We got to see Princess Di's wedding gown," Jane Brazeau said. "The train was as long as one entire room, and it wasn't straightened out all the way."

• This was overheard in a London park yesterday:

Surly vagrant: "Looks like a sausage on a string period."

Irate dowager: "Oh it does? For your information, it's a dog on a leash. Why don't you get yourself back to Liverpool?"

Surly vagrant: "Manchester, actually."
Brits stop to listen, not just look at cheerleaders

WORTHING, England — The Worthing Bears' cheerleading squad never will be confused with the Laker Girls, and that is for the good.

There is a certain 1950s sweetness about the Worthing lasses, the only cheerleaders encountered during Ohio State's two-week, 10-game basketball trek through Belgium, the Netherlands and Great Britain.

"We're just about the only team over here that has cheerleaders," said Worthing coach Dale Shackleford, who played for Syracuse from 1975 through 1979. "Worthing had them when I got here 10 years ago."

Outfitted in blue cotton jumpers and frilly white blouses, the 10 Bearettes (or Worthies) performed during OSU's 90-87 win last night.

Using pompons, they confined themselves to basic, springing toe-steps and the occasional high kick.

Best of all, their cheers had those intricate, puzzling lyrics from our palmy past, the ones we never quite understood because we were making too much noise.

The Worthing fans, vocal though they are, grow quiet during timeouts and actually listen to the cheers. Last night, their attention yielded these nuggets:

We welcome this team,
And a fine old team,
But they're not the best
If you know what I mean.
The Bears are here and
They're ready to win,
So let's all clap and
Start cheerin'.

Cheerleader Tanya Ryder, a photographer's assistant and student at nearby Bogmar Regis College, has been on the squad five years.

"We've got loads of lyrics — there are 17 timeouts (routines) that we know," she said.

Asked to share one, Ryder recited this:

Pass it, shoot it,
And don't dispute it.
'Cause we're ready
And we're winning

And the crowd are cheering.
OSU senior guard Jamaal Brown was fortunate he was available last night to score a team-high 18 points.

Earlier in the day, Brown was in danger of vanishing into antiquity after he entered the 16th century maze — a labyrinth of hedges — in the Hampton Court Gardens on the River Thames.

"Jamaal, Mark (Baker) and I went in together," Steve Hall said. "Then we each went down a different row. Mark and I ended up together again and found our way out.

"We started calling to Jamaal. When he answered, he sounded real close. But then he'd answer again and be far away."

Brown said, "I got completely lost in that thing. I don't even know how I got out."

The OSU nomads, who are due to land in Columbus at 10:12 tonight, hit the tourism wall yesterday.

Ayers ordered a 9 a.m. bus for a trip to Windsor Castle and Hampton Court Palace and Gardens. But the only players who made it were Brown, Hall, Baker and Tom Brandewie, and even a few of the adults were missing.

The bus inched through a grinding traffic jam caused by the proximity of a medieval art fair and a session of the Kempton Park Race Meeting. But the hearty pilgrims still were glad they went.

"My mother told me not to pass up a chance at anything, because you never know if you'll get to do this again," Brandewie said. "The gun racks in Windsor Castle were amazing. There were hundreds of old guns arranged in circles within circles."

Brown enjoyed Windsor Castles' display of knights' armor and ancient lances.

"I think the older people have more of a desire to see some of these places," Brown said, "but the thing is, we'll still remember this when we're their age."
1991-92 OHIO STATE BASKETBALL OUTLOOK

Ohio State returns three starters from last year’s 27-4 team, a squad that presented the school with its first Big Ten title since 1971, won two games in the NCAA Tournament and wound up fifth in the final wire service polls. In addition to tying the OSU record for season victories, the 1990-91 Buckeyes set school marks for regular-season wins (25), most Big Ten triumphs (15).

Ohio State Notes for 1991-92

* Coach Randy Ayers has a two-year record of 44-17, including a Big Ten mark of 23-11.
  * Ayers was the 1991 Big Ten Coach of the Year and was voted National Coach of the Year by the Associated Press, the U.S. Basketball Writers Association and Basketball Weekly.
  * Last year was Ohio State’s first visit to the “Sweet 16” since 1983.
  * The Buckeyes set records last year for most regular-season wins (25), most Big Ten wins (15), most home wins (15), most Big Ten home wins (9), most 100-point games (7) and most consecutive 100-point games (4).
  * During the month of February and the first week of March, Ohio State held down the No. 2 spot in both wire service polls, before settling for fifth in the final balloting.
  * The Buckeyes ended the season ranked fourth in NCAA scoring margin (16.2), 60th in won-lose percentage (.67), ninth in field goal percentage (.514) and seventh in rebound margin (6.0).
  * Ohio State led the Big Ten in scoring margin (18.0), rebound margin (7.3), steals (8.0) and opponent’s field goal percentage (.426).
  * Ohio State enters the season with a string of 16 consecutive wins in St. John Arena, 15 last year and three in 1990. Michigan State is the last team to defeat the Buckeyes at home.

Jamaal Brown, Jim Jackson, Randy Ayers

1991-92 OHIO STATE BASKETBALL ROSTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Hgt.</th>
<th>Wgt.</th>
<th>Class</th>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>** Mark Baker</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>6-1</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
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<td>Doug Etzel</td>
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<td>165</td>
<td>Fr.</td>
<td>Connov (Crestview)</td>
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<td>* Jamie Stelson</td>
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<td>So.</td>
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<td>Jr.</td>
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<td>Lawrence Funderburke</td>
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<td>230</td>
<td>Fr.</td>
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<td>195</td>
<td>So.</td>
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<td>215</td>
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<td>7-0</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>Sr.</td>
<td>Canton (McKinley)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Head Coach: Randy Ayers (3rd year) • Assistant Coaches: Paul Brazeau, Les Fertig, Dave Cecotti, Tom Sudder

Inn on the Lane

Holiday Inn* 328 West Lane Avenue Columbus, Ohio 43201
Sneak preview

OSU fans cannot wait for the 1991-92 men's basketball team to make another run at the NCAA title. A record crowd turned out for the first official practice at Monday night's Midnight Mania scrimmage. See story on page 6 for more details.
Basketball Bucks begin with Midnight Mania

By Mandie Miller
Lantern staff writer

The OSU basketball team officially began its practices Monday night at the annual Midnight Mania scrimmage. The largest Midnight Mania crowd ever saw what the 1991-92 season holds for the defending Big Ten champs.

Midnight Mania is an Ohio State tradition that started four years ago. Each year the National Collegiate Athletic Association sets a date that teams are allowed to officially begin practicing. This year, Tuesday, Oct. 15, was that date. Ohio State, anxious to begin the season, took the floor at exactly 12:01 a.m. Well over 8,000 fans packed into St. John Arena to sneak a peak at the new team.

The night was kicked off by a group of athletes who made up the ‘Bud Light Dare Devils’. The ‘Dare Devils’ performed acrobatic tricks of high flying, Frankie flipping and slam dunks while leaping off trampolines.

OSU coach Randy Ayers was then introduced to a completely pre-Ayers crowd. First sight of the 1991 National Coach of the Year brought the already berserk crowd to its feet. Two standing ovations later, Ayers spoke to the crowd about each Buckeye player.

The team then made its grand entrance. The lights were then dimmed as the announcer introduced the players. The team took the floor in complete darkness as a spotlight shone on each one. The already fired up crowd was even more intense as the 1991 Big Ten Championship banner was hung amidst the many banners of St. John.

A final countdown kicked off the scrimmage between team members, splitting into two teams, Scarlet and Gray. The Scarlet team consisted of senior Chris Jent, senior Jamaal Brown, junior Jim Jackson, junior Alex Davis, junior Tom Brandewie, sophomore Joe Reid and freshman Rickey Dudley.

The Gray team was made up of senior Mark Baker, senior Steve Hall, senior Bill Robinson, sophomore Jamie Skelton, sophomore Lawrence Funderburke, sophomore Jimmy Ratliff and freshman Doug Buzer.

The scrimmage began as Chris Jent flew past Bill Robinson for a thundering dunk, for the Scarlet team. Once again Jent proved himself to be the complete crowd pleaser. The remainder of the scrimmage belonged to All-American guard Jim Jackson. A man among boys, Jackson laughed and smiled from the moment he stepped on the court, obviously happy to be back for another Buckeye season.

Lawrence Funderburke, a highly publicized transfer student from Indiana, added hello to Ohio State with two electrifying alley-oops.

The second of two 10-minute halves ended as the Scarlet team easily cruised past the Gray by a score of 38-26. Jim Jackson led all scorers with 18 points and Chris Jent added 12 more for the Scarlet team. Lawrence Funderburke lead the Gray team with 10 points.

Junior forward Jim Jackson (22) drives for the hoop as sophomore center Joe Reid (50) sets a pick on sophomore guard Jamie Skelton (13), during Midnight Mania action Monday Night.

Hang it again!

A new banner was hung in St. John Arena at Midnight Mania Monday night to commemorate the OSU men’s 1990-91 Big Ten Champion basketball team. The banner replaces the original one, which was stolen last spring.
Ohio State returns three starters from last year’s 27-4 men’s basketball team, a squad that presented the school with its first Big Ten title since 1971, earned the top seed in the NCAA Midwest Regional and wound up fifth in the final wire service polls. In addition to tying the OSU record for season victories, the 1990-91 Buckeyes set school marks for regular-season wins (25) and Big Ten triumphs (13).

“Our goal this year is to move on to the next level,” says third-year Ohio State coach Randy Ayers. “I have always believed that you measure the success of a program by its improvement from year to year.

“We have our work cut out for us,” adds Ayers, last year’s Big Ten and National Coach of the Year. “But we are looking forward to the challenge.”

All-American Jim Jackson heads up the list of holdovers. The 6-6 junior was consensus Big Ten Player of the Year and was accorded first team All-America honors from several media organizations. He averaged 18.9 points, 5.5 rebounds and 4.3 assists per game last season while shooting 52 percent from the field, 75 percent from the line and leading the team with 55 steals.

In two seasons, Jackson has scored 1,067 points and grabbed 335 rebounds. He is the second sophomore and fourth Buckeye ever to top the 1,000-point plateau in his first two seasons of competition. Jackson will handle the ball more this season and join seniors Mark Baker and Jamaal Brown in the backcourt.

Baker, the point guard, and Brown, the second guard, are the other two returnees from last year’s starting lineup. They have played together for two years now and should help form one of the nation’s top backcourts.

Baker averaged 10.9 points and five assists a game last year, starting 30 of the 31 games. The 6-1 senior is a vital cog in the OSU attack, evidenced by the fact that Ohio State is 35-9 when he starts. The 6-4 Brown has been a regular from day one as a freshman with 95 consecutive starts. He is a talented, all-around performer who almost always draws the opposition’s top backcourt threat. He has developed, too, into a fine offensive performer, leading the Buckeyes in three-point goals in 1991 with 34. Like Baker, he is coming off his best year, averaging an even dozen points a game last season.

That leaves the power forward spot, held down by Treg Lee last year, and the all-important center position, occupied by Perry Carter the past four seasons, as the holes Ayers must fill.

Chris Jent is a good bet to replace Lee. The 6-7 senior was the Buckeyes’ sixth man last year, averaging 8.1 points, 3.6 rebounds and 22 minutes a game coming off the bench. Jent is no stranger to starting. He started all 30 games at power forward two years ago and also started three games at second guard his freshman year.

Seven-foot, 250-pound senior Bill Robinson appears to be the heir apparent at center. He has understudied Carter the past three years, appearing in all 31 games and averaging 2.7 points, 3.4 rebounds and 13 minutes per outing last season. foul problems, however, greatly reduced his playing time last year and that looms as an area of concern going into the 1991-92 season.

The list of holdovers also includes junior Tom Brandewie and sophomore Jimmy Ratliff at forward and senior Steve Hall and sophomore Joe Reid at center. All check in at 6-8. Backcourt returnees are 6-1 junior Alex Davis and 6-2 sophomore Jamie Skelton.

There are some new faces on the roster, too. Freshmen newcomers are 6-8 forward Rickey Dudley of Henderson, Tex., and 6-4 guard Doug Etzler of Convoy, Ohio. And, 6-9 Lawrence Funderburke will be eligible at the start of winter quarter after sitting out a transfer year. Funderburke prepped at Columbus Wehrle and was one of the most sought after players in the country as a senior.

“I like our depth, I like our versatility and I think our new players can all contribute this year,” says Ayers, who has a two-year record of 44-17. “But, there are still a lot of questions to be answered.”
Ohio State's Seniors

From left are Steve Hall, Chris Jean, Mark Baker, Janard Brown (seated) and Bill Robinson

1991-92

College Basketball
Class of '92 put OSU back on basketball map

Four seniors will be in the starting line-up when the Buckeyes open the season this week against Miami.

By Mike Shtin
Dispatch Staff

"Four seniors will be in the starting line-up when we open the season against Miami," said Chris Jent. "And if we can beat them, we're going to win the Big Ten.""How true that would be," said Steve Hall, Ohio State's head coach. "It's the first time we've had a senior class that's been together for four years."

"I'll never forget the game against Indiana last year," said Steve. "The Buckeyes were down by 18 points with two minutes left in the game. And we came back to win.""The Buckeyes are going to be tough to beat this year," said Hall. "We have a lot of experience and a lot of talent.""

The game against Indiana was the turning point for the Buckeyes. From then on, they were unstoppable. They won the Big Ten championship and advanced to the Final Four."

But it's not just experience that makes the Buckeyes a threat. They have a talented young nucleus that will make them a team to be feared."

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4500 WEST DUBLIN-WILLIAMS RD. 704-0484
HONDA EAST
3905 SCARBOROUGH BLVD. 864-5259
OSU Athletic Department will sell basketball cards

By Scott Kendrick
Lantern staff writer

The OSU Athletic Department will begin sales of basketball collector cards of the 1991-92 Ohio State men's basketball players by the end of November.

The full-color cards will depict all 14 players on the team and Head Coach Randy Ayers, said Bill Stauffer, a graduate assistant in marketing and promotions at Ohio State.

The front of the card will show a four-color action shot of a player and the back will contain a biography and statistics, said Stauffer.

The OSU Sports Information Department wrote the biographies and took the photos for the cards, he said.

The cards are printed by College Classics, Inc., a company which has printed football cards of past players for Ohio State and other universities.

The set, which will sell for $5.95, is the first of its kind produced at Ohio State, said Stauffer.

The price of the cards was set to give the athletic department a minimal profit, but the main goal of the project is to promote the program, said Stauffer.

Most card dealers in the Columbus area think the price of the set is fair. With the recent success of the men's basketball team and the card market itself, the cards are expected to sell well.

Ohio State is one of the first universities to have current players on basketball cards, and these are the first college cards to be printed in color on both sides, said Stauffer. He added that the project has been in the works for two years.

Stauffer said ironing out all the details and NCAA regulations has been the major stumbling block, but everything has been covered now.

"The toughest thing we've had to do is to make sure we don't do something we shouldn't do," Stauffer said. "So we've had to take careful consideration not to take advantage of the players at all."

All proceeds from the sale of the cards will go to the OSU Athletic Department's general fund, Stauffer said.

The Athletic Department would like to print cards annually for men's basketball if the project is a success. The department would possibly print cards of current players in sports other than basketball as well, said Stauffer.

The cards are not available for resale by anyone other than the university because of NCAA rules prohibiting the sale of the cards by outside retailers.

But card dealers around the area think that a black market for the cards will result from the limited time for the sale.

"In the state of Ohio, they should be received real well," Sam Kirk of Sports Card Connection in Reynoldsburg said. "Everybody's looking for Buckeyes."

"People that are into cards will want these. People love the Buckeyes," Patty Laakso of Laakso's Sportscards in Columbus said.

Certain cards in the set, such as Jim Jackson's, could become much more valuable if the player goes on to be an NBA all-star. Area dealers see his card being worth as much as $20 if this happens.
OSU athletic department sells men's hoops cards

By Scott Kendrick
BBB staff writer

The OSU Athletic Department has sold over 8,000 sets of basketball collector cards of the 1991-92 OSU men's basketball players since sales began in December.

"We knew they'd sell well," said Lynne Smith, concessions manager for the OSU Bookstore.

The cards are on sale now at the University Bookstore and The Arena Shop, located inside St. John Arena.

The full-color cards depict all 14 players on the team and Head Coach Randy Ayers, said Bill Stauffer, a graduate assistant in marketing and promotions at Ohio State.

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According to Stauffer, the price of the cards was set to give the athletic department a minimal, profit, but the main goal of the project is to promote the program.

Most card dealers in the Columbus area say the price of the set is fair. With the recent success of the men's basketball team and the card market itself, the cards are expected to sell well.

Ohio State is one of the first universities to have current players on basketball cards, and these are the first college cards to be printed in color on both sides, Stauffer said. He added that the project has been in the works for two years.

Stauffer said ironing out all the details and NCAA regulations has been the major stumbling block, but everything has been covered now.

"The toughest thing we've had to do is to make sure we don't do something we shouldn't do," Stauffer said. "So we've had to take careful consideration not to take advantage of the players at all."

All proceeds from the sale of the cards go to the OSU Athletic Department's general fund, Stauffer said.

The Athletic Department would like to print cards of current players in sports other than basketball if the project is a success, Stauffer said.

The cards are not available for resale by anyone other than the university because of NCAA rules prohibiting the sale of the cards by outside retailers.

But card dealers around the area think that a black market for the cards will result from the limited time of the sale.

"In the state of Ohio, they should be received real well," said Sam Kirk of Sports Card Connection in Reynoldsburg. "Everybody's looking for Buckeyes."

"People that are into cards will want these. People love the Buckeyes," said Patty Laakso of Laakso's Sports Cards in Columbus.

Certain cards in the set, such as Jim Jackson's, could become much more valuable if the player goes on to be an NBA All-Star. Area dealers see his card being worth as much as $20 if this happens.
Hairy assignment

Big Ten player of the week, Chris Jen, was honored by USA Today for the worst haircut in college basketball. Jen, a senior in journalism from Sparta, New Jersey, is wearing the Big Ten championship ring that the team received last week.
Jim Jackson’s family circle extends to Ohio State

Kimberly Jackson graduated from Macomber Whitney in 1983.
That’s the same year Dennis Hopson finished his basketball career at another Toledo high school, Bowsher, and went on to become Ohio State’s career scoring leader with 2,090 points.

“I couldn’t have told you who the best player in Toledo was,” Kimberly said. “I didn’t play any sports. That was my brother’s territory.”

“I just studied and did my homework. I was so shy I really didn’t get involved in school activities.”

So you’ll pardon Jackson, a receptionist in OSU’s college of business, if she seems somewhat startled by the rate at which her brother, Jim, is scaling Hopson’s statistical monument.

“I’ll be watching a road game on television, and I’ll say, ‘Now wait a minute, he didn’t have that many points,’ ” Kimberly said.

He could score a mere 15.4 points per game and pass Hopson late in his senior season. But with his current 23.8 average, the record could topple at this time next year, midway through the Big Ten race.

Jackson, protected against a career-ending injury by an insurance policy his father took out two years ago, has indicated that he wants to stick around, keeping the NBA on hold.

That would be fine with Kimberly, who feels she is involved in a game of family catch-up.

“You play, and you have the brother-sister arguments and fights,” she said. “It amazed me how much we both changed in four years. Yet we can still sit back and laugh about the things we did as kids.

“I didn’t want us to grow apart. I felt it was important to rekindle what was there and to get to know each other all over again.”

While Jim’s exploits for Macomber were giving him a national profile, Kimberly’s determination to see the world and make a mark in it left her far offside.

She moved to Washington, D.C., just as Jim was leaving Toledo’s DeVos Middle School, and went to work in a clerical position for the FBI.

The adventure lasted four years, “until the cost of living got too high. I was homesick. I decided it was time to move back to Ohio.”

Kimberly moved from Toledo to Columbus in July 1989, eight months after Jim had signed with the Buckeyes. She plans to enroll as a full-time student at OSU next year.

Meanwhile, there is the occasional pleasure of being mistaken for Jim’s kid sister.

“I’m five years older, and I take it as a compliment,” Kimberly said. “When I

left Toledo, Jim was a little bit taller than I was. When I came back, he was this big giant.”

“I used to pick him up and carry him around. I’d take him over to the baby sister’s, Mrs. Moore, at the end of our street, Woodstock. I looked out for him. Now he can look out for me. And he can pick me up.”

Kimberly has classes of what was to come. Long-distance calls from Washington would include tape measures and provided by her parents, James and Sandra Jackson.

“I’d say, ‘He’s few tall? Uh huh,’” she said. “I didn’t really get to see him play until he was a senior and they beat (Toledo) St. John’s in the tournament. I thought, ‘Wow, this is my brother? He is good’.”

Lisa Williams believes the siblings are more alike than even they realize.

“Kimberly has big goals,” said Williams, a doctoral candidate in logistics and marketing at OSU and the daughter of Mrs. Mary Moore, the baby sister from Woodstock Avenue.

“She’s full of energy, goal-oriented, very driven — just like her brother, but in a different arena.”

Kimberly plans to earn a teaching certificate in elementary education with a minor in business. Away from work, she fills her time with church activities, aerobics, swimming, roller skating and volleyball, and wants to master horseback riding.

“I’d like to learn how to play basketball, too,” she said.

“Then I could say, ‘I played my brother, and he beat me, too.’”

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Mike Sullivan reports on Ohio State basketball for The Dispatch.
BIG BILL
Bill ducked through the doorway into his Archeology 200 class.

He leaned forward, bent at the knees, put his huge hand on the back of the feeble, unsuspecting, little chair and turned around. He sat down, with great effort, and pulled his 39-inch inseam leg under the desktop. Only one leg would fit. He looked like any other adult trying to fit into a high chair at McDonald’s.

Twirling his Big Ten championship ring around his finger, Bill waited for class to start. When the professor announced to the class that they could come to the front and pick up their midterm from the week before, his eyes rolled into the back of his head and his mighty shoulders fell against the chair’s back. “I think I’ll wait this one out,” he said and smiled. “The test kinda took me by surprise, anyway.”

Bill Robinson is the 7-foot senior center on the OSU men’s basketball team. Growing up in Canton, he learned at a young age how to deal with being the biggest guy around.

“I think I first learned to duck when I was growing up in my house,” Bill said. “I would come rumbling down the stairs and smack my head against a beam that divided the first and second floor. After ending up sprawled across the steps on my back enough times, I sort of got the picture.”

Bill saw eye-to-eye with his kindergarten teacher when he was 4 feet 8 inches tall. He was 6 feet tall in the sixth grade and the tallest person in the school. He wore a size 17 shoe as a ninth-grader, the size he wears today.

By the time he was a junior at McKinley High School, he was a 7-footer.

The scales used to measure people in doctors’ offices stop at 6-foot-6 inches. Bill passed that height in the eighth grade.

One thing’s for sure — Bill is huge.

“It is really something I’ve had to deal with all of my life,” Bill said. “The only time it really bothers me is when I see some clothes or shoes I’d like to have but, of course, they don’t come in my size. You’ll usually see me in a sweatshirt and a pair of jeans, because that’s all that is really easy to find.”

Bill’s height has continually kept him in the spotlight. Even little favors turn into giant projects once he gets going.

“One time I was going to help out my old physical education teacher, whose nephew wanted me to go in with him to his kindergarten class for show-and-tell,” Bill explained. “His father found out I was coming and made some arrangements. By the time 10 o’clock rolled around and I was done with show-and-tell, I was scheduled to speak to the middle school before lunch and at an assembly for the high school in the afternoon. By the end of the day I had signed over 500 autographs.”

Bill’s height has given him a quite an image on campus, and gets him into foul trouble in the games.

“I’m just so big I don’t know if the official think ‘oh, here comes that goon to set a hard pick’ or something. Just the way I stand gets me in trouble. It’s not like a fluid motion when I cross the floor - it looks like I’m too big to even do that. I have changed my defensive style and stayed out of trouble the last five games, but I still think I’m a target for the officials.”

Bill says he is still a little self-conscious about his height, and it sometimes bothers him when people stare or make rude statements.

“It’s like some people have never seen a tall person before. I don’t really go out all that much because I don’t always like to talk basketball or have people come up to me and tell me how tall I am. Plus, if you can imagine it, I’m really not all that great of a dancer,” Bill said as he laughed.

But that leaves plenty of time for Bill and his fiancée Lorie Weston.

“We’ve been together for six years now, and we’ll be married next June,” Bill said. “It is really great with all the hustle and everything to have that kind of confidence in a person and in a relationship.”

Bill plans to play in Europe for awhile after he graduates, if his dreams of playing in the NBA are shattered after draft day. Then he intends to coach and teach high school.

“I am not sure where I’ll be in five years, but I know I’ll be with basketball. My best memories will be, being involved with a Big Ten championship team at one of the most competitive programs in the country. I know I’ll never forget that.”
Bill Robinson in action against Chris Webber of Michigan earlier this season.
Bill Robinson and his fiancée Lorie Weston have a midday conversation behind Arps Hall earlier this week.

**Story & Photos**  
**By**  
**Shawn Mc Allister**

Robinson has more than the usual trouble trying to fit into the small classroom desks.
Petition to ban Vitale handed out at game

By Tracey Hubiak
Lantern sports writer

Petitions were distributed to OSU fans entering the Ohio State-Indiana game to ban sports commentator Dick Vitale from announcing anymore Ohio State games.

The petition drive began because of a comment made about Lawrence Funderburke on a satellite feed during the OSU-Iowa game. Vitale said: "That (expletive) shouldn't even be in college basketball - we were right."

This is the second attack by Vitale on Funderburke this season. The first was during the Jan. 14 OSU-Indiana game when Funderburke was called for an intentional foul on Deamon Bailey.

"That is absolutely weak. He should be ejected from the game. A bush-league play by Lawrence Funderburke," Vitale said in January.

"We feel that this situation (the remarks made at the Iowa game) is unfortunate and we expressed this to Dick. We feel that his apology will suffice," said ESPN spokesperson Mike Soltys.

"I think his comments were inappropriate, unprofessional and uncalled-for," said OSU Athletic Director Jim Jones in an interview Friday.

Vitale submitted a public apology last Thursday to OSU head coach Randy Ayers and Funderburke saying that Vitale regretted the comment and that he recognizes the important role Funderburke plays for the Buckeyes.

"I have yet to see an apology in this office, but I have yet to speak with Coach Ayers," Jones said.

After Vitale's comment, ESPN received over 75 calls berating the network for Vitale's remark, Soltys said.

The network said that the feed that carried the remark was not ESPN's feed, it was an illegal satellite feed. Listeners were invading on a private conversation between Vitale and fellow commentator Mike Patrick, Soltys said.

Vitale does not recall saying that Funderburke should not even be in college basketball, Soltys said.

Fans at yesterday's OSU-Indiana game sported T-shirts saying "Down with Dick," and after the game a sign was posted that read, "Apology not Accepted, Baby."

The petitions circulated at yesterday's OSU-Indiana game will be sent to the Big Ten Conference office, which signs contracts with broadcast companies.
At 98, he's still taking his shots in the walk of life

When 94-year-old Ralph Sturgeon picked up a basketball at the Columbus Jewish Center Senior Olympics five years ago, it was the first time he had touched one since the end of his playing days at The Ohio State University almost 70 years before.

Having lost a hoop when Woodrow Wilson was in the White House, Sturgeon was understandably a bit tentative during the free-throw competition.

When it was over, he would condescend to an interviewee, "I didn't have much time to warm up, and it took me several minutes to get the hang of it, so I missed most of the first ones. Still, he made 15 of 25 shots — the last 10 in a row. It was good enough for the gold.

Sturgeon, who will turn 99 in August, has slowed down a bit since then. He can no longer do a 200-meter run and the long jump (a pair of Senior Olympics events he won at 94). But, every day he gets up, he ventures out from his Sunshine Terrace apartment on Gift Street and walks the bike path along the Scioto River.

"I've walked 100 miles since Sept. 1," he said, pointing out that he has cut back because his feet and legs aren't as steady as they once were.

Although he claims that the stroke he suffered three years ago knocked the edge off his memory a bit, his recall is sufficient to take him back to his playing days at Perry County's Glenford High School.

"When Glenford played their first basketball game ever against Millersport in 1918," he said, smiling, "we won 5-3. The second time we played them, we beat them 8-5. It was a more defensive game then. We played outside in cinders and sawdust with an outside ball."

The game moved indoors when Sturgeon began his studies at Ohio State in 1913. Freshmen were prohibited from playing on the varsity, so Sturgeon spent his first year as center for the School of Agriculture team.

When he went out for the varsity team in his sophomore year, he was ruled ineligible.

"I didn't know it," he said, "but I was a victim of dyslexia. They said I was careless and didn't study. I had to go over my lessons five or six times to get it."

Sturgeon recalled that OSU basketball coach Al St. John took the matter to the dean but was able to secure permission for his player to start on the Buckeyes' second team only.

Sturgeon said that the games Ohio State played then against the likes of Capital, Ohio Wesleyan and Oberlin were rough-and-tumble. Team photos from the era reveal that players were padded football pants.

"If you were physically able to take the ball, you took it," he said with a laugh. "Almost anything went. They'd let you tussle until they couldn't decide (protest)."

Sturgeon played forward and guard until his graduation in 1918.

He joined the Army, later farmed, then settled into a lifelong career in the commercial poultry and hatchery business.

In 1940, his wife of 63 years, Edith, died. A year later, he married his widowed younger sister, Nora. Six years later, she too died.

At 94, not yet ready to call it quits on matrimony, he married again.

His third marriage, however, lasted only three months.

Could it be that he had outlived yet a third wife?

No. With the casual frankness of one who spent too much of his life dealing with the fits and starts of procreating poultry ever to mince words, he bluntly acknowledged, "She divorced me because I became impotent."

Yes, well, there is just no way of knowing when something like that is going to sneak up on a guy when he least expects it.

Sturgeon's slick-armed interviewer scribbled "94" into his notes next to the quotation explaining the demise of the marriage and stored it away at the number.

And to think, this guy made only the second team.
OSU wins Big Ten, top seed

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

For a guy who was having his ticket punched for a hometown appearance in the NCAA Tournament, Alex Davis did a good job yesterday of keeping himself in the dark.

"I wouldn't turn on the TV," said Davis, a guard on the Ohio State basketball team. "I thought it would jinx Purdue if I did. When Michigan played Indiana, I didn't watch, and Michigan won."

Davis, a graduate of Forest Park High School in Cincinnati, missed yesterday's 61-59 win over the Hoosiers by Purdue.

But he will not miss the NCAA Tournament opener Thursday in Cincinnati's Riverfront Coliseum, where Ohio State, led by coach Randy Ayers, will play Mississippi Valley State.

Ohio State became the outright Big Ten champion when Indiana lost. OSU (23-5) was seeded No. 1 in the Southeast Regional and bracketed against the 16th-seeded Delta Devils (16-13). The winner will face the Nebraska-Connecticut winner Saturday.

Indiana was made the No. 2 seed in the West Regional and will open Thursday against Eastern Illinois in Boise, Idaho.

Joining Ohio State as top regional seeds in the 64-team tournament were defending NCAA champion Duke (East), Kansas (Midwest) and UCLA (West).

Oklahoma State is the No. 2 seed in the Southeast.

If Ohio State wins twice in Cincinnati, the Buckeyes will advance to Rupp Arena in Lexington, Ky., site of the Southeast semifinals and final March 27-29.
Buckeyes glad to hog top spot

Indiana loss keeps OSU close to home

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

With candy bars, umbrellas or beach towels, sharing can be fun.
But when it comes to a conference basketball championship, greed is good.

In fact, it just might spare you a trek to bighorn sheep country.

Ohio State reveled in that homely wisdom yesterday after learning that sole possession of the Big Ten title meant No. 1 seeding in the Southeast Regional of the NCAA Tournament.

The Buckeyes won outright with a 15-3 league record when Indiana (14-4) lost its finals at Purdue yesterday. OSU will open Thursday in Cincinnati's Riverfront Coliseum, facing the bottom seed in the 16-team Southeast, Mississippi Valley State.

Meanwhile, Indiana wound up with the No. 2 seed in the West and will open Thursday in Boise, Idaho, against Eastern Illinois.

Indiana had swept its two-game series with Ohio State and probably would have landed in Cincinnati if it could have beaten Purdue.

"I didn't feel a lot of tension watching the (Purdue) game," OSU guard Bill Jackson said. "It would be different if we still had one left to play, or if we had lost our last game."

"But we had done what we had to do. We all knew that. After losing two in a row, we never gave up. We worked hard and took care of the things we could control."

OSU's worries kept diminishing as it churned through a six-game winning streak to end the regular season, defeing Purdue, Michigan State, Michigan, Northwestern, Illinois and Minnesota.

"Cincinnati will be like a home away from home for us," Jackson said. "We'll have the crowd behind us, and that's an important factor. But we're ready for anything. We had a 7-2 road record in the Big Ten, and that speaks for itself."

"Experience plays an important part. We were a No. 1 seed last year (in the Midwest), so we know how teams come after you. And from a mental standpoint, I think we're competing better than we were at this time last year."

Ohio State coach Randy Ayers now has led OSU to three NCAA berths in a row, two straight No. 1 regional seedings and back-to-back Big Ten titles, OSU's first since a string of five straight from 1960-64.

"I'm happy for the school and for the whole community, because we went through a spell where we weren't successful as a program and the support has been tremendous," Ayers said.

But after all the blessings were inventoried, there was general agreement that Ohio State probably dropped into the toughest of the four regionals.

If the seedings go as expected, OSU will meet No. 2 Oklahoma State in the Southeast final March 29 in Rupp Arena in Lexington, Ky.

To get there, however, the Buckeyes might have to play ninth-seeded Connecticut (which opens against Nebraska) and either No. 4 North Carolina or No. 5 Alabama.

On Oklahoma State's side of the bracket, mean hombones include Arizona, Michigan and St. John's, which blasted OSU 91-74 in a Midwest semifinal last season.

"That was one of the first reactions," forward Chris Jent said. "You sort of think, 'Wow, what a tough region.'"

"But coach (Paul) Brazeau said something with a lot of truth behind it — if you go back and look at the whole field, every single bracket has a potential national champion. The top 32 teams are so good, any one of them could take the whole thing."

OSU's captain, guard Jamaal Brown, said the Buckeyes are reaching a peak.

"We're playing great together as a team," Brown said. "We're on a real high. If we don't lose a step from the way we played Saturday at Minnesota, I think things look good for us."
Ohio State’s Jim Jackson, shown getting ready to dunk yesterday was selected as an Associated Press first-team All-American, and for the second straight year was chosen first-team all-Big Ten and Big Ten player of the year. His coach, Randy Ayers, shown directing the team, was named the Big Ten coach of the year for the second consecutive year. See Pages 18 and 20 for details.
Jackson hauls in hardware

Starting five nets Big Ten mention

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

When Ohio State plays its NCAA Tournament opener in Cincinnati at 7:35 p.m. Thursday against Mississippi Valley State, the Buckeyes will be out to haul away some serious hardware.

Yesterday OSU got some practice in the hardware-hauling department. It went like this:

- Jim Jackson earned a first-team spot on the Associated Press All-American squad, moving up from his second-team berth as a sophomore, and also was named Big Ten player of the year for the second season in a row by both coaches and news media.

- Randy Ayers made it two straight Big Ten coach-of-the-year awards in voting by news media.

- Led by point guard Mark Baker, voted to a second-team berth in each poll, all four of Jackson's fellow starters earned some sort of All-Big Ten recognition.

"Winning is what leads to this," Jackson said, smiling. "When you're on a team that gets a lot of exposure and has success, some individuals are going to be spotlighted."

The light is just beginning to shine on Jackson, already OSU's No. 6 all-time scorer.

He is a finalist for the Wooden and Naismith national player-of-the-year awards, and is expected to repeat his first-team All-American niche with United Press International, among others.

"I was determined to make all aspects of my game better," Jackson said. "That's what the summer was all about. You want to improve on last year and the year before that."

1992 All-Americans

Jim Jackson, a first-team All-American two years in a row

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Manager lives real fantasy with Buckeyes

By Dennis Fiely
Dispatch Accent Reporter

No matter what happens to his beloved Buckeyes in the NCAA Tournament, Joe Bias feels as if he’s finishing a five-year stay in a basketball fantasy camp.

As manager for the men’s basketball team, Bias has mopped the St. John Arena floor, kept statistics, confirmed travel arrangements, packed equipment, ordered post-game meals, placed wake-up calls in hotels, opened the weight room and set game clocks.

And, occasionally, he has shot hoops with the boys.

“What’s it like to mix it up on the court with, say, Jim Jackson and Chris Jent? A dream and a nightmare.

“There’s no sense in even trying to guard them; they’re gonna score on me no matter what I do,” said Bias, 23, who was captain of the varsity basketball and baseball teams at Margaretta High School. “They’ll pass me the ball, and I’ll shoot my one 3-pointer a (practice) game, but I don’t dare try to drive on them and shoot layups.”

Bias added, “I’m just one of the guys. They rip on me, and I rip on them.”

Playing ball with the nationally ranked Buckeyes has been one of the perks of Bias’ job.

Being OSU’s manager has been a “phenomenal experience,” Bias said. “I’ve watched (All-American) Jimmy Jackson’s career unfold. Every game he’s played, I’ve seen.”

Bias has never scored a point, hauled down a rebound or notched a steal in a game. But, he said proudly, “I’ve been to three NCAA tournaments, gone to Europe, and I have a Big Ten championship ring. He’ll receive a second Big Ten title ring this year.

Bias started his career as a freshman under head manager Ed Kurt, a hometown friend who recruited him for the job.

Two years ago, Bias assumed the post of head manager. He supervises eight assistants.

“Coach (Randy) Ayers always says managers who do good jobs go on to be very successful people,” Bias said. “You can’t learn what I’ve learned in basketball. This is a real-life experience, dealing with different people and different situations. It definitely looks good on a resume. I think it’s gonna help me in whatever I do.”

A communications major, Bias is interested in coaching. His mentor, Kurt, is head basketball coach at Madison Plains High School.

Bias, a native of Sandusky, Ohio, tells the usual stories about lost luggage, late planes and breakdown buses. A winning team makes the hazzles bearable, he said.

He declined to reveal the best stories, but he noted sincerely, “This team is pretty boring,” when it comes to off-court high jinks.

On the road, managers are heckled just as players are. Bias has been called a “water boy” and a “bench warmer.”

“When you’re winning, it’s no problem,” he said.

Indiana University has the most disparaging fans, he said. Northwestern has the most creative.

“They’ll chant slogans like Beat us for 90 minutes, work for us for 40 years.”

Bias hopes his career ends on a high note with a trip to Minneapolis on April 4 and 6.

“Winning the Big Ten is fantastic, but I would definitely love a trip to the Final Four.”
CELEBRATION TIME

Paul Brazeau, left, Ohio State University assistant basketball coach, and OSU senior guard Janaual Brown, center, joined in the victory celebration last night as the third-ranked Buckeyes advanced to the final of the NCAA Southeast Regional with an 80-73 victory over North Carolina. Story on Page 1B.
To fans, they're winners

Thousands greet OSU upon return from loss

Thousands of Ohio State basketball fans braved a cold rain and gave the Buckeyes a warm welcome home outside St. John Arena last night after the team fell one game short of the NCAA Tournament's Final Four.

Ohio State lost to Michigan 75-71 in overtime in the final of the Southeast Regional at Lexington, Ky.

"They didn't have given us a better sea-
son," said Helen Chylak of Grandview Heights, who had been waiting since 6:45 p.m., even though the players weren't scheduled to return until after 9 p.m.

"We were here because we wanted to make the players feel wanted and to know that we appreciated the season," Chylak said.

Nine-year-old Michelle Nisula and her 6-year-old sister, Kristina, bickered with their grandparents, Barbara Trues, under an Ohio State blanket, waiting for the team.

"We were here because we're Buckeye fans," Trues said. Michelle agreed, although Kristina wanted to know, "What are all these people talking about?"

Eight members of the Ohio State women's swim team went to the celebration after watching the game on television.

"Joyce Lightfoot, a junior, brought a sign saying, "We love you Buckeyes," and "Thank you annies. Four great years. Two Big Ten Champions," wrote in the cold rain, the crowd warmed itself with shouts of "H-A-I-O," sang "Carnival Ohio," and even tried a wave.

Then, just before 9 p.m., the team bus arrived and the fans roared their welcome.

Please see BUCKEYES Page 2A

Coach Randy Ayers and the rest of the team filed into St. John Arena followed by the fans. After disappearing into the locker area for several minutes, the team reappeared on the gym floor and was greeted with another roar of approval.

After bugging each other and waving to the fans, the team left the floor, the seniors for the last time in their careers.

Although the Buckeyes lost, they managed to make history.

NCAA officials said the Ohio State-Michigan game not only was the first matchup of two Big Ten teams in a regional final, but also marked the first time in NCAA tournament history that two regional finals have gone into overtime. Duke beat Kentucky 104-101 in overtime Saturday night.

Ohio State was making its first appearance in a regional final in 11 years. That game in 1971 also went into overtime, with the Buckeyes falling to Western Kentucky 81-78.

Ohio State was trying to add a Final Four berth to a list of accomplishments this season that included winning its first outright Big Ten title since 1971.

Jim Jackson earned a first-team spot on the Associated Press All-American team and was named Big Ten player of the year for the second year.

Coach Randy Ayers was named Big Ten coach of the year for the second time. Every starter earned some recognition in voting for the All-Big Ten team.

Ohio State has made eight trips to the Final Four, the last in 1960. The Buckeyes last appeared in the NCAA championship game in 1962, losing to Cincinnati. They won an NCAA title in 1960.
Buckeyes can't find a miracle against Michigan

Final Four dreams die in overtime loss

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

LEXINGTON, Ky. — After 36 minutes of clawing its way up the down staircase against Michigan yesterday, it was a minor miracle that the Ohio State basketball team had a four-point lead to squander.

But squander it the Buckeyes did as a Rupp Arena sellout of 23,124 rode the emotions of another NCAA Tournament donnybrook.

OSU also blew a potential winning possession at the end of regulation before the Wolverines — overwhelming in overtime — captured the Southeast Regional championship game 75-71, advancing to the Final Four for the second time in four years.

“I have to give Michigan's kids an awful lot of credit,” Ohio State coach Randy Ayers said. “They got it done when they needed to over the course of the game. They showed great offensive patience and took us out of any rhythm with their defense.”

For all that, the Wolverines (24-8) and their five freshmen were looking more flaccid than fab until a three-point shot by Chris Jent nicked off the front of the rim.

At that moment, 3:40 remained in regulation and OSU, riding a 13-2 run, was on top 61-57.

“I think that would have finished them,” Jent said. “Lawrence (Funderburke) made a great inside-out pass, and the shot felt good. But all my shots felt good today, and you see the results.”

Jent was 2 of 12 from the field as he scored six points. His string of double-figure performances ended at 16 on the same day that the Buckeyes’ winning streak froze at nine games.

Jalen Rose, named the outstanding player in the regional, hit a 12-foot leaner, and Chris Webber dunked with 1:53 left to tie the score at 61.

Ohio State captain Jamaal Brown restored the lead to the Buckeyes with a 17-foot fadeaway in the key as the clock hit 59 seconds.

But with 31 ticks left, Webber, who had game highs of 28 points and 11 rebounds, sliced to the backboard for a putback of Rose's missed jumper.

With regulation winding down, OSU managed one missed shot, a 14-foot jumper from the left baseline by Jent, in a wild closing sequence that resembled a rugby scrum.

The five-minute extra period resem-
bled an Ann Arbor shooting gallery.

Rose struck from the left of the key, Jimmy King buried a three-pointer from the front and Rose swished two foul shots as the Wolverines forged a 70-65 lead.

"I really don't know how I feel yet," said Rose, a 6-foot-8 point guard whose 20 points gave him 45 in the regional’s last two games.

"I don’t think it will sink in until I get up in the morning and read the paper."

Ohio State (26-6) had lost in OT to Western Kentucky in its most recent Final Eight appearance, in 1971.

OSU managed just one tie in overtime, when Funderburke’s steal and save-in led to a breakaway dunk by Jim Jackson.

But King’s trey followed for a 68-65 Michigan lead. After the free throws by Rose, Jackson’s reverse layup made it 70-67 with 1:44 left.

But the Buckeyes, who defeated Michigan twice on their way to the Big Ten title, were out of miracles.

Webber broke loose from a semi-delay pattern, took a sharp pass from Ray Jackson and dunked for a three-point play.

"Ohio State is a great team," Webber said. "You really can’t say enough about them. When they went ahead by four, I was having flashbacks to the way they beat us in Columbus. But our coaches told us no one could beat us but ourselves."

Funny, but that’s the way Ohio State felt about the way it lost the game.

Jackson, for example, commit-
Michigan crushes Buckeyes’ hopes for Final Four spot

Wolverines slip past Buckeyes in overtime

By Scott Kendrick
Lantern staff writer

LEXINGTON, Ky.—The Buckeyes came so close. Ohio State had what they wanted—10 seconds left in regulation, a tie game and the ball in the hands of All-Ameri-
can Jim Jackson, with a trip to the Final Four on the line.

But Michigan freshman Jalen Rose had other ideas, as he stopped Jackson’s drive to the basket. A Chris Jent 10-
footer at the buzzer clanged off the back of the rim, and the game headed to overtime.

It was all Michigan in overtime, as the Wolverines defeated the Buckeyes 75-71, to steal Ohio State’s ticket to Min-
neapolis.

“I didn’t have a problem with Chris taking the shot,” said OSU Head Coach Randy Ayers. “He’s got some big shots for us.”

Jackson led the Buckeyes with 20 points. Senior captain Jamaal Brown added 16 and Lawrence Funderburke scored 12, as the Big Ten Champions closed the season with a 26-8 record.

Michigan forward Chris Webber led all scorers with 23 points while grabbing a game high 11 rebounds. Rose, the

Ohio State All-American Jim Jackson fires a shot over Michigan defenders in their NCAA tournament fourth-round overtime loss to the Wolverines, 75-71.

Southeast Regional Most Valuable Player, added 20 for the Wolverines, who qualified for the Final Four for the second
time in four years.

In a nip and tuck first half that featured five ties and 14 lead changes, Michigan forced 10 Ohio State turnovers, and
took a six point lead at halftime, 37-31.

“We talked about slowing down the game (at halftime),” Ayers said. “We wanted to get a good look at the basket.”

Ohio State came out with its guns loaded in the second half as Brown and Jent each hit three-pointers in the first
minutes to tie the game at 37.

Michigan’s youngsters did not fold, and they came back to take a 49-42 lead after a fast break layup by Jimmy King.

The teams traded baskets for the next few minutes, and Michigan held on to a seven-
point lead after another King lay-in, 57-50.

Then, the Buckeyes made their move. Ohio State tied the game at 57 when junior guard Alex Davis hit three free
throws after being fouled attempting a three-pointer.

A Funderburke slam gave the Buckeyes the lead, and Jackson added a layup to cap an 11-0 run with 4:21 to play.

But unlike two earlier victories over Michigan, Ohio State could not throw the knock-out punch. The Wolverines
clamped down on defense and tied the game at 61 after a rebound dunk by Webber with just under two minutes to play.

“Down the stretch ... they would never let us get a good look at the basket,” Ayers said.

In the overtime, Michigan went on a timely 7-2 run, keyed by a King three-pointer, putting Michigan up by five,
70-65.

The Buckeyes tried to come back, cutting the lead back to three with a Jackson layup.

Ohio State tried to force a turnover, but Michigan forward Ray Jackson found Webber wide open cutting to the
basket and he hit a layup while being fouled by Jent, sealing the game.

“I thought that Michigan played really well — the way you are supposed to play in the NCAA’s,” Jackson said. “Hats off to them. I hope they represen-
t the Big Ten well.”
OSU ‘family’ mourns lost opportunity

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

An emotional welcome Sunday night from fans crowded into St. John Arena started the healing process for Ohio State’s Big Ten basketball champions, who lost to Michigan 75-71 in overtime in the NCAA Southeast Regional final.

"Certainly we're going to reflect back with a lot of satisfaction in a couple of days," OSU coach Randy Ayers said.

"We played our hearts out and gave the effort. Our seniors have meant so much. I feel bad that I couldn't take them to the Final Four."

The Buckeyes' 26 wins tied the 1962 team for the No. 2 total in school history. Ohio State also has logged 27 wins twice — last season and in 1961.

"It's just sad right now because it has to end, but we really have nothing to be down about," point guard Mark Baker said.

"When you've done something positive for your university, you have nothing to be ashamed of. We made a good run, and we've done a lot for this program."

Even after losing a four-point lead late in regulation, the Buckeyes forced a 63-61 on Jason Brown's clutch jump shot.

Chris Webber tied the score with a rebound basket, and a defection by Jalen Rose scrambled the final play as OSU tried to win at the buzzer.

Then Rose, Jimmy King and Webber hit the big baskets as the Wolverines powered to a 73-71 lead in the OT, gaining a Final Four berth Saturday against Cincinnati in Minneapolis.

"I think what happened in regulation did affect us," Baker said, "because you ought to put a team away when you get them down. We didn't do that. We were up four and didn't execute."

The Buckeyes didn't try to hide their emotions, which seemed more bittersweet than bitter.

"We did a good job, and it's too bad we're not in the Final Four," forward Chris Jent said. "Our season is over and my career is over, and that's too bad."

"But there are going to be a lot of fond memories, a lot of good things for the scrapbook. People can't even take those away from us, because we're like a family."

Brown, also a senior and OSU's captain, sounded as if he can't wait for the family reunions.

"We've done so much sweating together," Brown said. "We've battled it out so much. We've been going to war together for four years."

"The loss is tough enough, but that's almost tougher — the fact that we won't be with each other on the basketball court."

Junior Jim Jackson, who led OSU with 23 points, said the Buckeyes struggled to find consistency even as they fought back from an eight-point deficit to take the lead.

"When we slowed down, we controlled the game," Jackson said. "But at times we tried to do everything at once."

Jackson and sophomore center Lawrence Funderburke totaled 74 and 63 points, respectively, in OSU's four tournament games. They made the All-Southeast Regional team with Webber, Rose and North Carolina center Eric Montross. Rose was named Most Outstanding Player.

"We had one of those games where we gave ourselves several opportunities, and some good shots wouldn't go down for us," Funderburke said. "I'm a competitor and I hurt whenever I lose, but I feel this was a very special year for a lot of guys. Our seniors did a great job. Coach Ayers and the whole staff had us ready for every situation."
A Season to Remember

By Todd Harrell
Lantern sports writer

It was a season to remember.
The 1991-1992 OSU men’s basketball team took all of us, students, fans and alumni, on a five-month, whirlwind, roller coaster ride of the most exciting, breath-taking and heart-pounding action ever displayed by a Buckeye team on the hardwood.

And although the Buckeyes “March to Minnesota” and “Road to the Final Four” ended abruptly on Sunday with a loss in the Southeast Regional finals, it is still a year to treasure.

Backed by an experienced, determined and close-knit group of seniors and led by junior All-American Jim Jackson the Buckeyes roared out of the gates with an 8-1 record.

The awesome force of this team was shown early in the year when the Buckeyes demolished the Chicago State Cougars 116-44. This win set records for most points scored (116) ever by an OSU squad and for the largest margin of victory over an opponent (72).

And who could forget the Big Ten conference opener in St. John Arena versus the Michigan State Spartans when a 6-foot-9 sophomore transfer student laced up his shoes and proved to all that he could play the game as well as, or even better than, some of the veterans of the league.

And what about that game in Bloomington against that band of Hoosiers from Indiana when, with the score seemingly out of reach, the Buckeyes reached down deep and put together perhaps the two greatest minutes of teamwork basketball ever seen in a collegiate contest as they came back to take the lead after outscoring the favored Hoosiers 26-2 in a two minute stretch.

Although the Hoosiers came back and beat the Buckeyes in that game, and went on to defeat the Buckeyes for a second time later in the season, when the regular season was all said and done, the Buckeyes were the ones left holding the 1992 Big Ten championship banner after posting a 15-3 conference mark.

And lastly, who could forget the emotional scene of the five seniors standing side-by-side singing along to the words of their alma mater “Carmen Ohio” after they defeated Illinois in their last home game of the season at St. John Arena.

The dream of winning a national championship may be gone for this year’s basketball Buckeyes but the emotion, excitement and drama of this season will live on in the memories of Buckeye fans for years to come.

THE 1992 OHIO STATE BUCKEYES— 1992 BIG TEN CHAMPIONS.
It was indeed a season to remember.

Jimmy Jackson, Lawrence Funderburke and Jamaal Brown congratulate each other on a job well done in their victory against the University of Connecticut.
Loyal Buckeye fans show their support for the Buckeyes during the second game of the NCAA Southeast Regional Tournament.

Buckeye Coach Randy Ayers holds the ball during a timeout in the game against Michigan.
Jamal Brown goes past a University of Connecticut defender for two points in a second round game in the NCAA Tournament’s Southeast Regional.

Lawrence Funderburke scrambles against Michigan defenders for a loose ball during the Buckeyes’ Final Eight overtime loss.
Jackson named player of year by UPI

Jim Jackson, Ohio State's 6-foot-6 swingman, was chosen yesterday as the United Press International Player of the Year in men's college basketball.

Jackson won over runner-up Christian Laettner, Duke's senior center, in voting by a panel of UPI sportswriters.

No point totals of the voting were announced.

Jackson, a junior from Toledo, is the first Ohio State player chosen for the award since Gary Bradle in 1984. The Buckeyes' Jerry Lucas won it in 1961 and '62.

Ohio State won its second straight Big Ten title with Jackson as the leader. He was named Big Ten Player of the Year for the second straight time.

He compiled team-leading totals of 22.4 points and 6.8 rebounds per game in 1991-92. He scored 718 points in 32 games, the fourth-highest season total in school history. Dennis Hopson ranks first with 758 points in 1987.

Jackson also has moved into fifth on the Buckeyes' career scoring list with 1,785 points. Hopson, who played for Ohio State in 1984-87, heads that list with 2,006 points.

Jackson also had 129 assists and 108 turnovers in the Buckeyes' 26-6 season.

Coach Randy Ayers said Jackson "has had a tremendous impact on our program. He was the kind of player who put our program over the top."

The question now is whether Jackson will return for his senior season.

He's projected as a lottery pick if he bypasses his last year at Ohio State and declares for the NBA draft. Jackson likely will command a multimillion-dollar, multiyear contract from an NBA team.

However, Jackson said he will not make a decision until he discusses such an offer with his parents, Ayers and others he has not identified.

Jerry Walker, a Seton Hall player, watched Jackson score 21 points in a 68-64 loss Jan. 26 to the Pirates in the Meadowlands Arena. Afterward, Walker said, "He's one cool brother."

Jackson also made another All-American team yesterday. He was one of 11 players named in the John Wooden selections.
OSU manager thanks team for the memories

Lenny Roberts
SPORTS COLUMNIST

Williams was the head coach. He was a yeller, a screamer, a motivator and he knew his basketball, too! I won't forget my first road trip to Maui, Hawaii, or the trip to Iowa the year Jay (Burson) broke his neck. Nor will I forget last year's Indiana double-overtime thriller or this year's senior night.

Three years ago coach Williams left. Enter Randy Ayers. From the moment he took the job, 'to this day, Coach Ayers has not changed as a person. Of course, he has to be a disciplinarian at times, but he has the respect of all his players. That is why they go out and work as hard as they do every day. He has drawn a fine line between coach/friend with the players.

I would like to thank Coach Ayers for everything he has done for me. I have learned a lot, not just about the game of basketball, but also about the game of life. I have experienced a lot and will never forget my four years with the program. My biggest memory I will carry away from this place is what a bunch of "CLASS" people are in the program, starting with Coach Ayers himself. He always finds the time to help people out or stop to shake someone's hand and sign an autograph.

Thanks to the rest of the coaches, Paul Brazeau, Les Fertig, Dave Cecutti and Tom Souder. To the secretaries Debbie Cecutti, Debby Hill and Danielle Rogers who were always there if I needed help. To all the managers, Chris, Doug, Ed, Brad, Dan, Dave, Steve, Joe and Matt, because whenever you spend 40 hours a week with a group of people you tend to get on each others nerves. But I thank all the managers for being there and making it a great season.

Thanks to the athletic counselors Larry Romanoff, John Macko and Kate Riffe for keeping my academics on track. To our equipment managers Brice Westfall and John Bozik. You guys were great.

Last but not least. THANK YOU to the players. You guys have been my family away from home. Jamaal, Chris, Mark, Steve and Bill, we have spent four of the best years of our lives together. Everyday for four years we have made St. John Arena home and I want to wish you guys the best of luck as we move on. The progress you have made for this program will never be forgotten, 17-13 as freshmen, to 27-4 as juniors and 26-6 as seniors. Back-to-back Big Ten Championships and sweet sixteen appearances, plus a 30-1 record at home the last two years.

Jimmy Jackson, with all the attention you have received the past few years, you could have easily become arrogant and selfish but you haven't. The only thing that has changed about you is that you have matured into a very "classy" man and I want to thank you for being a close friend and a huge part of my life.

To the younger players Jimmy R. and Doug (give me three). Tom, Alex, Jamie, Rickey and Lawrence, promise me one thing: you will never forget that feeling after the Michigan game on your way to the NCAA Championship in 1992.

Thanks Ohio State Basketball, it has been great and the memories will live forever.

GO BUCKS!!!
Jackson already missed by OSU basketball fans

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

A banquet audience of about 1,500 in St. John Arena last night said goodbye to the seniors on the Ohio State basketball team and clearly hoped they'll be saying hello again to a junior who missed the occasion.

Guard Jim Jackson, a consensus All-American, was in Los Angeles for the Wooden Award ceremonies. His parents, James and Sandra Jackson of Toledo, accepted the Jerry Lucas Award on his behalf. It is voted annually to OSU's most valuable player.

Coach Randy Ayers said Jackson — who led the Buckeyes to a 26-6 record, an outright Big Ten championship and a final eight berth in the NCAA Tournament — will decide early next week whether to return for his senior season.

"There are a couple of people from the NBA we need to talk to," Ayers said. "We have to coordinate with the Buckeyes and their schedule, but hopefully we can get together and talk a little bit about his future.

It was a simpler matter for the crowd to salute the five Buckeyes who finished their careers guards Jamaal Brown and Mark Baker, swingman Chris Jent, center Bob Knight and forward Steve Hall.

Brown, OSU's captain, was named best defensive player. Jent won the John Havlicek Award as most inspirational player. Baker was honored as the most assists — 152, the third-highest season total in school history.

"If you were going to write how this class would finish their careers, you couldn't ask for much more positive note than winning the Big Ten outright and advancing to the final eight," Ayers said.

"They'll be remembered more for how hard they worked than for the wins and losses," Ayers knows the rational paw will become an inquisitive one next season, even if Jackson stays.

Baker, Jent and Brown started all but one game and Robinson logged 29 starts. Game-tested returnees will include center Lawrence Funderburke, guards Alex Davis and Jamie Skeelson, and forward Tom Brandewie.

The only other returning guard will be Doug Etzler, but Ayers said forward Jimmy Radiff may see action at shooting guard next season. Forwards Riksey Dudley and Joe Reid also will be back.

Joining the mix next season will be 6-foot-9 forward/center Antonio Watson, who is gaining academic eligibility this year, and four freshmen — 6-11 Nate Willouph of Upper Arlington; 6-1 Greg Simpson of Lima, Ohio; 6-7 Charles "Killer" Macon of Michigan City, Ind.; and 6-1 Gerald Eaker of Westchester, Ill.

Another freshman-to-be, 6-4 Otis Winston of Toronto, Ohio, has said he plans to walk on.

"It's going to be an extremely tall team," Ayers said. "You have to wonder if we'll be able to go out and apply defensive pressure the way we have. I hope we'll always be able to do that — our basic philosophy won't change — but you do make adjustments, as we did in becoming more of a finesse team this season.

If he had been handed a script in October, Ayers said, he would have settled happily for Jackson in the middle of the court, the ball in his hand, with the clock winding under 10 seconds in a tie game.

That scenario presented itself in the Southeast Regional final against Michigan. But regulation ended in a 53-53 tie after a Jackson pass was deflected. The Wolverines won 75-71 in overtime and advanced to the NCAA championship game, losing to Duke 71-51.

"That was depressing, for lack of a better word," Ayers said. "It's frustrating to be right there. You couple that with the end of the season and losing five good people from your program, and it was a rough couple of days."

Ayers defended Jackson's NCAA Tournament play, in which he averaged 18.5 points but shot 36.1 percent (27 of 77) and committed 20 turnovers, including nine in the regional final.

"I think he had a good tournament," Ayers said. "Everybody looks at his percentage, but that happens to a lot of great players."

Ayers said the Buckeyes made major progress by winning their last six Big Ten games — three on the road and defeating Connecticut and North Carolina in the NCAA second and third rounds.

"Connecticut was a huge win, because people put the tag on us about playing a physical Big East team," Ayers said. "With North Carolina's mystique, and with our semifinal loss last year, that was another big hurdle for us."

Ayers praised the defense played by Michigan, which had lost two previous games to the Buckeyes.

The Wolverines' late collapse against Duke made OSU fans wonder if the Buckeyes would have fared better in the Final Four.

"I guess we'll never know," Ayers said, smiling.
OSU men's basketball honors awarded

By Scott Kendrick
Lantern sports writer

The 1992 OSU men's basketball team capped the season with its annual appreciation banquet Wednesday night at St. John Arena.

Junior All-American Jim Jackson garnered the most awards, even though he was in Los Angeles for the Wooden Award ceremonies.

- Jackson placed third in the balloting for top college basketball player behind Christian Laettner of Duke and Shaquille O'Neal of Louisiana State for the award.
- Jackson also won the Jerry Lucas Award for OSU's most valuable player.
- His parents, James and Sandra Jackson, accepted the award on his behalf, as well as awards for best free-throw percentage, the best rebounder and the Alpha Phi Alpha award for the most valuable player of the home Michigan game.
- Also receiving awards were:
  - Junior forward Tom Brandewie, the Fred H. Taylor Award for academic excellence;
  - Senior forward Chris Jent, the John Havlicek Award for most inspirational player.
  - Jent finished his collegiate career with the most three-pointers (112) in OSU history.
- Sophomore guard Jamie Skeleton most improved player;
- Senior guard Jamaal Brown, best defensive player. Brown finished third on the all-time steals list with 158, second in three-pointers (109) and tied for first in most games started (126).
- Senior guard Mark Baker, won the award for most assists. Baker finished his OSU career with the third-highest assist total (424) in Buckeye history.

The crowd of about 1,500 was entertained by speeches from the five senior players and three senior managers. Head Coach Randy Ayers, OSU President E. Gordon Gee, Athletic Director Jim Jones and former OSU great Jerry Lucas also spoke.

One of the most stirring moments of the evening occurred when senior Bill Robinson recited a poem he had composed in honor of the seniors:

We came here as boys; how naive we were then.
The ups and the downs of college basketball are over; and now we are men.
We came here as several people - from Canton, Texas, Jersey, Dayton and Payne,
And now we are a family, we're brothers to count on, again and again.
I say brothers, because to me that's what we are.
And no matter where our lives take us, we'll never be too far.
Topick up a phone to just say hello;
Or to hop in a car for a visit because one of us is feeling low.
You all mean so much to me, and I know your feelings are the same;
Imagine, all of this from basketball.
What a wonderful game.

Now we leave this school with two more banners hanging from the levels far above;
We helped do this through our sweat and blood, our dedication, and our love.
Together, we've accomplished something special, and something we have made;
It is something we will always remember every time we hear Carmen Ohio played.
So lift your heads with me brothers, while our final moments are still alive;
It is true Michigan has good freshmen, but in my heart, we are the Fab Five.

The evening ended with the seniors raising the new 1992 Big Ten Championship Banner in the upper deck of St. John Arena.
OSU basketball banners stolen

Four OSU championship banners, valued at $1400, were recovered a few hours after being reported stolen from St. John Arena early Sunday morning, OSU police said.

The stolen items included a 1971 men's, a 1991 men's, a 1987 women's and a 1989 women's championship banner, OSU Police Deputy Chief Ronald Michalec said.

The banners were cut down, but the Lantern could not confirm any damage.

A caller told police he saw two men running from St. John Arena carrying trash bags. The caller reported the license number of the vehicle the two men left in and the police were able to trace it, Michalec said.

The vehicle was traced to a fraternity house's parking lot, where it was found unlocked, with the stolen banners draped across the front seat, Michalec said.

Michalec would not name the fraternity because the identity of the caller is under investigation and there is a chance that the fraternity was set up.
St. John banners removed as safety precaution

By Amy Keller
Lantern staff writer

Spring is in the air, but the OSU men's and women's basketball championship banners aren't. All of the banners that once decorated St. John Arena have been taken down as a safety precaution after four banners were stolen April 26, said Richard Sloan, assistant to the athletic director.

Police still have no leads about the banners that were recovered after being reported stolen from St. John Arena Sunday morning, OSU Deputy Police Chief Ronald Michalec said.

The banners were damaged when they were cut down from the top ledge of a balcony, assistant men's basketball Coach Dave Cecutti said. If the banners are replaced, they will probably be put in a spot unreachable by the general public, he said.

Sloan said the banners cannot be repaired and must be replaced by the athletic department at about $400 each.

The banners were the 1971 men's, 1991 men's, 1987 women's, and 1989 women's championship banners, Michalec said. An unknown caller gave OSU police the license plate number of a car he saw two men with trash bags run toward after they left St. John Arena.

The vehicle was traced to a fraternity house parking lot, where it was found unlocked with the stolen banners draped across the front seat, Michalec said.

Michalec would not name the fraternity because the identity of the caller is under investigation, and police said there is a chance the fraternity was set up.

Cecutti said the 1991 men's basketball championship banner was also stolen last year at this time.

Sloan said the 1991 banner that was stolen last year was never recovered and the 1991 banner stolen Sunday was the replacement from the first theft.

Sloan said he does not know if there is a connection between Sunday's incident and last year's theft.
TEARS FOR YEARS AS A BUCKEYE

Buckeye basketball superstar Jim Jackson sheds some tears over leaving his teammates. The All-American player announced yesterday he would bypass his senior season and make himself available for the NBA draft. Story on Page 1E.
Jackson says sense of family spurred decision

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Writer

Ohio State junior Jim Jackson is a business major, but he said yesterday that the state of the NBA marketplace was the deciding factor in his decision to start a pro career year early.

“Our family has never struggled,” Jackson said. “If I needed money, I had all I had to call home and ask. Getting a great deal of money wasn’t the most important thing.

“I just want to give something back to my family. They did things like send me to basketball camps instead of taking a vacation. And I want to put something back into the black community in Toledo. This is another challenge for me, to move on to the next level.”

However, the risk to Jackson’s potential earnings was his OSU career was never far from the minds of his father, James, a Toledo auto dealer, and OSU coach Randy Ayers.

James Jackson took out a $2.7 million insurance policy on Jim when his son was a freshman.

“I wanted to see him have this chance,” James said. “You have to read between the lines on these insurance policies. Too much have to break both legs to collect.”

When Jim suffered a foot stress fracture during the Pan American Games in August, Ayers, an assistant coach for the United States team, ruled him out just before the U.S. played Puerto Rico in a semifinal.

“To watch him have a possible career-threatening injury in Cuba, that was tough,” Ayers said. “He was frustrated and I was frustrated.”

“Jim was a mature, thoughtful, well-prepared individual in the eighth grade,” Launche said. “The word for this is personable.”

Jackson options for 'green' NBA pastures

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Writer

The prepared statement was simple enough, and no surprise: Jim Jackson announced yesterday that he will make himself available for the NBA draft, bypassing his senior basketball season at Ohio State.

The crying spell was something else again.

About 15 minutes into a press conference at Woody Hayes Athletic Center, Jackson - an All-American guard who is OSU’s No. 3 career scorer - let his eyes stray over the crowd and spotted two of his contemporaries, James Brown and Mark Bealer.

“I have no regrets,” Jackson said. “The (Big Ten) titles show that. We started off rocky and young, trying to build a future where we’d be in the spotlight sometime.

“We got better collectively, not as individuals, and I wouldn’t change anything at all. I’ve just been a team player. People are the most important thing, James and Mark and all over there, the coaching staff - this was a tough decision.

“That’s when Jackson lost it. He continued in a quantum voice as his mother, Sandra, put her hand on his back.

“Remember me, how much I love you, man,” Jackson said, looking at Brown and Bealer. “It’s tough, man, but these are times of anger. They’re tears of joy. I cry because of the respect I have for them.

Jackson said he arrived at his decision about three weeks ago but waited to tell his parents until he had checked his options as thoroughly as possible.

“I had to be selfish here, and consider the pros and cons of what’s best for my family,” Jackson said. “But the most important thing was staying in the NBA. I could go anywhere in the top four to six, or two, depending on who’s picking.

“Sandra put it a bit more concisely than I was, to help get me where I am now. I can help my family out and repay them a little bit for all they did.

“Looking back, I was afraid I’d lose myself if I had accomplished what I wanted and done the best I could at Ohio State, and the answers were yes, I’ve got mixed emotions, but it’s time to move on, to get a better feel for myself in appreciating the game of basketball.

Estimates of Jackson’s potential income from a five-year NBA contract have ranged as far as $50 million and as high as $80 million.

“This is tough for me,” Ohio State coach Randy Ayers said. “I’ve known Jim for eight years, since he was an eighth-grader. There was no guarantee if he returned that he would make the Final Four or improve his draft position.

“I felt he was ready, but I didn’t push him one way or the other. I told him the things we could do to improve him from a basketball standpoint, if he decided to stay, and also some of the positives about going. I felt he was in a tough situation.

“Jim was a mature, thoughtful, well-prepared individual in the eighth grade,” Launche said. “The word for this is personable.”

From left, Sandra Jackson, Randy Ayers, Colin Launche and Jim Jackson after news conference.

“We just kind of drafted it onto one another, and he sought my advice in academics. He is an example for all the young people in Toledo, a reasoning stick that never stops,” Schroeder said. He has "analyzed every move" of Jackson’s games since he left Muncie.

“The NBA draft is not just getting an All-American,” Schroeder said, “they’re getting a guy who cares about other people, and that’s what makes him great.”
Ticket offer to OSU

From staff and wire reports

The NCAA is fining the University of Cincinnati $25,000 for athletic director Rick Taylor's attempt to entice Ohio State into a home-and-home basketball series in exchange for extra tickets to a tournament.

Taylor tried to get Ohio State athletic director Jim Jones to agree to the intrastate matchup by offering Ohio State 300 tickets to the Southeast Regional NCAA Tournament at Cincinnati in March. Jones refused.

Jones was unavailable for comment yesterday, but said at the time, "I think a home-and-home series deserves more than whether or not we get held up for 300 tickets."

Taylor said, "It (the suggestion) was totally off the cuff, and the NCAA knows that. I admitted it from the first: I was wrong. I thought I had an opportunity to push UC and Ohio State into playing. If I had to do it over again, I certainly wouldn't do it."

Taylor said his school made about $98,000 as host of the tournament. The NCAA penalized the university by withhold-


costs UC $25,000

ing $25,000, reducing the school's cut to about $75,000, Taylor said.

The NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Committee — which also selects the NCAA Tournament teams — recommended the fine. The NCAA Administration Committee approved.

NCAA regional tickets are the property of the NCAA, not the host sites or schools, so, in essence, UC was offering tickets that didn't belong to it.

Taylor said he appealed but did not expect it to be granted.

"We're not necessarily appealing the penalty. I was wrong, I admit that," Taylor said. "We're more appealing the amount. Their rationale (on how much to fine the school) was based on our ticket prices and the fact that it became public. But I think it's a dead issue."

Cincinnati and Ohio State have not played since the Bearcats beat the Buckeyes 71-59 in the 1962 NCAA championship game. They have not played in the regular season since the opening game of the 1921-22 season, which Cincinnati won 33-17.
SPECIAL
BIG TEN
CONFERENCE EDITION

Extensive Reference
Section Inside

1992-93
NCAA
PREVIEW

Ohio State's Lawrence Funderburke

REBUILDING
THE BUCKEYES
Ohio State's
Randy Ayers
few moments offer quite the bit-
ing each of an overtime loss to a confer-
ence chum with the Final Four at stake.

Just on the off chance that Ohio State
needs more salt for its wounds, the Buckeyes
are among the handful of programs that will
take (and fail) the inaugural Fab Five Unreality
Test.

Michigan became the first team to send five
freshman starters to the NCAA tournament
semifinals when it defeated Ohio State 75-71
in the Southeast regional title game March 28.

Instantly — and unfairly — the Wolverines
quarterback Chris Webber. Jalen Rose, Juwan
Howard, Jimmy King and Ray Jackson became
a measuring stick for every "Super Group" to
follow.

It's unfair only in the sense of being a mis-
mash.

Not only is this record a lock to become the
36-game hitting streak of college
basketball, but a vast majority of
highly praised
recruiting classes
— including the
one just enrolled
at Ohio State —
will contract
sophomore
itis
without having
filled all five spots
in a starting line-
up.

For Ohio State
coach Randy
Ayers, though, the
Buckeyes' recruiting haul is miracle
enough considering the circumstances.

The overtime thriller with
Michigan was the
last game for five
seniors who had
combined for 294
career starts and
for Junior Jim
Jackson, the two-
time Big Ten play-
er of the year, who
left school early
and was made the
No. 4 pick in the
NBA draft by the
Dallas Mavericks.

"On paper, obviously, we like
these freshmen,"
Ayers said. "The
opportunity to
work with this
group is exciting. But we've got to take our
time and install the basics. You can't try to go
from Step A to Step C with a bunch this
young.

The Buckeyes' harvest — ranked third
nationally behind Kentucky and Georgia by
recruiting analyst Bob Gibbons of Lenoir,
North Carolina — conforms to Fab fashion by
having one of each: 6-1 Greg Simpson (point
guard); 6-6 Derek Anderson (off guard); 6-7
Charles "Killer" Macon (small forward); 6-11
Nate Wilbourne (power forward) and 6-11
Gerald Eaker (center).

But the defending Big Ten champions' cup-
board is not so bare that those rookies could
totally supplant a lineup of returnees led by 6-9
Lawrence Funderburke (center); 6-1 Alex
Davis or 6-0 Doug Ezrul (point); 6-2 Jamie
Skelton (off guard); 6-9 Jimmy Ratliff (small
forward) and 6-8 Tom Brandewie or 6-7 Rick-
ey Dudley (power forward).

It gets better, though no less confusing.

Based on his play in a Columbus summer
league, 6-9 Antonio Watson, who spent his
freshman season satisfying Proposition 48
guidelines, may be impossible to keep out of
the starting lineup.

To sort through the sudden morass of unas-
signed roles and unproven talent, Ayers will
call on the usual intangibles from his only
seniors, Davis and Brandewie, and the super-
star potential of Funderburke, the once-
nomadic transfer who led the team in blocked
shots (55) while averaging 12.2 points and 6.2
rebounds.

"Either loss — Jim Jackson or the five
seniors — would have been difficult in itself,
but the combined impact is huge," Ayers
said. "We're starting all over again. But I
think Alex and Tom will give us good leader-
ship.

"Lawrence is the guy who has to step for-
ward, elevate his game and have a great year for
us. We want to get him facing the basket more
and move him around so he can use his great
quickness."

Davis, who logged 15 starts as a freshman
in 1989-90, returned from obscurity midway
ROSTER

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<td>51</td>
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<td>215</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>Nate Wilbourne</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>6-11</td>
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Rickey Dudley quickly drew comparisons last year to his predecessor in the middle for the Buckeyes, Perry Carter, who once was voted by Columbus Monthly readers as possessing the city’s best body. A promising third-year high school player, Dudley was recognized as the Class 4A football player of the year at Henderson (Texas) H.S. in 1990.

Through last season by teaming with Skelton in a double-sub unit to spell starters Mark Baker and Jamaal Brown.

“Alex can play the point, but you also have to look at Ettler,” Ayers said. “Jamie really has the shooter’s mentality you like to see in an off guard. He had a great game for us against North Carolina (an 80-73 South regional semifinal win).”

Simpson averaged more than 30 points each of his last two seasons at Lima, Ohio.

“Greg had to shoot 25 or 30 times a game for his team to be successful, which is not the role he’ll perform for us,” Ayers said. “I like what I’ve seen the last two or three years — I think he’s very coachable. He’s wiry-strong, with good body control and good range on his shot.”

Ratliff, who spent two years as Jackson’s swingman understudy, will have a head start on two versatile freshmen. Macon and Anderson, for the small forward spot.

Macon, at 230 pounds, has the build of a bench with his board work and medium-range shooting.

Wilbourne, noted for a shooting touch that extends to three-point range, and Eaker, who averaged nearly six blocked shots, are the skyscrapers on what may be the league’s tallest team overall.

But it could be Watson, a top 20 recruit in 1991, who lines up next to Funderburke for the season-opening tip against Ohio University on December 1.

“We really liked Antonio coming out of high school,” Ayers said. “He’s a 6-9 player who can run the floor, a good-passing big man with great hands.

“He’s done a good job for us in the classroom. Now it’ll be exciting to see if he develops into the player we think he can.”

It will be an upset if this aggregation doesn’t develop into a Big Ten contender. But Ayers, 36, knows there may be a one-season hiccup before he can follow his own daunting act.

Since the 17th game of Ayers’ rookie baptism three seasons ago, Ohio State has played .816 basketball (62-14). His NCAA tournament record of 6-3 includes two regional No. 1 seedings and a progression from final 32 to final 16 to final eight.

OSU’s two straight Big Ten titles are its first back-to-back crowns since Fred Taylor’s run of five straight from 1960-64, and the final eight berth was the first since 1971.

Among Big Ten teams, only Indiana, at 74-23, has a better record in the ’90s than Ohio State’s 70-23, and in league play the Buckeyes hold sway at 40-14 to the Hoosiers’ 37-17.

“This year we’re going to need patience from the staff, the players and all the people who support our program,” Ayers said.

“The November 1 start gives us less time to prepare, and that’s always a concern when you consider yourself a teaching program. We have to hope that we’re starting to come together in January and that we can carry that through into February and March.”

By January the Buckeyes will have faced North Carolina and Southern Cal at home and West Virginia, Oregon State and either Brigham Young or Oregon on the road.

So the last two preconference records (10-0 and 8-1) appear out of reach, and so does a successful title defense.

“Naturally you look at Michigan and Indiana coming off the Final Four, and I think Iowa has to be the No. 3 pick because of Acie Earl alone,” Ayers said.

“It’s enough to keep you from being complacent, let’s put it that way. But we think we can be competitive. It should be fun.”

Fun is something less than Fab, but it will have to do for now.

SCHEDULE

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<td>Nov. 24</td>
<td>RUSSIAN NATIONAL TEAM *</td>
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<td>NORTH CAROLINA</td>
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<td>Dec. 28</td>
<td>vs. Oregon State #</td>
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<td>Dec. 29</td>
<td>vs. Brigham Young or Oregon #</td>
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<td>Mar. 13</td>
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* exhibition
# Far West Classic, Portland, Ore.
Ayers cancels Midnight Mania

By Todd Lamb
Lantern sports writer

Midnight Mania, the event that tips off the OSU men’s basketball team’s season, has been cancelled.

“What?”

That’s right. Coach Randy Ayers has decided to cancel the event after the NCAA shortened this season’s practice schedule by two weeks.

The new rule prohibits college hoop teams from practicing before Nov. 1 in hopes that players would be more established as students later in the season, Ayers said.

“There is no question, with our young team, that (the decision) will hurt us,” Ayers said. “We will need more time on the court to come together as a team.”

The decision by the NCAA, coupled with the six players Ohio State must orient into the program before its first exhibition game Nov. 17 made Ayers decide it would be best for the team not to have Midnight Mania this season.

Ayers said that the cancellation is not permanent, and he expects the event to return next year.

This year, Ayers is planning two two-hour practices for the first day and doesn’t want to keep the team out late the night before.

Midnight Mania, a tradition started in 1987, was an event that began at 12:01 a.m. on the first day of practice and gave fans a preview of what the team had in store for the upcoming season.

The event, which packed an estimated 8,000 fans into St. John Arena last year, featured a scrimmage between players to show off individual talents.

“Our goal is to put the best team on the floor, I hope that students will be able to understand that.”

—OSU men’s basketball coach Randy Ayers

In the past, there have been additional opportunities to see the team, especially after home football games during its practice schedule. Ayers said this would continue.

Ayers stressed that student participation is a big part of the program and said the team has a commitment to students.

Student seating has increased this year by 300 seats per game, bringing the total number of student seats to 4,000 per game, Ayers said.
Meet the team

The OSU men’s basketball team will hold “Meet the Team” night on Sunday night at St. John Arena.

The event was designed to take the place of the usual “Midnight Mania,” which Coach Randy Ayers canceled this year as the result of an NCAA decision shortening practice time by two weeks.

The event will be much like Midnight Mania, said Bob Goldring, assistant sports information director. Fans will be able to get autographs and see an intrasquad scrimmage, he said.

The event begins at 5:25 p.m. on Sunday with an autograph session. Fans will be able to have members of the 1992-93 team sign pictures.

Following the autograph session, there will be three separate contests, including a “Dash for Cash,” a three-point contest and a free throw contest.

Team introductions will be at 7 p.m. followed by the scrimmage.

It will be the first opportunity for the general public to see this year’s squad, which consists of seven newcomers, including the Big Ten’s best recruiting class of the season.
NCAA rule brings AIDS prevention to basketball

By Tracey Ward
Lantern sports writer

Along with the recent NBA attempts for a new ruling to enforce mandatory AIDS testing, a new Big Ten Conference and NCAA ruling prevents any player with an open wound to play until cleared by a team physician or trainer.

The ruling affects Division I, II and III men's and women's basketball.

Assistant Commissioner Rich Falk said the clarification of the rule, published Nov. 16, states, "an official who sees an open wound on a player or uniform can stop play, so that the wound will be attended to or sit out until next dead ball."

Because any player with a sign of a cut or blood on a uniform can be removed from the game at any time, the rule can be competitively advantageous and disadvantageous.

"There is a concern for key players being removed at key times of play which could be a disadvantage for the team," said OSU Men's Basketball Coach Randy Ayers.

"The NCAA will be coming out with more clarification on these types of situations later this week," Ayers said.

Players in all sports are being lectured on the risks of AIDS and the HIV virus. Because the cost of mandatory AIDS testing is $40 a person, mandatory testing is not seen as a possibility in the near future.

"The expense is incredible," said Dr. Robert Murphy, OSU's team physician.

Other problems are that the HIV virus cannot be detected until six months after initial infection, Murphy said. He said that in order for mandatory testing to be effective, players would have to be tested every six months.

The solution for the NCAA is for players to avoid any kind of contact with blood during play.

"The chance of having contact with blood is infinitesimal," Murphy said.

A new solution has been provided by the NCAA that dries blood instantaneously on uniforms.

"There is definitely a need to take some extra jerseys on away games," Ayers said.

Schools will have the choice to change a uniform without penalty.
Captains have big task as OSU looks to rebuild

By Todd Lamb
BBB staff writer

With the loss of five seniors and two-time All-American Jim Jackson, OSU Coach Randy Ayers knew this would be a rebuilding year.

Ayers managed to grab the nation's third best recruiting class, according to recruiting guru Bob Gibbons, but if he wants to pick up where he left off last year, he will need to rely on his older, more experienced players.

This season, the Buckeyes are guided by Tom Brandewie and Alex Davis, the team's only two seniors.

Ayers is counting on Brandewie and Davis to work with the newcomers to rebuild what has been a successful program.

"Their role, as captains, is to keep our ball club together through tough times," Ayers said.

"Alex and Tom have been through it the last three years. They understand what it takes," Ayers said. "I see them talking to the young guys during practice and that's a positive."

With the loss of six key players, basketball experts do not predict the Buckeyes chalking up a third straight Big Ten championship. In fact, many don't see Ohio State finishing within the top six spots in the conference.

"We've got to pull through it," Ayers said.

"There are certainly going to be some tough times. Hopefully Tom and Alex will step forward to give us that leadership we need." Both Brandewie and Davis were helpful in the Buckeyes' efforts in the pre-conference schedule.

Brandewie, who has been averaging 4.5 points per game, provided a career high 11 points in the Buckeyes' 60-54 win over Bowling Green (Dec. 12). He also grabbed five rebounds against the Falcons.

Spending most of his playing time inside at one of the two post positions, the 6-foot-9 forward from Fort Laramie has proved to be an excellent rebounder. Ten of his 24 rebounds have been on the offensive end of the floor. Last season, 28 of his 57 rebounds came from that end.

Brandewie said the seven newcomers will play a large part in how much success the Buckeyes have this season.

"When you have seven new guys on the team, you've got to get some production from those guys," Brandewie said. "They're coming in and rebounding the ball well and are doing the things we ask."

Davis returns to the starting lineup after starting in 15 games his freshman year, in which he averaged 10 points a game. His play...

OSU senior captain Tom Brandewie scores against Wright State.

The Buckeyes' effectiveness was reduced following a knee injury in the summer following his freshman season.

The 6-foot-1 guard from Cincinnati Forest Park High School is almost flawless at the free throw line, maintaining a 91.2 percent career free throw percentage of the Buckeyes. Davis' miss against Wright State (Dec. 16) was his first missed free throw in two years.

Davis scored in double figures in the first four Buckeye wins, but was held to just four points against West Virginia (Dec. 19).

Davis said he does not mind that critics have low expectations of this year's team, although it is a different atmosphere than that of the last two years.

"It's nice to be the underdog," Davis said. "We'll just have to go out and prove everybody wrong."

Davis, the most experienced returning player, said he expects a lot of upsets at the hands of the Buckeyes because their opponents will not take them as seriously as they have in the past.

Freshman forward Charles "Killer" Macon said he and the other newcomers look to Brandewie and Davis to provide team leadership.

"They definitely keep us together, especially when we get out of sync," Macon said.
**1992-93 SCHEDULE**

**NOVEMBER**
- Tue. 17 LAFAYETTE HUSTLERS (EX)
- Tue. 24 RUSSIAN NATIONAL TEAM (EX)

**DECEMBER**
- Tue. 1 OHIO UNIVERSITY
- Sat. 5 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
- Sat. 12 BOWLING GREEN
- Wed. 16 WRIGHT STATE
- Sat. 19 at West Virginia
- Tue. 22 NORTH CAROLINA
- Mon-Tue. 28-29 at Far West Classic, Portland, OR
- 28 Ohio State vs. Oregon State
- 28 BYU vs. Oregon
- 29 Coronation Game
- 29 Championship Game

**JANUARY**
- Sat. 2 ILLINOIS-CHICAGO
- Tue. 5 at Penn State
- Sat. 9 IOWA
- Wed. 13 MICHIGAN STATE
- Wed. 20 at Wisconsin
- Sun. 24 at Indiana
- Tue. 26 at Michigan
- Sat. 30 ILLINOIS

**FEBRUARY**
- Wed. 3 PURDUE
- Sat. 6 PENN STATE
- Wed. 10 at Northwestern
- Sat. 13 at Michigan State
- Tue. 16 at Iowa
- Sat. 20 WISCONSIN
- 23 INDIANA
- Sun. 28 MICHIGAN

**MARCH**
- Sat. 6 at Illinois
- Wed. 10 MINNESOTA
- Sat./Sun. 13/14 at Purdue

*All Game Times are EST*

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**1992-93 OHIO STATE BUCKEYES**

**FRESHMAN FACTS**

**DEREK ANDERSON**
-Born in Louisville, Ky.
-Position: Guard
-Personal note: He grew up in the shadow of Bo Ryan, the Buckeyes' all-time leading scorer.

**GERALD EAKER**
-From Bellefonte, PA
-Position: Forward
-Personal note: He's a versatile player who can play both forward spots.

**CHARLES MACON**
-From Columbia, SC
-Position: Guard
-Personal note: He's a hardworking player with a strong work ethic.

**GREG SIMPSON**
-From Lima, O.
-Position: Guard
-Personal note: He's a strong leader on the court and in the classroom.

**OTIS WINSTON**
-From Columbia, O.
-Position: Forward/Centre
-Personal note: He's a consistent scorer and rebounder.

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**TITLE WINNERS**

After sharing the Big Ten title two years ago, Ohio State won its first outright championship since 1971 last year, posting a 15-3 mark in league play. The 1992 and 1993 crowns were the Buckeyes' first back-to-back titles since the 1963 and '64 seasons. Over the years, Ohio State has won 15 Big Ten Championships, 10 undisputed crowns.

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**THE BIG TEN'S BEST**

With a 40-14 conference ledger the past three years, the Buckeyes own the best record in the Big Ten during the 1990's. Indiana and Michigan State are tied for second at 37-17. Ohio State is 30-6 past two years.
Brown returns to OSU as coach and as student

By Todd Lamb
Lantern sports writer

Former OSU men's basketball player Jamaal Brown is back with the team.

No, your eyes aren't going bad. You read it correctly. Jamaal Brown is back with the Buckeye basketball team, but not as a player. He's a coach.

Brown, one of the five seniors who left the Buckeyes last season after leading Ohio State to two consecutive Big Ten championships, has rejoined his former team as a student assistant on Randy Ayers' staff.

The decision to use Brown in this capacity was made by Ayers and was agreed upon by the rest of the coaching staff, said Dave Cecutti, an OSU assistant coach.

Brown re-enrolled at Ohio State this quarter after pursuing a career in the professional ranks. After trying out for NBA teams, Brown played nine games with the Columbus Horizon of the CBA, the official development league of the NBA, but was released in December.

"We're happy to see Jamaal return (to Ohio State)," Cecutti said. "We'd like to see all of our former players get a degree."

Cecutti said Brown will help break down game films for the Buckeyes and man the phones to help in underclass recruiting.

On the court, Brown will help coach the perimeter players and will be available to help the younger players further develop their game.

"I will kind of take the young players under my wing so the young guys don't take something coach (Ayers) says too personally," Brown said.

In a television interview during Wednesday night's game at Wisconsin, Brown said it is hard for the players he used to play with to now get used to his new role.

"We're not going to call you Coach yet. You don't deserve it," Brown said the older players tell him.

But he said the new guys have a lot of respect for him.

Brown said he is not pursuing a career in coaching right now, "but it's too early to tell."

He would like to return to the pros, but he wanted to return and get his degree, he said.

"I have a goal that I want to reach and I'm going to set my mind to it," Brown said. "Sometimes you have to take the scenic route to get where you want to go."
1968 Buckeyes had a special magic all their own

Somewhere around the house, Fred Taylor still has the Sunday, March 17, 1968, edition of the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader. It's the one with all the ads wishing Adolph Rupp and his Kentucky Wildcats good luck and a great time in California. It's the one the morning after the night before. It's the one that also tells all about The Shot that ruined everything.

"I always liked Adolph," Taylor said. "We made a lot of trips together for the coaches association. He liked to come, but he had a marvelous sense of humor."

Not that night. That night in Memorial Coliseum in Lexington, Rupp sending out a quick hand and said, "Gawd, Freddie, that's a heluva way to lose a game."

1968. The year of the Tet offensive. The year Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated. The year Lyndon B. Johnson threw in the towel and Richard Milhous Nixon came to the presidency. A turbulent year in U.S. history — and the year that the Ohio State Buckeyes beat Kentucky on its home court to earn a trip to the Final Four.

No Ohio State team has been there since. One of the members of the team is dead. The rest have grown from young men to middle age. The coach has long since been retired. The Shot — and what led up to it — is something they'll never forget.

"I played on a state championship team in high school, and on a gold medal team in the Olympics," Bill Hosket said. "I played on an NBA championship team with the Knicks. But because of what it meant to the team and to me then and later, I'd have to say that game topped everything."

Dick Fenlon

No ordinary team — those last-guy-to-do-it Buckeyes of 25 years ago who were honored yesterday at halft ime of Ohio State's game with Penn State in St. John Arena. Three times earlier in the 1960s — with Ohio State's only NCAA championship team of 1960 and the runner-up teams in '61 and '62 — the Buckeyes had been there under Taylor. But that was basically the same team — the team of Jerry Lucas and John Havlicek and Mel Nowell, et al. That was the team that rarely if ever lost. This was the team that managed somehow to lose at home to Cornell and at Hawaii along the way — that ate its final meal and mentally put the gear away only to learn that it had been reboiled.

"We'd had a couple of practices just in case something happened," starting guard Denny Meadows said. "But most of us kind of figured our season was over. We were a half game behind Iowa, which had Michigan yet at home after we'd finished up. Michigan had Rudy Tomjanovich and not much else. We didn't think Michigan had much chance."

Go figure. On March 4, Ohio State finished the regular season with a 67-64 win at home over Illinois. On March 5, the team was feted at the annual banquet and...
Meadows was named the next season's captain. On March 7, Michigan upset Iowa 71-70 in Iowa City to drop the Hawkeyes into a first-place tie with OSU. And on March 12, on the neutral Paradise court in West Lafayette, Ind., the Buckeyes beat Iowa 85-81 in the Big Ten's first-ever playoff to earn the league's sole spot in the NCAAAs.

The world of difference then extended to college basketball. Now, 64 teams qualify for the tournament. Then, 25 did. Now, the Big Ten is recognized as a kingpin of basketball. That year, Houston and UCLA topped the polls and there was not a Big Ten team among the Associated Press' final regular-season top 10 and only Iowa, at 29th, made United Press International's 29-deep rankings.

And those Big Ten co-champion Buckeyes? "One of the things consistent about their play was that it was inconsistent," Taylor said. "You start losing to powerhouses like Cornell and you begin to learn something."

'68 SQUAD KNEW HOW TO PLAY TOGETHER

But along the way, Taylor learned some other things as well. He learned that on the court, in the manner of a much-averaged phrase that would come to two years later, the Buckeyes were a family of sorts. And he learned that they took to a zone and went to the boards like ducks take to water.

"Among the qualities they had was that they were prepared. And if we were trying to do what we think we might have been in," Taylor said. "I never even contemplated using a zone until we played New Mexico State early that year. They were very big and very quick and we weren't the quickest team in the world and had some tendency to get into foul trouble with our size. When we went to it 1:25 lasted off the clock before they could get a shot off. And if I heard it a half dozen times after we beat somebody - Congratulations, but we didn't shoot very well. Well, you put your shooting percentage with offensive rebounds and put-backs. Those blocked out and didn't give up second shots. They shot poorly because they made them shoot poorly."

Reborn, it was off to Lexington for the four-team Midwest Regional - the one that was supposed to certify fifth-ranked Kentucky's trip to the Final Four in Los Angeles - where OSU would meet East Tennessee State and Kentucky would play Marquette in the semifinals.

Which meant Rupp also had to play against Marquette coach Al McGuire - the master of mind games, the one coach, above all, who delighted in getting the old man's goat. Taylor:

"Adolph got up at the posttournament dinner and said that since the tournament was being played in the Commonwealth of Kentucky - his words - that Kentucky will wear white. Naturally, Al took offense to that. And then he added fuel to the fire by saying: 'We're mentally tougher than Kentucky.' Adolph was just firing."

THAT'S WHY THEY PLAY THE GAMES

It could have been shirts against skins for all it mattered. Daily enraged. Kentucky crushed Marquette 107-85. In what amounted to the prelude, OSU beat East Tennessee 75-72. Steve Howell, who was a key 6-5 power forward before the term was coined, scored 22 points for the Buckeyes.

Now, for the coronation.

"I think we were 14-17 point underdogs," Howell said. "I remember seeing signs that (travel) packages were available for Kentucky's trip to California. But we felt that we had a chance."

Taylor's players tallied 15 points. He pointed out that Kentucky's win was a "big thing" even though OSU was a "lot better than" the Buckeyes. Now, 64 teams qualify for the tournament. Then, 25 did. Now, the Big Ten is recognized as a kingpin of basketball. That year, Houston and UCLA topped the polls and there was not a Big Ten team among the Associated Press' final regular-season top 10 and only Iowa, at 29th, made United Press International's 29-deep rankings.

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1968 is ancient history in terms of Final Fours

Since Ohio State last made the Final Four in 1968 B.C., six Big Ten teams - all but OSU, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Northwestern - have gone to the Final Four a total of 13 times. Indiana has been in the Final Four five times, Michigan three, Purdue twice and Illinois, Iowa and Michigan State once each.

For further depressing figures nationally, these are the leaders in Final Four appearances since 1968: UCLA 9, Duke 7 (including the last five years), Louisville 6, North Carolina 5, Kansas 4, UNLV 4, Houston 3. A bunch have been there twice and - ready? - the powers that have been there once include Penn, Rutgers, Indiana State, New Mexico and Jacksonville.

Why, O Lord, why? - Dick Fenlon

Halfway through, everybody who wasn't from Kentucky saw that something big might be up.

"We didn't do much on the road then," Taylor says in a backhanded reference to the era in OSU athletic history in which Woody Hayes was emperor and King Football reigning over all. "But the Marquette pep band got our song and started playing it. And since OSU had neglected to send any - the Marquette cheerleaders began centering for the underdog Buckeyes. Before long, it opened that half the crowd was on the Ohio State bandwagon.

It was, Taylor recalls, 81-89 Kentucky with seven seconds left. OSU had the ball out of bounds under its own basket. Haslet, the 6-8 senior forward, was the triggerman. Dan Issel, Kentucky's 6-9 sophomore center - who would go on to become pro basketball's fifth all-time scorer - guarded the inbound pass thrown by Haslet from the base just to the left of the lane.

Haslet couldn't find Howell, the primary option.

"I kind of thought," he said, "I was going to stand there eating the ball as the clock ran out. Issel turned to screen 'Five seconds' to the official, and when he turned I just jumped over his arms."

It went to Dave Swenson, OSU's 6-7 sophomore center, who turned and banked in a - what? - a 10-15-15-footer?

THE LIKES OF THE SHOT WON'T BE SEEN AGAIN

Accounts vary, but years later, when Haslet would meet Joe B. Hall, then Rupp's assistant, Hall would remember the exact shot from which the shot was made and dare anyone to bank it in from there again.

But that day?

"Even now, a lot of our people who were there say it was one of the most exciting sporting events they've ever seen," Taylor said. "Obviously, the crowd was just stunned. But, hey, that's why they tee it up, isn't it?"

In L.A., OSU lost to North Carolina 50-66 in the semis and beat Elvin Hayes and Houston 85-80 for third place. UCLA, with Lew Alcindor, beat North Carolina 78-55 in the final.

For Ohio State, the end of a 21-8 season and of a very magical era.

"Hereor not," Taylor said, "as much as you want to always do a thing well, a coach has to accept the fact that every team is a little bit different. This team could do some of the most ridiculous things you could imagine and then turn around and stone for them. What a fun bunch it was to be around!"

Dick Fenlon is sports columnist for The Dispatch.
My dumb mistake: In Sunday's piece on the 1968 basketball Buckeyes, I said that Ohio State had not lost to Kentucky going into that year's Mideast Regional championship game. The teams were 6-6 in 12 games going in. A thousand lashes to a knothead who — believe it or not — did know better.
Standing 'O'

Excited fans sing Carmen Ohio after storming the basketball court after the Indiana game Tuesday night. By the way, in case you missed it, we won.
Front Cover: From 1959 through 1963, the University of Cincinnati and the Ohio State University dominated collegiate basketball. Following their victory over OSU in the 1962 NCAA championship game, Bearcat guard Larry Shingleton casts down the net.

Larry Shingleton Collection
John Zimmerman, Photographer
See: "Bearcats and Buckeyes"

Left: The NCAA trophy is the most coveted prize in collegiate basketball. In 1960 the Buckeyes of Ohio State University brought it home to Columbus. The following two years, the University of Cincinnati Bearcats added a pair to their trophy case. Ohio State University Athletic Department
David R. Barker, Photographer
See: "Bearcats and Buckeyes"

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When basketball pundits sat down to make their predictions for the 1961–62 season, they concluded with little hesitation that the national collegiate champion would come from the state of Ohio. Prophecy is a risky business, but this forecast seemed less chancy than most. After all, Ohio schools had claimed the championship two years running and promised to be strong again. The question the experts asked themselves was, which of the two would prevail? Would it be Ohio State, champion in 1960 thanks to a team laden with sophomores who were now seniors? Or would it be the University of Cincinnati, which had de-throned the Buckeyes in 1961 and was coming back for more?

Over the past decade or so, the National Collegiate Athletic Association men’s basketball championship has become a sporting spectacle of surpassing interest. Over two long weekends dubbed March Madness, sixty-four teams are whittled down to the Final Four, a registered trademark that has entered the American lexicon. While coaches define success by Final Four appearances, what truly matters is the last game, played these days in oversized, multipurpose arenas, from which the national champion emerges.

Needless to say, 'twas not always thus. In 1939, the tournament's first year, the eight invited teams competed in modest gyms, 5,500 spectators showed up for the final game, and the NCAA reported a net loss of $2,531 for the entire proceeding. Twenty-three years later at the end of the 1961–62 season, with twenty-five teams in the draw, the tournament was still far from a national phenomenon. But in Ohio, basketball fever was epidemic. Ohio State was out to regain the crown it had lost the year before. Cincinnati yearned to prove that it was no fluke in 1961, when, for the first time in tournament history, two schools from the same state had met to decide the title. Remarkable? Yes, and yet the two were on target to duplicate this feat, marking the sole time that the same pair of teams would reach the championship game in consecutive seasons.
The 1959–60 Buckeyes started the season ranked sixth by UPI, and fans turned on their televisions to watch the team that everyone expected to do great things. But potential does not win games: "They're just puppies," Fred Taylor was fond of saying, "they aren't dogs until they've bitten somebody." But they did, compiling a 25-3 record and earning a national championship. Perhaps even more impressive was the team's off-court record: all sixteen players received degrees. In addition, each of the starting five went on to play professional basketball. Ohio State University Archives
In 1958 Ohio State had placed the fortunes of its basketball program in the gentle hands of thirty-three-year-old Fred R. Taylor. An upset choice to succeed Floyd Stahl, Taylor had played basketball on the Buckeyes' 1950 Big Ten championship team. An All-American selection in baseball, Taylor signed a contract with the Washington Senators and stuck it out for three years, mostly in the minor leagues. "I really didn't play much in the majors," he recalled, "but I got up enough in parts of three seasons to know that I wasn't that good." He spent his winters in Columbus, went to graduate school, and helped out with the basketball program. In 1953 he was hired to coach the freshman team.

The man Taylor beat out for the varsity job was Paul Walker, head basketball coach at Middletown High School. An able coach, Walker had the additional advantage of having on his squad a basketball phenom named Jerry Lucas. Walker's backers assumed that appointing him would give the Buckeyes a leg up in attracting Lucas. In truth, Lucas was ready to opt for Ohio State regardless of who would be coach.

Well over six feet tall at age fourteen, Jerry Ray Lucas was a precocious basketball player. "I developed fast and the word got around," he said. "When I was fifteen, I was playing against the Cincinnati Royals [of the National Basketball Association] and college All-Americans." Lucas led Middletown to the state championship in his sophomore and junior years and to seventy-six consecutive victories. The streak was snapped in the last game of his senior season when Columbus North upset Middletown, 63-62, in the state semifinals.

Lucas put off all college recruiters until his senior season ended. He even snubbed legendary University of Kentucky coach Adolph Rupp, who interrupted one of Lucas's classes and got ten seconds of the young man's time. When Lucas chose Ohio State, he accepted an academic scholarship, not an athletic grant, convincing himself, at least, that as an honor student and class president he would be going to college to get an education.

Once Lucas selected Ohio State, he decided to pull another outstanding athlete, John Havlicek from Lansing, Ohio's, Bridgeport High School.

Oscar Robertson — the Big O — was one of the game's most versatile and dominating players. Three times he led the nation in scoring, becoming only the second collegian to exceed 1,000 points in a season. But even this three-time UPI player of the year was unable to propel the Bearcats past the University of California, and twice his teams lost to Pete Newell's Bears in the NCAA semifinals. University of Cincinnati Athletic Department
Fred R. Taylor, a Zanesville native, began his association with OSU as a student. Although he played center on the basketball team that won the 1950 Big Ten championship, Taylor was perhaps best known as an All-American first baseman. Following graduation in 1950, he signed with the Washington Senators. In his best season, 1952, he saw action in only ten big league games, playing behind standout Mickey Vernon, and hit .263. After a stint with Beaumont in the Texas League, it was time to move on.

In 1953 he returned to OSU as freshman basketball and baseball coach under Floyd Sahl. Following Sahl's retirement from coaching five years later, the thirty-three-year-old Taylor took over the basketball program. With a sole returning starter, his first team compiled a 11-11 record and finished fifth in the Big Ten. Then came 1960 and the Big Ten title, OSU's first since Taylor had anchored the pivot. This was capped with the national championship — the school's first and one built around players that Taylor had recruited.

Over the next sixteen years, Taylor's teams won six more Big Ten titles, including an unequaled five in a row. He has been especially noted for coaching centers, and during 1960-64 his Buckeyes started a first-team All-American in the middle. In all, his teams compiled a 297-158 record, which included 50 straight home wins, and won more than 60 percent of their Big Ten games. His record in the NCAA tournament is even more impressive, 14-4, and, it should be remembered, Taylor's teams had to win the Big Ten outright to ensure a tournament berth. "As a coach," Indiana basketball coach and former Taylor player Bobby Knight said, "Fred Taylor did more to determine how basketball would be played in the Big Ten than any coach in the conference."

Ohio State University Archives
along with him. Havlicek was heavily recruited for basketball and football, and he visited Ohio State twice to see both programs. Football coach Woody Hayes impressed the Havlicek family with his persistence, but John's mother did not want her son to play football. When he decided to concentrate on basketball, he began to shy away from Ohio State. "You see," said Lucas, "John wasn't sure he could play at Ohio State. I played with him during some all-star games, and I think I finally convinced him that he could."

Under existing NCAA rules, freshmen were not eligible to play varsity basketball. So when Lucas and Havlicek arrived on the Columbus campus in the autumn of 1958, they were consigned to the freshman team that included several other promising recruits. Mel Nowell from Columbus had played on the same all-star team as Lucas and Havlicek. Gary Gearhart from New Lebanon, Ohio, had already committed to Eastern Kentucky, but changed his mind. Completing the incoming class was a feisty 6'4" forward from Orrville named Bobby Knight.

The rookie coach knew all these youngsters well — he had recruited them himself — and he decided to treat them specially. "I knew they were going to be great," Taylor said. "I decided we were going to keep them with us [the varsity] all year in practice. There were things I wanted to work on with our offense with next year in mind."

Freshmen played no outside competition at that time, so Taylor had them scrimmage the varsity six times. The freshmen won twice, with Lucas scoring more than forty points each time. Word of these practices leaked out, and public interest in the varsity fell off. Fans would come to St. John Arena on game nights, watch the freshmen play the junior varsity, and then leave after this preliminary game was over. Still, led by Larry Siegfried, a high-scoring sophomore guard from Shelby, the varsity put together a respectable season (7-7 in the Big Ten and 11-11 overall), but finished last in the league in defense.

Meanwhile, 110 miles to the southwest of Columbus, the University of Cincinnati was gilding its own basketball tradition. For the 1957-58 season, the Bearcats had moved from the Mid-American Conference to the more rigorous Missouri Valley Conference. Coach George Smith was confident his team could make this switch successfully because of the presence of an extraordinary sophomore who may well have been the most complete basketball player of all time. His name was Oscar Robertson.

A product of Crispus Attucks High School in Indianapolis, the 6'5" Robertson was the first
African-American to play for Cincinnati. He had led Attucks to a forty-five-game winning streak and consecutive state titles, and he excelled academically as well. Coach Smith urged his team to accept Robertson, promising that he would elevate their game to a distinctly higher level.

The 1957–58 Bearcats won their first seven games, dropped two of three, and then traveled to New York's Madison Square Garden to play Seton Hall. The crowd was small, but Robertson sent those present out into the Manhattan evening in awe. He connected on 22 of 32 field-goal attempts, made 12 of 12 foul shots, and grabbed 15 rebounds in a 118-54 rout of the Pirates. His 56 points set school and Garden records and left the basketball world raving. St. John's coach Joe Lachick, himself a basketball legend, said simply, "There's never been one like him."

Returning home, Cincinnati reeled off fifteen wins in a row to finish the regular season 24-2. Ranked second in both major wire-service polls, the Bearcats won the conference crown and earned the school's first invitation to the NCAA Tournament. They drew a first-round bye, but then, in a Midwest Regional semifinal game, lost to Kansas State in overtime, 83-80. Robertson and two teammates fouled out.

The following season, Robertson shouldered an even greater burden as academic problems disrupted the team. Still, Cincinnati lost only three regular-season games, two of them in the racially charged atmosphere of the Dixie Tournament in Raleigh, North Carolina. They again won the MVC title and received an NCAA bid. With a relatively small lineup, the Bearcats defeated Texas Christian and top-ranked Kansas State to reach the Final Four. There they met the University of California, coached by Pete Newell, a defensive mastermind. As had many coaches before him, Newell devised a special defense to deny Robertson the ball in the frontcourt. It worked. Robertson managed only one field goal in the second half. His last two shots were blocked by Cal's 6'10" center, Darrall Imhoff, and Cincinnati lost, 64-58.

The 1959–60 Ohio State team opened its season with six straight victories — Wake Forest, Memphis State, Pittsburgh, and Butler at home; St. Louis and Butler on the road. In the starting lineup were guards Siegfried and Novell, Lucas in the pivot, and Havlichek and senior Joe Roberts at forward. Actually, senior Dick Furry had started the first game at forward, but when he was injured, Havlichek came off the bench permanently.

Half a dozen consecutive wins pleased everyone
Twenty-five teams, conference champions and a few selected independents, entered the 1965 NCAA tournament. Two Ohio teams, Cincinnati and Ohio State, were ranked nationally, and both made the Final Four, held at the Cow Palace in San Francisco. Cincinnati fell to the number-one-ranked California Golden Bears while the Buckeyes advanced over New York University. The heavily favored Bears were confident of a victory; their All-American center, Darrall Imhoff, was ready to practice his shot-blocking specialty: "If you bat a ball down a man's throat ... he's going to choke a little and might not try it again." Cal's stature was emphasized when, prior to tip-off, Pete Newell was presented the Coach of the Year award.

Taylor cared little about what others thought of his team's chances. He was more worried that his Buckeyes, whose attention lately had been directed toward academics, might not be sharp, despite their victory over NYU: "We hadn't even been able to practice because of exams that week." At the final buzzer, the Buckeyes were winners in a rout: OSU's starters shot 75 percent and held California to 33 percent. All five scored in double figures, with none having more than sixteen. In an almost-perfect performance, theirs was a team victory.

Ohio State University Archives
but Taylor. He had spent his summer at a one-man clinic on defense given graciously by Pete Newell, but as yet the message on the importance of stopping the opposition had not gotten through to his players. He unloaded on them verbally after the second victory over Butler, but it did little good. The Buckeyes went west and lost to Utah, 97-92. Two games later, they lost again, to Kentucky, 96-93.

Taylor’s cajoling finally took root. The Buckeyes’ defense improved considerably, and they lost only one more regular-season game. They continued to pile up points, four times going over 100, but the margin of victory increased substantially. Ohio State won the Big Ten championship with a 13-1 record (the lone loss to Indiana came after the conference championship was secure) and won a bid to the NCAA’s Mideast Regional.

The 1959-60 season was Oscar Robertson’s senior year, his last opportunity to win a national championship. Smith moved him to the front court to increase his scoring opportunities and installed 6’9” sophomore Paul Hogue at center. Hogue lacked experience, but he learned quickly. The Bearcats lost only one regular season game (to Bradley) and were ranked first in the Associated Press’s poll of sportswriters. The NCAA placed Cincinnati in the Midwest Regional.

At that time, the NCAA Tournament format dictated that the Final Four match-ups would be East vs. Mideast and West vs. Midwest. By assigning the Big Ten champ to the Mideast and the MVC champ to the Midwest, the selection committee ensured that the two Ohio schools could not meet until the finals.

Ohio State breezed through its two regional games, overwhelming Western Kentucky, 98-79, and Georgia Tech, 86-69. Cincinnati had little trouble dispatching DePaul by 40 points and Kansas by 11. In the national semifinals, the Buckeyes buried the New York University Violets, 76-54, to advance to the title game. In the other semifinal, matching the first- and second-ranked teams in the country, Cincinnati again faced California. Pressured by Newell’s tough defense, Robertson managed only four field goals, and California won handily, 77-69.

The championship game between Newell, the teacher, and Taylor, the pupil, was no contest. Ohio State won, 75-55. Defense aside, the Buckeyes put the game away in the first half by hitting 16 of 19 shots and taking a 37-19 lead into the locker room. A frustrated Newell exhorted his team to get back in the game by grabbing more defensive rebounds. “Coach,” said Imhoff, “there have only been three, and I got all of them.”

Ohio State seemed destined to defend its championship successfully. Of the Buckeyes’ five starters, only Joe Roberts graduated. He was replaced by senior Richie Hoyt, who joined Siegfried, also a senior, and Lucas, Havlicek, and Nowell, now juniors, on the first string. Who could challenge this aggregation? Certainly Cincinnati did not appear to be among the heirs apparent, having suffered two big losses. The most obvious was Oscar Robertson, now plying his trade for the Royals of the National Basketball Association. The other was George Smith, who had moved up to the athletic director’s office, leaving the basketball team to Ed Jucker, his forty-one-year-old assistant.

Jucker was an experienced coach, and he recognized that the Bearcats’ style of play would have to change. He abandoned the up-tempo game that had showcased Robertson and installed what he called “percentage basketball”: pressure defense and an offense designed to work for good shots from close range. Three holdovers from the ’60 team, including Hogue, made the transition. They were joined by two sophomores, 6’2” forward Tom Thacker and 6’0” guard Tony Yates, a twenty-three-year-old service veteran.

The Bearcats took a while to adjust to Jucker’s system. They lost three of their first eight games.
including two league tilts. Home attendance dropped precipitously as fans switched their allegiance to the Royals. Jucker seemed concerned mainly to make a good showing in the conference. Then, in a non-league game, Cincinnati beat a good University of Dayton team by ten points. It was a new beginning. The Bearcats refused to lose again and climbed steadily in the polls. By the end of the regular season, their record stood at 24-3, good enough for a number two ranking. The Midwest Regional beckoned again.

Still, Ohio State seemed even better. The Buckeyes went through the regular season undefeated, 24-0, and were ranked first in both polls. The selection committee sent them again to the Mideast Regional, as experts wondered whether the Buckeyes were one of the finest teams of all time.

The chance to answer that question affirmatively nearly disappeared in the Buckeyes’ first tournament game. Trailing Louisville by five points with three minutes to play, Ohio State had to rally to tie the score. The Buckeyes went ahead, 56-55, on Havlicek’s twenty-five-foot jump shot with six seconds left and eked out a win as Louisville missed a final free throw. In the regional final, the Buckeyes blasted Kentucky, 87-74, prompting Adolph Rupp to anoint them as “truly great.”

Cincinnati had no problems in its regional, cruising by Texas Tech and Kansas State. In the Final Four, set for Kansas City, the Bearcats drew Utah, and Ohio State opposed St. Joseph’s. Neither game generated much excitement. The Buckeyes blew by the Hawks, 95-69, and Jucker’s overachievers lopped Utah convincingly, 82-67. The all-Ohio final was on.

Some observers joked that the Bearcats would leave town rather than subject themselves to this certain defeat. Jucker’s plan was slightly different: keep the game close in the first half and prevent Ohio State from running its fast break. Fred Taylor countered by telling his team to work on Hogue, who had little bench help. “Make him foul,” Taylor urged.

Both coaches got their way, but for a while it looked like the game would never start. The consolation game for third place went into four overtimes, and all the finalists could do was wait. Cincinnati watched from the stands, but Taylor kept the Buckeyes fidgeting in the locker room. When the referee finally tossed the opening jump ball, the Bearcats controlled the tempo. Ohio State built a 20-13 lead, but Cincinnati, containing Lucas, came back. At the half Ohio State clung to a 39-38 margin; Hogue had three fouls.

The teams exchanged the lead in the second half, but Cincinnati kept pace all the way. A short
While the Bearcats and Coach Jucker, here in the arms of Paul hogue, celebrated their 1961 victory, others downplayed their accomplishment. In Columbus, Governor Michael V. DiSalle sent the victors letters of congratulations, but then issued proclamations calling Taylor the All-American coach and the Buckeyes the All-American team. Calls for impeachment came from the Queen City as Bearcat supporters, including members of this UC fraternity, demanded the respect the team had earned on the hardwood. The following year, Cincinnati remembered the treatment.

The Cincinnati Post/Jack Klumpe Collection
In 1962 Cincinnati won 25 of 27, outscoring their opponents by an average of 17. Two sophomores, Ron Bonham and George Wilson, were strong additions to the program. Bonham averaged fourteen points and Wilson eight rebounds. Still, Ohio State was ranked number one, and they, too, had some fine sophomores Gary Bradds, playing mostly behind Lucas, would go on to become OSU's next All-American center.

For the first time, the same two schools contended for the national championship for the second year in a row. Cincinnati wanted to prove that they were the best team in the land and that 1961 had not been a fluke. Ohio State wanted to prove that Sports Illustrated reporter Ray Cave was correct when he earlier had proclaimed them "the best basketball team of all time." Fans from both cities poured into Louisville for the grudge match. Hogue here lighting Bradds for the ball while Lucas (11) and Nowell (3) look on, was complemented by fine play from the guards in leading Cincinnati to victory.

AP/Worldwide Photos
jump shot by Thacker gave the Bearcats a 61-59 margin, but Bobby Knight's lay-up with 1:41 left tied the score. On to overtime. Hogue hit two foul shots, and Cincinnati pulled out a stunning 70-65 triumph. Lucas, who had 27 points and 12 rebounds, won the tournament's Outstanding Player award, but the important trophy was headed for the Queen City.

After a summer's rest, the Buckeyes prepared to avenge their defeat. Lucas, Havlicek, Nowell, Knight, and Gearhart were now seniors. They were joined by juniors Doug McDonald and Dick Reasbeck and by sophomore center Gary Bradds, forming a team with awesome depth. Again, they manhandled regular-season opponents, finishing with a 23-1 record. No team came within eight points until Wisconsin pulled off an 86-67 upset, after the Big Ten title was sewn up. The Buckeyes were headed back to the Midwest Regional.

The Bearcats had added new faces to their line-up as well. The presence of sophomore forwards George Wilson and Ron Bonham enabled Jucker to move Thacker to the backcourt. The 6'5" Bonham, another Indiana high school star with an unerring shooting touch, learned Jucker's style the hard way. Autumn practice began with three full weeks of defensive drills without a single shot being taken. "Even a lousy defensive player like me learned something," admitted Bonham.

Cincinnati ripped through its schedule with only two defeats, but one of them was a key overtime loss to conference rival Bradley. Both teams finished with identical 10-2 conference records, forcing a one-game playoff for the MVC title. The Bearcats prevailed, 61-46, and won the bid to the Midwest Regional.

Fans of both schools had been anticipating a return showdown all season. Cincinnati, in fact, had endeavored to schedule the Buckeyes for several years, but OSU officials resolutely refused. When seats for the Final Four at Louisville's Freedom Hall went on sale in January, all 17,865 tickets were gobbled up in a few hours. Ohioans undoubtedly did a good part of the devouring. As the tournament approached, an NCAA official estimated that 100,000 tickets could have been sold. Cincinnati held the title, but previously, at a banquet in Columbus, Governor Michael DiSalle had proclaimed Ohio State the number one team in the country.

The regionals gave no clue as to which team was better. The Buckeyes ripped through Western Kentucky and Kentucky. The Bearcats eliminated Creighton and Colorado, yielding only 46 points in each game. In the national semifinals, Ohio State defeated Wake Forest easily, 84-68, to reach the final for the third year in a row. But Lucas wrecked his left knee with six minutes left and had to be helped off the court. Cincinnati faced UCLA in its semifinal. The Bruins were making their first NCAA appearance under coach John Wooden, and they hung in against the Bearcats all the way. With two minutes left, the score was tied at 70. Cincinnati got the ball on a charging call and held the ball for a last shot. Jucker called timeout and instructed Hogue to take the shot. But the big center was covered, and Thacker hit a long jumper near the buzzer to win the game.

Lucas started the championship game with his leg heavily bandaged, and it was soon clear that he could not play up to his ability. Lucas could have used Havlicek's help on Hogue, but Havlicek had to guard Bonham, who resolutely stayed out on the perimeter all night. Lucas managed only 11 points on 5-for-11 shooting; Hogue poured in 22 and grabbed a game-high 19 rebounds. The Bearcats led by eight at halftime, boosted their margin to 18, and won easily, 71-59.

Buckeye fans were quick to argue that Lucas's injury had deprived their choice for the nation's best team of resuming its rightful place on top of the heap. They turned out 12,000 strong at Port Columbus airport to welcome the team home, saluting Taylor and the players not only for their effort in 1962, but for three marvelous years. Cincinnati, though, had done even better: four straight Final Four appearances and two national championships in a row. The Bearcats would return to the Final Four for a fifth consecutive time in 1963, only to suffer their own heartbreak, an overtime loss in the title game to Loyola of Chicago. Ohio's reign was over.
Heart Of Last Year's Team Back In Columbus After Less Than A Year

Former Buckeyes Having Reunion Of Sorts

By JEFF RAPP
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

The last time Ohio State fans saw the seniors from last year's men's basketball team together, the five players were embarking on the St. John Arena floor.

It was a magical moment as the Buckeyes had secured a crucial win over Illinois and went on to wrap up the school's first outright title since 1971 with a follow-up demolition of Minnesota.

On that emotional day almost a year ago, Mark Baker, Jamal Brown, Chris Jent, Steve Hall and Bill Robinson fought back tears as they waved goodbye. Two months later, junior Jim Jackson was announced that he would also leave the program to seek a career in the NBA.

Now, as fate would have it, all six former Buckeyes are back in Columbus.

"I definitely miss being around all the guys every day," said Hall, who is in his first quarter of undergraduate work toward a degree in mechanical engineering. "That's what I miss the most. But it's great to know that I can see those guys whenever I want because we're like family."

Jent, a product of Sparta, N.J., missed Columbus as much he asked to be traded to the Columbus Horizon of the Continental Basketball Association.

He got his wish when Rapid City, the team with the CBA's best record, sent him back to the Ohio capital and a team with the one of the league's worst marks.

That didn't bother him a bit, though, because the move reunited him with his close friends.

"I don't think that family ties ever end," Jent said of his relationship with his classmates and Jackson. "We're all staying in touch and, hopefully, when we're all older and married, we'll still stay in touch. We became way too close not to."

Jackson's reaction might be more mixed. He, too, feels at home in Columbus, but since being tabbed as the fourth pick in the NBA draft by the Dallas Mavericks, the OSU All-American remains unsigned with the team.

Instead of proving his skills in NBA arenas and collecting a hefty paycheck, Jackson has been seen working out on his own at St. John. He has vowed not to sign with Dallas and expects to wait for the process to start over with next year's draft.

But despite a multitude of distractions and his career on hold, Jackson has not lost sight of the importance of his education. He has declared he will finish up with school by taking summer courses.

When he does finish, he will likely join the other five players with degrees, a thought that is most pleasing to OSU head coach Randy Ayers.

"I'm definitely happy they're still on course to graduate because I don't care who you are — even Jimmy, if and when he gets signed with a pro team, is going to have to quit playing some day," Ayers said. "So you better come back and get your degree to prepare yourself for down the road." So far, none of the six has graduated.

which seems to be disturbing to some fans, including one recent person who wrote to The Columbus Dispatch criticizing Ayers for only talking about the importance of graduating players. But players say finishing in four years while playing is a very difficult thing.

"I know people say we use it as an excuse, but believe me, with the time you spend playing and practicing, it's easy to get behind," Baker said. "The reason why we haven't graduated yet is that we have goals and dreams of playing professional basketball. At least, I know I'm shooting for that next level."

Baker and Brown began the season with the Horizon but were released in mid-December after the team got off to a horrid 1-10 start. Both players were averaging right around five and a half points per game.

Now the two are off-campus roommates, re-enrolled at Ohio State. Both hope to attain their degrees by the end of the year.

Baker is pursuing studies in education, a backup if professional basketball does not present itself again. "I'll always want to stay around the game," he said.

But Baker, who is third on OSU's all-time assists list with 424, has not given up on playing again. He has been working out diligently with another former OSU star, Treg Lee, in search of a better shooting touch.

"I think I have to get my confidence back in my outside shooting," he said. "I've always been able to shoot it, but I was changing my shot in certain situations because I wasn't always confident.""

"Now, I'm really learning to relax and shoot it and that's the only thing holding me back from being in the league."

Brown is still keeping an open mind about basketball but is more concentrated on choosing a career after getting a communications degree.
Buckeye Sports Bulletin

"I really still don't know exactly what it is I want to do right now," he admitted. "But I am exploring and I'm involved in football. I am currently volunteering his time as an assistant to Ayers while continuing his studies. But no matter what path he takes, his memorable smile will be a fixture in Columbus.

"I've been doing more and more public speaking and I really like it, especially when I go to schools," Brown said. "I love to go out and meet the kids and talk to them and try to help them get a direction in life."

Even though Baker and Brown are outside the game looking in, both have continued to support Jent as he plays with the Horizons.

"Chris is a competitor," Baker said. "I don't know if I can't like to play the game more than Chris does. I'm really happy to see him playing well."

Jent appreciates the support.

"I wish I was still playing with them, no doubt about it," said the former OSU guard. "But you still have to take advantage of your opportunities. They're behind me, I know, and I'm behind whatever they do."

Jent, a 6-7 forward who scored 1,007 points as a Buckeye and tallied a school-record 112 three-pointers, has been impressive since returning to Columbus Jan. 29. He has led the Horizons in scoring in several games and is beginning to show signs of playing professionally for years to come with his marked improvement.

But even Jent has not forgotten for a second that his college degree awaits.

"I'm hoping to get back this summer and try and finish up," he said. "I hope to attain my degree in journalism (public relations) after two full quarters, then hopes eventually return to OSU for graduate school."

"It's like a dark cloud hanging over your head," he admitted. "Whenever people see you they say, 'Don't forget to go and get your degree.' But they don't realize how important it is to us to get our degrees. That's why we came to school. Ohio State gave us that opportunity and hopefully we'll all finish up."

Hall and Robinson will be the first ones in line from the group. Both are on schedule to receive their diplomas March 19 in St. John Arena, the same venue as their basketball successes.

"You kind of get a chill down your back when you make a play and 15,000 stand up and go nuts," said the 7-foot Robinson, a fan favorite during his career. "Knowing that's not going to happen anymore kind of hurts."

"But it will be a thrill to get my degree in the same place."

Robinson is nearing a career in English education. He is currently doing his student teaching at Hilliard High School in suburban Columbus while his wife, Lorte, is teaching in Urbana, Ohio, about 60 miles west of Columbus.

"There are so many opportunities here that aren't there back home, and we're real happy living here," said the native of Canton, Ohio.

Robinson already has been offered an opportunity to manage an Italian restaurant on the north side of Columbus but is hoping to quickly land a teaching job. However, even with his adult life in order, he still fantasizes about this being his senior year.

"I think about it all the time," said Robinson, who has season tickets next to Hall for Buckeye games. "Sometimes I wonder, if I had been redshirted, would my last year be different. Plus, I see this year's team and know they could use some help inside."

"But I was part of two championship teams here and I don't think I'd trade it," Hall said. "It's also sentimental, but I have no illusions of basketball anymore."

"Watching the guys I've played basketball (Feb. 23) brought back a few memories from a year ago and, sure, I miss it," said the Horizons. "But I'm totally satisfied with my career here and I've gotten all I can out of basketball."

A three-time Academic All-American with the Buckeyes, Hall has channeled all of his energy into school, currently boasting a grade-point average of 3.16.

"When Hall was never in need of extra motivation when it came to school, he saw firsthand how seriously Ayers took to the players' education."

"A lot of times, we get back from road trips at two or three in the morning and Coach would say, 'I expect to see that every one of you made it to class,' " he said. "When he talks about an education, it's not just lip service. He means what he says."

Hall, a sturdy backup player for his college career, is set to become the second Buckeye in the last six ex-players to lose his eligibility. He is scheduled to marry his girlfriend of three years, Kellie Logan, Sept. 11.

"It's going to be a big year," he admitted. "Although the post-college lives of the six are getting more involved, each has remained committed to keeping tied in to the basketball program."

"We're starting to develop the long-term success of the program with our guys and it's very nice to see them around, Ayers said. "We also encourage them to come back, and a lot of our former players do."

"Jay (Burson) has come back this year," Joe Dunns and Scott Anderson were at a recent game. "That's great because you always want them to feel a part of your program."

One year after riding the talents of the six departed players to a league title and a run to the final eight of the NCAA Tournament, Ayers and Ohio State are fighting for a chance to return to the big dance.

Although the freshman group Ayers ushered in to replace the departed players came with praise and has shown steady improvement, the OSU coach admits a return of any of the six would have helped this season.

"Jimmy or Chris, especially, could help us a lot this year because of their size and because they're both small forward guys. They can both play inside and outside, so that would be nice," Ayers said. "But you never live in the past. We knew they weren't going to be here when we lined up in November."

"It's been a struggle this year, no question about it, but I think we've learned from it and we've made some strides despite our record."
Ayers prescribes hard work for Buckeyes

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sport Reporter

Ohio State men's basketball coach Randy Ayers has no choice but to follow the advice of the police inspector played by Claude Rains in Casablanca.

Rains said, "Round up the usual suspects," and Ayers gathered a familiar cast of 14 characters last night at Ohio State's awards banquet — 12 of whom will return for the 1993-94 season.

"We've got to get in the weight room, get stronger and become a better defensive team," Ayers said. "The same goes for our rebounding. We finished eighth in the Big Ten in that category."

"For the first time in several years, there was no award given for best defensive player."

"Even when we had a 9-2 record, I just didn't see any consistency, especially at the defensive end," Ayers said. "I thought we did settle down and show some consistency in the stretch. We won six of our last 10 league games. That's what we have to build on for next year."

Senior-to-be Lawrence Funderburke and Jamie Skelton shared the Jerry Lucas Award, voted by the players to the team's most valuable performer.

Funderburke also claimed honors for best rebounding average and field-goal percentage, and Skelton was cited for making the most assists.

The Buckeyes climbed from ninth to a final perch of seventh in the Big Ten standings at 8-10. They carried a 15-12 overall mark into the National Invitation Tournament, where they lost their opener 56-53 to Miami University.

"We were flat, I don't know the reason, but the kids wanted to play," Ayers said. "They didn't just go through the motions. The effort was there. We didn't get it going, but Miami hit some big shots and did a great job."

OSU had its most stable season of the four-year Ayers era in terms of the player rotation.

December starters Tom Brandeski, Alex Davis, Jimmy Radcliff and Doug Etzler all lost their jobs. The minutes-played column fluctuated wildly for sophomore Rickey Dudley and freshmen Charles Mason, among others.

"We never really arrived at a set rotation," Ayers said. "The ability level was close in several cases, and there were times when certain people stepped up in practice. You've got to reward that."

OSU men's basketball awards

- Fred R. Taylor Award (academic excellence): Doug Etzler
- Most Improved player: Antonio Watson
- Most assists: Jamie Skelton (79)
- Best field-goal percentage: Lawrence Funderburke (53.3)
- Best free-throw percentage: Alex Davis (81.3)
- Most rebounds: Lawrence Funderburke (6.6)
- John Havlicek Award (most inspirational player): Tom Brandeski and Derek Anderson (tie)
- Jerry Lucas Award (most valuable player): Lawrence Funderburke and Jamie Skelton (tie)
- Special recognition — Greg Simpson, named freshman of the year in the Big Ten; Alex Davis, school career record for free throw percentage (930, 97 of 109); Doug Etzler, academic All-Big Ten.
Recruiting violation

Ohio State self reported a recruiting violation in men's basketball to the NCAA, according to a press release Monday.

Damon Flint, a senior at Cincinnati Woodward High School, was involved in the infringement. He signed a national letter-of-intent with Ohio State last November.

During an unofficial visit to Ohio State in Flint's junior year, the OSU coaching staff had unauthorized, off-campus contact with him. The NCAA 3.1.1.1 rule that prohibits in-person, off-campus contact with recruits prior to Sept. 10 of a prospect's senior year was violated.

Ohio State Athletic Director James L. Jones said Ohio State discovered the violation, investigated the incident and turned it into the NCAA. He said it is in the NCAA's hands now.

"We regret this incident, but we do not think it was intentional, and we believe it to be of a secondary nature," Jones said.

Jones refused to release further information about the subject until Ohio State is contacted by the NCAA. He said it would be inappropriate to comment before the NCAA makes a ruling.

Men's basketball Coach Randy Ayers was unavailable for comment.

—Caralyn A. Close
OSU broke NCAA rule in recruiting Flint

By Miko Sullivan
Dispatch Staff Reporter

It appears Ohio State has been caught with its hypocrisy in the distinction made by the NCAA between on-campus and off-campus.

Athletic director Jim Jones released a statement yesterday revealing that OSU has "self-reported" a rules violation to the NCAA in the recruitment of Damon Flint, a Cincinnati Woodward basketball player who signed a national letter of intent with the Buckeyes in November.

Flint, now a senior, made an unofficial visit to Ohio State in October 1991, during which OSU admits that the "coaching staff made unauthorized off-campus contact."

The NCAA rule in question — 13.1.1.1 — prohibits in-person, off-campus contact before Sept. 10 of a prospect's senior year.

"We regret this incident," Jones said. "But we do not think it was intentional, and we believe it was of a secondary nature."

Coach Randy Ayers and members of his staff were allowed in-person contact with Flint during the unofficial visit, as long as they remained on campus.

Leaving the grounds — even to a fast-food restaurant on High Street — made it a violation.

"There was no intent to gain a recruiting advantage," Ayers said. "It was right in the vicinity of campus."

The NCAA has a no-comment policy regarding ongoing investigations, but there seemed some doubt yesterday whether an investigation is under way.

"When you're being investigated, they send you a letter," Ayers said. "This wasn't an investigation. We self-reported it based on a phone call we got from the NCAA."

However, Woodward coach Jim Leon expressed concern based on a visit he received from NCAA representatives on April 19.

"The NCAA told us they would have a decision real soon and would meet with Coach Ayers the first week of May," Leon said. "They've told Randy one thing and told me another. I'm not sure what they're talking about."

"They told Randy it was a secondary violation. But when they were here to see us, they said Damon is not eligible at this point. I've never had dealings with the NCAA before. We asked for precedents, but each case is different."

Ayers said the suspension of Flint's eligibility is part of the reporting process.

"You have to get the eligibility restored, and that's what we're in the process of doing," Ayers said. "It's standard procedure."

Flint, a 6-foot-5 guard/forward, is ranked among the top 25 recruits nationally.

Leon said the NCAA made one earlier visit to Woodward "in November or December."

"We were under the impression they did that with everyone," Leon said. "It was routine when a (highly ranked) kid signs." Leon said. "Now, they've come back and asked more questions. Damon and I were really surprised."

"Any time you have a violation, you risk some type of penalty. Ineligibility is a big concern. Damon has worked hard. He has his ACT score and his core average, and he's ready to play basketball. He's not going to go back to where he was, and he's not eligible for the team."

Leon said Flint and his family will not give interviews until the matter is settled.

"He's not commenting at all until we find out what the decision is," Leon said.
OSU may extend surcharge on basketball

By Tim Dowlen
Dispatch Higher Education Reporter

A surcharge on Ohio State University men's basketball tickets may be extended for at least another season.

OSU's executive and Senate fiscal committees have recommended that the university maintain the $2.50 charge on nonstudent tickets to help generate about $400,000 in general revenue.

When it started the surcharge last basketball season, the university said it hoped the added charge could be dropped after the season.

"The recommendation is that we continue the basketball surcharge for at least another year," William J. Shkurti, OSU vice president for finance, told the Board of Trustees yesterday. "Then, hopefully phase it down as our financial condition hopefully begins to improve."

The surcharge is part of a package of revenue-enhancing and cost-cutting measures totaling about $7.5 million that the university may include in its fiscal budget that begins July 1. The trustees are expected to approve the budget by that date.

In February, trustees gave the go-ahead to begin planning for about $5.4 million in savings and new money in the 1993-94 budget and ordered studies on another $2.1 million.

Shkurti said maintaining the surcharge is recommended over other options because "people know what the surcharge is and what it means."

"(But) we need to make sure that this does not become an antidote for papering over other financial decisions at the university," he said.

Shkurti also recommended a number of measures the university has been studying the last couple of months, including:
Violations may lock Flint out of OSU

NCAA reportedly will give word on Monday

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Ohio State athletic director Jim Jones declined to comment yesterday on a report the NCAA will declare Cincinnati Woodward senior Damon Flint ineligible to play basketball at OSU.

"If I could, I would discuss it, but I can't say anything at this point," Jones said. "You can't do that until the NCAA gives their answer."

According to an article in a Cincinnati newspaper, the NCAA will give its answer Monday to Ohio State's report on its possible violations in recruiting Flint, a 6-foot-5 guard/forward who signed a national letter of intent with OSU in November.

Citing unnamed sources, the article said the NCAA has found 16 violations in addition to an off-campus contact at a restaurant in October 1991, when Flint was making an unofficial visit to OSU as a junior.

Recruiters cannot have direct contact with a recruit off-campus until September of his senior year. Ohio State said it reported the infraction in February after a departmental review.

The sources said Flint will be freed from his letter of intent and that he is considering Cincinnati, Louisville, Nevada-Las Vegas and Kentucky.

Flint's coach, Jim Leon, was quoted as saying, "If he doesn't go to Ohio State, I think those would be among his choices. But we really haven't talked about it."

Ohio State coach Randy Ayers was unavailable for comment yesterday. Jones said Ayers was attending an alumni function in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C., area.

"I don't know where they (the newspaper) got all their information," Jones said. "I heard on the radio this morning that they said all that happened. What can I tell you?"

Jones said the report that Flint would be ineligible at OSU "wouldn't surprise me. We've already declared him ineligible ourselves (pending a response). That is one of the penalties if they feel you gained a recruiting advantage."

Asked about the possibility of several violations being cited besides the restaurant meeting, Jones said, "I can't comment on that."
NCAA to rule on Flint’s eligibility; OSU could face 16 more violations

Compiled from staff and wire reports.

The NCAA will rule today that Damon Flint is ineligible to play at Ohio State and free him from his letter of intent, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The Cincinnati Enquirer cited a source it did not identify.

Ohio State last month reported a recruiting infraction, which reportedly involved contact at an off-campus restaurant.

The contact was made in October of 1991, when Flint was still a junior in high school and was making an unofficial visit to campus.

Recruiters cannot have direct contact with a recruit off-campus until September of his or her senior year.

An NCAA investigation turned up 16 other recruiting violations against the university, the source told the newspaper.

OSU Athletic Director Jim Jones would not comment on the possibility of the other violations.

Jones told the Columbus Dispatch that it would not surprise him if Flint was declared ineligible to play at Ohio State.

“We’ve already declared him ineligible ourselves (pending a response). That is one of the penalties if they feel you gained a recruiting advantage,” Jim Leon, Flint’s coach at Cincinnati’s Woodward High School, declined comment on Flint’s eligibility, the newspaper said.

Flint, a 6-foot-5 guard-forward, is expected to begin the process of selecting another school, the newspaper said. Among his final choices were the University of Cincinnati, Nevada-Las Vegas, Arkansas, Louisville and Kentucky.

“If he doesn’t go to Ohio State, I think it would be among those schools,” Leon said. “But we really haven’t talked about it.”
Flint ineligible to play for OSU

The NCAA alleges that a coach paid for two meals for the recruit and that coaches had a number of illegal contacts.

By Dick Fenion
Dispatch Sports Columnist

Prime basketball recruit Donovan Flint is gone. Ohio State is appealing his loss, but could face further penalties because of illeg- alities in the recruiting process — violations of which caused Randy Ayers to resign as head coach.

"I've thought about it, to be honest," Ayers said yesterday after the NCAA declin ed to restore the eligibility of Flint, a 6-foot-8, blue-chip forward-guard from Cincin nati Woodward High School. "But I think people are entitled to mistakes, and we certainly have made a mistake in this situation. But now we're going to go out and try to correct those things and make sure it doesn't happen again in the future."

But it may not be that simple.

In a telephone conversation yesterday, S. David Barse, assistant director for enforcement and eligibility appeals, emphasized that the NCAA investigation is ongoing. The NCAA expects to complete it within the next 30 to 60 days, he said. Then it will make a finding on the university's responsibility and decide whether disciplinary action is warranted.

"The NCAA eligibility staff's decision in the Flint case — and a decision by Ohio State to appeal it — came at a news conference in the Woody Hayes Athletic Center yesterday conducted by athletic director Jim Jones, with Ayers at his side.

"We are concerned — we are embarrassed," Jones said. "We regret any embarrassment this has brought to the university. We are acknowledging violations on our part."

Ayers said, "If you want to point fingers, point them at me. I accept responsibility for what my staff did. I'm in charge of basketball."

That was after Jones took responsibility. "Jim Jones is responsible for the program," he said. "The buck stops here."

Actually, under the NCAA banner of institutional control, the buck stops with university president E. Gordon Gee.

In a prepared statement, Gee said he considers the violations "minor in nature."

"Obviously, I was fully briefed on it," Gee said. "I'm disappointed that this occurred. I think it's very clear these are secondary violations. I feel comfortable that as soon as we discovered the violations we reported them. I'm satisfied with the way the athletic director handled the situation and I'm satisfied with the way the coach handled the situation."

Jones emphasized that the university did not agree with all of the NCAA's designated violations, some of which, the NCAA said in a prepared statement, "were clear and fundamental in nature."

Other violations, it said, "although possibly not serious when considered individually, provided a recruiting advantage when considered collectively that was unavailable to other institutions that were recruiting Flint."

Some of these were a domino-effect result of an Oct. 30, 1991, incident in which Flint, then a high school junior, accompanied by Woodward coach Jim Leon, made an unofficial visit to Ohio State to observe practice. Afterward, the group went to Dar-on's restaurant on Olentangy River Road for dinner with Ayers, then-assistant coach Paul Bronzan and then-volunteer assistant Tom Sauler. OSU acknowledged that Bron zan gave money to Leon — apparently $90 — to pay for the meal and travel expenses and that later Bronzan gave four nylon bags, costing at least $25 total, to the visitors.

Under NCAA rules, Sauler was not allowed to recruit off-campus. Providing expenses made it an official visit for Flint, an impermissible junior-year contact. Gifts are impermissible, too.

At the news conference, Ayers said repeatedly that he did not consider Daron's, approximately a half-mile from the main campus, to be an off-campus restaurant.

But, Bert said, the finding that money changed hands made that a moot point.

"That's the real problem in my view," Bert said of the money. "You can be confused about whether it's appropriate to..."

Please see FLINT page 2F
Alleged violations cited by the NCAA against the Ohio State men's basketball program:

- Oct. 30, 1991 — Ohio State head coach Randy Ayers, assistant coach Paul Brazeau and volunteer assistant Tom Souder meet with Cincinnati Woodward player Damon Flint, his coach Jim Leon, and three friends of Flint in a Columbus restaurant. Brazeau allegedly gives Leon $60 to pay for the meal and transportation, both NCAA violations. The meeting, at an off-campus restaurant, is also against NCAA rules. Brazeau allegedly also gives four nylon bags with coaching notebooks to those in Flint's party. (Six violations).

- Dec. 9, 1991 — Ayers and Brazeau visit a practice at Woodward during Flint's junior year. While Ayers conducts his radio show from Leon's office, Brazeau allegedly buys a fast-food meal for Flint and Leon. Ayers also meets briefly with Flint. (Three violations).

- Oct. 9, 1992 — Flint makes what is intended as his official visit to Ohio State. But because of the violation almost a year before, two more bylaws are broken. (Two violations).

Additional violations occurred during Flint's senior year in high school or resulted because the university did not properly identify the first three recruiting contacts listed above:

- Sept. 20, 1991 — Ayers, visiting Woodward for a noncontact evaluation, offers condolences to Flint on the death of his mother. (One violation).

- March 1992 — Ohio State, playing in the NCAA Tournament in Cincinnati, practices at Woodward. While leaving the court after the practice, Ayers is introduced to Flint's grandmother by Leon. (Two violations).

- Sept. 11, 1992 — An Ohio State assistant coach speaks briefly to Flint after observing a Woodward practice. (One violation).

- Sept. 17, 1992 — Ayers and his assistants visit Flint and his family at home. (One violation).

- Oct. 8, 1992 — Ayers speaks with Flint for 30 minutes during a noncontact period. (One violation).

Damon Flint, shown dunking in a game for Woodward High School, is ineligible to play at Ohio State.

Talk to someone at a particular location, and I suppose even confused about whether someone is a junior or a senior, but I don't think there's a coach in the country who isn't aware that you can't provide money under those circumstances."

Ayers said he learned only recently that the money changed hands and that the nylon bags were given. Jones said there is no accounting trail to determine if the money came from department funds or from Brazeau personally. Brazeau, now the head coach at the University of Hartford in West Hartford, Conn., was said to be out of the office and did not return a telephone call.

In all, the NCAA alleged that 17 violations occurred, many stemming from the domino-effect of earlier contacts between Ayers or Brazeau and Flint. In one of them, Ayers introduced himself to Flint's grandmother after Ohio State had held practice at Woodward in March of last year for the NCAA Midwest Regional in Cincinnati. In another, a brief face-to-face meeting at Woodward, he expressed condolences to Flint on the death of his mother.

That's among the charges OSU considers to be unfair. "I think civility ought to be understood in regard to condolences on a mother's passing," Jones said. Rorst said the appeal — to the full eligibility committee — would be conducted by telephone. "It usually takes just a couple of weeks," he said. Asked about the chances of a reversal, he said, "There aren't any statistics that I'm aware of but there are many appeals that are successful."

Asked if Flint is considering waiting to see if his eligibility at OSU might be restored, Leon said, "He's not. He's already working with other schools. I'm not involved in his recruiting, but I know that he has three visits left, and he canceled visits to Las Vegas (UNLV), Arkansas and Louisville. Today, 11 schools have already called here and said they have scholarships."
Slammed: OSU program guilty of 17 violations

By Joe Hoffmann
Lantern sports writer

OSU men’s basketball coach Randy Ayers thought signing All-American high-school player Damon Flint would be one more step toward the team’s return to the NCAA Tournament.

Instead, the NCAA declared Monday that Ayers and his staff committed 17 recruiting violations in their efforts to land the Cincinnati Woodward senior.

The decision means Flint, a 6-foot-5 guard-forward, will likely never play at Ohio State.

OSU athletic officials acknowledged Monday that rules were violated, but they don’t agree with the NCAA’s decision.

“We are concerned and embarrassed that this kind of an incident would happen here,” said OSU Athletic Director Jim Jones.

Ayers criticized the NCAA’s decision in the case.

“I do not agree with all the NCAA’s findings or the conclusions that we obtained a recruiting advantage,” Ayers said.

Ayers and former OSU assistant coach Paul Brazeau made illegal contact with Flint at a local off-campus restaurant in October 1991.

Flint, who signed a national letter of intent in November to attend Ohio State and play basketball for the Buckeyes in the upcoming 1993-94 basketball season, is being released from his national letter of intent to attend Ohio State.

In releasing its decision, the NCAA gave this account of the infractions.

* On Oct. 30, 1991, Flint, his high school coach, Jim Leon, and three other people affiliated with the Woodward basketball program made what was intended to be an official visit to Ohio State.

After watching an OSU basketball practice, Flint and the others left to eat at a restaurant near campus with Ayers, Brazeau and a second OSU assistant coach. They ate at Damion’s Restaurant.

* On Dec. 8, 1991, Ayers and Brazeau made what they thought was their first official visit to Woodward to view Flint during a practice.

Flint made a verbal commitment to attend Ohio State during this visit.

The NCAA allows college basketball coaches three off-campus, in-person visits with potential recruits. It also allows four other visits in which the coach can scout the recruit but must have face-to-face contact with him or her.

The NCAA found the OSU program guilty of several other violations that the athletic governing body said were “not serious when considered individually.” Ohio State could have avoided each one had the Damion’s incident not occurred, OSU officials said.

These infractions included a face-to-face meeting with Ayers and Flint and others at a restaurant near campus with Ayers and Brazeau.

The NCAA brought the allegations to Jones’ attention earlier this month, he said. After looking into the matter, then-OSU Athletic Department “self-reported” the violations.

It’s still unclear how the allegations against Ohio State first came to light. Jones, who asked by a reporter at a news conference Monday, said he had no way of knowing who first complained to the NCAA.

Ayers said the whole matter comes down to confusion on his part.

“At the time, we didn’t consider it (Damion’s) to be off-campus,” Ayers said. “It’s in close proximity to St. John Arena. And come to find out, our fraternity and sorority houses are also considered off-campus.”

The OSU Athletic Department, which has elected to appeal the NCAA’s decision on Flint, does not know if the NCAA will enforce any sanctions against the OSU basketball program.

“I still hold coach Ayers in high regard,” Jones said. “I believe he did not know. I believe he had known, we would not be here today.”
Ayers doesn't know what lies ahead

Ohio State's basketball coach awaits final word from the NCAA on the Flint affair.

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Writer

It appeared to be perfect, if accidental, timing.

Coach Randy Ayers departed for Europe shortly after a May 24 news conference to announce that recruiting infractions had cost Ohio State its only 1993-94 basketball signee, Damon Flint.

But Ayers, who was an assistant to Seton Hall's P.J. Carlesimo on a touring squad of college all-stars, learned he couldn’t escape the setback even by crossing the Atlantic Ocean.

"I picked up a newspaper over there and it was listed under 'sports transactions' in the small type," Ayers said yesterday.

The loss of Flint for several violations of NCAA rules — most involving an off-campus lunch in October 1991 — is a transaction with lingering effects.

For Ayers, they include criticism from some followers and observers of OSU sports, and the penalties — if any — that may be imposed in addition to the loss of Flint, a Cincinnati Woodward standout who has signed with Cincinnati.

"It's been a tough time, and a very regretful time, as well," Ayers said. "And there's a certain unknown about it all."

The NCAA said it would make a final ruling on Ohio State's case in 30 to 60 days. So word may come any day, or a month from now.

It's assumed other aspects of OSU's recruiting are being reviewed, but Ayers said he didn't know if that is the case.

"I've had no indication on what the timetable is," Ayers said. "The university attorneys are handling that aspect."

University of Hartford coach Paul Bragg, who was Ayers' top assistant from 1989-90 through 1991-92, was singled out for the most serious violations, including giving Woodward coach Jim Leon $50 for the off-campus lunch and gas expenses. Bragg has declined interview requests.

Ayers said it does not appear likely the Buckeyes will sign an incoming freshman to take the spot vacated by the loss of Flint.

Meanwhile, recruiting guidelines prohibit Ayers from talking about Rick Yoidt, a 6-foot-7 transfer from Austin Peay, until Yoidt signs a scholarship in the fall.

Yoidt, who has said he will enroll at OSU, is taking summer courses near his home in Portage, Ind., to meet the credit requirements for transferring.

As soon as he goes on scholarship, Yoidt will count against the NCAA limit of 13, even though he won't begin playing until the 1994-95 season.

The Buckeyes will enter the upcoming season with 12 active players if Otis Winston decides to continue competing in both track and basketball.

The core group consists of guards Jamil Skeletor, Doug Erzler, Greg Simpson and Derek Anderson; forwards Lawrence Funderburke, Jimmy Radliff, Antonio Watson and Charles Moors; and centers Reebal Dudley, Nate Washington and Gerald Eaker.

"We need to make the decision on what he wants to do," Ayers said. "He's been competing in the high jump this summer."

Although he is a walk-on who receives non-athletic tuition assistance, Winston is a scholarship "counter" because he was recruited in track.

In the November signing period, OSU could have four scholarships to offer — three for outgoing seniors Skeletor, Funderburke and Radliff and a fourth for Winston's spot.

If that happened, Winston would be able to practice with the team but not play in games in 1984-95.

Funderburke and Watson both had surgery June 8 to correct a tendinitis condition Ayers described as "jumper's knee."

"Lawrence is off his crutches," Ayers said. "Tony, as of Monday, was not."

"It's a matter of six to eight weeks for both of them. I'd expect them to be full-go by pre-season. But January, when the Big Ten starts, is when we really need them."

Ayers said several OSU players are competing in the Worthington Summer League. One exception is the 6-11 Eaker, who was redshirted last season as a freshman. He is playing in a league near his suburban Chicago home.

Please see AYERS Page 2G
Basketball camp gives young athletes chance to improve

By Joe Strauss
Lantern sports writer

If the earth were created in seven days, then perhaps superb basketball players can be created in only five. This is what 276 campers, ranging from seventh to twelfth grade, hoped for at the Randy Ayers basketball camp, July 11-15, at St. John Arena.

"I'm here to have fun, work hard, and learn teamwork," said Grant Barcley, a ninth grader from Virginia. "I've been to this camp in past summers, and I'm happy to improve my game in each one."

OSU men's basketball coach Randy Ayers and his assistants, Mark Anderson, Dave Cecutti and Randy Roth, have attracted high school players and coaches from all over Ohio and across the country to attend this camp.

Ayers said the close interaction between coach and player fosters the camp environment.

"In order to work with kids, you really have to break it down and do a much better job of relating your philosophy to them," Ayers said. "You have to watch how you phrase things and do that really helps you as a coach. That's why I think a lot of high school coaches try to get that experience with us in the summer because it helps them when they go back to their programs and teach their kids," he said.

"We're trying to give the kids a better understanding of fundamentals and discipline," said Darin Stewart, coach of the freshman basketball team at Toledo St. John's High School. "Even when away from home, they still have to have discipline. During the summer, kids are usually relaxed, so one of our goals is to show them that they have to work hard all the time," Stewart said.

This was a basketball camp stressing hard work, fundamentals and enthusiasm for the game. From 7 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., with breaks for lunch and dinner, the players were on the court either running drills or playing highly competitive games.

The campers were divided by age, in three separate leagues (Big Ten, NCAA and NBA) and tested for their ability. They then worked on fundamental skills such as individual offense and defense, team offense and defense, rebalancing, passing and shooting. Ayers stressed throughout the camp that if young players of different abilities understand the basic fundamentals, they will ultimately be successful on the basketball court.

"Everyone comes from different backgrounds," Ayers said. "I think what we try to do is get everybody on the same team, and in order to do that you have to concentrate on the fundamentals.

"You don't have to be the most talented player, but any coach is looking for players who work hard and compete every time they step on the court," Ayers said.

This type of dedication was shown by Bryan Wallace, a sophomore at Chaminade Julienne High School in Dayton, who was also practicing his shooting.

Last year, Wallace was second on the freshman team in assists, and during camp games he exhibited a tremendous willingness to sacrifice his body for his team.

This camp has been great," Wallace said. "I came here not knowing anyone, so I had to assert myself and play my game.

"The competition is so tough here, and I'm playing against older and physically bigger guys, but I'm trying my hardest," Wallace said.

As the players gained more confidence, the games became more intense. This is especially pleasing for young coaches like the 26-year-old Stewart, who was participating in his first summer basketball camp.

"We're trying to show them that they have to work hard to achieve success in the long run," Stewart said. "You gain personal satisfaction knowing you did your best. In that way, there can be even a moral victory if you play hard."

Each day after lunch, campers were treated with guest appearances by former OSU basketball stars such as Jimmy Jackson, now with the Dallas Mavericks, and Ronnie Stokes, a successful businessman in Columbus, who also finds time to play in the Worthington Summer League. Both stressed the importance of hard work now, while the players are young, so later they have no regrets.

"If you want to be successful you've got to work at it," Jackson said. "I've worked hard in my day because I wanted to be the best. I wasn't aware of it at the time, but my parents sacrificed to send me to basketball camps. That's why I'm working so hard, so I can give something back to them."

"When you're young you take it for granted that people should do something for you, but now I understand," Jackson said.

Stokes added that there is no excuse for players not to work hard and make the most of their experience at the camp.

"In the game of basketball, as I was growing up and even today, when I cross these white lines, I come to play," Stokes said. "The things I did as a young person and continue to do today has made me a better basketball player."

"Everybody has strengths that they can play to and be a part of," Ayers said. "And you just hope that they can take to heart what you're trying to teach them. You try to preach it and I think that if they hear it enough they'll understand it's important to us here at Ohio State," Ayers said.

For a player like Wallace, and all the other campers whose work ethic drives their potential, the camp was an important step toward improvement.

"Last year, my coach really only allowed three guys to shoot," Wallace said. "In my heart though, I knew I could score. Hopefully, next year I'll get my chance."
GREAT YEAR EXPECTATIONS OF LAWRENCE FUNDERBURKE

Once one of the most sought-after players in scholastic basketball, the Buckeyes' talented enigma prepares for his last season. Is this the year of stardom?

BY RAY PAPROCKI

LAWRENCE

Funderburke is in his campus-area apartment, his sculpted body—all 6 feet 9 inches and 245 pounds after a high-calorie, heavy-workout summer—stretched across a sofa. Two scars run vertically over his knees, visible evidence of minor, off-season surgery. The tube flashes pictures of beautiful people stuck in some soap opera plot.

Funderburke is between classes in the final weeks of a busy summer quarter at Ohio State University. He's talking with two friends and a visitor. Referring to the visitor, Funderburke says to his friends, "This is the guy who called
me 10 times in one day, I bet he was getting annoyed when I didn’t get back to him.” The visitor reminds Funderburke it was only three times. “Yeah, I know,” he says, laughing. “I’m just joking you. But you were probably thinking I was like what some people say I’m like.”

The visitor doesn’t agree; he’ll give Funderburke a chance to be himself.

“Good. That’s all I want—a chance.”

Lawrence Funderburke—the so-called Bad Boy of Basketball, the Nomad of Hoopdom, the King of Controversy—is a man of many chances. Basketball has given him an opportunity to escape the poverty of a Columbus housing project, be a nationally recognized high school athlete, and become a star player at Indiana and Ohio State universities.

He’s also almost blown it all because of his hasty or ego-driven decisions, but he keeps getting One More Shot. He’s a tantalizing basketball talent, with vast potential in a long, graceful body that propels him like a leopard up and down the court.

But just having potential isn’t enough. So far in college, Funderburke has shown only flashes of brilliance. This year, in his senior season, he needs to prove he is what everybody knows he can be: a Player. If Funderburke continues to fall into his baffling mid-game funk, he will have let the rarest of opportunities—the immediate riches and lifetime security of being a high NBA draft pick—implode into a thousand slivers of what-could-have-been.

Funderburke is aware of the possibilities. “I know where I stand,” he says. “It’s all up to me.”

Lawrence Funderburke carries more baggage than a Port Columbus skyscraper. His history of turmoil and trouble probably has been memorized by sports junkies around the world:

• There’s the High School Stuff: After a strong sophomore year at Worthington Christian High School, Funderburke transferred to Wehrle High School, where he developed into a national prospect—but then early in his senior year got kicked off the team and never played his final season. He also was a figure in a recruiting scandal at the University of Kentucky.

• There’s the Indiana Stuff: After six games at Indiana University, he quit the team, then transferred to a junior college in Kentucky, returned to Indiana to continue his studies and then—without an athletic scholarship—enrolled at Ohio State University.

• There’s the Vitale Stuff. ESPN sportscaster Dick Vitale twice targeted Funderburke for scathing comments during national broadcasts of 1992 Big Ten games.

His well-publicized controversies tagged Funderburke with a reputation: Huge basketball talent with a bigger attitude problem. His actions spawned the question: Why bother?

But people did bother because Funderburke is more than just what the headlines indicate. He’s a serious student, an articulate and bright young man.

And he’s misunderstood.

That’s what those few people who know him well say. People such as Randy Ayers, Ohio State University basketball coach who took a chance (there’s that word again) by inviting Funderburke to play for the Buckeyes; Nate Mitchell, longtime Funderburke friend and unit director at the west side’s Boys and Girls Club of Columbus, and Bret Bearup, former University of Kentucky basketball player and current attorney and owner of an investment management business, who befriended Funderburke during the Indiana Stuff.

Funderburke comes across as more thoughtful than the average jock. His outlook is similar in some respects to another controversial OSU athlete, Robert Smith. They are outspoken and forceful; they seem distant and, at times, cocky. They understand there is life after sports.

Funderburke, who says he carries a 3.0 grade point average while pursuing a major in business/finance, emphasizes that he gives equal weight to schoolwork and basketball. “A college degree is very important to me,” he says, “I will be the first person in my family, except my grandma, to have one.” Adds Ayers, “He brings more to us than just basketball. His conversations are about the big picture, about life. He knows what’s happening in politics and business.”

Funderburke has provocative opinions. He rejects the notion of athletes being role models. “We live in a dream world. Now, I like being on TV. It makes you feel good and special, but athletes are normal people. It bothers me that people act as if they know me. They don’t know who I am. So they shouldn’t try to act like me. The only thing they can emulate is my moves on the basketball court. They should pattern themselves after the people they see every day: teachers, parents.”

He refuses to sign many autographs.
Part of it is the role model thing. Another part is he can be moody. “One time he can be really great, other times he’s in a fog,” says an acquaintance. Sometimes he just doesn’t want to be bothered. “I guess to some people I come across as arrogant, cocky,” Funderburke says. “I don’t mean harm, but I fall outside the stereotypical role of what people expect of athletes. A lot of people don’t understand me.”

Funderburke prides himself on his independence of thought and self-reliance. Pictures of Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and Malcolm X hang on a wall in his living room. When asked if the black leaders had any impact on his life, he says no. “No role models,” he says. “Just me, they’re just pictures.” He later adds, “I trust nobody.” When asked about his indebtedness to Ayers for allowing him to play at OSU, Funderburke says, “I am grateful for the opportunity. But I pay for my own school. I got my own academic scholarship. I put myself in debt. The indebtedness is to me.”

His attitude stems from his upbringing. Funderburke grew up in Sullivant Gardens, one of the roughest neighborhoods in the city. He never knew his father and lived with his mother and three older sisters. Funderburke has said he pretty much raised himself. “I had no one I could really look up to or follow,” he says. “It can affect you for the rest of your life.” He managed to stay out of trouble. “He was a loner, but involved in activities at the Boys Club,” says Nate Mitchell. “Living in Sullivant Gardens, you have to be tough to survive, but not so tough that people are challenging you. He is very blessed to come out of that and not be a victim of that environment.”

Funderburke says many of the people he grew up with are either in jail, dead or still stuck in the Gardens. “I feel like I had an angel protecting me,” he says. “It’s funny, but I always knew that I would be successful. A lot of people thought they would stay in the projects. I didn’t. And it wasn’t just basketball. I just knew. It was like we were in a bubble and there was this hole in it and I was the only one that got out.”

Funderburke studied his books, sold concessions at Columbus Clippers games or at Ohio Stadium, hung out at the Boys Club and lived in the gym. He clearly remembers his first basketball game. “I was 8 years old. The score was 10-6. We had a trophy and a pizza party.”

And Funderburke listened to Mitchell. “We talked a lot, about staying in school, keeping up grades, doing the right thing,” says Mitchell. “When he got a good report card, I would take him to McDonald’s to celebrate.” And Mitchell would sit on him when needed. He says Funderburke realized he possessed abundant talent at about age 14, and acted like it. Mitchell cut him from his AAU team for slackin’ off. “He came back the next year and busted butt for me.”

Spirituallity seems to play a central role in Funderburke’s life; he speaks about God’s influence on him. Funderburke, through a scholarship program, attended Worthington Christian High School. “I didn’t want a public school education,” says Funderburke. “I wanted a Christian education.” As a sophomore at Worthington Christian, he attracted considerable attention for his basketball skills, averaging 20 points a game and being named to the All-District first team.

The school was no basketball power, but it could have been with Funderburke — could have, because Funderburke left for Wehrle High School in 1987. “I felt out of place. Growing up poor and being with all those people who were well off, it was very hard to deal with,” he says. “It was a great school, but I didn’t fit in.”

Wehrle, on the south end, was closer to home and also had a powerhouse basketball program. Funderburke felt comfortable. “It was a dream year,” he says of his junior season. Funderburke was the star (Ohio’s Division IV Player of the Year) on a state champion, averaging 28 points and 14 rebounds a game. He was touted as being among the best high school players in the country and got national publicity.

All the glory and recognition inflated Funderburke’s ego. “Every coach wanting to play for him, everybody telling me how great I was. People were treating me like I was president of the United States,” he says. He clashed with Wehrle head coach Chuck Kemper. “I went into practice saying, ‘This is my team. I didn’t go to some practices, talking back to the coach. If people think I’m arrogant now, they should have known me then.”

In a move that made big news, Kemper kicked his superstar off the team after the eighth game of his senior season. “That humbled me,” says Funderburke, who no doubt was further humbled when Wehrle repeated as state champs.

His senior year troubles were building blocks in his reputation as the Bad Attitude Kid. Adding to it was his involvement in the recruiting-violations scandal that tarned the University of Kentucky. The NCAA cited the wooing of Funderburke by the legendary basketball school on its list of infractions and handed UK a three-year probation. “I was 16 years old,” he says. “I didn’t know what was going on or had no idea what NCAA violations were.” Although Funderburke was not at fault, the link to the controversy tainted him.

Ohio State pursued Funderburke, but there were stories that he and then-OSU basketball coach Gary Williams didn’t mesh. Williams, while recruiting Funderburke, told a reporter he was furious when the star athlete abruptly rose to leave a meeting and then refused to shake his hand. Funderburke today says he doesn’t remember the incident and that he had no hard feelings toward Williams. He didn’t attend OSU because, he says, “I just wanted to get away from Columbus.”

Funderburke made more big news in 1989 when he announced he would attend Columbus Monthly • October 1993
Funderburke has spent the summer preparing for the season. The operation on his knees should eliminate the painful tendinitis that has plagued him since high school.
times, he seemed detached, even dogging it on the court. He often resembled a yo-yo, with Ayers frequently pulling him in and out of games. Ayers was so upset with Funderburke during a comeback win over Penn State that he kept him on the bench for the final 11 minutes.

There were several reasons for the roller-coaster year. Funderburke wasn’t ready to become a team leader. He played on an inexperienced, struggling team. And he again was asked to play out of position at center. Funderburke is at home as a power forward, utilizing his chief assets—remarkable speed and quickness. But the other big guys weren’t ready for prime time, and Ayers had no choice but to keep Funderburke close to the hoop.

“Your could see his frustration,” says Bearup. “He wouldn’t run down the court. He wouldn’t go after the rebound.” Funderburke himself said during the season that at times he became “lackadaisical.” He says that if he didn’t do something “dramatic” early in the game, he sometimes would lose his concentration.

People questioned his mental toughness and his spirit. But Funderburke showed he wasn’t a quitter. He responded admirably during a critical test. A lot of attention was focused on Funderburke’s benching in the Penn State game. But the pivotal point came the next game—when Ayers pulled Funderburke early against Northwestern. He could have responded badly; instead, he had perhaps his best game of the year, scoring 27 points.

This season, Funderburke will have to maintain his focus. He can’t afford to slack off if he wants to be a top player. OSU should be a stronger team than last season’s 13-15 squad. Sophomore Greg Simpson and Derek Anderson will join senior Jamie Skelton to provide a lot of scoring. The other big men—Antonio Watson, Nate WIlbourne, Gerald Eaker, Rickey Dudley—will have to develop to allow Ayers to use Funderburke away from the basket. And, “When Lawrence runs the floor, they are an entirely different team,” says Bill Hosket, longtime Buckeye basketball TV commentator.

If Funderburke finds his groove, he will have found the jackpot at the end of the rainbow known as the NBA. He could be among the top 10 picks. Bearup thinks his sheer athleticism guarantees him an NBA contract. “But there’s a big difference between a lottery pick [the highest choices] and the 23rd pick—$2 million a year compared to $600,000 a year,” he says.

Funderburke has spent the summer preparing for the season. The operation on his knees should eliminate the painful tendinitis that has plagued him since high school. Surgery meant that, unlike the past two summers, he didn’t play in the star-studded Worthington Summer League. The inactivity doesn’t concern him. “This has given me an opportunity to sit back and relax—time to stay away from the attention—and go to school,” he says.

He took a big load—17 credit hours—this summer and is on schedule to graduate winter quarter. And he has put in a lot of time in the weight room and in the kitchen. A hand-lettered sign hangs in his apartment, reminding him to eat 100 pounds of potatoes in eight weeks. His goal is to gain 15 or 20 pounds so he weighs 250 pounds when practice begins Nov. 1.

He adds, “I’m ready.”

Ayers thinks he is, too. “He is among the most talented players we’ve had here in my 10 years,” he says. “The sky is the limit. I think he is going to have a good year.”

When Funderburke was entering his senior year in high school, the basketball experts ranked him on par with the likes of Jimmy Jackson, Kenny Anderson and Bobby Hurley. All became collegiate all-Americans and first-round draft picks. Could this finally be the year Funderburke will catch up with his contemporaries?

It’s his last chance.

Ray Popracki is a staff writer for Columbus Monthly.
Buckeyes checked by NCAA

Basketball players’ buying cars at issue

By George Strode
Dispatch Sports Editor

Ohio State athletic director Jim Jones said last night that he’s aware of reports of two basketball players trying to buy vehicles from Dennis Autopoint with non-related co-signers.

However, Jones said, “What I know I can’t talk about.”

Ohio State coach Randy Ayers could not be reached for comment last night.

These were the reports circulating yesterday:

- Derek Anderson, Greg Simpson, Jamie Skelton and Charles Macon attempted to buy vehicles from Dennis, starting with Macon in June.
- Simpson and Macon had relatives as co-signers. Their purchases of Isuzu Rodenos were approved.
- Anderson and Skelton did not have relatives as co-signers. Their co-signers may have been involved in the Worthington Summer League. Their purchases were not approved.
- The NCAA contacted Ohio State officials, unaware of any possible violations, about the players’ dealings with Dennis.
- Anderson played for Masser Metals and Skelton for Andrew Insurance in the WSL this season. Sponsors of those teams could not be reached for comment last night.
- Marty Ziegler, general manager of Dennis Imports, told WBNS-TV that Macon was the first player to buy a vehicle.
- “We thought this might be a problem,” Ziegler said. “That’s why we didn’t sell them (Anderson and Skelton) the vehicles. We decided to check with an attorney and found it could be a violation.”

Aaron Masterson, vice president and general manager of Dennis, told WSYX “there’s no way they (possible Worthington Summer League sponsors) should be permitted to co-sign. In essence, it looks like they were paying the players.”

Masterson said he was told by an Ohio State official there was no violation with Skelton and Anderson because the sales did not take place.

He also said the NCAA and an OSU attorney looked at dealership records last week.

Meanwhile, Jones said he had no idea when the NCAA would make a decision in the Damon Flint case.

In May, the NCAA ruled Flint ineligible with the Buckeyes because Paul Brazeau, then an assistant coach at OSU, gave Flint’s coach, Jim Leon, $60 to pay for a meal at Damon’s restaurant, and four nylon gym bags. The dinner occurred when Flint, now at the University of Cincinnati, was a high school junior.
More fodder for the NCAA
Latest flap at OSU could add to sanctions

By BRUCE HOOLEY
PLAIN DEALER REPORTER

An NCAA official said yesterday that failed attempts by two Ohio State basketball players to purchase sport vehicles would figure in the determination of sanctions against the school for the illegal recruitment of Damon Flint.

"Anything that comes up while an institution is being evaluated will be considered," said David Berst, assistant executive director of the NCAA. "... when

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the Flint issue is concluded, I will be able to speak more freely, but I cannot comment beyond that at this time."

The NCAA's eight-month investigation has yet to result in sanctions against OSU beyond ruling Flint ineligible to play for the Buckeyes this season.

An NCAA investigator was in Columbus on Friday examining attempts by OSU sophomore Derek Anderson and senior Jamie Skelton to purchase vehicles from Dennis Auto Point with non-family co-signers for their loans.

OSU coach Randy Ayers said his players would not be disciplined for their attempt to purchase vehicles in violation of NCAA rules.

"I think our kids were treated like any other customer," Ayers said. "When their background did not check out, they were denied an opportunity to make a purchase. I'm pleased they were treated just like anybody else."

Anderson and Skelton declined comment on the matter yesterday.

Aaron Masterson, executive vice president and general manager of the dealership, denied Anderson's loan for a $20,000 Isuzu Rodeo and canceled Skelton's loan for a $25,000 Isuzu Trooper on Wednesday, two days after a non-relative attempted to replace his parents as co-signers.

Masterson said persons who identified themselves as representatives of Anderson's and Skelton's respective Worthington Summer Basketball League teams offered to co-sign the players' loans.

Masterson declined to name the co-signers, citing "a request that's come out of the community."

"We have been asked, very bluntly, to let the matter die," Masterson said. "Everyone is saying, 'No harm, no foul,' and we agree."

Masterson declined comment on whether the request came from Ohio State officials.

Fred Andrew, sponsor of Skelton's team in the Worthington league, said Skelton didn't request he co-sign a vehicle loan.

"I've never, ever talked to Jamie about anything like that," Andrew said. "Nobody has ever asked us to do anything."

Mark Masser, the sponsor of Anderson's summer league team, said he refused to co-sign the loan when contacted by the dealership at Anderson's request.

Masser said he notified Ayers of Anderson's intention.

"I knew deep down this would be a violation, but I wanted Randy to be aware of what was going on and I wanted him to also acknowledge it to Derek," Masser said.
Buckeye cagers strut their stuff at Madness

By Al Slay
Lantern sports writer

It hasn't been the easiest off-season for OSU men's basketball coach Randy Ayers or his troop of Buckeye players.

The Damon Flint incident is a typical example of what the men's basketball team has had to deal with in the off-season. Last spring, the NCAA declared Flint ineligible to play for the Buckeyes because of illegal recruiting practices.

For those and other reasons, Friday night's "Madness at Midnight" took on extra meaning for Ayers and the team.

"As a competitor, coach and educator, I'm anxious to get started," Ayers said. "We've had a long off-season and we're going to try and put this team together and be competitive this year."

The event is mostly for the fans, said 6-foot-6 sophomore forward Derek Anderson.

"I was really happy to see (Gerald) Eaker give us some positive minutes," Ayers said. "I also thought Tony Watson gave us some good work on the boards."

One thing Ayers said wasn't very positive about was the physical condition of 6-foot-9 senior center Lawrence Funderburke.

Funderburke said he isn't close to being fully recovered from off-season knee surgery and classified his knees as being only 75 to 80 percent.

"We've got to have a more physical presence inside and we have to rebound the basketball," Ayers said. "That will be a key for us this season."
BASKETBALL TEAM – 1897-98

A "formal" picture of the team that was the first to play intercollegiate basketball in the new gymnasium of the Armory in February of 1898.

The above photo and caption were used in a bulletin board display in the Main Library for Winter Quarter, 1994.
While growing up on the south side of Columbus, Jerry Francis was always told that things would happen fast for him if he could earn a college degree. After playing basketball for the Buckeyes and graduating from Ohio State in 1991, Francis knows the full truth of his childhood advice.

As he finished up school, Francis coached the junior varsity team at the same high school where he starred, Columbus Wehrle. In just a couple of years since then, he has attained his degree in education, married his college sweetheart, been blessed with twin daughters and moved twice to college coaching posts.

"Things are going real well," said Francis, now a full-time assistant for the basketball team at Butler University in Indianapolis. "I guess I'm doing what I expected to. I'm a coach and a family man."

Francis, who owns the OSU record for career games played with 133, was a three-year starter and a very popular player for the Buckeyes. He was a local high school product who, at about 6-4, held down a forward spot and pleased coaches and fans alike with sheer hustle and determination. In his senior season of 1988-89, he was named team captain along with Jay Burson and Tony White.

In September of 1992, Francis married the former Felicia White, a talented sprinter who lettered in track at OSU. As a newlywed, he worked for eight months during the 1992-93 season at Bowling Green State University as a restricted earnings coach. His main duty at that time was to scout opposing teams for the Falcons. One of his assignments was to prepare the squad for an encounter with Ohio State.

With that successful venture under his belt, Francis looked to move on.

"I wanted to step up," he said. "I need to get as much experience as I can in all aspects of coaching."

BGSU head coach Jim Larranaga and Ohio State assistant Randy Roth, who previously coached at Butler, put in a good word for Francis. The call soon came and the Francises were on the move again.

The couple recently produced a double dribble when twin girls Jaren and Jarel were born Dec. 18. Starting to feel like a full-fledged adult, Francis skipped playing in the Worthington Summer League for the first time in years last summer.

"I'm tired of chasing kids," he joked.

But Francis likes to stay closely associated with young players. While there and mix it up in drills and show those guys how to play tough inside. But then I have to rest for about two weeks."

Francis' input seemed to pay immediate dividends when Butler upset in-state rival Indiana for the first time in decades at the beginning of the season.

"It was a good situation for me to talk to the kids a lot that week because I played those guys each and every year," said Francis, who was a frustrating 0-8 against the Hoosiers during his Buckeye career. "I told them they can be beaten if everyone concentrates on what they need to do. I think that helped settle them down and not get caught up in the fact they were playing IU."

"I thought it was great, personally, because everyone is so IU-crazy around here. I'm always flapping my gums about Ohio State and letting people know about the Buckeyes — my friends call me 'Brutus.' I'm sure they're sick of hearing it."

After the emotional win, Butler struggled through a West Coast trip later in the season and was 6-6 through its first dozen games. But Francis continues to make his mark, especially as an emotional presence on the bench.

"I'm more nervous as a coach than I was as a player," he said. "Before, I could control things a little bit. If someone needed to dive on the floor and get a loose ball or draw a foul, I knew I could do it. Now I've got to hope these guys can.

"But don't get me wrong, it's fun to coach. Hopefully I'm learning a lot, and I feel like I am."

While Francis is enjoying his experiences, he makes it plain he'd like to be back in the Buckeye State soon.

"There's no question I'd like to be at Ohio State again, or at least somewhere nearby," he said. "I think every coach would like to eventually be in their home state or alma mater. I know my wife wants to come home right now. She's coming down on me pretty hard. But she'll be patient. I think it's only a matter of time before I'm back there in some capacity or another."
Wilbourne mulls transfer from OSU

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Apparently this Ohio State basketball soap opera isn't going to end until we find out who shot J.R.

Two days after finishing their first losing campaign in 17 years, the Buckeyes learned yesterday that Nate Wilbourne, a 6-foot-11 center from Upper Arlington, may transfer and use his remaining two seasons of eligibility at another school.

"What Nate basically has said is that we're going to go through a decision-making process," the player's father, Frank Wilbourne, said last night.

"Nate wants to determine what is best for the program and himself. He very well appreciates the privilege he's had with a higher education and playing basketball at Ohio State. It's a matter now of analyzing his value to the program and the program's value to him."

Frank Wilbourne said Nate "is going to be finishing exams, so he's trying not to make any statements. He'll be here (enrolled at OSU) for the spring quarter."

The younger Wilbourne, a sophomore, appeared in 21 of the Buckeyes' 29 games, making 10 starts.

He was bothered by an ankle sprain before a serious elbow infection flared up on Jan. 16, eventually requiring surgery and putting him out for six straight games.

Wilbourne played sparingly after his return but still finished averaging 5.3 points sixth on the team, and 3.3 rebounds, which was fourth.

He shot 52.3 percent from the field and 79.2 on free throws while logging 13.1 minutes per game, and made academic All-Big Ten with a 3.26 grade-point average in his major, international business.

"As soon as this started getting around town (yesterday), you heard about playing time," Frank Wilbourne said.

"I don't think anyone in this household has mentioned playing time in the last 24 hours."

"If anyone thinks that's involved, they don't realize the depth of this young man or know him at all. The injury was not a factor, either. That was handled in a first-rate manner by the university, with excellent medical care."

Ohio State coach Randy Ayers, who was out of town yesterday, apparently had no indication of the transfer possibility on Monday, when he conducted a team meeting. One-on-one sessions with each player are to follow.

Wilbourne emphasized that his son did not deliver a letter formally requesting a scholarship release, but notified OSU of his possible move to clear the way for outside contacts.

"The word 'release,' that's a letter of release that occurs somewhere down the line if he decides to leave and a school decides to take him," Wilbourne said.

"There are NCAA rules, paper drills and points of procedure, and you have to follow them or you stub your toe. Nate went by to see Randy today and he was out of town. But please see WILBOURNE Page 2F"
OSU set to file report with NCAA

Suggestions on penalties to be decided this week

By George Strode
Dispatch Sports Editor

Ohio State officials will decide in the next few days what penalties to recommend to the NCAA for 17 alleged violations in the recruitment of Damon Flint.

"We will come to some agreement by the end of this week. We will make that decision. They (NCAA officials) will not make it," David Williams II, OSU vice president of student affairs, said yesterday.

"When you send this in, they can do one of two things: They can accept your penalties as is, or, two, find them not acceptable. We suggest what these penalties should be. If they don't agree with them, they tell us and then the ball is back in our court."

Williams, who oversees the athletic department, is one of the Ohio State officials discussing what penalties to recommend in the Flint case. The group also includes university attorneys Robert Duncan and Steve McDonald and probably faculty representative Carol Kennedy and athletic director Jim Jones.

The NCAA ruled Flint ineligible at Ohio State. He starts as a freshman guard for the University of Cincinnati.

The NCAA's Committee on Infractions will hear the Ohio State case in mid-April.

"We have not received anything from the NCAA," Williams said. "We are dealing with draft work between our attorneys and the NCAA. We have never received a formal charge from the NCAA."

Among the penalties being discussed by OSU officials are the losses of one men's basketball scholarship and one coach for road recruiting for the 1994-95 season. Another possibility is freezing men's basketball coaches' salaries.

A university source said the NCAA notified the school yesterday that men's track has been absolved of any infractions. However, women's track also has been investigated by the NCAA "for nickel-and-dime violations," the source said.

Ohio State president Gordon Gee would like to have a new athletic director selected before the NCAA considers the university's case.

Jones, 57, announced Feb. 18 that he will take early retirement, effective June 30. However, he will remain through 1994 as an adviser to his successor.

More than 100 candidates have applied or been nominated for the job of directing a $28 million annual budget for 32 sports.

A university administrator said California businessman Rex Kern and Archie Griffin, an Ohio State assistant athletic director, have been nominated "multiple times."
It has been more than 10 years since Derick Polk graduated from Ohio State, and even faithful Buckeye basketball fans have had difficulties keeping track of Polk’s whereabouts since then.

“I know a lot of people from Ohio State are wondering what happened to Derick Polk,” said the Cleveland native, who graduated from the school in 1983.

Well, since earning an education degree, Polk has literally been a Globetrotter and has made a successful living out of shooting hoops.

He has played for squads in Australia, Belgium, Canada and the United States. And there was also his three-year stint with the world’s most famous basketball club, the Harlem Globetrotters.

Polk admits he lost count of how many countries he toured while he was a member of the laugh-a-minute and highly talented Globetrotters. He estimates his travels took him to 50 nations.

But these days Polk, a 7-foot, 245-pound center, is a little more settled. He is a player/assistant coach with the Hamilton Skyhawks of the National Basketball League. The NBL, which is beginning its second season, is Canada’s first professional basketball circuit.

Hamilton, which, like Pittsburgh in the U.S., is affectionately known as the Steel City in Canada, is located about 50 miles southwest of Toronto in Ontario.

The Skyhawks are actually the second Canadian team Polk has toiled for. In the mid-1980s, he spent one and a half seasons with the Toronto Tornadoes of the Continental Basketball Association.

During his second year with that club, the franchise relocated to Pensacola, Fla. But the Skyhawks have provided Polk with a first — his first coaching post.

“I feel I have a good rapport with the players,” said Polk, who averaged about six minutes of action and three points per game for the 1992-93 season. “Being a former player, I can understand where they are coming from.”

He spent most game nights on the Skyhawks’ bench with a clipboard in hand, keeping track of pertinent statistics, intensely studying the action on the court and occasionally getting up to offer suggestions to Hamilton’s head coach, Kevin Mackey, former head coach at Cleveland State.

“A lot of times, I just sit back and say to myself, ‘What would I do in this situation?’ said Polk, who admits he is anxious to move up the coaching ladder. “Hopefully, in the next year or two a head coaching job will come my way.”

However, Polk’s competitive fire as a player is still burning strong.

“Like any other player, he wants more minutes,” said Mackey, who has coached in the CBA and Global Basketball League, and compiled a 144-67 record during his seven years at Cleveland State.

“That comes with the territory. He’s always telling me, ‘Coach, give me a few more minutes.” His attitude, though, has been outstanding. It’s been A-plus.”

Mackey, who joined the Skyhawks in the third week of last season, inherited Polk as his assistant. When club owner Ted Stepien released coach/general manager Gary Youmans, now the coach of the Columbus Horizon in the CBA, and brought in Mackey, he insisted that Polk continue his assistant coaching responsibilities.

Mackey and Polk, however, have crossed paths numerous times before.

After Polk had graduated from OSU and while Mackey was calling the shots at Cleveland State, the pair would frequently see each other during the summer months at pickup games in local gyms.

But now that they’re fighting for the same cause, Mackey says he’s come to appreciate Polk’s talents even more.

“He’s got a good eye for the game,” the coach said. “Derick is also a quality person. He’s a real team guy who works very hard in practice. And he’s very cooperative. Since he’s also an assistant coach, he’s got a couple of roles to fill, and in game situations he does both roles very well.”

Polk and Stepien have also known each other for some time. Stepien, who previously owned the NBA’s Cleveland Cavaliers, was the head of the Toronto Tornadoes when Polk played for that outfit.

Stepien has also worked in an executive management position at Softball World, the Cleveland complex Stepien operates.

While Polk says his boss “is like a father to me,” Stepien, at least publicly, maintains having Polk on his current basketball team is simply a wise business decision.

“It’s good for everybody and it saves money by having a player/coach,” Stepien said with a smile. “Instead of having to pay a coach and an assistant, by having Derick around I can save a salary.”

Polk, who is also under a yearly personal services contract with Stepien, collects about $24,000 a season for his player/coach duties with the Skyhawks.

Stepien, whose contacts helped Polk land his Globetrotters job, adds he wanted to help out his friend again after discovering what his future aspirations were.

“I always wanted to be a coach in high
Macon suspended for year after arrest

Sophomore forward charged with theft, drunken driving, speeding

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Coach Randy Ayers said yesterday that sophomore forward Charles Macon has been given a one-year suspension from the Ohio State basketball team in the wake of charges resulting from incidents near Lafayette, Ind., on Friday night.

"I'm just extremely disappointed," Ayers said. "I thought we had stressed the subject of handling responsibilities, the idea that you do things in a certain way. We've always stressed that to all of our players."

Macon was arrested by Indiana State Police after he allegedly pumped $16.93 worth of gasoline into his car at a Clinton County service station, then drove off without paying.

Minutes later, police pulled over Macon's car after they clocked him driving 90 mph in a 65 mph zone on I-65, about 11 miles from the service station.

Police say they discovered less than 30 grams of marijuana in Macon's car. They ordered a test to determine whether Macon had been smoking the drug.

Macon, 20, was charged with felony theft, drunken driving, and speeding. He has not been charged with drug possession or operating a vehicle while under a controlled substance.

He was released from the Tippecanoe County Jail on Saturday after posting a $250 cash bond.

Ayers said Macon, of Michigan City, Ind., made court appearances in two Indiana counties yesterday accompanied by his mother, Dorothy.

"I talked with them both on the phone today, and hopefully we'll meet in a couple of days," Ayers said. "I think Charles is in the process now of getting an attorney."

Judge Richard Martin entered an automatic not guilty plea on the felony theft charge for Macon in Clinton Superior Court after Macon said he needed time to secure an attorney.

Martin set a pretrial hearing for May 26 and a trial for June 13.

If convicted, Macon could face up to three years in prison and a $10,000 fine.

"The thing with Charles, now that he's suspended for a year, is that basketball is entirely secondary," Ayers said. "He has to get his personal life in order."

"There are other issues, things he's got to address, and he needs to forget basketball and get himself back together first."

Macon, who was named Indiana's Mr. Basketball as a senior at Michigan City Elston High School in 1992, was given two one-week suspensions by Ayers before the 1993-94 season when he fell behind academically. He later missed a practice and a game dealing with family problems.

Macon retains two years of eligibility.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.
OSU suggests penalties to NCAA

Loss of scholarship, assistant for recruiting may be on list

By George Strode
Dispatch Sports Editor

Ohio State has submitted its recommended penalties to the NCAA for admitted rules violations in the recruitment of Damon Flint.

An Ohio State official said last night that it has suggested the losses of one scholarship and one assistant coach during a recruiting period in the 1994-95 season.

David Williams II, vice president of student affairs and overseer of the athletic department, would not confirm the recommendations.

However, Williams said, "We're trying to put in a better monitoring system, to take corrective action."

Williams said a committee of five will have monthly meetings to see that NCAA rules are being followed. The five are the new athletic director, the new athletic department compliance officer, faculty representative Carol Kennedy, university attorney Bob Duncan and Williams.

The NCAA Committee on Infractions is expected to consider the Ohio State case at its meeting April 15-17.

The university was charged with 17 violations in the Flint case. Paul Brazeau, an OSU assistant coach at the time, provided $60 to buy dinner at an off-campus restaurant and gym bags for Flint. The NCAA announced the violations in May 1993 and ruled Flint ineligible. He now plays for the University of Cincinnati.

Ohio State apparently has helped its cause with the NCAA with the early retirements of athletic director Jim Jones and Dick Finn, a special assistant to Jones in charge of compliance with NCAA rules.

Jones, 57, and Finn, 60, are expected to complete their OSU careers on June 30 although Jones will remain as an adviser through 1994 and Finn would like to continue until Feb. 1, 1995.

Ohio State president Gordon Gee was upset over lack of a university response to what one official called "nickel and dime" violations in an NCAA inquiry.

"The issue should have been resolved much more quickly. They never responded to them. Some people were not in control that should have been," an OSU administrator said.

"Much of the issue has been taken care of," said the administrator, apparently referring to the early retirements.

Meanwhile, Rex Kern, a leading candidate to replace Jones, said he hadn't made up his mind to remove his name from consideration because of health reasons.

Kern, 44, quarterback of the Buckeyes' 1968 national football champions and a Ventura, Calif., businessman, has had five back operations and one hip replacement since his college career.

"I don't know if I'm withdrawing my name from consideration," Kern said yesterday. "I have meetings in the area Monday — but they are unrelated to the university."

Kern has not applied for the athletic director's job, but has been nominated.

The screening committee will meet again this week to set up interviews with eight to 12 candidates, probably beginning next week.

Gee would like to have a new athletic director named in time to help deal with the finish of the NCAA investigation.
OSU's Simpson pleads not guilty to assault charge

Ohio State basketball player Greg Simpson pleaded not guilty to a misdemeanor charge of assault yesterday in Franklin County Municipal Court.

Jerry Pitts, an attorney for Simpson, entered the plea on Simpson's behalf. Simpson, 20, of 296 E. 13th Ave., did not attend the hearing. The case will be assigned to a judge for further proceedings.

The charge stems from a fight during a pickup basketball game March 2 in Lärkins Hall, OSU Police Chief Ron Michalec said.

Charles White, an OSU student, told police Simpson had punched him and asked police to file an assault charge.

"Not real sure what the fight was in relationship to, only that it revolved around a basketball game," Michalec said.

OSU coach Randy Ayers said he was not aware charges were going to be filed against Simpson, a sophomore guard from Lima, Ohio.

"This was a situation that we handled internally at the time it happened," Ayers said.

"We set up a plan for Greg that he has to follow."
Ohio State gives NCAA list of sanctions for violations in basketball team recruiting

By Chris Emswiler
Lantern sports writer

Ohio State has submitted its list of recommended penalties to the NCAA surrounding violations in the recruitment of basketball player Damon Flint.

The Columbus Dispatch reported Monday that an OSU official had suggested that the men's basketball team would forfeit one scholarship and lose one coach during a recruiting period in the 1994-1995 season.

The NCAA Committee on Infractions is expected to consider the Ohio State case at meetings being held April 15-17.

These actions are a result of the men's basketball team being charged with 17 violations in the Flint case. Two violations involved former Assistant Coach Paul Brazeau who provided dinner money for an off-campus restaurant and gym bags for Flint.

These rules violations were announced in May 1993, causing the NCAA to rule Flint ineligible to play at Ohio State. He now plays for the University of Cincinnati.

David Williams, university vice president for student affairs and overseer of the Athletic Department, confirmed Tuesday that the recommendations had been sent, but would not confirm what the suggested sanctions were.

"We are initiating a committee of five in order to ensure a better monitoring system," Williams said.

The committee will be headed by a compliance director who will serve as a mediator between the NCAA and Ohio State. The five members will have monthly meetings to ensure that NCAA rules are being followed.

Assistant Athletic Director Dick Finn will serve as the compliance director. Athletic Director Jim Jones, faculty representative Carol Kennedy, University Attorney Bob Duncan, and Williams will round out the committee.

Jones and Finn will step down as athletic directors effective June 30. It is unknown who will fill their positions upon their retirement. Jones was unavailable for comment, and Finn declined to issue a statement.

The Dispatch reported that an unidentified university official had suggested that "much of the issue has been taken care of" with the retirements of Jones and Finn.

Williams denied the claim that the early retirements of Jones and Finn have helped the university's position with the NCAA, and questioned where that information came from.

According to Williams, the NCAA utilizes a two-component system when deciding what sanctions they will impose on a school who is in violation of the rules.

The first part of the system surrounds the findings reported by Ohio State and the findings of the NCAA investigation. A committee of infractions will be established which will consist of various collegiate officers who are not employees of the NCAA.

The panel will discuss which violations occurred, finding a list which is agreed upon by the NCAA and Ohio State.

The second component of the system is the recommended penalties. The committee can either accept or reject Ohio State's suggested penalties and may propose new ones.

OSU basketball Coach Randy Ayers said, "It would be better for me to comment on the penalties at the time they were to come out."

University President E. Gordon Gee was unavailable for comment.
Andersen says he plans to stick with Buckeyes

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Writer

The best player on the Ohio State men’s basketball team is committed to finishing his career with the Buckeyes unless the NCAA imposes sanctions on the program.

Derek Andersen, a 6-foot-6 guard from Louisville (Ky.) Doss High School, said yesterday that he feels “an obligation to Ohio State, and I’m going to fulfill it. But those (NCAA) violations don’t concern me. I’d have to suffer (from sanctions), too.”

The NCAA is expected to announce sanctions against OSU this month after a year-long inquiry sparked by the school’s recruitment of Cincinnati Woodward guard Damon Flint, who was released from his letter of intent and signed with Cincinnati.

Andersen, who will be a junior next season, said it clear that only one major sanction — barring OSU from the NCAA Tournament for one or two years — would cause him to look elsewhere.

“It’s got to be serious for me to leave,” Andersen said. “Not something like losing scholarships.

“If we can play in the tournament, I’m not going anywhere. I’ll be right here, most definitely.”

Andersen projects as OSU’s top returnee in scoring (16.0), rebounding (4.9), assists (107), steals (45), free throws made (80) and attempted (113), and free-throw percentage (81%).

His totals in three of those categories are OSU’s last seven games with a torn knee ligament.

“I couldn’t accept not going to the tournament on our own, because we didn’t win enough,” Andersen said.

“But not if we won and then still couldn’t go. If it comes down to where we’re just handicapped, I want to try to fulfill my dream.”

Two members of Andersen’s five-man recruiting class will be absent next season. Center Nate Wilcox is planning to transfer. Forward Charles Mason was given a one-year suspension by coach Randy Ayers after theft and drunken driving charges stemming from March 18 incidents near Lafayette, Ind.

Mason is enrolled at OSU for the current quarter and could return as a redshirt sophomore in 1996-97.

Guarding Andersen and Rickey Dudley — who probably will not resume basketball until January if he makes the OSU football team — Ayers right now has eight scholarship players for next season.

The others are Antonio Watson, Doug Etchison, Greg Simpson, Gerald Esler, Kirk Yards and incoming freshmen Robert Shilton.

There are two walk-ons, Eric Weston and Brian Wood, and Ayers hopes to land two recruits in the spring signing period, which starts April 13.

Ayers, who left Wednesday night to attend the Final Four in Charlotte, N.C., could not be reached for comment.

“I don’t think about (transferring) at all, but it comes up any time I go anywhere,” Andersen said. “At the mall, at the (student) union — people say, ‘What’s going on with Charles? What’s going on with the program? What’s the solution?’”

Andersen said he heard some gripes with Ayers in a recent meeting.

“My dad and I talked with Coach, and my dad was kind of upset,” Andersen said. “He felt I’d had a bad time up here. It was a lot of different things, but it wasn’t too much.”

Andersen said his hometown University of Louisville wouldn’t necessarily be his next stop if he did leave OSU.

“The first thing I would do is go home, before I even thought of where I was going,” Andersen said. “Syracuse was my second choice when he signed, and Pete Gillen has a new job at Providence. He was my coach last summer in the Olympic Festival.”

Andersen said he is ahead of schedule in his rehabilitation from surgery March 3 to repair the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee.

“I’ve been off crutches two weeks,” he said. “They think I’m because the left leg is the one I always jumped with, so it didn’t lose as much strength.

“I’m lifting weight (with the knee), the same as people who had the operation a month before I did.

“I get an invitation to the Goodwill Games (in July), and I almost think I could go. But I don’t want to take a chance and mess things up for the Big Ten.”
OSU BASKETBALL

Funderburke voted MVP by teammates

Despite 13-16 record, team displays sense of humor at banquet

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

A crowd of about 500 in St. John Arena last night got to hear the last words (knock on wood) about the 1993-94 Ohio State basketball team.

Despite a 13-16 record and off-court troubles that extended well into the postseason, there was a jocular mood at the banquet, which served as a send-off for seniors Lawrence Funderburke, Jamie Skeiton and Jimmy Ratliff.

Coach Randy Ayers said his son Ryan, 8, told him before they left home, “Dad, I hope you keep it short tonight. I don’t know about you, but I’d like to win some games next year.”

Funderburke was voted the Jerry Lucas Award as most valuable player by his teammates, and also was honored for leading the squad in scoring and rebounding for the second year in a row.

After introducing his girlfriend and asking her to stand up, Funderburke gestured to his teammates and said, “Fellows, she put me on that potato diet. She’s the reason I got up to 260 pounds. So blame her — please.”

OSU’s president, Dr. E. Gordon Gee, said he has a recurring dream in which a limo driver asks him if he’s from one of the schools in the Final Four. “And I tell him, ‘Yes . . . I . . . am,’” Gee said.

Forward Rickey Dudley, winner of the John Havlicek Award as most inspirational player, came to the banquet from spring football practice. “I’ll continue to be here,” said Dudley, who may not rejoin Ayers’ team until after a football bowl game. “I’ll just be a little late.”

Skeiton narrowly edged Derek Anderson for best ratio in assists/turnovers, but he knew that his shooting was the main topic and broke up the crowd with this remark: “I know you thought I went overboard sometimes. So . . . so what? You don’t have to worry about that no more.”

Ratliff denied that he’ll remember his career only for the Big Ten titles in 1991 and ’92. OSU was a combined 28-29 the last two seasons.

“These last two years, we’ve all grown to be friends,” Ratliff said. “These guys are going to get it clicking pretty soon, so stay behind them. I wish Lawrence and Jamie the best of luck, because I’ll probably go a little later in the (NBA) draft than they will.”

Junior guard Doug Etzler won the Fred R. Taylor scholar-athlete trophy. Awards also went to Antonio Watson (field goal percentage), Anderson (free throw percentage) and Funderburke (MVP of the home game with Michigan).

Charles Macon, who may return as a redshirt in 1995-96 after being suspended from the team, did not attend the banquet but met with Ayers before it began. Macon’s father and stepmother, Charles and Darlene Taylor, did attend and were introduced to the crowd.

Ayers made a special presentation to outgoing athletic director Jim Jones, who hired him in July 1988.
Ayers has to patch up OSU basketball team

By Mike Sullivan
Associated Press

Let’s take first rumors first: No, center Nate Wilbur is not considering a return to the Ohio State basketball program.

Wilbur, a 6-foot-11 sophomore who informed OSU three weeks ago that he planned to contact other schools, is on Columbus for Friday’s official visit to Ohio State.

South Carolina coach Eddie Fogler visited Wilbur’s home in Upper Arlington on Wednesday. Also running in the Arlington race, which Wilbur will visit next weekend.

“Nate has bored it down to those three,” said the player’s father, Frank Wilbur. “He’s probably had inquiries from two dozen schools. It’s a flurry of activity very similar to the pre-college recruiting process.”

The decision by Wilbur to transfer is only one blow that4d descended on coach Randy Ayers’ program in the wake of a 13-16 record, the first losing season by an Ohio State men’s basketball team in 17 years.

Ayers suspended another sophomore, 6-7 forward Charles Marion, for a year when Marion was charged with felony theft, drunken driving and speeding after March 18 incidents near Lafayette, Ind.

Marion alleged piled up $1,520 in gasoline into his car and drove off without paying.

In-state rival Purdue said it was giving 90 mph in a 65 mph zone when they pulled him over 11 times from the street, and said they found less than 30 grams of marijuana in the car.

Marion, who is still attending OSU, faces a pre-trial hearing May 25 and a trial June 13 in Clinton County (Ind.) Superior Court.

Apart from considerable embarrassment and negative publicity to Ayers program, the loss for 1994-95, of two key players threw a greater load on 6-7 center forward Rakey Dudley, a sophomore as a junior last season.

But Dudley, looking to a possible two-year future, joined the OSU football squad. If he makes it, he probably could be a key team until January, about 10 games into next season.

Weaker in the loss of seniors Lawrence Funkerburke, Jimamch, and student athlete Tony Evans, Ayers has eight active scholarship players.

And one of those eight, guard Greg Simpson, who has played for three years, is on the football team.

Even then, OSU had no active scholarship players.

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Ex-OSU basketball player dies at 27

John Anderson, a “blue collar” former co-captain, lost a battle with meningitis in Australia.

Associated Press

Former Ohio State basketball player John Anderson died Sunday in Australia after being hospitalized 10 days with fungal meningitis. He was 27.

During Anderson’s years at Ohio State, the Buckeyes were National Invitation Tournament champions in 1986, NCAA qualifiers in ‘85 and ‘87 and NIT qualifiers in ‘88.

“John was a hard worker. He brought a blue-collar mentality to our program,” said Ohio State coach Randy Ayers, an assistant with the Buckeyes when Anderson played for them. “He blended his talents with guys like (Dennis) Hopson and (Jay) Burson. He worked so hard. That’s why he had success here at Ohio State.”

Anderson started 41 of 97 games in his Ohio State career, averaging 3.7 points and 2.9 rebounds while shooting 47 percent from the field and 70 percent from the foul line.

He was the team’s co-captain in his senior year.

He was an all-state selection at Linn-Mar High School in Marion, Iowa, where he was a member of the school’s 1983 Class 4A state championship team. He was the team’s leading rebounder and averaged 15.8 points per game that season.

The 6-foot-9 forward went to Australia to play professionally. He left the sport to work in a Maine hardware store, then went back to rejoin his old team. He played three games before he was hospitalized in late March.

His high school coach, Bob Landis, said Anderson died in a Newcastle, Australia, hospital.

Fungal meningitis is rare in the United States but is more common in Australia. Tests showed Anderson was developing large blood clots in the brain and spinal cord.

Anderson’s parents, Richard and Jean Anderson of Iowa City, Iowa, were with their son in Australia. The body has been cremated, Landis said.
ANDERSON

John M. Anderson, 27, of Iowa City, Iowa, died Sunday, April 10, 1994 at the John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle, Australia from complications of fungal meningitis. He attended The Ohio State University where he lettered in the basketball program for 3 years. Survivors include his parents; 1 sister; 2 brothers; maternal grandmother. Memorial Services will be Monday, April 18, 1994 at 1:30 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, Iowa City. A memorial service was held earlier in Australia. Arrangements by DON-OHUE-LENSESING FUNERAL HOME. Memorial contributions may be made to the John M. Anderson Memorial Fund, c/o Iowa State Bank & Trust, P O Box 1700, Iowa City, IA 52244-0817.
Dudley arrested on drunken driving charge

For the third time in five weeks, an Ohio State basketball player has been charged with drunken driving.

Rickey Dudley, who is also trying out this spring for the OSU football team, was arrested early yesterday when he was stopped near the OSU campus, court records show.

Dudley, of Henderson, Texas, also was charged with failure to register a vehicle and driving without a license, records show.

Guard Greg Simpson and forward Charles Macon also have been charged in recent weeks with drunken driving.

OSU football coach John Cooper said he will meet with Dudley and take “appropriate disciplinary action.”

Ohio State basketball coach Randy Ayers called the string of arrests “a little frustrating. We’re going to handle it internally. Coach Cooper and I will come up with a plan for Rickey, but I wouldn’t have any other comment until I sit down with Rickey.”

Dudley was driving a 1990 Chevrolet on High Street near 12th Avenue about 12:30 a.m. when he was stopped for an unspecified traffic violation.

He allowed officers to give him a breath test, and his blood-alcohol level was 0.127 percent, according to records. Ohio law says 0.10 percent or higher indicates intoxication.

Dudley, a 6-foot-7 junior forward, was released on his own recognizance and is scheduled to appear Wednesday in Franklin County Municipal Court.

Simpson and Macon also have upcoming court dates to answer charges of drunken driving.

Macon has been suspended for one year, but Simpson has not been punished.

It was not the first time Dudley has found trouble while driving a car. Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles records show Dudley was driving a car owned by a friend when he hit two parked cars on Oct. 15, 1992.

Owners of both parked cars filed accident reports as required under Ohio law for accidents totaling more than $400 worth of damage or involving injury.

Because Dudley did not file a report, his Ohio driving privileges were revoked Jan. 29, 1993. He was convicted Feb. 18, 1993, of failing to control the car.

Dudley never had an Ohio driver’s license, according to state records. State law allows a court to revoke driving privileges, even if the driver is not licensed in Ohio.

Dudley also failed to pay for damage to one of the cars, owned by Richard and Betsy O’Brien of Columbus, said Daniel Hurley, the couple’s attorney. The couple and their insurance carrier, Farmers Insurance Group, sued Dudley.

Dudley never responded to the complaint. A judge issued a default judgment for $1,252.09, covering reimbursement of the couple’s $600 deductible and the $752.09 Farmers Insurance paid to repair the car.
Dudley charged with drunk driving

By C. Calvin Jefferson
and Jennifer Richter
Lantern sports writers

OSU junior Rickey Dudley, a three-year member of the basketball team who made news this spring when he joined the football team, made more news Thursday morning when he was charged with operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol.

Columbus police stopped the vehicle Dudley was driving at 12:35 a.m. on West 12th Street west of North High Street, according to police.

Dudley was taken to OSU police headquarters because there were indications that he had been consuming alcohol.

Dudley's blood-alcohol level was measured at .127, according to the Columbus police. The legal level in Ohio is .10.

He was also cited for a vehicle registration offense and an operator license violation.

An unnamed source close to the OSU football team said that Dudley had been at a party Wednesday evening and had been drinking beer. Dudley apparently left the party around midnight with Dimitrious Stanley, a sophomore wide receiver on the OSU football team.

Dudley would not comment on the charges.

The incident continues the line of problems plaguing the OSU basketball program.

In the face of possible recruiting violation sanctions, several players have been reported to be leaving the team.

Junior forward Mark Macon was recently suspended from the team and disciplinary action against sophomore guard Greg Simpson concerning underage drinking is pending.

OSU basketball coach Randy Ayers said Thursday that he had not yet been informed of the situation concerning Dudley and had no comment on it.

OSU football coach John Cooper is going to meet with Dudley "as soon as possible," according to Steve Snapp, director of the OSU Sports Information Department.

Cooper said when he meets with Dudley he "will take the appropriate disciplinary action," according to Snapp.

Dudley is set to go to trial for the charges April 27, Columbus police said.

—Kim Huhn contributed to this article
Simpson fined after pleading guilty to reduced charges

Ohio State basketball player Greg Simpson was fined $200 after pleading guilty Wednesday to reduced traffic charges in Lima, Ohio.

Simpson, 20, of 396 E. 13th Ave., was charged March 17 in Lima with driving under the influence of alcohol and not using headlights. The driving under the influence charge was reduced to failure to control. Simpson pleaded guilty to the charges before Allen County Municipal Judge Richard Workman, who fined Simpson $100 and court costs on each of the charges.

The sophomore guard still faces a misdemeanor assault charge in Franklin County Municipal Court. The charge stems from a fight during a pickup basketball game March 2 in Larkin's Hall.

A hearing in that case is scheduled for May 13.

OSU coach Randy Ayers said Simpson remains a member of the team.
OSU: No ruling yet by NCAA

Officials deny TV report on penalties

By George Strode
Dispatch Sports Editor

Ohio State officials denied a television report last night that the NCAA had notified the school of its penalties for recruiting violations.

WBNS-TV (Channel 10) reported the NCAA had suggested a one-year probation, the loss of one scholarship and taking one coach off the road for recruiting purposes for the men's basketball program in the 1994-95 season.

Citing no source, the station said it had learned the probation would not affect appearances in the NCAA Tournament or on television next season.

"Ohio State would have to really toe the mark because if they were caught breaking any more rules, it's possible they could be slapped with the death penalty," the report said.

Channel 10 reported the university would respond to the NCAA in early June, a timetable also denied by OSU leaders last night.

"That's all news to me," said Steve McDonald, associate counsel for Ohio State. "There has been no decision from the NCAA. They have simply asked for more information."

"There won't be any agreement until it's final. Their process doesn't allow bits and pieces."

David Williams II, vice president for student affairs, said, "They (the NCAA) have not agreed to anything. They've actually told us we can't do anything until we supply additional information."

Williams said McDonald will work this weekend on answering the NCAA's questions. The answers mainly will deal with the resumes of university personnel mentioned in a response the school earlier provided the NCAA. That response included the proposed losses of a scholarship and a coach for recruiting.

Williams, however, would not reveal specific names.

He said he expects McDonald to report to Robert Duncan, the university's counsel, and to him by Monday. Williams said the university's latest response could be sent to the NCAA as early as Tuesday.

"We're still in the tennis match, so to speak," Williams said.

The NCAA Committee on Infractions met April 15-17 in Baltimore and considered the OSU case.

The forthcoming penalties will be the result of rules violations involved in the recruitment of basketball player Damon Flint.

The NCAA ruled Flint ineligible to play for Ohio State last May. The 6-foot-5 swingman from Cincinnati played for the University of Cincinnati, starting as a freshman last season.
OSU complies with NCAA request

Ohio State has answered an NCAA request for additional information in the year-old investigation of the Buckeyes’ men’s basketball recruiting violations.

A university source said last night that additional information on resumes of athletic department personnel was provided to the NCAA on Monday.

The source would not identify any individuals, however.

The NCAA is expected to announce its penalties in about three weeks.

At its last meeting, April 15-17, the NCAA Committee on Infractions considered the university’s recommended penalties of losses of one scholarship and one coach recruiting on the road for the 1994-95 men’s basketball season.

The source said lack of institutional control is no longer an issue with the retirements of athletic director Jim Jones, associate athletic director Phyllis Bailey and Dick Finn, Jones’ special assistant dealing with NCAA rules compliance.

Andy Geiger, who took over as OSU athletic director on Monday, is expected to work with men’s basketball coach Randy Ayers to better control the program, the source said.

— George Strode
ON THE AGENDA — An NCAA committee considering sanctions against Ohio State for recruiting violations plans to discuss the case during the weekend in Kansas City, Mo., the chairman said.

David Swank, chairman of the NCAA Infractions Committee, said the matter was on the panel’s agenda but declined to comment further. “I won’t get into speculating when we will be finished,” he said.

David Berst, assistant executive director of the NCAA, said the NCAA isn’t expected to get the committee’s report for several weeks.

The Ohio State basketball program has been under investigation since early 1993 when the university responded to an NCAA inquiry into the recruitment of Damon Flint.

David Williams, OSU’s vice president for student affairs, said the university has revised its suggestion for a possible penalty from the NCAA for its 17 admitted violations. He did not specify the changes or suggested sanctions.
Summer fun at Ohio State entices young athletes

By Dawn Maranacci
Lantern sports writer

Summer means many things to many people and for several Ohio State coaches, summertime means camp time.

This month, some of the OSU athletic camps kicked off and will continue throughout the quarter.

The most prominent of the camps are John Cooper’s Football, Randy Ayers’ Basketball and Russ Helickson’s Wrestling, which attract athletes from around the country and within the state.

These athletes take part in activities not only to improve their athletic skills, but also to introduce them to Ohio State coaches and facilities.

Cooper’s camp, which is the most notable and highest attended OSU summer athletic camp, is finishing up its first session this week.

Cooper’s camp is broken down into two sessions: an all-position camp, which runs through this Friday and a specialty camp, which is being held June 26-27, for punters, kickers and long snappers.

Both camps take place at the Woody Hayes Athletic Complex and are open to any athlete who will be entering the 5th-12th grades.

The groups are divided by age, making the sessions more appropriate and personalized for each individual athlete. Football fundamentals, skill development drills, and motivational talks, are the various activities offered to the campers.

Cooper is happy with this year’s record turnout of campers.

“There is a lot of enthusiasm and energy among the kids and the main thing is that they’re having fun out there,” Cooper said. “The athletes have an opportunity to be introduced to our staff and some of the top high school coaches in the area, as well as meeting our players in the weight room.”

Some of the campers are putting the skills they’re learning right to use. Orlando Pace, a Sandusky, Ohio, native signed by the Buckeyes in January, is participating in the camp and feels it is very beneficial for him.

“It gives me a head start on getting prepped for pre-season in August. It also gives me a chance to work on my fundamentals and polish them up,” Pace said.

Randy Ayers’ basketball camp is currently in its second week. The camp is split into several sessions which include athletes in the 7th-9th grade and 20 varsity and 29 junior varsity teams from around Ohio.

Ayers’ camp has attracted close to 500 athletes. Camp instructors include his coaching staff, area high school coaches and occasionally Ohio State players who come to teach the young athletes some drills.

Randy Roth, Ohio State assistant coach and camp coordinator said Ayers’ camp like Cooper’s is having a tremendous success on the program.

“It’s an advantage for us because we can enroll entire teams around Ohio to come in and participate in our camp and take part in competition with the other area teams,” Roth said.

Russ Helickson’s wrestling camps are also underway and continue through July.
NCAA to reveal violation penalties

By Wendy Luckenbill
Lantern staff writer

After a year of deliberating, the NCAA will announce at 11 a.m. today its findings on recruiting violations of the OSU men’s basketball program.

The NCAA declared in May 1993 that coach Randy Ayers and his staff committed 17 recruiting violations in their efforts to sign All-American high school player Damon Flint.

The violations arose after Ayers took Flint, his high school coach, Jim Leon, and three other people to dinner off campus at Damon’s restaurant and provided them with $60 to cover the meal and transportation costs.

This was considered illegal contact with a recruit, an NCAA violation.

New OSU Athletic Director Andy Geiger did not want to comment on the specifics of the investigation or on today’s planned NCAA announcement.

“For me to get into the details on this matter would be premature at this juncture,” Geiger said.

David Williams, vice president of student affairs, said he does not expect any surprises from the NCAA.

“It (the penalties) will hurt us, but we will go forward with this,” said Williams, who oversees the athletic department.

OSU officials were to be notified last night of the nature of the penalties, Williams said.

OSU will comment further at their own press conference after the NCAA makes their official announcement, an OSU Sports Information press release said.

The OSU press conference will be held at 3 p.m. at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, the release said.

The length of the investigation was not a concern to Williams or to Geiger. “I understand the process and I understand that it can sometimes take a long time,” Geiger said.

Williams said the NCAA investigation was lengthy due to the desire for a thorough investigation and because the volunteer infractions committee met sporadically.

Geiger, who has dealt with the NCAA infractions committee before as the Athletic Director of the University Of Maryland, said the NCAA takes recruiting violations very seriously.

“The NCAA considers this to be a major deal,” Williams said. “We think it’s a minor on a major scale.”

Measures to prevent the University from falling into a similar situation will also begin immediately, Williams said.

The University will start first with rules education and compliance within their departments, he said.

“We’re going to tighten up and strengthen up,” Williams said. “Better compliance means a better record for everyone in the department.” Geiger reiterated those sentiments.

Helping with the rules education will be Randy Ayers, who is expected to remain as OSU’s head basketball coach.

“This situation won’t effect him at all,” said Williams. “It’s something that happened and he has to just put it behind him.”
NCAA places OSU on probation

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sport Reporter

In a report that made sure to single out basketball coach Randy Ayers for blame, the NCAA Committee on Infractions gave Ohio State a pretty good whack on the wrist yesterday.

Officially closing a probe that started 18 months ago over violations in the recruitment of Damon Flint, the NCAA put the OSU athletic program on one year of probation for rules infractions in "recruiting, extra benefits and eligibility legislation in the men's basketball and men's and women's track-and-field programs."

Misconduct, as expected, were two of the four sanctions that would have battered the school's pocketbook and prestige — pay 10% of game proceeds from television games to the NCAA.

But the probation, which started June 4 and ends June 3, 1995, includes a one-year salary freeze for Ayers, the loss of one basketball scholarship (from 12 to 11) for the 1994-95 season, no off-campus recruiting by Ayers during July and August, and an additional one-year probation for women's track and field.

OSU must file periodic reports during the year of probation, and implement various steps to upgrade compliance oversight in the athletic department.

The Buckeyes also will be subject to the NCAA's impending violation review, which was initiated by the NCAA in September.

But the NCAA has agreed to let OSU handle the case.
OSU BASKETBALL

Geiger vows to rein in OSU basketball players

Associated Press

Ohio State athletic director Andy Geiger said yesterday that a series of problems with the law by men's basketball players is unacceptable and that changes will be made to ensure firmer control of the program.

"We're not going to close the office today and give up. We're not going to shut down the basketball program. We're not going to throw people out of their jobs. St. John Arena is open for business. We need to do a better job," Geiger said.

Sophomore guard Greg Simpson, sophomore forward Charles Macon and junior forward Rickey Dudley have been charged with drunken driving this spring. Simpson has been charged with assault for punching a student after a pickup game. A police report said Simpson and Macon were involved in another assault against a former roommate of Simpson's.

The NCAA will announce penalties against the men's basketball program this morning. Those

"I think we need to change behavior when possible and if it's not possible, we need to make changes in personnel. And I don't necessarily mean the coach."

Andy Geiger
OSU athletic director

will deal with violations of NCAA bylaws and do not have anything to do with what Geiger said was a chronic problem of basketball players getting in trouble with the law.

Coach Randy Ayers said yesterday that there is not a lack of discipline on his team.

"I don't think there is," he said. "I think my guys past and present all understand what I expect of them from that standpoint. Our kids have made some mistakes. We know that. But again it's a process where you have to continually support them and continue to help them make good decisions. Our guys aren't immune to making mistakes. Let's hope we do the right thing for them here so they'll make better decisions down the road."

Geiger said, "You cannot control the behavior of people totally. The other extreme is what we see here. Obviously this is not acceptable, this string of incidents and all these kinds of things that are going on. There needs to be tighter management, a firm hand in dealing with these problems.

"We're also charged with being educators. I think we need to change behavior when possible, and if it's not possible we need to make changes in personnel. And I don't necessarily mean the coach."

Simpson, a former two-time Mr. Basketball in Ohio, accepted a plea bargain and paid a $200 fine plus court costs May 5 after being arrested for drunken driving, driving without his headlights on and underage consumption of alcohol in his hometown of Lima.

At the time, Ayers said Simpson would remain a member of the team but would have to "do some things off the court."

Asked yesterday what those things were, Ayers said, "Greg has done some speaking, has done some research here on campus that we wanted to give him some educational information... to address and look at and hopefully understand what we want out of him in the future."
NCAA: Retirements of Jones, Finn had no bearing on case
OSU says timing of buyouts ‘coincidence’

By Bob Baptiste
Dispatch Staff Reporter

The early retirements of Ohio State’s athletic director Jim Jones and compliance officer Dick Finn this year prompted widespread speculation they were forced out as a result of the NCAA investigation of the school’s athletics program.

But when the NCAA announced its findings and penalties yesterday, its report contained no reference, by name or title, to either man. In
part, it read, “the university and the head men’s basketball coach failed to exercise appropriate institutional control over the
men’s basketball program.”

David Steck, chairman of the NCAA committee on infractions, said yesterday that Jones’ announcement in February that he had planned to accept an early retirement buyout offer from the university, and Finn’s decision a month later to do the same, had no impact on the penalties the committee eventually decided to levy against Ohio State.

“A lot of people find this hard to believe but it really didn’t,” said David Williams, OSU vice president for student affairs who is responsible for overseeing the athletic department. “The fact that you have is we were in an NCAA investigation at the same time the university, for an entirely different reason, decided to retire its last early-out retirement.”

“If you were privy to the numbers that were offered in Dick’s situation, then I think that fact, quite honestly, if that was available to me, I’d take it too. So that had no impact,” Jones said yesterday that he has never considered himself a scapegoat.

“Everyone makes a mistake. I’m sure it would have been a daunting amount of work for OSU. He knows he made a mistake. I’m not going to say that maybe his mistake wasn’t his fault. But I think he knew better than to give someone 60 bucks. Why did he do what he knew?”

Finn, who attended a news conference at which new athletic director Andy Geiger and men’s basketball coach Randy Ayers discussed the penalties, said he registered for the buyout offer in March but didn’t decide to accept it until he met with Geiger last month, shortly after Geiger started.

“I was not interested in retir-

ing,” Finn said, “but when Andy
Geiger came in, I went in and sat down with him. We talked about it, talked about it again, he said, ‘Here’s my game plan, and I was not

included in that.’”

Geiger recently named assistant athletic director Larry Romanoff, who had been in charge of academic counseling, to succeed Finn as

Finn

compliance officer.

Like Jones, Finn said he doesn’t consider himself a scapegoat, though he said he understands the perception that he and Jones were forced out because of the investigation.

“I don’t have a problem with it, because I look at what they’re proposing here and most of the things they’ve got in here right now are already in place,” Finn said, referring to an outline distributed yesterday by OSU detailing the establishment of committees to monitor rules compliance within the athletic department.

“We’ve done all those things,” Finn said. “There are some things that we did not have in place, and we got caught in the one we didn’t have in place at that time — the recruiting committee. We did not have that in, and that’s where our mistake was.”

The most serious finding against Ohio State was the $80,000 and future bans given by former assistant coach Paul Brazeau to the high school coach of recruit Damon Flint of Cincinnati. That incident triggered what eventually became an 18-month investigation.

Brazeau has been placed on probation by the University of Hartford, where he is now head coach. I have met several times with Paul Brazeau. I have never asked Paul, ‘Why?’” Finn said.

“I think Paul is embarrassed and ashamed of himself. He knows he made a mistake. I’m not going to say that maybe his mistake wasn’t his fault. But I think he knew better than to give somebody 60 bucks. Why did he do what he knew?”

A chronology of OSU sanctions

A chronology of events leading to Ohio State’s NCAA penalties announced yesterday by the NCAA:

Oct. 30, 1991 — Damon Flint, a junior at Cincinnati Woodward High School, watches an Ohio State practice along with his coach, Jim Jones, and several others. After the practice, Flint, Leon and the others go to Damon’s, a sports bar and restaurant a mile from the OSU campus. They are met by OSU head coach Randy Ayers and assistant coach Paul Brazeau. At the end of the meal, Brazeau gives Leon three $20 bills to cover food and transportation expenses. Minutes later in the parking lot, the OSU coaches say goodbye to the Cincinnati contingent. But before the visitors pull away, Brazeau stops them and gives them four nylon bags and writing portfolios. (Six NCAA bylaws were broken. The $60 payment and the gift of the gym bags were the major violations, turning the encounter into a paid visit resulting in subsequent violations. Also, contact could not be made with Flint off campus.)

Dec. 3, 1991 — Ayers and Brazeau visit a Woodward practice. While Ayers does his Columbus radio show from Leon’s office, Brazeau talks to Flint and Leon in a nearby classroom. Brazeau goes to a fast-food restaurant and buys lunch for the two men.

Oct. 5, 1992 — Flint makes his official recruiting visit to OSU and declares he will attend Ohio State.

Sept. 20, 1991 — Ayers visits Woodward to watch practice, and offers compliance to Flint on the death of Flint’s grandmother; Sept. 11, 1992 — Before watching practice at Woodward, OSU assistant coach Mark Anderson told Flint he was looking forward to having the player on campus; Sept. 17 and Oct. 8, 1992 — Ayers visits Flint. (All were improper contacts.)

Sept. 11, 1992 — Flint signs letter of intent with OSU.

Jan. 1993 — The NCAA begins investigating Flint’s recruitment by OSU. OSU athletic director John Steinbrenner has been alleged in various communications that he had offered or accepted illegal compensation.

Sept. 20, 1991 — Ayers visits Woodward to watch practice, and offers compliance to Flint on the death of Flint’s grandmother. (All were improper contacts.)

Oct. 19, 1991 — Woodward coach Mark Anderson told Flint he was looking forward to having the player on campus. (All were improper contacts.)

May 8, 1992 — Brazeau is announced as head coach at the University of Hartford.

Nov. 11, 1992 — Flint signs letter of intent with OSU.

Aug. 27, 1992 — That same day, OSU athletic director John Steinbrenner meets with his staff to plan the recruiting season.

Oct. 5, 1992 — Flint makes his official recruiting visit to OSU and declares he will attend Ohio State.

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Oct. 5, 1992 — Flint makes his official recruiting visit to OSU and declares he will attend Ohio State.
Tough times aren't over for Ayers yet

The Ohio State men's basketball program has to recover from a lot more than just NCAA sanctions.

By Bob Baptist
Dispatch Sportswriter

Fear of the unknown.

It was a phrase head coach Randy Ayers employed often during the past year when asked why the Ohio State men's basketball program was shooting air balls in recruiting.

"Hopefully, that's behind us," Ayers said Thursday, after an 18-month NCAA investigation of OSU athletics ended with the program being placed on probation for one year.

"We'll really have an indication of that in the spring," Ayers said.

By next spring, he will know whether he and his assistant coaches have been able to overcome another fear recruits have.

Fear of a failing program.

The Buckeyes had a losing record (13-16) for the first time in 17 years last season and were not invited to a postseason tournament for the first time in 13.

Moreover, they have not restocked their cupboard in two years.

Even after Jim Jackson, Chris Jenet, Jamaal Brown and Mark Baker departed after the 1991-92 season, the forecast was bright. A 53-10 record over two seasons and back-to-back Big Ten championships and NCAA Tournament appearances helped Ayers recruit a freshman class that included the Mr. Basketball from both Ohio and Indiana, Greg Simpson and Charles Mason, as well as Derek Anderson, Gerald Eaker and Nate Wilbourne. Not a Fab Five, but a potentially formidable one.

On Nov. 11, 1992, Damon Flint of Cincinnati, who would be named Mr. Basketball that season, signed early with the Buckeyes.

Ohio State seemed headed back up the mountain. Then the NCAA called regarding Flint's recruitment. It's been a landslide of bad news ever since.

Flint was declared ineligible in September.

Coach Randy Ayers can't leave campus to speak with recruits during the next two recruiting periods.
March 1992. Two months later he signed with the University of Cincinnati, where he was a starter as a freshman last season.

With the investigation of the program under way, Ayers signed no other high school seniors. But with Lawrence Pondersurtle and Jami Skelton still around from the glory days and the freshmen a year older, there wasn’t immediate cause for alarm.

One year later, there was.
Pondersurtle and Skelton, unpredictable as they were, are gone, and the length of the investigation handshranked Ayers’ ability to replace Pondersurtle, at least.

Robert Shelton, a 6-foot-3 shooting guard from Gunn Springs, Va., signed last fall, and 6-5 forward Curtis Derek of Eastmoor did this spring. But three nationally coveted players who a year ago reportedly had OSU on their lists of preferred destinations — Felipe Lopez of New York, Jerod Ward of Clinton, Miss., and Samuell Wilson of Whitehall — chose St. John’s, Michigan and Louisville, respectively.

“We were thinking a lot of guys would steer away, and I think that happened,” Anderson said. “The kid who signed with Michigan, Jerod Ward, plays Lawrence’s position. He could have come right in and played. I know what he was thinking. He would have chosen us.”

Recruits have not been the Buckeyes’ only losses.

A COMBINATION OF THINGS

Anderson, who developed into the team’s most skilled and entertaining player, is rehabilitating from surgery to repair the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee, which was torn during a game Feb. 13. He said last week the knee was 76 percent healed and he expected to be ready for the season.

Wilburhouse has announced he will transfer to South Carolina.

Senior Rick Dudley, who may have more potential as a tight end, will play football this fall and miss the beginning of basketball season. “We expect (Dudley) to come back after football,” Ayers said Thursday, sounding less certain than that he will.

Dudley was charged in April with driving under the influence of alcohol, pleaded no contest and opted to enter an alcohol treatment program. It was not the first brush with the law for a Buckeyes basketball player, nor has it been the last.

A year to forget

An Alumnus of The Columbus Dispatch

A chronological of troubles that beset the Ohio State men’s basketball program on and off the court during the past 13 months:

May 24, 1993 — OSU acknowledges it violated NCAA rules in recruiting Damon Fint of Cincinnati but that it will appeal his ineligibility to the NCAA. Appeal is denied and Fint letter of intent voided. He signs with the University of Tennessee on May 24.

Oct. 24, 1993 — Published report says local auto dealer died in the crash of two Worthington Summer League teams to co-sign loans for Jamie Skelton and Derek Anderson, who wanted to purchase sport utility vehicles costing $23,000 and $20,000, respectively. Co-signing by anyone is not a parent or guardian of a player is a violation of NCAA rules. NCAA investigates briefly but concludes no rules were violated because loans were denied. Earlier, Charles Macdon and Greg Simpson purchased similar vehicles with local co-signers by relatives.

Nov. 15, 1993 — Macdon misses exhibition opener against Ohio State in Action when coach Randy Ayers suspends him one week for academic reasons. Macdon was suspended one week for the same reason during preseason conditioning.

Dec. 12, 1993 — Gerald Eaker, Antonio Watson and Clive Wiseman are suspended for the game at Marquette after missing curfew the night before the game.

Dec. 20, 1993 — Simpson is convicted of speeding in Logan County, Ohio.

Jan. 7, 1994 — Simpson is convicted of reckless operation of a motor vehicle in Franklin County Municipal Court.

Jan. 7, 1994 — Ayers signs an ice outside St. John Arena and suffers a broken and dislocated right ankle. He misses OSU’s game the following night at Wisconsin.

Jan. 12, 1994 — Center Nate Wilburhouse misses practice because of inflammation in his left elbow. He undergoes surgery Jan. 28 to remove the bursa sac and misses six games.

Feb. 22, 1994 — Buckeyes suffer their worst loss in 29 years, 101-93 at Purdue.

Feb. 13, 1994 — Anderson, the team’s leading scorer, is lost for the rest of the season after he suffers a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee.

Feb. 13, 1994 — Athletic director Jim Jones announces he will accept an offer from the university to take early retirement. Jones and the university deny the resignation was forced as a result of pending NCAA sanctions.

March 2, 1994 — Simpson is charged with assault after allegedly punching a fellow student after a pickup basketball game on campus. Charges subsequently are dropped.

March 8, 1994 — Dick Finn, assistant athletic director responsible for compliance with NCAA rules, announces he will accept an offer from the university to take early retirement. Finn says he was not forced out as a result of the NCAA investigation.

March 13, 1994 — Buckeyes lose 83-74 at Iowa to finish 13-16, their first losing season in 17 years.

March 15, 1994 — Wilburhouse’s father, Frank, says his son is considering leaving the program. Wilburhouse subsequently announces he will transfer to South Carolina.

March 17, 1994 — Simpson is arrested in his hometown of Lima, Ohio, and charged with driving under the influence of alcohol, underage possession of alcohol and driving without headlights. He later accepts plea bargain and pleads guilty to driving without headlights and failing to maintain control of car.

March 18, 1994 — Macdon is arrested by Indiana State Police and charged with felony theft for allegedly not paying for $100 worth of gasoline at a Clinton County, Ind., service station. He also is charged with driving under the influence of alcohol.

A broken and dislocated right ankle added to the problems last season for Ohio State coach Randy Ayers.

alcohol, speeding, and possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana. Eaker is a passenger in Macdon’s vehicle. Macdon has a hearing Monday on the charges of drunken driving, speeding and marijuana possession. He has a hearing July 14 on the felony theft charge.

March 21, 1994 — Ayers suspends Macdon for the 1994-95 season. An OSU spokeswoman said yesterday Macdon has been dismissed from school for academic reasons and is not expected to return to the program.

April 21, 1994 — Bickey Dudley is arrested by Columbus police and charged with drunken driving, driving with expired tags and driving with an expired license. He subsequently pleads no contest and chooses to attend an alcohol treatment program instead of serving three days in jail.

May 14, 1994 — Mark Anderson resigns as assistant basketball coach. Ayers says it is for personal reasons and is not connected to NCAA investigation.

June 2, 1994 — Simpson and Macdon allegedly are involved in an off-campus incident in which a former roommate of Simpson tells police he was struck by bricks thrown by Simpson, Macdon and another man, and that gunshots were fired as he fled. The city prosecutor’s office said Friday it does not anticipate filing charges in the case.

June 23, 1994 — The NCAA announces Ohio State has been placed on a one-year probation and will lose one grant-in-aid this season. NCAA prohibits Ayers from leaving campus to recruit during July and September contact periods and prohibits him from being in control of his program for being present when many of the violations occurred.

Bob Baptist
A man with a plan

Geiger revealed Thursday how he plans to address it. A comprehensive compliance committee has been established to educate the athletic department staff on NCAA rules, and an expansion of the academic services program is planned so it can provide more adequate counseling for student-athletes.

"Over the next two years, we intend to double the size of the staff of the academic services program," Geiger said. "We're going to, as rapidly as we can, find a facility for them and have it be, to the best of our capability from a resource point of view, state of the art.

Academic services personnel are referred to us tutors, who help athletes stay eligible. But, Geiger said, "We think that our responsibility for all 760 of our student-athletes is life counseling, not just tutoring for courses."

In the short term, Geiger and Ayers say they will meet with members of the men's basketball team and their parents. They say none of the players, even those who have broken the law more than once, have been given an ultimatum that one more strike and they're out. But they are on notice.

"My first effort will be to try to help," Geiger said. "If we're unable to help them, then we can't have them around. We can't continue to have the kind of behavior occur that has been occurring. We can't continue to have their teammates damaged by such behavior."

Meanwhile, it will be up to Ayers and his staff to clean up the rest of the mess.

Already, he has received commitments from two high school seniors-to-be that they will sign with Ohio State in November: 6-7 Sean Tucker of Mansfield and 6-1 Justin Boyce of Massillon. But the player who could help put the past behind in a hurry — the next Jim Jackson — doesn't appear to be on the horizon.

Even if he was, Ayers would be hard-pressed to lure him. The NCAA has prohibited Ayers from leaving campus to speak with recruits during the next two recruiting periods, in July and September. The sales job before the November early signing date will be up to his assistants.

"I think there's a lot of concerns about the program and which direction we're headed in. We have a lot of question marks," Ayers said. "But I like the guys. I think if a couple of the younger players step up, we could be competitive."
NCAA hands OSU athletic recruiting violation penalties

By Dan Keener
Lantern sports writer

Ohio State can begin looking to the future now that the NCAA's investigation regarding recruiting violations is behind it.

Thursday, the OSU representative of Athletic Director Andy Geiger, men's basketball coach Randy Ayers and Vice President for Student Affairs David Williams II discussed the NCAA penalties leveled against the university earlier in the day.

David Swank, chairman for the NCAA's Infractions Committee, announced the NCAA sanctions that followed OSU athletic administration's self-imposed penalties. They are:

- public reprimand and censure;
- one year probation to begin June 4, 1994, and implementation of a comprehensive athletics compliance education program;
- loss of one men's basketball scholarship for one year;
- freezing of the men's head basketball coach's base salary for one year;
- head men's basketball coach is forbidden from off-campus recruiting during the July 1994 and September 1994 evaluation periods;
- admonishments and/or reprimands to all head coaches involved;
- recertification of present athletic policies and practices.

The OSU basketball program was not alone in the improprieties for which the NCAA reprimanded OSU. In addition to the basketball team, the NCAA also handed out penalties to the men's and women's track teams.

Men's and women's head track coach Russ Rodgers was reprimanded for allowing a former volunteer coach to work with an ineligible player, and former women's head coach Mamie Rollins was admonished for providing transportation to and from a NCAA championship site when the student-athlete was eligible for travel expenses.

Reactions to the sanctions against the Ohio State men's basketball program were quick and positive.

Coach Ayers took the most responsibility for the events and actions that led to the penalties.

"I agree with the findings and the penalties leveled against us by the NCAA," said Ayers. "I'm looking forward to working with Andy and his staff and the rest of the people in the university community to see that we get our program redirected."

When asked how the penalties might affect recruiting, Ayers was quick to point out that the future could be bright.

"I think all along we were fighting the fear of the unknown. I think I've said that a number of times. We were fighting the fear of the unknown," Ayers said. "Hopefully, with this behind us, we'll be able to get some more commitments in the fall."

As a result of the investigation and penalties, several plans were implemented in order to ensure that such infractions will not happen again.

Most notably is the compliance program that is to be chaired by Geiger and is to have both Ayers and Rodgers as members.

"They'll become teachers of compliance to our staff and to our students," said Geiger. "Teachers will tell you that the best way to learn is to teach."

You know, we were wrong. We made some mistakes. I'm not proud of that fact, but I'm glad that this is behind us now," said Ayers.

Geiger reiterated that despite the recent problems OSU has had in dealing with the men's basketball program, he stands behind Ayers and gives him his full support towards him for the future.

"We all learn and grow from our mistakes, I have confidence in that aspect of Randy Ayers and every other aspect that I have heard about in terms of his reputation," said Geiger.

Overall, Williams thinks the university administration and the OSU athletic department itself did all could to correct their mistakes and communicate with the NCAA investigators.

"I think on all terms we were very honest," Williams said. "Whatever we knew we shared with the NCAA and if they came up with other thing we might not have known, we investigated it.

It has been a very open, and friendly process," Williams added.
Chris Jent returns and will be honored today

Former Ohio State basketball standout Chris Jent will be honored today when he returns to Columbus.

Jent's recent success with the World Champion Houston Rockets will be the focus of a "Welcome Back Chris Jent" rally today at noon on the Statehouse lawn. Columbus Mayor Greg Lashutka has also proclaimed today to be "Chris Jent Day".

Expected to be on hand to welcome Jent back to his adopted hometown are: OSU President E. Gordon Gee, state Rep. Stinziano, and OSU Head Basketball Coach Randy Ayers.

Jent was described as an emotional team leader for the Buckeyes during his four years at Ohio State.

Jent was called up to the Rockets from the Continental Basketball Association with only 10 days remaining in the regular season, but he managed to average 10.3 points, 5 rebounds and 2.3 assists a game. For his efforts Jent made the roster of the Rockete playoff squad.

Jent will join former Buckeye teammates Bill Robinson, Jamaal Brown and Mark Baker to lead the Chris Jent Basketball Camp at Bishop Hartley High School June 28 through July 2.

—Jamie Sabau
Former “Mr. Basketball” will start over

By Jeff Wise
Lantern sports writer

Former OSU men's basketball player Charles Macon is taking summer classes at a college in Indiana and is not expected to return to Ohio State.

Macon, who was suspended from the team in March after being arrested in Indiana for driving while intoxicated and possession of marijuana, has enrolled at Indiana University at South Bend. Reached by phone Wednesday at his home in Michigan City, Ind., Macon said he enrolled at IU-South Bend to help bring his grade average up in order to re-enroll at another four-year college.

OSU Sports Information Director Steve Snapp said Wednesday he understood Macon was dismissed from OSU for poor grades.

The former Mr. Basketball of Indiana, earlier this week pleaded guilty to DUI and marijuana possession charges. Two other charges were dropped.

Macon said he was glad the court case was over and he would like to put the whole situation behind him and go on with his life.

"I've still got goals to accomplish," Macon said.

Macon sees his dismissal from Ohio State as a turning point in his life. "It's a chance for me to move on," Macon said, "I've still got a career ahead of me."

"Coach (Randy) Ayers is trying to help Charles with his options, if he wants to return to college," said assistant men's basketball coach Dave Cecotti. However, Cecotti noted Macon most likely will not be returning to Ohio State. Macon said he is pleased that Ayers is willing to still help him out.

A plea agreement in Macon's case was accepted in Lafayette, Ind., court on Monday.

Macon was ordered to pay a $200 possession fine and $113 in court costs, but had an additional $500 fine suspended.

Sentencing for Macon includes a one-year unsupervised probation, random drug testing by the probation department and ten days of community service, which Macon said he would like to work with kids.

However, Macon's legal troubles are not behind him. The same day he was arrested on the speeding and possession charges, Macon also allegedly left a gas station in Clinton County, Ind. without paying for $16.30 worth of gas. Macon was charged with felony theft and still faces a pretrial conference on that matter July 14th.

OSU Sports Information
Former Buckeye star grabs his NBA dream

By Wendy Luckinbill
Lantern sports writer

Being a part of a World Championship team is everything Chris Jent could have dreamed. Two weeks ago his dream became a reality.

Although he did not get much playing time, the former OSU basketball star was a part of the Houston Rockets squad that defeated the New York Knicks four games to three to capture the first NBA championship in the franchise's history.

"After the (final) game was over, I could barely show emotion. It was unbelievable," Jent said in an interview Tuesday night. "It hasn't really even sunk in yet."

Jent played less than five minutes in the championship series against the Knicks and scored no points.

Jent has returned to Columbus for the summer and has started his own basketball camp currently in session. He also plans on sharpening his game in the next couple of months by playing in the Worthington Summer League.

In less than two months the former Buckeye basketball star went from playing for a mediocre team in the Continental Basketball Association to being a member of the World Champion Rockets.

Although Jent has plenty to say about being in the NBA and playing for the Rockets, it is hard to tell what he is more thrilled about: being a world champion or not playing for the Columbus Horizon anymore.

"It was hard to play night-in and night-out," Jent said. "We were losing. We weren't getting paid. It was a nightmare."

According to Jent, the Horizon wrote him between 11 and 15 bad checks while he was with the team.

"I will not play for that organization again," Jent said. "I would never play for that man (Horizon owner Eli Jacobson) ever again. He had no idea what he was doing with (his) players."

Being called up to the NBA was not only a dream come true, it was an escape from his nightmare with the CBA.

Jent was called up to the Rockets with 10 games left to play in the season due to injuries sustained by several Houston players.

Earlier in the season he was called up to the Rockets but did not even suit up for a game before being sent back down to the CBA. But even then Jent never gave up. He still thought there was a chance to get back to the NBA.

"It was the only way I could keep myself playing (with the Horizon)," Jent said. "I had to play. If I stopped playing, then I'd never have a chance."

Despite joining the Rockets late in the season, Jent had no trouble fitting in with the team who made him feel comfortable and confident with his game.

"(Houston guard) Scotty Brooks initially took me under his wing," Jent said. "And (Houston center) Hakeem (Olajuwon) is unbelievable to play with. He makes you such a better player. You don't rush when you play with him."

Jent said his Houston teammates were very confident they could win the championship.

Jent said after the Rockets dropped two games to the Phoenix Suns in the second round of the NBA playoffs, a teammate assured him that we were going to win.

Now Jent can only hope he showed enough enthusiasm and talent to the Rockets that they will sign him on for next year.

"I'd like to think I have a future with the Rockets," Jent said. "They said they're going to sign me back, but they didn't say they're going to guarantee the money."

Now the main factor deciding Jent's fate with Houston is the NBA draft.

"If they pick a power forward in the draft instead of a small forward, that'll help because they're not looking to build that three spot," Jent said.

The Rockets decision to keep forward Matt Bullard could also be a deciding factor.

"If he is denied — then I'm in there," Jent said.
Lone star

Former OSU men's basketball standout Chris Jent greeted and signed autographs for his fans at the statehouse Monday. See related story on page 3.
FINALLY!!

Lengthy NCAA Probe Results In Probation For B

By MARK REA

Following an exhaustive 18-month process in which virtually every dark alley was explored, the NCAA placed the Ohio State athletic program on probation for one year stemming from violations made during the recruitment of Cincinnati high school basketball player Damon Flint.

In addition to the one-year probation, the NCAA publically admonished the university for failures in both rules awareness and compliance to those rules. In addition, it singled out head coach Randy Ayers for not recognizing and reporting the violations when they occurred.

"You are not dealing with a new coach," said David Swank, a professor of law at Oklahoma and chairman of the NCAA's Committee on Infractions. "You are dealing with an experienced coach who should have known these rules because he had been recruiting for a number of years."

Swank was alluding to the infamous meeting at Damon's restaurant between former OSU assistant coach Paul Braunke, Cincinnati Woodward head coach Jim Leon and Flint.

The meeting occurred during Flint's junior year at the off-campus restaurant during a time when NCAA rules specify there can be no contact outside the boundaries of the university campus.

In addition, after the meeting Braunke gave $60 to Leon to pay for the meal and instructed him to give him some nylon gym bags and coaches notebooks. Those, also, are NCAA violations.

While Ayers met briefly with the party at Damon's, he did not participate in the money exchange. During a news conference to respond to the NCAA's sanctions, he explained that he believed the restaurant to be part of the campus area, therefore within NCAA guidelines for contact with prospective recruits during an unofficial visit.

"I just felt, at the time, that we were within a campus area and were not in violation of any NCAA rules," Ayers said. "I just felt with the number of activities that we have at Damon's, and it being a campus restaurant, I felt it was OK to eat there."

The fact that Ayers did not realize that Damon's was an off-campus site and not available within NCAA rules to coaches to entertain prospective recruits during unofficial visits pointed up the NCAA's claim that there was a lack of institutional control of the men's basketball program when it came to rules compliance.

FACING THE MUSIC — Ohio State athletic director Andy Geiger and basketball coach Randy Ayers answer questions from reporters regarding the NCAA's penalties against the Buckeyes. Among the sanctions announced, OSU will be placed on probation for one year, Ayers cannot recruit off-campus until next spring and the team loses one scholarship for the 1994-95 season.

Swank's comments about Ayers being a veteran coach — a sixty-something assistant under Eldon Miller and Gary Williams before becoming head coach in 1989 — touched off an exchange between the coach and reporters during the news conference, reporters finding it extremely difficult to believe Flint was the only prospect ever entertained at Damon's on an unofficial visit.

But Ayers steadfastly maintained no other player had been taken to the restaurant during his time as an assistant or head coach.

Still, reporters persisted.

"Even though you never had a monitoring system in place to mark down when and where you took people," asked Bruce Hooley of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, "you are 100 percent certain you never took a kid to Damon's for anything other than an official visit?"

"Yes," Ayers replied. "We took several kids there while they were on official visits, but never unofficially."

Later, the head coach said that there were monitoring programs implemented by both former OSU athletic director Jim Jones and his former compliance director, Dick Finn.

"I think these programs were followed. I don't think they were followed to the T," Ayers said. "Again, it was a mistake we made and we were wrong in that. I think maybe the word 'compliance' has become a bigger issue with athletic programs in the last four or five years. Certainly, we had some programs implemented. It was our mistakes, and being the head basketball coach, I assume total responsibility for the mistakes that we made."

When all was said and done, the NCAA chose to adopt most of the penalties that Ohio State had suggested.

Those include the one-year probation, loss of one scholarship for the 1994-95 season, barring Ayers off-campus recruiting during the upcoming July and September evaluation periods, freezing Ayers' salary at $110,000 for the 1994-95 academic year and a more stringent program for recognizing, knowing and adhering to NCAA legislation and rules.

In the end, Ohio State got off rather easy. Despite the probation, the Buckeyes will be allowed to appear on television at any time and remain eligible for

Continued On Page 2
Damon's Dinner Touched Off Investigation

NCAA's List Of Sanctions

- Public reprimand and censure.
- During this period of probation, Ohio State shall: (a) develop and implement a comprehensive educational program on NCAA legislation to instruct coaches, the faculty athletics representative, athletic department personnel and all university staff members with responsibility for the certification of student-athletes for admission, retention or competition; (b) submit a preliminary report to the administrator for the Committee on Infractions by Sept. 1, 1994, setting forth a schedule for establishing this compliance and educational program; and (c) file a final report by Aug. 1, 1995, with the committee's administrator indicating that all problems related to the probationary period. Particular emphasis should be placed on education and compliance with NCAA legislation involving recruitment of student-athletes.

- During the 1994-95 academic year, the number of scholarships permitted in men's basketball will be reduced from 13 to 12.
- The number of coaches permitted to recruit off-campus at any time will be reduced from three to two during the July 5-31, 1994, evaluation period and from two to one during the Sept. 9-26, 1994, contact period. In both cases, head coach Randy Ayers shall be the coach who shall not recruit at all.
- Recertification from OSU president Gordon Gee that all of Ohio State's current athletic policies and practices conform to all requirements of NCAA regulations.
- OSU will issue a written reprimand to Ayers and freeze his salary at its current level for the 1994-95 academic year.
- Each member of the men's basketball coaching staff will be required to attend at least one NCAA legislative and rules interpretation seminar before the end of the 1994-95 academic year.
- OSU will withdraw all offers to student-athletes until the case is resolved.
- The violation was a significant one.


"A lot of people find it hard to believe, but the fact that Jim and Dick took early retirement when they did was just a coincidence. If you were privileged to know the numbers that were offered to Dick's situation and in Jim's situation... quite honestly, if that was available to me, I'd take it, too.

Under terms of the early retirement package offered by the university, Jones will draw approximately $46,400 annually for the remainder of his life, or about 85 percent of his $108,000 salary. Fink is eligible to receive between 83 and 98 percent of his $45,000 salary.

Those numbers notwithstanding, reports have continued to circulate that Ohio State had to somehow get rid of both men to prevent the NCAA from invoking harsher penalties. But both have rejected that notion and Jones did so again in the wake of the announcement of penalties.

"No matter what is said, people are going to have their own perception," he said. "I know that I was not forced to retire. It was something I did of my own free will. I voluntarily took the buyout. No one made me do it.

In addition to the penalties imposed on the men's basketball program, the NCAA also announced that Ohio State would lose its 1993-94 Big Ten action in response to a later violation by the men's football team.

Then, in 1992, former head women's coach Marie Balline drove a track team member back home from the NCAA championships in Indianapolis. Since the team member was not competing in the race, she did not violate NCAA regulations.

Fink then suspended Fink's 1994-95 volleyball team for an investigation into his handling of former coach James Collner's firing. While Balline was relieved of her head coaching position by Ohio State and assigned to primarily administrative duties, the case marks the second time the OSU volleyball program was put on probation.
OSU players argue; tire shot out

Ayers considering course of action; announcement likely today

From staff reports

The state of the Ohio State basketball program was in question again last night after reports that senior forward Antonio Watson had a tire on his car shot after an argument with two teammates.

OSU coach Randy Ayers told a local television station last night that strict disciplinary action may be in order.

"If all facts check out and if some things were involved that I don't agree with, then some people may be leaving our program," Ayers said. Ayers did not say which players he was talking about.

Watson called police at 3:40 a.m. yesterday to report that the left front tire of his 1985 Ford Thunderbird had been shot by sophomore center Gerald Eaker. Watson told police that another Ohio State player, junior guard Greg Simpson, also was involved.

Watson declined to press charges, a police report said.

Reportedly, Baker and Watson were arguing at a residence the two share on E. Whittier Street, and Simpson arrived during the argument. At some point, Baker reportedly shot Watson's tire and he and Simpson drove away in Simpson's car.

Reached at 10:35 last night, Ayers told The Dispatch some of the players were at his home and he was sorting out the situation.

"I'm still trying to find out some things," Ayers said. "As soon as I hear all sides of the story, then I'll come out with a statement.

"I have not talked to all of the kids yet, or to their parents. Once I do that, I will take the necessary steps to discipline who was at fault."

Ohio State athletic director Andy Geiger said no one from the university would comment directly on the incident until today.

"We're making sure Randy has a chance to talk to all the players and some of the parents," Geiger said. "When we get through that process ... and get it sorted out, we'll have something to say, probably (today)."

Asked to reconstruct the incident, Ayers said his information was still sketchy.

"I don't know all the facts either," he said. "Tony filed a report with police, based on some things he thought Gerald did. That's in dispute. Greg's name is in the report, too. I have not talked to Greg yet."

OSU swingman Derek Ander-

son said last night that he had not spoken to any of his teammates but that he was surprised Watson and Eaker were arguing.

"They're best friends," Anderson said. "That's why they moved in together. As far as I know, nobody has any grievances with anybody else."

Eaker was unavailable for comment last night. Simpson and Watson refused comment after finishing their games at the Worthington Summer League.

"I've got nothing to say," Simpson said. "If you want to talk about the game, we'll talk about the game."

The incident is the latest in a growing line of brushes with law involving OSU players.

Forward Charles Macon was suspended from the team for a year after his arrest for speeding, felony theft and possession of marijuana in Indiana. He is not expected to return to the program.

Simpson and junior forward Rickey Dudley were charged with drunken driving this spring, and a police report said Simpson and Macon also were involved in an assault against a former roommate of Simpson's.
Eaker gets boot; Simpson suspended

OSU basketball coach Randy Ayers took action after an incident in which Antonio Watson’s tire was shot.

By Ray Stein
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Randy Ayers dropped the gavel yesterday on two of his Ohio State basketball players for their part in an early morning shooting Tuesday outside the apartment of two players.

Sophomore center Gerald Eaker had his scholarship withdrawn and was dismissed from the team. Junior guard Greg Simpson was suspended from the program indefinitely. Simpson will remain on scholarship, but it is unclear when, or whether, he will rejoin the team.

Eaker, 20, of Bellwood, Ill., reportedly shot the left front tire of the car belonging to Antonio Watson, Eaker’s teammate and roommate, after the two argued at their E. Whittier Street apartment around 3:30 a.m. Tuesday.

According to the police report, Simpson arrived at the apartment during the argument and drove away with Eaker after Eaker had shot Watson’s tire. Watson then called 911 at 3:40 a.m.

Jeffrey L. Wilson, the Columbus police officer who responded to Watson’s call, would not comment on the specifics of the incident but said he believed Watson was not at fault.

“It’s my personal opinion that he’s got his head on pretty straight,” Wilson said of Watson, a senior from Columbus. “I believe he’s a victim in this and that he was not an instigator in any way.”

Watson refused to press charges, but that didn’t stop Ayers, OSU’s sixth-year coach, from passing judgment.

“When people don’t follow the standards and guidelines you put down, I think you’ve got to take some corrective action,” Ayers said. “I spoke to a number of people that were there and were also aware of the situation because I wanted to get as many stories as I could. In talking with (OSU athletic director) Andy Geiger, I sat down and made my decision based on that.”

Geiger said he fully supported Ayers and the coach’s decision.

“You can’t have gun shooting. You can’t have guns and that sort of thing in a college basketball program,” Geiger said. “I’m pleased with the steps Randy’s taken, and I’m pleased with the way he’s handled this. We’re simply going to do our damnedest to get out of this mess.”

The incident was the latest in a long line of recent skirmishes with the law involving the OSU basketball program.

Forward Charles Macon was suspended from the team for a year after his arrest for speeding, felony theft and possession of marijuana in Indiana. He has left school and will not return to the program.

Simpson and junior forward Ricky...
Dudley were charged with drunken driving this spring, and Simpson also has been convicted of speeding and reckless operation of a motor vehicle. In addition, a police report said Simpson and Macon were involved in an assault against a former roommate of Simpson's. No charges were filed.

"What makes this difficult sometimes (is that) it seems we don't make progress," Geiger said. "But I think the steps we're taking will be helpful. . . ."

"We've had a situation in our basketball program that's chronic. What happened today is part of the process of getting out of this chronic condition. It seems this is the only way we'll be able to do it."

Ayers said what most upset him was that he believed the players knew to avoid situations such as the one that occurred Tuesday.

"It bothered me that they were there, at a late hour, in a situation that easily could have gotten out of hand," Ayers said. "(But) deep down, my disappointment comes from the fact that we had talked about a number of different things. And for that behavior to continue, to me, is unacceptable. I felt this was the right thing to do, given the circumstances, given the past."

Ayers also apparently made his decision based on more than what happened at Watson's apartment. In discussing Eaker and Simpson yesterday, Ayers repeatedly mentioned "off-the-court" factors involving both.

Of Eaker, Ayers said, "There were a number of off-the-court issues that I felt it was in his best interest and the program's best interest that he look in another direction. . . . I think he accepted the responsibility of some things he didn't get done off the court. It's maybe a situation where maybe he needs to take a step back and re-evaluate his situation."

Of Simpson's possible return, Ayers said, "I can't make that decision or comment now. I just don't know. I expect him to take care of his off-the-court responsibilities first and foremost."

Whether Simpson, a two-time Mr. Basketball honoree from Lima, Ohio, returns to the program is more or less up to Simpson, Geiger and Ayers said.

"He's got to go to class," Geiger said. "We're praying that maybe, maybe, we can get through to him. (His suspension) is not a direct result of this incident, but it's a direct result of the accumulation of incidents."

"Hopefully, those incidents are all done," Geiger said.

"I think you have to realize that (these) recurring incidents involve a few of the players," he said. "Charles Macon is gone, Gerald Eaker is gone and Greg Simpson is on a day-to-day basis. I hope this is the end of it."

So does Ayers, who could use some positive news in a year littered with off-court troubles, including NCAA sanctions for recruiting violations.

"There's no question the last six or seven months have been difficult," Ayers said. "I think this (latest incident) further impacts my credibility. I think if you talk with my past players and current, I think they know what I stand for. But being the head coach, I ultimately have to take the responsibility."

Ayers said he never considered resigning at any time since he became aware of the latest incident, and Geiger wouldn't have it any other way.

"As far as I'm concerned, I haven't wavered in my support of (Ayers) and I haven't wavered in my resolve to build a basketball program with Randy Ayers as our coach," Geiger said.

"Randy is a man with high standards and high integrity. He feels worse than anybody about the situation we're in. This doesn't happen because Randy Ayers was cavalier and not paying attention to his job. He's extremely involved with the players. I think he's been betrayed."

Ayers wouldn't say as much but did confirm his desire to see the program return to prominence, if not on the court than in character off it.

"It's been a tough day, but to leave now would not allow me to accomplish some of the goals set before us," he said. "I've never been a quitter. I've never been afraid of a challenge. I'm not going to start now."

Ayers acknowledged the challenge could be sizable.

"We've got to bind together," Ayers said. "Hopefully we can get a couple walk-ons and sign one or two more players. . . . The big concern is that now we have some off-court problems we've got to take care of between now and when school starts in September. That's the most important thing."
Eaker’s alleged gunplay prompts exit from team

By Wendy Luckenbill

Lantern sports writer

Shooting the tire of a teammate’s car apparently is enough to get kicked off the OSU men’s basketball team.

Coach Randy Ayers’ kicked center Gerald Eaker off the team Wednesday after Eaker allegedly used a gun to shoot the tire of teammate and roommate Antonio Watson’s 1985 Ford Thunderbird. In addition, Ayers indefinitely suspended guard Greg Simpson, who is accused of driving Eaker away after the alleged incident, supposedly prompted by an argument about 3 a.m. Tuesday.

“Guns, I couldn’t believe it,” OSU Athletic Director Andy Geiger said, shaking his head.

Watson told police that Eaker shot the front driver’s side tire of his car and “drove away” by Simpson after an argument at their house at 935 E. Whittier St.

No criminal charges were filed by Watson, who met with Ayers Tuesday afternoon.

Ayers said he considered the three players’ “past histories” and spoke with them and their parents before making his decision. Ayers said the suspension and dismissal were “the best solution.”

“I understand that young people make mistakes,” Ayers said.

“But when you set down certain guidelines, and it gets to a certain point, you’ve got to take extreme steps, and that’s what we had to do.”

“I think in (Eaker’s) case, it may be a good thing for him to take a step back and recollect his thoughts,” Ayers added. “It’s in (Eaker’s) best interest that he looks into another situation.”

Eaker refused comment, packed his belongings and left his house in a car with his mother.

Watson, who was not punished, did not return a telephone message left on an answering machine.

See EAKER/Page two

OSU’s basketball woes

- Dec. 80, 1993 - Simpson convicted of speeding.
- March 2 - Simpson charged with misdemeanor count of assault. Charges dropped.
- March 17 - Simpson arrested in his hometown on charges of drunken driving, driving at night without lights and underage possession of alcohol. Fined $200 plus court costs.
- March 18 - Charles Mason arrested after allegedly not paying for gas, driving 90 MPH on the highway and having less than 30 grams of marijuana in his car. Teammate Gerald Eaker is a passenger in car. Three days later Mason is suspended from team.
- April 21 - Rickey Dudley arrested on charges of drunken driving, driving with expired tags and driving under license revocation.
- June 9 - Former Simpson roommate Daniel Smith files complaint that Simpson, Mason and another person threw bricks at him and his apartment.
- July 19 - Columbus police investigate a report by OSU player Antonio Watson that, after an argument, Eaker shot a tire on Watson’s car and then rode off in Simpson’s car. No charges were filed.
- July 20 - Randy Ayers kicks Eaker off the team and indefinitely suspends Simpson.

Designed by Teayyun Kim - Compiled by AP

"I think some of them have bad personal problems as well, dealing with some things within their families that have impacted their adjustment," to college, Ayers said.

"It’s a culture shock," Geiger said. "If the only way to stop this behavior is to (dismiss) the whole team, then that’s what we’ll do." Despite the number of incidents affecting Ayers’ basketball program this year, Ayers’ said he is confident about keeping his job and has no plans to resign.

"To leave now would not help me complete some of the goals or challenges that we have before us," he said. "I’ve never been a quitter, I’ve never walked away from a challenge and I’m not going to start now."

In the last seven months, Simpson has been convicted of speeding, reckless operation of a motor vehicle, drunken driving, underage possession of alcohol and driving at night without his lights.

A misdemeanor assault charge against him was dropped March 2, and on June 9, a former roommate complained that Simpson and others threw bricks at him.

Ironically, Eaker talked the latest issue of the "Backeye Sports Bulletin" - "I don’t want to jinx myself or anything, but Antonio, me and a couple of other people really are the only ones who haven’t gotten in serious trouble. Sometimes it seems like trouble is looking for us."

Forward Charles Mason was suspended from the team after he was arrested on charges of failing to pay for gasoline, sleeping and possession of marijuana. He was later kicked out of Ohio State for academic reasons.

The loss of Mason and Eaker further depletes the team’s front line, already hurting from the transfer of center Nate Wilbourne to South Carolina.

"Depth is going to be a big concern of ours," Ayers said. "In the Big Ten you are going to need four or five people ready to go at bat up front. We’ll have to make adjustments.

On Geiger said increasing the counseling staff for OSU athletes has become a priority.

There are three counselors for more than 700 athletes.
Hoopsters hope to rebound from woes

By Jeff Wise  
Lantern sports writer

Some OSU basketball insiders are wondering if the wheels are falling off the program after the departure of three players in the past few weeks.

The incidents, involving the OSU basketball team in the past week and during the past year, have left many OSU alumni, fans and even former players scratching their heads in amazement, wondering.

Former OSU basketball player Chris Jent is one of those people.

"I think it's unfortunate," Jent said. "They have made some terrible judgements in their lives."

Jent, who was interviewed by the Lantern just after he returned to Columbus last month, was very candid in his views of what has gone wrong with the OSU basketball program.

"I don't think they have any guidance from the upperclassmen. When we came in we had seniors that taught us how things are done and I don't think they have had that," Jent said.

Interestingly enough, Jent made these comments even before the latest round of incidents involving the OSU basketball team.

The latest incident occurred last week when Gerald Eaker was kicked off the team and Greg Simpson was suspended by OSU Head Basketball Coach Randy Ayers. The two were allegedly involved in a shooting incident following an argument with teammate Antonio Watson.

Ayers, although upset about the trouble his players have been in, is also somewhat pleased that so many people are concerned.

"I appreciate their concern," he said, "I'd be worried if they weren't concerned."

While Ayers notes there have been problems with some of the players, he stresses that it won't affect the team for the upcoming season.

Despite the recent barrage of problems, the coaches and players may be taking a different approach than that of the public by looking ahead instead of dwelling on the past.

Assistant Coach Randy Roth noted people are judged by what they do day by day, and particularly in sports, it is not the past that really matters but what the team does this year.

Ayers said the core of next year's team is very strong, particularly the upperclassmen who are going to be counted on to provide strong leadership.

"We certainly hope they step up and provide leadership," Ayers said. "Add in Rickey Dudley after the football season, and there's a good mix of leaders."

Many OSU observers agree that Dudley, Doug Etzler and Antonio Watson are the three seniors to be looked upon to provide that leadership.

"Watson is a good example of players spending their summer preparing for next season," Roth said.

Ayers also said Etzler figures heavily into next year's core group of players.

The senior class has experienced two straight years of not making the coveted NCAA tournament.

"They want to do whatever they need to do to make that goal," Roth said.

Obviously everyone is working on improving, but for the seniors, it is their last chance, he said.

While Ayers has mentioned more than once the lack of size up front for next year's team, he's quick to dismiss the notion that the team is rebuilding.

"I'm a little concerned about our depth," Ayers said, "but to play in the Big Ten, you need more than a few quality big men."
Anderson leaves OSU program in lurch

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sport Reporter

It is, George Williams knows, a question most Ohio State basketball fans will ask, and not without some justification.

Why so late in the summer?

Williams' nephew and former son, Derek Anderson, called from their home in Louisville, Ky., yesterday to ask OSU athletic director Andy Geiger for a release from the Buckeyes basketball program.

Anderson, a 6-6, 245 senior wingman, plans to transfer to another school, with Pittsburgh and Providence the early front-runners. He would have been the team's returning leader in virtually every statistical category.

A junior-college, Anderson is the fourth player to leave coach Randy Ayers' program since the end of last season, joining Nate Wickens, Charles Mason and Gerald Estes.

However, as the months passed and it appeared Anderson would remain, it clearly was the cornerstone of any hopes to rebuild OSU by 1994-95, when he would have been a senior.

"I don't know if I'm to blame for this," Williams said. "The biggest thing probably was the Gerald Estes situation."

Estes shot out a tire on teammate Antonio Watson's car during an argument July 13, was dismissed from the team by Ayers the next day, and left school.

"My only comment is that I'm disappointed Derek is leaving, and I wish him well. We've got to go on and try to build this thing up where it was a couple of years ago."

Randy Ayers
OSU basketball coach

"Derek didn't want to get in trouble," Williams said. "People were looking at him like, 'You're next.' He felt that people looked him at him like, 'It's a matter of time with you. You're going to do something and, fit the mold.'"

He wanted to keep up such a good image. He's been brought up with a good kid, and he's always been on the right side of the law. There was pressure on him, I was worried for him.

"And there are problems here at home that are worrying him. They're a close family, not a big family. When something happens in our family, everybody gets involved."

Geiger, who has stood behind Ayers through a series of setbacks that included a one-year NCAA probation announced in June, made clear that the exit door swings one way.

"We have the utmost respect for Randy (Ayers), as a person and as a coach, and for the Ohio State program. There were just some things that fell apart that we had no control over."

— George Williams
Anderson's uncle

But, he goes on, Anderson holds a press conference Friday in Louisville.

"Derek really loves the people of Ohio," Williams said. "This has been terrible for him, the toughest thing he's ever done in his life."

"We have the utmost respect for Randy, as a person and as a coach, and for the Ohio State program. There were just some things that fell apart that we had no control over."

The career statistics of guard-forward Derek Anderson at Ohio State.

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Three-point shooting — 92-93: 9 of 25, 35.7 percent. 93-94: 21 of 63, 33.3 percent. Career: 30 of 97, 30.9 percent.

Please see ANDERSON Page 2B
OSU sports and

In the spring of '93, the NCAA began looking for dirt on OSU. Soon AD Jim Jones was history, everybody's hero Randy Ayers was rebuked and the basketball team was making a helter-skelter drive to self-destruction.

John Cooper, can you cheer us up?

By Jeff Long

It really started on Oct. 30, 1991, when assistant coach Paul Brazeau gave $60 to star recruit Damon Flint’s high school coach in the parking lot of Damon’s restaurant on Olentangy River Road.

Brazeau

Flint

Damon's
"It was brought to our attention," said then-athletic director Jim Jones, "by a representative of the NCAA that we ought to look into whether or not that was a legal or illegal contact."

It fell to Jones's successor, Andy Geiger, to deliver the NCAA-mandated mea culpa. "Mistakes were made," Geiger said. "I apologize to loyal supporters and to the community."

May, 1993: Jones, left, and basketball coach Randy Ayers at a press conference after the NCAA found violations in the recruiting of Damon Flint.

June, 1994: From left are OSU vice president David Williams, Geiger and Ayers, at a press conference on the NCAA's findings.
"Surely he shall deliver thee... from the noisome pestilence."

—Psalms 91:3

For deliverance from the noisome pestilence that has surrounded his basketball program for the past year, Randy Ayers looks now to Ohio State football coach John Cooper.

As Cooper's boys kick off the 1994 season, Ayers and his troubled team surely will be able to escape to the fringe of the Columbus sports spotlight. Cooper—whose task this year is merely to improve on a 10-1-1 record—once again will be the focus of critical news stories and second-guessing fans on sports talk shows.

For a few months at least, Cooper will be the Ohio State coach under the microscope, the one who has to defend each and every decision. And for that, Ayers will be profoundly grateful. He's had a tough year.

"How are the mighty fallen."

—Samuel II 1:27

Ghosts hovered around the Woody Hayes Athletic Center auditorium on the late June day that Ohio State officials explained how they ended up on the short end of the NCAA stick.

The spirits of Dick Larkins and Lynn St. John—OSU's first two athletic directors, who ran OSU sports from 1912 to 1970, the men who made Ohio State sports—must have wondered: How did it ever come to this?

How could their successors ever have allowed Ohio State to be cast down into the NCAA pit, down there with the UNLVs and the Oklahomas? Schools where cash is paid to recruits' coaches. Schools whose student-athletes appear regularly on the police docket.

Schools whose athletic directors resign in the midst of NCAA investigations.

Retired AD Jim Jones was, of course, absent that day at the Hayes Center. It fell to his old basketball coach, Randy Ayers, to take the heat for the "lack of institutional control" repeatedly mentioned in the NCAA report issued on June 23.

"Accept full responsibility," Ayers said. It fell to Jones's successor, Andy Geiger, to deliver the NCAA-mandated mea culpa. "Mistakes were made," Geiger said. "I apologize to loyal supporters and the community."

So the Ohio State basketball program now is serving a one-year probation. One more screw-up and there may not be an Ohio State basketball program.

And Larkins and St. John are spinning in their graves.

"Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble."

—Job 14:1

The plagues and misfortunes lately visited on Ayers and his team have reached epic proportions.

Three years ago, in the fall of 1991, the Buckeyes were riding a glorious wave of success and adulation. They'd made it to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA tournament the previous year and were loaded for a run at the national championship. Ayers was one of the rising stars of college coaching. The top recruits in the nation suddenly were looking at Ohio State with the Dukes and North Carolinas. Jimmy Jackson was at the top of his game.

Then, on Oct. 30, assistant coach Paul Brazeau gave $60 to star recruit Damon Flint's high school coach in the parking lot of Damon's restaurant on Olentangy River Road.

And it's been downhill ever since.

Sure, the '91-'92 season produced another NCAA tournament appearance, but the seeds of self-destruction had been sown.

From the pinnacle of the college basketball world to the dregs in just two years. Since the end of the '92-'93 season, OSU has been beset by player arrests, lost recruits, lost games, lost players, more arrests, a lost athletic director and lost prestige.

Oh, yeah. And an NCAA investigation into recruiting violations.

"It was brought to our attention," said then-athletic director Jim Jones at a May, 1993, press conference, "by a representative of the NCAA that we ought to look into whether or not that was a legal or illegal contact."

He was talking about the dinner at Damon's with Damon, describing how Ohio State had come to "self-report" that the dinner might have been a recruiting violation. In Jones's mind, apparently, if you're caught, and you admit it, it's the same thing as turning yourself in.

Either way, it was the beginning of a year in hell for the Ohio State basketball team.

It's been so ugly, with so many injuries, arrests, embarrassments and even deaths, that it's all kind of run together: Wait a second, was that Simpson who was in the car with Macon? Or was it Eaker who got into that fight? Was Funderburke still hurt when Anderson blew out his knee?

So let's try to sort this all out. (If you have small children, you may want to send them from the room.)

• May, 1993: After OSU "self-reported" possible recruiting violations involving Flint, the NCAA issued its list of OSU transgressions. First, there was the dinner at Damon's, which was improper because it was off campus. Ayers and Brazeau had eaten with Flint, his high school coach, Jim Leon, and three of his friends. After dinner, Brazeau gave Leon $60 to pay for the meal and transportation, and gave Flint and his buddies four nylon bags.

At the press conference Jones and Ayers held after the NCAA list was issued, that "off-campus" violation became an issue. Reporters asked why Ayers thought Damon's—about a mile and a half from campus—was actually on campus.

"We held a lot of activities there," Ayers said. "It's in close proximity to St. John Arena."


Some of the violations seemed picky to those not familiar with NCAA rules. When Ayers consoled Flint after his mother's death, that was a violation. When Ayers met Flint's grandmother during an OSU practice held at Flint's high school, that was a violation.

The Buckeye community yelped in protest when the violations were released. Even OSU president Gordon Gee professed shock that some of the contacts could be considered illegal. But they were. "There were a series of serious violations," says David Swank, head of the NCAA Infractions Committee.

"Even OSU president Gordon Gee professed shock that some of the contacts could be considered illegal. But they were. There were a series of serious violations," says David Swank, head of the NCAA Infractions Committee.

"Ohio State fans have convinced themselves that these are picayune violations," says Bruce Hooley, who covers Ohio State sports for the Cleveland Plain Dealer. "The fact is, [the money given to Leon] is one of the most serious violations there is, giving money to a kid's coach."

Dick Finn, the athletic department's rules compliance chief, tried to mitigate Ayers's guilt by saying that other OSU coaches met recruits at off-campus restaurants. Finn had been baseball coach at OSU for 18 years before he got the compliance job.

"Dick Finn believed his job was to make sure people knew what the rules
were, not to make sure they followed them," Hooley says.

Flint, one of the best high school players in the country, was declared ineligible to play for Ohio State. He later signed with the University of Cincinnati.

Thus began an NCAA investigation that was supposed to last about 90 days. It lasted until June of this year.

• June, 1993: Two big men Ayers was counting on—Lawrence Funderburke and Antonio Watson—had knee surgery. Watson’s was the less serious of the two.

Funderburke’s surgery to repair tendinitis would have a major impact on the upcoming season. To bulk up while rehabilitating, Funderburke embarked on a diet heavy on potatoes. The regimen worked. By the start of the season, Funderburke looked very much like a potato.

Funderburke’s knees bothered him early in the season, limiting his playing time. Then it was clear that he was out of shape. He didn’t start a game until a third of the way through the season. Funderburke was looking for a big senior year to improve his NBA stock, but he didn’t reach peak effectiveness until the end of the season.

• July, 1993: Derek Anderson and Jamie Stockton became the envy of the cool $20,000 sport/utility vehicles being owned around town by teammates Charles McCon and Greg Simpson, tried to buy Isuzus of their own.

But while McCon and Simpson used relatives as consigners, their teammates tried to use sponsors of their teams in the Worthington Summer League. Even OSU athletic officials recognized this as an NCAA rules violation. The consigners balked, and Anderson and Skelton didn’t get the vehicles.

Ayers painted the incident as minor—just two players who couldn’t get car loans—but with NCAA investigators nosing around it, it was, at the very least, embarrassing.

• November, 1993: McCon, who was to have a very active year everywhere but on the court, was disciplined by Ayers for academic shortcomings. He missed practices and the first exhibition game of the year.

• December, 1993: Gerald Eaker, Antonio Watson and Otis Winston were suspended for a game against Marquette for what Ayers described as violations of "team rules." Ayers wouldn’t elaborate.

• January, 1994: Ayers fell on an ice patch outside St. John Arena and broke his ankle, putting him in a cast for two months. Assistant Dave Cecutti took over.

Ayers would be hampered for much of the rest of the season by that ankle. Even after he got off crutches, he was less mobile, which limited his involvement in practices. Under Cecutti, the team faltered, leading to talk that Ayers had a weak staff.

Later in January, center Nate Wilbourne went down with a staph infection in his elbow, halting the steady improvement he’d been making.

Then the Buckeyes traveled to Purdue and got whacked 101-63, the worst Big Ten loss in Ayers’ career. And in fact the worst for OSU since 1965.

• February, 1994: McCon complained that he wasn’t playing enough. He skipped practice and was left home from a road trip to Minnesota.

Meanwhile, Eaker suffered the death of an uncle he was close to. He missed the Minnesota game, too, and the short-handed Buckeyes lost to the Gophers.

"He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down."—Job 14:11

The season went irretrievably into the dumper when Anderson—leading the team in scoring and second in rebounding—took the anterior cruciate ligament in his knee in a game against Michigan. That career-threatening injury took Anderson out for the rest of the season and sent him into rehabilitation; the prognosis is that he’ll miss part of next year as well.

The day after Anderson hurt his knee, Rickey Dudley lost a brother to lung disease.

• March, 1994: After a pickup game on campus, Simpson allegedly punched another student. He was charged with assault, to which he pleaded not guilty. The charge was later dismissed.

The inevitable rumor that Ayers would leave cropped up in March. Supposedly, he was going to resign to return to Miami University, his alma mater, as athletic director. "Randy Ayers isn't going anywhere," Gee said.

Local high school blue-chipper Sama ki Walker announced that he wouldn’t attend Ohio State, though Ayers had recruited Walker heavily. In the ultra-competitive world of high school recruiting, it’s a slap in the face when you can’t sign a kid from your own backyard. Walker would later sign with Louisville.

The season was hell ended in March, with Ohio State finishing 13-16, ninth in the Big Ten, the worst record since 1977. But there was more fun to come in March for the Buckeyes.

"They shall be as thorns in your side."

—Judges 2:3

On March 17, Simpson was arrested for drunken driving in Lima, his home town. That followed a speeding charge in December and a reckless operation charge in January. In a plea bargain on the drunken driving charge, Simpson pleaded guilty to lesser traffic offenses.

On March 18, McCon was arrested in his native Indiana and charged with stealing gasoline, drunken driving, speeding and possession of marijuana. (He also had Eaker in his vehicle, but Eaker was not charged with anything.) In a plea agreement, McCon pleaded guilty to drunken driving and pot possession and was sentenced to one year’s probation that will include random drug testing.

For stealing gas, McCon pleaded guilty to a reduced misdemeanor theft charge and received a 30-day suspended sentence and four months’ probation, and was ordered to pay $113 in court costs.

Ayers suspended McCon for one year. But Geiger later decided that McCon’s troubled history—he also was dismissed from school for academic reasons—merited nothing less than dismissal from the team. Buckeye fans now can quit wondering why Bobby Knight left Indiana’s Mr. Basketball get away.

Later in March, Wilbourne announced that he probably would transfer, eventually settling on South Carolina. Wilbourne and his father have refused to discuss why he wanted to leave Ohio State: "We have an agreement with Randy Ayers that we won’t discuss it," said Frank Wilbourne.

It’s rumored that both became disgusted with a lack of discipline on the team.

• April, 1994: Dudley joined the football team, which meant that he’d miss the beginning of the basketball season.

But Dudley was still part of the basketball team, as evidenced by his arrest for drunken driving on April 21. He later pleaded no contest and opted to participate in an alcohol rehabilitation program rather than serve three days in jail.

• May, 1994: The NCAA Infractions Committee asked the OSU athletic department for additional information. This seemed to confirm rumors that the investigation had widened to include more than just the Flint violations.

Assistant coach Mark Anderson resigned in May, for what Ayers called "personal" reasons. The fact that Anderson, as chief recruiter, hadn’t landed any stars in his tenure had nothing to do with his resignation, Ayers said. Earlier in May, Mississippi high school superstar Jerod Ward spurned OSU to sign with Michigan.

• June, 1994: Simpson and McCon managed to get in trouble with the law one more time. Media reports said that Simpson, McCon and another man tussled with a former roommate of Simpson’s. The alleged victim told police he was hit by bricks and then heard gunfire as he ran away. The Columbus prosecutor’s office declined to press charges in the case.
Last year's OSU basketball team

'93-'94 troubles, '94-'95 status report

Charles Macon
'93-'94: Complained about playing time. Suspended for academic problems. Arrested for theft, drunken driving and pot possession. Status: Dismissed from team.

Doug Etzier
Status: Returning.

Nate Wilbourne
'93-'94: Suffered the death of an uncle, and Staph infection in elbow cost him a large chunk of the season. Status: Transferred to the University of South Carolina.

Gerald Eaker

Otis Winston

Rickey Dudley

Greg Simpson

Antonio Watson

Lawrence Funderburke
'93-'94: Recovered slowly from preseason knee surgery, limiting his effectiveness until midseason. Status: Graduated.

Jamie Skelton
Status: Eligibility expired.

Jimmy Ratliff
Status: Eligibility expired.

Derek Anderson
'93-'94: Knee injury put him out for the year; was leading the team in scoring at the time. Status: Rehabilitating knee. Reportedly considering transfer to Kentucky.
Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt.

—Exodus 11:1

July, 1994: It just didn't seem possible that OSU basketball players—knowing the shaky ground Ayers was on—could manage to create another mess. But Eaker and Watson got into an argument at their south side home that led to Eaker's pulling a gun and shooting out the tire of Watson's car. Simpson—by now looking as though he has a real knack for trouble—arrived in time to drive Eaker away.

Result: Eaker was kicked off the team and Simpson was suspended indefinitely. He may or may not come back, Ayers said; it depends on his keeping his nose ultra-clean and actually going to class.

Result: Ohio State enters next season with a roster that just might be able to beat Otterbein.

'Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.'

—Genesis 49:4

In the midst of all this turmoil, back in February, Jones announced he was resigning. He and Gee said he was doing so just to take advantage of a golden retirement deal.

But hardly anybody believed that. The retirement of Jones, and the subsequent exodus of his top staff people, were widely seen as a sacrifice to the NCAA gods, a way to mitigate punishment for NCAA rules violations.

Ohio State's athletic department, which had only four directors in its first 72 years of existence, has now had three in the past 10 years.

Football coach Earle Bruce's firing led to athletic director Rick Bay's resignation in November, 1987, dealing a blow to an athletic department sorely in need of his dynamic leadership, the kind of leadership that's been lacking in recent years.

"Rick did such an outstanding job at Oregon, getting them out of the red," says former WCMH sports anchor Jimmy Crum, who's been a close observer and occasional critic of OSU sports for more than 40 years. "And he did so many good things here. He was eager. He was enthusiastic. He was there to run the athletic department, and he didn't kowtow to anybody, not even the university president."

Then-OSU president Ed Jennings said he hired Bay for "his integrity, his commitment to the academic enterprise and his commitment to NCAA rules." Ten years later, Gee would make similar comments when he hired new athletic director Andy Geiger.

Bay's departure derailed strides the athletic department had made in his tenure.

"The university was going down a very forward-thinking and very innovative approach with the athletic department, and it didn't continue that in certain areas" after Bay resigned, says George Lehner, sports director at WTVN. "Where Rick Bay had a vision to modernize that department sport-by-sport and coach-by-coach, that movement kind of halted. The emphasis went back to major-revenue sports and other sports."

Jennings immediately hired assistant athletic director Jim Jones as the new AD. Jones had been a candidate before, but lost out when Bay was hired.

Jones brought a perfectly acceptable résumé to the job. For 22 years, he had worked his way steadily up the OSU athletic department ladder, starting as a physical education teacher, then serving as an academic counselor for the football team. He spent the next 17 years as an administrator, overseeing scholarships, travel schedules and rules compliance. Then he became AD Hugh Hindman's right-hand man, handling much of the day-to-day department administration.

That didn't necessarily make him the right man to be the new Ohio State athletic director.

"Jim Jones has been a friend of mine for a long, long time, but he was just in over his head as athletic director at Ohio State," Crum says. "When he was the associate athletic director and he was in charge of things like hospitality rooms and such, he was the grandest fellow you ever met. But he was just suddenly dumped in that athletic director's job because Ed Jennings wanted a yes-man."

"When Hugh Hindman left, it took them four or five months to find Rick Bay," Crum says. "When Rick Bay resigned, it took them three hours to hire Jim Jones. It wasn't posted or anything. When Earle Bruce was fired and Rick Bay resigned, Dr. Jennings panicked. He wanted a yes-man in there."

As AD, Jones was surrounded by administrators who had followed a similar career path: longtime service rewarded by a plum administrative job. Associate AD Bill Myles had been a coach under Woody Hayes since 1972, moving into the office job in 1985 despite having no administrative experience.

Phyllis Bailey, associate AD for women's sports, had been at OSU since the mid '50s as a teacher and coach. And Jones had Dick Finn, the former baseball coach, in charge of rules compliance.

Maybe it's more than coincidence, then, that the Jones administration was marked by more controversy than the Buckeye faithful were used to seeing.

First came the loss of popular basketball coach Gary Williams, who in 1989 left for the University of Maryland, his alma mater. Big names such as Nolan Richardson of Arkansas and rising stars such as Lon Kruger of Kansas State were in the running for the job until they and other candidates passed.

"One of the mistakes Jim Jones made was looking at Nolan Richardson and all these other outside coaches," Crum says. "The players were telling me, 'We want Randy Ayers, not someone from outside.' After Jim Jones talked to all these other coaches who didn't want the job, they made it look like Randy Ayers got the job by default. That wasn't fair."

Ayers, Williams' top assistant, made Jones look like a genius with his early success. He was named National and Big Ten Coach of the Year and, for a time anyway, made OSU one of the top programs in the country.

But there were problems in the athletic department.

The football team's image took a shot in the late '80s when three players were found to have signed with agents while in school. The football program also was embarrassed in 1990 when four of the 20-member recruiting class—20 percent—were declared academically ineligible.

Then there's track coach Russ Rogers. He was accused of being an agent for runners he coached on the 1992 U.S. Olympic team, though the NCAA said he hadn't broken any rules. Rogers also was sued by a former member of his Fairleigh Dickinson team who said Rogers cheated him out of $41,000.

Then there's former men's gymnastics coach Mike Willson, who won $37,000 in a suit that charged he was wrongfully fired by Jones.

Then there's the suit filed by former women's basketball player Monica Taylor, who claims coach Nancy Darsch kicked her off the team without just cause. She said Darsch attempted to coax her into an "alternate lifestyle" and intimidated her into leaving the team.

Then there's the suit filed by former track athlete Denise Klemencic, who says former track coach Ed Crawford subjected her to sexual harassment and that Jones knew but did nothing about it. Klemencic's suit names Crawford, Jones and the university.

Jones' reputation was that of a good old boy whose department was top-heavy with people whose distinguishing feature was their longevity. Loyalty was prized, even at the expense of sound administration. And dirty laundry was not to be aired.
in public. (Many past and present OSU athletic department employees, including former AD Jones, track coach Rogers and former compliance chief Finn, did not return phone calls for this story.)

But Jones was popular with boosters, which may be why he stayed on as long as he did when it was widely believed that Gee wanted his own man in there.

"I don't think it was just Gordon Gee who was dissatisfied; it was the whole university administration," Crum says. "Nobody was happy with the job he was doing."

David Williams, OSU's vice president for student affairs, says all the turmoil surrounding the athletic department had no impact on the retirements of Jones, Bailey and Finn.

Lehner, among others, doesn't believe it. "I don't think it takes a chemistry major to figure out that the athletic department is not clicking on all cylinders. There were some slipshod things and some things that weren't done the way they were supposed to be done."

On Jones's retiring just to get a nice retirement deal, "I'm sure the way the situation was presented to Jim, it was a great deal for him," Lehner says.

Within several months of Jones's departure, he was actively pursuing a job as commissioner of the Mid-American Conference.

"Set thine house in order."

Andy Geiger looks to be a hardy sort, and that will be useful in the vortex of controversy that's been swirling around the OSU athletic department.

He is considered one of the top athletic directors in the country. He's been AD previously at prestigious academic institutions such as Brown, Penn and Stanford, and he's been at Maryland, which is, well, big. He's also been on a long list of NCAA committees and was a candidate to replace former NCAA executive director Dick Schultz several years ago.

"I look at [Geiger] as I did with Rick Bay," Crum says. "Now they're back on the track they should have been on seven years ago."

Geiger plans to reorganize and modernize the athletic department, with an emphasis on playing by the rules. In June, he named Larry Romanoff, formerly the head academic counselor, to oversee rules compliance. Geiger says Romanoff will oversee a 15- to 20-member "compliance committee."

Hookey says, "I think in Andy Geiger they're bringing in a guy who has some of the drive and the great administrative ability of Rick Bay without some of the pit bull tendencies to not give back the authority he was given when he got the job. Andy may know how to play the political game a little better."

One of Geiger's first tasks is to get the basketball program back to full health, or at least to stop the bleeding. This spring, one of the priorities was to find a top-flight assistant to fill the vacancy on Ayers's staff. Geiger said he wanted "somebody who can be an alter ego for Randy. He needs somebody with energy who can recruit and do all of those things as well as be a friend, mentor, adviser."

An ass-kicker would be nice, too, Hookey said. "What they need in my estimation is somebody who provides a personality contrast to the guys they have now. Somebody who raises his voice a bit. Of course, what they really need is better players."

In late June, Kansas State assistant Ken Turner, 48—an Ohio native and a former assistant at the University of Cincinnati—was hired to replace Anderson.

"He's a veteran," Geiger says of Turner. "He's what I think will be a perfect partner for Randy."

No one—outside of the more irresponsible rumormongers—thinks Geiger is ready to give Ayers the boot.

"You have an amazing honeymoon period in a place like Ohio State when you win back-to-back Big Ten championships and you're one of the best young black coaches in the country," Lehner says. "The administration really likes him. I don't think he's in any trouble."

"But it's really an uphill battle going into next season. This is when you find out how good a coach he is. Not just in terms of wins and losses, but in terms of getting guys ready to play, going out every night and playing hard. It will be interesting."

Randy Ayers has had a tough stretch, and he's borne his trials with the patience of Job. But Buckeye fans don't have that kind of patience. They expect Ohio State sports to be one thing:

"A land flowing with milk and honey."

—Genesis 8:8

Jeff Long is a staff writer for Columbus Monthly.
Ohio State hits a rough patch

Ayers' basketball program must rebuild from ground up

By Mike Lopresti
USA TODAY

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Where did the good times go?

For Ohio State men's basketball, the party is over. The debris includes NCAA probation, player defections and dismissals and busy police blotters. It has been a dizzying descent.

Where little more than two years ago the Buckeyes were within an overtime loss of reaching the Final Four, they will begin this season with only seven scholarship players. Some fearful beatings might come in the winter nights ahead.

Where two years ago Randy Ayers was Big Ten coach of the year and one of the hottest young names in the ranks, he now must fight for his job, trying to rebuild a program that has cracked apart beneath his feet, like soft ice on a pond.

Where two years ago, the future appeared bright with a highly vaunted recruiting group headed for Ohio State, that class now has been gutted. Charles Macon and Gerald Eaker were dismissed from school; Derek Anderson and Nate Wilbourne transferred. Only one member of that prized group remains: Greg Simpson, who himself is coming back from suspension.

The penalties were not severe, the charges not the most serious in the world. But they could not have come at a worse time. The same summer that saw Macon, Eaker, Simpson and football-basketball player Rickey Dudley involved in several off-court incidents, the most serious being Eaker shooting out a tire of teammate Antonio Watson's vehicle after an argument.

On top of that, Anderson, the best returning Buckeye, abruptly headed for Kentucky in late August, leaving the turmoil behind.

Ohio State's cupboard and chances might never have ever been so empty as they are now.

"I've always felt pressure in this job," Ayers said. "My first year, when we were winning and now. I don't think that's going to influence the way I work or the way I go about my job. Because I've always thought of myself as a hard worker. "You've got to stand firm in your decisions. But to me, you still have to support your kids. To me, that's bottom line."

The recruiting violations?
"We made a mistake," Ayers said.

The off-court incidents? "I think we've had some individuals make some bad decisions. It's frustrating, very frustrating. One of the things we've always stressed is making good decisions off the floor. We're a highly visible sport, and we understand that. We talk about dealing with responsibility all of the time. We've had some individuals who haven't done that."

Any second-guessing of the way he has handled his players? "I don't think so. I think I've always been a very supportive coach. I'm going to continue to do that. I don't look back a lot. Even when we were winning, I didn't look back. The thing I'm concerned about is we clean up our act off the court."

Across the arena from Ayers is the office of the man who has had to put out the brush fires. This is Andy Geiger's first summer as athletic director. It has not been boring.

He has been around the block in college athletics, with stops at Maryland and Stanford. He has handled messes before, and his method is to meet them head-on. Since the flood of bad news began, he

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has granted countless interviews, given countless speeches: "You need to deal with it. I'll bring it up. I won't wait for the question-and-answer period."

"I want people to understand what I understand. This is a 32-varsity sport program. The largest intercollegiate program in the country. Between 750 and 800 student-athletes participate. We have, over time, been remarkably free of incidents. It's not true this is a program out of control."

He said what has happened to Ohio State could happen to nearly any major college. None feel immune.

"Kids are kids," Indiana coach Bob Knight said at a lecture in Dayton, Ohio, last week. "Something could go wrong at Indiana. I can't tell you we're not going to have problems with kids at Indiana. Kids today are confronted with a lot more distractions than ever before."

Geiger: "Why is it that people think that somehow, some way, intercollegiate athletes are exempt from the experiences and frailties of the rest of the human experience? On the day one of our football players was arraigned for shoplifting, in the city of Columbus there were 84 arraignments ... murders, assaults, rape, shootings."

"One of them was on the front page of the newspaper. A football player shoplifted, did a terrible, stupid thing, but it was the big story in town. But it'll always be that way. It goes with the territory."

The player was kicker Mike Malfatt, who has good grades and was an Eagle Scout.

"For me to sit down with (football coach) John Cooper and say, 'John, you did a lousy job of recruiting that kid,' would be silly," Geiger said. "That's just something that happened."

He has been clear in his support for Ayers but also in his expectation that Ayers get a grip on his program. A recent headline in one Ohio paper said, "OSU AD won't let Ayers get off easy."

"That's because the OSU AD doesn't let the OSU AD get off easy," Geiger said. "It's a place of high expectations. I don't have to draw a picture for Randy Ayers. I don't feel as badly about it as he does.

"He understands what's at stake. Of course, there is accountability. But there's also education and developing of him. Randy's a very young guy. He needs some time and needs to be given an opportunity to rebuild this basketball program. He's part of the demise of it. Now he needs to be part of the rebuilding of it."

How long?

Geiger said it'll probably take at least three years for the basketball program to be back on its feet. Ayers hopes it's much sooner. Time can heal a lot. The problem at Ohio State right now is, there is so much to heal.
THE OHIO STATE BASKETBALL
POLICE BLOTTER

Dec. 30, 1993
Greg Simpson convicted of speeding.

Jan. 7, 1994
Simpson convicted of reckless operation of a motor vehicle.

March 2
Simpson charged with misdemeanor count of assault.
Charges were dropped.

March 17
Simpson arrested in his hometown on charges of drunken driving, driving without lights, and underage possession of alcohol. Fined $200 plus court costs.

March 18
Charles Macon arrested after allegedly not paying for gas, driving 90 mph on highway and having less than 30 grams of marijuana in his car. Teammate Gerald Eaker is a passenger in car. Three days later, Macon is suspended from team.

April 21
Rickey Dudley arrested for DUI, driving with expired tags with revoked license.

June 9
Former Simpson roommate, Daniel Smith, files complaint that Simpson, Macon and another person threw bricks at him and his apartment.

July 19
Columbus police investigate a report by Antonio Watson that after an argument, Eaker shot a tire on Watson’s car and rode off in car driven by Simpson. No charges were filed.

July 20
Randy Ayers kicks Eaker off the team and indefinitely suspends Simpson.
Letter threatening ex-hoopster’s life turned over to FBI

By Michael C. Fitzpatrick
Lantern staff writer

Events continue to unfold surrounding Greg Simpson and his dismissal from the OSU basketball team.

Simpson was removed from the team on Sept. 24 after repeated run-ins with legal authorities.

According to a published report in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, the junior from Lima was threatened in a letter addressed to coach Randy Ayers. The letter was postmarked in Cleveland.

Ayers forwarded the letter to the Columbus FBI, who informed the Cleveland FBI.

FBI special agent in Cleveland, Bob Hawk, said the investigation is ongoing.

"There was a letter apparently mailed to the coach at OSU that concerned Greg Simpson. There were some apparent threats in the letter," Hawk said.

"We are going to look at that letter, analyze it, get a prosecutor’s opinion from the attorney’s office as to whether there was a federal violation involved," Hawk said.

"We could attack it from two fronts, a civil rights violation or an extortion violation," Hawk said.

Hawk declined to detail the specific nature of the letter.

"The only thing I can say about it at this time is that any time I receive a letter of that nature I pass it on to the proper authorities. I’ve done that for five years since I’ve been the head coach and I didn’t treat this situation any different," Ayers said.

Comments made by OSU Athletic Director Andy Geiger to the Lantern concerning the letter indicate that the threats were racial in nature.

Geiger said "Randy gets hate letters every day... He turns them over to the proper authorities and that is what happened this time."

"Either someone is playing a cruel joke or somebody is sick or both," Geiger added.

Simpson’s attorney Robert H. Mihlbaugh said he understands the letter was signed.

"A very helpful fellow," Mihlbaugh said.

In other athletic news, Geiger announced that although Simpson had been removed from the team he would still be on scholarship. NCAA rules prohibit the revocation of a scholarship unless a player is convicted of a crime or some type of violation of the university code.

"I used the word revoked and I probably shouldn’t have," Geiger said.

Geiger said Simpson’s scholarship will not be renewed after this academic year.

Mihlbaugh said his client has not been in school because he was under the impression that he was no longer on scholarship. He faults Geiger for misleading his client.

Geiger said Ayers placed a call to Simpson’s family on Monday and informed them Simpson still is on scholarship.

Simpson’s parents informed Ayers during the call that Simpson did not wish to return to Columbus and would instead continue his education at the Ohio State University campus in Lima.

"I don’t know how many times I have to repeat this... I will not change my story. I have been absolutely consistent," Geiger said, in his dealings with athletes who transgress the law.

"This was the eighth incident for Greg Simpson," Geiger said.

"He violated an agreement he made with the athletic department. It is not a matter of law that he be allowed to play basketball. He is not eligible to play basketball at Ohio State, period."

Simpson was involved in eight run-ins with the law in a nine month period.

Simpson is just one of several OSU athletes to have a run-in with the law.

Football players Rickey Dudley, Eric Moss and most recently Mike Malfatt have all been involved in legal problems. They all remain on scholarship. Geiger contends he has acted fairly.

"When you get a job and you are making about 275 thousand bucks, and when your children can be sent to Ohio State for free; when you get a job like that and you don’t even know the NCAA rules, I think that would be the first thing you learned at that job, at least read them before you destroy the boy’s life," Mihlbaugh said.
Ayres holds tryouts to rebuild men's b-ball program

By Tocsina Durham
Lantern sports writer

The rebuilding of the OSU men's basketball team has begun.

After and off-season full of off-the-court player disciplinary problems, NCAA probation and the deaths of assistant coach, lay-ups and jump shots once again became the central focus.

Randy Ayres and his coaching staff watched yesterday as 62 OSU students displayed their basketball talents in an open tryout.

Ayers held open tryouts in order to round out his roster for the upcoming season. The roster spots became available after the mass exodus of players from last season's squad.

Eight players are now gone due to disciplinary problems, transfers, graduation and expiration of eligibility.

Ayers finds himself with only two players on basketball scholarship — seniors Doug Steere and Antonio Watson. Rickey Dudley is expected to return at the end of football season.

Students who tried out for the two to three possible walk-on spots on the team had to meet several basic standards.

"We have to clear them in terms of satisfactory progress, being enrolled with at least 12 credits and having a physical," said James Hall, athletic academic counselor.

Ayers said there have been about 100 students trying out in previous years.

Scott Zack, a junior majoring in psychology, said he just came to watch. Zack, who is 6 feet 7 inches tall, is a recruited walk-on who was invited to pre-condition and begin practicing with the team.

Curtis Jones, a second year radiology major, was one of the 10 selected to play in the final game.

The 6-foot-2-inch Jones said he tried out last year, but his SAT and ACT scores made him ineligible.

Jones, who broke his hand this weekend while practicing for the tryouts, said he did not expect any special treatment because of his condition.

"I gave it my all. I'm sure they cared," said Jones of the coaches, "but when you step out on the court it's different, they're looking for two or three people and if they feel I can help their team they'll pick me." Jerry White, a junior engineering major, was also one of the final 10 selected.

White said he is confident of his chances of making the team.

"I can offer the team outside game as far as dribbling and handling the ball, but not too much inside game because I don't think I'm tall enough," said White who is 6 feet 2 inches tall.

White said he unsuccessfully tried out as a freshman, and decided to try again this year.

After the selected 10 finished their game, they were invited to come back again at 6:30 Wednesday morning for further tryout procedures.

Ayers said he needs a few more practice sessions with the walk-ons to evaluate their skills before the final selection is made.

Eric Marshall, a freshman majoring in art, did not make the final 10 but said he plans on trying out again.

"I feel I can do better. I love playing basketball; any free time I get I play," he said.

Marshall said he tried out because he knew the team was in trouble and felt that he could offer the team defensive skills.

Ayers said this season's practices have been going well and he expects the team to look better when Ricky Dudley and John Lumpkin join it after football season is over.

Ayers was able to recruit three new faces for this year's team from off-campus recruitment; Robert Shelton, a freshman from Richmond, Ind., Carle Davis, a freshman from Columbus, and Rick Yulet a junior transfer student.

OSU men's basketball coach Randy Ayers runs a drill during tryouts yesterday.
Former Buckeye returns bearing gifts

By Scott Priestle
Lantern sports writer

Jimmy Jackson walked onto the court Wednesday night at St. John Arena to a standing ovation.

The former OSU basketball star returned for his first game between his current team, the Dallas Mavericks, and the Cleveland Cavaliers.

For a city starved for basketball success, this was a reminder of how good things were now.

For the Mavericks, it was a chance to show what they hope will be one of the most eventful games of the league.

For Jimmy Jackson, it was a homecoming.

Despite the Cavs 100-10 victory over a Michael Cage layup with five seconds left, the big news was Jackson's return to Ohio State.

"It felt good," Jackson said. "We had a good crowd, and it was a pretty good game for us. The emotions were real, just getting back and playing in St. John Arena. It was funny being the visitor, though."

What wasn't funny for Cleveland was Jackson's performance. He led all scorers with 26 points, including an alley-oop from Lucious Harris to end the first half. He also dished out seven assists.

Jamal Mashburn added 25 points and seven assists for the Mavs, who dropped to 0-2 this season. Terrell Brandon led Cleveland with 23 points.

In a ceremony before the game, Jackson was presented with the university with a gift of $100,000. The half of the money will go to the Athletic Department toward basketball scholarships, and the other half will be given to the Frank W. Hale, Jr. Black Cultural Center.

Jackson said he and men's basketball coach Randy Ayers talked about a donation for 3-2 first time the team saw, but Jackson wanted to wait until "I saw the need to do it."

"Right now, there's a critical time, especially for Coach Ayers, who could use help with the team, and the Frank Hale Center on campus where I spent a lot of time. It was a chance for me to give something back to people who've given to me in the past," Jackson said.

In the last three years in Columbus, Jackson led the Buckeyes to two Big Ten titles and three-straight NCAA tournaments.

The All-American led his junior year to play in the NBA. The Buckeyes haven't made it to the NCAA tournament since Jackson's departure, and five scholarship players have left or been kicked off the team since last year.

Before Wednesday's game, Jackson commented on the problems surrounding the program.

"Coach Ayers is such a great friend of mine, going back to my high school days and through college," Jackson said. "I hate to see the things that not only he, but also the program, are going through."

"It's tough for me, because we built a reputation of doing everything right and being winners. But, at the same time, I can't explain certain situations because I wasn't there. The only thing I can say is that Coach Ayers is doing the best he can do," Jackson said.

He said, at this age, players have to take responsibility for their own actions.

"If you raise your son or daughter for 18 or 19 years, and teach him or her the things they need to be successful in life, and they go out and do something that's wrong, does that make you a bad parent? I don't think it does, because that child has to make a decision for himself or herself," Jackson said.

"That's the same situation Coach Ayers is in. He can only teach you so much, and after that you've got to accept the blame."

Jackson said the fans should be patient with Ayers, because he has already proven he can win games.

"I know they'll get tough times turned around. Sometimes you have to take a step back to take two steps forward," he said.

As for his new team, Jackson thinks it can be one of the best in the league, but it will take some time.

The Mavericks haven't had a winning season in five years, and they've finished with the worst record in the NBA each of the past two seasons (11-71 in 1992-93, 13-69 last year).

But, the worst teams get the highest picks in the amateur draft, and the Mavs have been able to stockpile some of the best young talent in the league.

Jackson joins Mashburn, a second-year forward, and rookie point guard Jason Kidd to form a solid nucleus for this young team.

Mashburn and Jackson tied for the team's scoring lead last year, each averaging 18.2 points per game. Already this year, the two have combined for 56 of the Mavericks' 210 points in their two preseason games.

Kidd was one of the most sought-after recruits out of high school, and in his first (two-year) college career he treated Kidd like a rookie because he already played like a veteran.

For his part, Kidd said it helps having young players like Jackson and Mashburn.

"There's times when I'm going to have bad games," Kidd said. "But, everybody's going to have bad games. I just get to keep coming back and learn from my mistakes."

Jackson said the addition of center Roy Tarpley, who missed three NBA seasons after violating the league's drug policy, gives the Mavs a much-needed inside presence.

"Roy is going through some changes in his life, getting back to the NBA. But, he brings another dimension that we didn't have last year, which is a real rebounder and a big guy inside," Jackson said.

Another change this year is coach Dick Motta. Last year's Quinn Buckner, in his first season as an NBA coach, had trouble relating to his players and openly feuded with then-rookie Mashburn.

Mashburn said the difference in the coaches' styles is "night-and-day. The atmosphere is a lot looser. It's easy to work in. We're all having a lot of fun, including the coaching staff, and everybody really together as a team."

Jackson said Motta's coaching experience is making a difference. Motta, in his 33rd season as an NBA head coach, is the fourth-winningest coach in league history.

"It's tough to criticize someone who was just getting started, but the experience is there with Coach Motta," Jackson said. "I learned a lot this summer in just three days with him."

For the first time in a long time, Maverick players and fans are looking to the upcoming season with optimism.

"We have some new blood as far as new coaching staff and new players," Mashburn said. "It's going to be exciting. We came up a little bit short (against Cleveland), but luckily it's still the exhibition season. We'll make our mistakes now."

Jackson, Kidd and Mashburn said they know the talent is there, but they need time to develop as a team.

"We're rebuilding, and we're a long way from a championship or the playoffs. But, we've got all the pieces in place right now," Jackson said.

Kidd said he's ready to surprise some teams.

"We have it right here," he said. "We've been showing people all week that we can play in this league. Now, it's just a matter of getting all the wrinkles out and having fun."
Hoopla!
the Lantern Buckeye Basketball Bulletin
January 4, 1995 Issue 1

Randy's season on the brink

-Big Ten Preview
This year, it's a whole different ballgame for Bucks

By Michael C. Fitzpatrick

Hoopla staff writer

OSU basketball coach Randy Ayers stood at the podium in the media room of Gund Arena in Cleveland, his head slightly bowed, a look of disappointment masking his face. The Buckeyes had just been beaten by Cleveland State, 75-73.

A heart-breaking loss.

Less than 30 months ago Ayers had stood at a similar podium, discussing his team's loss 75-71 loss to Michigan which denied the Buckeyes a trip to the Final Four. That loss was disappointing, but even in the despair of that loss there was hope, there was next year.

On this December night in the spanking new Gund Arena, the Buckeyes trailed CSU for most of the game. With 28 seconds remaining Ohio State was able to forge ahead 72-70 only to eventually lose 76-73.

Gut wrenching.

Another loss to an Ohio school that last year the Buckeyes would have most likely disposed of with little trouble. But much has changed over the last 12 months in Columbus.

There are no more cupcakes on the Buckeye schedule. Their 2-7 record includes losses at home to Bowling Green and Ohio University.

Last year the Buckeyes, playing the toughest schedule in the country according to USA Today, stumbled and staggered to a 13-16 record.

During January of 1994 Ayers slipped on a patch of ice and fractured his ankle, an ironic foreshadowing of the fall of the basketball team was about to take.

Since that time the basketball program has imploded.

Gone is the highly touted recruiting class of 1992 that included Greg Simpson, Derek Anderson, Charles Mason, Gerald Baker, and Nate Wilbourne. Simpson, Mason, and Baker left after well chronicled run-ins with the law. Anderson, the most talented of the bunch, broke camp for the bluegrass of Kentucky and Wilbourne decided he would like to finish his career in South Carolina.

To say the Buckeyes are undermanned this year is like saying Davy Crockett was a little short of help at the Alamo.

Ayers has had to go with a team that has only four players with Division I college basketball experience in Antonio Watson, Doug Etzler, Otis Winston, and Rick Yudis. His tallest player is the 6-8 Watson.

This leaves Ayers with an eight-man rotation which features two freshmen — Kevin Martin, and Carlos Davis — in the starting lineup, with Martin being a walk-on to boot.

The Buckeyes are a game bunch. Their never say die attitude will endear them to the fans more so than their underachieving predecessors of the past two seasons. In December they made a gutsy second half comeback against Tennessee-Chattanooga in which they overcame a double-figure deficit late in the game and eventually won in overtime, 84-83.

But even in victory, memories of what was just a short time ago linger. You sit in St. John Arena and can't help but remember another Buckeye overtime victory. One in which Jimmy Jackson passed off to Troy Lowe to beat Indiana 97-95. The nadir of Ayers' era.

And the question remains, "What in the heck happened and who is to blame?" Just 30 months ago Randy Ayers was the toast of the collegiate coaching坛, Two straight Big Ten titles and two successive No. 1 seeds in the NCAA tournament.

As the saying goes, "His future was so bright he needed to wear shades."

But that was before the NCAA investigation into the recruitment of Damon Flint became public. That was before the Buckeyes put together back-to-back lack-luster seasons with no NCAA tournament appearances. That was before players started acting up and the Buckeyes suffered three losses in one season to in-state rivals.

Today the only reason Ayers might have to wear sunglasses is to maintain anonymity.
One bad season hardly a test of OSU fan's loyalty

Any fan of the Ohio State men's basketball team might find these depressing winter weeks more endurable if he were a Buddhist — or Glenn "Webby" Webb.

The "four noble truths" of Buddhism — with the cornerstone of spiritual enlightenment being the realization that life is suffering — would serve OSU enthusiasts well in the waning days of the season.

"You can't win every game," Webby said last week after the Buckeyes dropped one to the Hoosiers and fell to 5-16 overall and 1-11 in the Big Ten.

He uttered the observation with the conviction of a man who truly understands the importance of the Buddhist principles of right-mindedness, right views and right contemplation.

Webby wouldn't know Buddha, though, from Orson Welles. Rather, the lifelong Buckeye fan looks at OSU basketball with a broader view than do many of its recent devotees (not to mention critics).

You see, Webby has missed only two Buckeye home basketball games in almost 40 years. And he missed those only because he was en route to and from Pasadena to watch the football Buckeyes play in the Rose Bowl.

"I had to give my four tickets to my bowling team," he lamented.

Eisenhower was in the White House when Webby first made the short trip to St. John Arena from West Jefferson, Ohio, where he ran the Shell gas station for 45 years.

His devotion to the basketball team seems small only when compared with his attendance record at Buckeye football games.

"I haven't missed any home games since 1931," he conceded. "I've got a plaque from Dr. (Edward) Jennings (a former OSU president) to prove the first 60 years. It says, 'It's guys like you who make this university great.'"

So Webby saw Ohio State play Notre Dame during the Depression.

"Raining to beat heck that day," he recalled.

He also saw the famous "Snow Bowl" in 1950.

"I was right there. Never got my car home till Wednesday."

Children not yet born when Webby began his attendance string are eligible for Social Security.

The fan has attended not only every home football game for more than three score years, he says, but also every Buckeye away game during the Big Ten season at Michigan, Michigan State, Purdue or Indiana.

His football record was in jeopardy only once, several years ago: The Buckeyes played a Saturday night home game at Ohio Stadium at the time the West Jefferson High School Roughriders had an uncommon Saturday night game at Circleville.

Webby compromised, watching the first half of the Ohio State game, then highballing to Circleville in time to see all but the opening two minutes of the second half of the West Jefferson game.

After all, he could not risk blanching the record of having seen every home and away game West Jefferson has played since the second game of the 1930 season.

Webby would not divulge his age.

"Just tell them I'm older than dirt," he advised.

The man who is "older than dirt" looks at life from a wide, contemplative perspective. Even though he is the regular organist at Community Free Will Baptist Church, he still looks at human existence and OSU basketball as might a Buddhist.

"He'll come out of it," he said of Coach Randy Ayers. "They're getting better every week. I'm behind him 100 percent. No, buddy, don't blame Randy. He's got five or six good recruits coming in. You can't go on losing on into forever."

The simple laws of karmic truth remind us that from long suffering and anguish comes rebirth and that, from rebirth, universal justice prevails.

Or, as Webby said: "They'll be back. You watch. Go Bucks!"
Reunion Dinner Set For ’60 Champions

By STEVE HELWAGEN

Former OSU men’s basketball coach Fred Taylor is right — they are still talking about his 1960 NCAA championship team.

Taylor and several players from that famed 1960 team attended a media reception at the Holiday Inn on the Lane just before the Feb. 14 game against Indiana at St. John Arena.

The purpose of the reception was to publicize the team’s 50th anniversary reunion dinner, “The Season For All Seasons,” scheduled for Friday, April 14, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Columbus.

The reunion, co-sponsored by the OSU athletic department, Buckeye Boosters and members of the 1960 team, will benefit an athletic scholarship as well as the Boosters’ annual contribution to further athletics at Ohio State.

“I am really excited about it,” Taylor said. “I had a request when we were back from California and the championship game that people would still be talking about this team 20 years from now.”

“It’s been 35 years and people are still talking about it,” he said.

Bruce Peterson, a member of the Buckeye Boosters board of directors and a co-chairman of the reunion dinner with team member Richie Hoyt, said the idea for this reunion stemmed from the 25th anniversary reunion for OSU’s 1965 national championship football team held in 1990.

“The 35th anniversary dinner for that team at the Woody Hayes Athletic Center, and that went really well,” Peterson said. “That was really a once-in-a-lifetime event.”

“The following Monday, I was at work and I got a call from Lee Caryer, the son of the book on Coach Taylor’s teams (The Golden Age of Ohio State Basketball)!” He said he heard what a wonderful event the football 1965 team would be and suggested that we might try and do one with this team,” he said.

In the eyes of many basketball fans, the 1960 Ohio State team held great respect for one main reason: It is the only college basketball team in history to boast four members of the Basketball Hall of Fame with Taylor and Indiana’s Bobby Knight in as coaches and Jerry Lucas and John Havlicek in as players.

This is one special basketball team,” Peterson said. “As of right now, they are the only team to have four people in the Basketball Hall of Fame. None of the great UCLA teams of the 1960s and 70s even have that.”

Peterson said and Caryer set down with Taylor and Hoyt last March to pitch the idea of doing a reunion dinner.

“We told them about how well the football dinner went and how we set up the Woody and Anne Hayes Scholarship,” he said. “We talked about doing something along those lines that could be the 1960 Scholarship for a basketball player who wants to pursue a postgraduate degree.”

You know, Coach Taylor always stressed was academics and making sure his players had a life after basketball," he said.

According to Peterson, about 2,300 people attended the football dinner. Planners are hoping for 900 to 1,000 people for the basketball reunion.

“This dinner will be a little bit different,” Peterson said. “For sentimental reasons, we wanted to use the Woody Hayes facility for the dinner. For this one, we thought a downtown location would offer us the best situation.”

Naturally, the burning question is whether Knight, Indiana’s bombastic but effective coach, will attend. Knight, in Columbus for a game with OSU, April 14, admitted he knew about the dinner. “(Somebody) just mentioned it to me last night,” he said after the game, but he stopped short of saying he would attend.

In order to get Knight, organizers planned the reunion dinner for the weekend after the Final Four.

All four of the Hall-of-Famers are committed,” Peterson said. “Our biggest question has been Coach Knight, but he’s got it on his schedule. Jerry Lucas and John Havlicek are committed.”

In addition to the Hall-of-Famers, the team also included Jim Allen, Dave Barger, John Cedergren, Dick Furry, Gary Gearhart, Hoyt, J.T. Williams, Nelson Miller, Gary Mulliken, Howard Nourse, Mel Novell, Joe Roberts and Larry Siegfried. Mike Surovtz was the manager, Jack Graf and Frank Truit were assistant coaches. Cedergren and trainer Ernie Biggs are deceased.

In addition to dinner, guests will enjoy live and video presentations highlighting the 1960 season and will receive a special commemorative gift.

There will also be a silent auction featuring many unique items, including personal basketball memorabilia donated by team members and basketball cards signed by all team members.

Individual tickets are $75 each and may be purchased by writing the 1960 Reunion Committee, 100 Wetherby Lane, #106, Westerville, OH 43081 or by calling (614) 865-5323. Corporate tables and major sponsorships are also available.

PLAYERS ATTENDING the media reception included Roberts, Hoyt and Barger.

Roberts, who currently lives in Oakland, Calif., said he is looking forward to the reunion dinner.

“I think it’s a great idea to get the guys back together,” Roberts said. “It was an unusual group of young men and a great bunch of Ohio guys. It will be fun to get back together.”

Roberts, who was a player and coach in the NBA, liked the idea of how some proceed from the dinner could possibly earmarked specifically for a basketball player’s postgraduate education.

“I think that’s great. In the future, everything will depend on your education, particularly your postgraduate education. I wish I could have gone back and gotten some type of postgraduate degree like that. I know a scholarship like this would have definitely made it easier,” he said.

TAYLOR PRESIDENT of the OSU basketball history from 1960 to ’65. Those teams, dominated by three-time Big Ten MVP,

REUNION TALK — Former Ohio State basketball coach Fred Taylor met with members of the media at a special reception held before the Feb. 14 Indiana game to announce the April 7 reunion dinner for OSU’s 1960 NCAA championship team.

PETERSON RECALLS staying up late the night of March 19, 1960, to watch the NCAA championship game on the Cow Palace in San Francisco. The game was not televised on a major network and was broadcast to local stations across the country.

“They were on the West Coast, the game didn’t come on until midnight,” he said. “Ohio State was playing California, the defending national champion, and it was a six-point underdog. Cal had beaten Cincinnati and Oscar Robertson the night before. Ohio State had beaten NYU (New York University) the night before.

“Ohio State came right out and ended up up 20 points at halftime. I was a 12-year-old boy, sitting at my grand mother’s house in Bayley. Half time came at about 1:15 a.m. I looked outside and saw every house up and down the street had the lights on, presumably watching the game.”

OSU maintained its lead in the second half, winning its only NCAA title by a 75-65 margin over the Golden Bears.

EACH WEEK this season, 822 i running a recap of how the 1960 team did during that particular week 30 years ago. Those recaps, written by former editor and now Letters to the Editor page each week.

Nick season’s Simmons said, 

they knew they had the edge to get the pro.

Simmons said, 

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Seniors Simmons is also hoping it 

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Simmons also said it would be a 

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Teehee has pretty much been all 

and support college to come out

Simmons also said, that would be a 

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Simmons said. Tickets will sell out.

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OSU makes basketball more home 

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OSU
1960 hoops team gets together, relives glory

By Bill Loadman
Lantern sports writer

Confident smiles and enthusiasm abounded as members of the 1960 Ohio State men’s basketball team met Friday in Columbus to celebrate the 35th anniversary of their national championship.

The former players spoke glowingly about the team that won both Big Ten and NCAA titles, and would eventually send all five starters into the professional ranks.

“It was a unique group of young men,” three-time Big Ten Most Valuable Player, and 1960 team member Jerry Lucas said. “We were all from Ohio. We were all dedicated, and a really fine group of students.”

Just a sophomore in his first season of eligibility, Lucas was the undisputed star of the squad that went 25-3 and beat defending champion California in the NCAA final. The recurring themes from all of the players though, were team play and admiration for their head coach Fred Taylor.

“He (Taylor) instilled working together and being a family, and competing for Ohio State, and all-for-one and all-in-for-all — that type of philosophy,” team member Joe Roberts said.

Dick Furry, an upperclassman on the team, also credited Taylor with much of the team’s success.

“Fred stood for excellence. I think he set a standard for coaching, and the type of student-athletes he had had never been matched,” Furry said.

John Havlicek was also a sophomore on the 1960 club. He went on to become one of the NBA’s all-time greats while with the Boston Celtics.

“In my particular case, I would never have been a professional basketball player if it hadn’t been for Fred Taylor because he taught me the rudiments of the game, and the things that make you a stronger player,” Havlicek said.

Roberts, along with many of his 1960 teammates, is disenchanted with current state of college and professional basketball.

“I think it’s gotten out of hand, they (today’s players) think about themselves first,” Roberts said.

“If I wouldn’t want to be a coach today. It is probably one of the most difficult jobs a person has today. Players today are totally different,” Lucas said.

Both Lucas and Roberts were hesitant to discuss the current state of the Ohio State basketball program. While they are disappointed, they think head coach Randy Ayers will get the Buckeyes back on track.

“I have a lot of confidence in Randy,” Lucas said. “I think Randy is a good coach. Some unfortunate things happened in the program that were outside his domain, and you can’t control everybody.”

Roberts believes Ayers handled last season’s turmoil well.

“I think you can go up and down,” Roberts said. “And what happens is you get a couple of bad eggs in there and it deteriorates the whole program.”

Havlicek credited the successes of the 1960 squad to their individuals strengths and ability to fit into the system.

“We had a lot of unique personalities on this particular team,” Havlicek said. “No one wanted to be considered the weak link.”

Roberts felt that the team’s success could be attributed to much more than its basketball skills.

“There were no egos to deal with at that time, so we had team play and players taking advantage of other players. We’d pound the heck out of each other during practice, but after practice everybody was happy, everybody was friendly and got along.”

With the anniversary of the championship, one might think that basketball would be the hottest topic of discussion between the players or that they would reminisce about their victory over California.

“We don’t talk about the game,” Havlicek said. “We basically wonder what everyone else is doing, so we catch up that way.” The sophomore-dominated Ohio State team was able to keep everything in perspective in 1960 as well.

“We didn’t think about winning the national championship until we realized we were in the finals,” Lucas said.

Havlicek agreed, sort of.

“We were just concerned about making a good showing,” he said, and added with a chuckle, “but then we also knew we were pretty good too.”

Members of the 1960 NCAA Ohio State championship meet during their 35-year reunion. Seated are Joe Roberts (left) and John Havlicek. Standing are (from left) David Barker, Jerry Lucas, Dick Furry, and J.T. Landis.
Players, Luminaries Praise Taylor At Reunion

By JEFF RAPP and STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff

As the players from the 1960 Ohio State men's basketball national championship team gathered for a 35th anniversary banquet April 7, stories flew, team pride was rekindled and game highlights were dug up.

But the undeniable theme of the entire event, which drew all but one of the living former players, can be summed up in two words: Fred Taylor.

At the banquet, held at the Columbus Hyatt Regency and dubbed "The Season For All Seasons," Taylor's coaching brilliance and mentorship were honored as much as the all-star cast that won the title. As the outpouring of warmth unfolded, the beloved former head coach seemed more awkward.

When "Fred's Formers," a group of his former players, honored him with a new vehicle, Taylor simply said, "I'm speechless."

Current head coach Randy Ayers took the podium early in the festivities to remind the thousand or so in the crowd that the entire celebration was made possible by Taylor's teachings.

"I know this is a night to honor a great team," Ayers said, "but I want to be sure that everyone leaving here tonight is reminded of the accomplishments of coach Fred Taylor."

After telling the crowd of Taylor's eight Big Ten championship teams, seven as a coach and another as a player in 1950, and his four squads that reached the Final Four, Ayers said, "Fred is the coach against whom all of us will be measured and one whose record for student-athlete development will never be touched."

Indeed, even more impressive than his career record of 297-158, Taylor graduated 97 of his 102 lettermen as OSU head coach.

The 1960 group helped get that ball rolling by posting a team grade-point average above 3.0 while winning the program's only national title. And after being model student-athletes, the '60 Bucks went on to enormous success in the business world.

"It's been a very successful group," said former co-captain Dick Furry, a retired corporate president who now is working for a church non-profit organization in Cleveland. "Everybody graduated. There are seven master's degrees, three doctorates and three of the players on the team won the Western Conference scholarship medal for the outstanding senior athlete-scholar at OSU State.

"We used to joke that, with our costs and ties on, we looked like a bunch of bankers and lawyers. The week before the Final Four it was our finals week, so we were all taking finals before we took off for California. Being that it was a pretty studious group, we were probably more worried about our exams than what was going to transpire in California."

The career involvements of the group after basketball are as amazing as the accomplishments on the court. Larry Siegfried, for example, played and coached professionally but left the game to begin his own credited life program for prison inmates. Jim Allen is a doctor of medicine. Bob Knight, the lone no-show, is, of course, the accomplished head coach at Indiana University.

Even manager Mike Sorooshk graduated in chemical engineering and is a chemical plant superintendent in Mobile, Ala.

These men were also role models and their loyalty to Ohio State simply inspires all of us," OSU president Gordon Gee said at the banquet, "I say thank you for giving us not only memories but inspiration, aspiration and hope for our future."

Added athletic director Andy Geiger, "They built a sense of goal-setting and sacrifice and good moral standards, things we all stand for and the integrity that we believe in. All of them have lived that not only as basketball players, but in everything they have done. And all of them have successful and productive and creative careers. To me they are the essence of inter-collegiate athletics."

Jerry Lucas, the focal point of the team as a three-time All-American and Big Ten MVP, still believes Taylor was the source for all the success of the team and its individuals.

"There's no doubt about it, we all learned some things here that helped us in our lives and continued to help us," Lucas said. "Fred was a great coach. He was like a father image to us and taught us a lot of things. He taught us that hard work paid off, that those who dedicate and discipline themselves will find that they will be rewarded for that."

and taught us how to work together, that the group was always more important than the individual."

Lucas turned in a distinguished 11-year career in the NBA and is now accepted as the world's top authority in memory and learning systems. He's written close to 50 books on the subject and has given instruction to most of the Fortune 500 companies in America. Lucas now has his sights set on contributing his unique skill to education.

Fellow All-American John Havlicek, Lucas' roommate at OSU, also went on to a Hall of Fame career and is now a highly successful businessman. He, too, likes to give much of the credit to Taylor.

"In my particular case I would have never been a professional basketball player if it hadn't been for Fred Taylor, because he taught me the rudiments of the game and the things that make you a stronger player," he said. "I know having worked with him I was able to go into the pros not needing that much coaching."

Former OSU power forward Joe Roberts said Taylor taught him "in a complete manner, usually tying life lessons to the fundamentals of the game."

"He instilled working together and being a family, competing for Ohio State and being all for one and one for all," Roberts said. "Plus, he was a good tactical as well as a defensive coach, and he has a slogan that says let the shooters shoot and the rebounders rebound. In other words, you do what you can do best for the team."

Like his starting teammates, Roberts carried Taylor's philosophies over into a successful NBA career, then coached for many more years in the league, retiring in 1985 as an assistant with the Los Angeles Clippers.

Roberts is now the athletic director at Oakland (Calif.) Tech and aspires to become a teacher and administrator at the caliber of Taylor.

"Fred would not tolerate guys not going to class. I think that's all part of discipline," he said. "If you don't go to class and you don't go to practice and you don't do other things, you're not going to help your basketball team, nor will you be a success in life."

"I think everyone has listened to Fred, and he's been a great inspiration for all the fellows."

"I don't remember so much the championships, the winning and the glory," added Siegfried, "but I remember the '50 team who also went on to NBA success. I remember all of the little things Coach Taylor taught us."

Furry said all the players on the team took to and worked for Taylor, who previously was the OSU freshman coach. Taylor was considered for the head coaching job in 1969. Now virtually everyone associated with the program is thankful.

"Fred just stood for excellence in everything," Furry said. "I think he set a standard for coaching and for the type of student-athletes he had. He was the best."

Taylor, in taking center stage at the reunion banquet, thanked his former players for their accomplishments.

"Jack Graf, Frank Triukis and I probably had as much enjoyment coaching as anybody had," Taylor said. "This group, they not have been called the Fab Five, but I guarantee you they could play. I can't put into words what I feel about this group."

Taylor was among the team members who covered the 1960 team also appeared or sent videos for the reunion. Here's a sampling of what they had to say:

"I'll take this 1960 NCAA championship team; you can take the Denver Nuggets or the Chicago Bulls," said Kaye Hessler, who covered the team for the Columbus Citizen-Journal and now resides in Denver.

"One of the things I take away from that 1960 team, in addition to my memories, is the fact that two of my very best lifelong friends came from that group — Fred Taylor and Bobby Knight," said Dick Otto, who covered the team for The Columbus Dispatch and now resides in Florida.

"Nobody ever won the Big Ten with a lot of sophomores, let alone won the national championship with sophomores," said Lee Carver, who penned "The Golden Age of Ohio State Basketball."

"This team won every game in the NCAA Tournament by 17 points or more. Nobody had ever done that before or has done that since."

SPECIAL GIFT FOR TAYLOR — "Fred's former players at OSU pitched in and presented their former coach a gray Jeep Cherokee at the 25th anniversary banquet for the 1960 NCAA championship team on April 7.

Bill Hosket, a member of Taylor's 1968 Big Ten champion and Final Four team, served as the emcee for the reunion banquet. Hosket, today a color commentator on OSU telecasts, brought his own perspective to the proceedings.

"Most of us came here to try and do what you did in 1960," said Hosket. "It never happened. They were the best of the best."

Other luminaries in attendance included former OSU president Novacek Fawcett, who had a hand in the decision to hire Taylor; former OSU athletic director Jim Jones; former team doctor Bob Murphy; former sports information director Mary Homan; Anne Hayes; and Millie Biggs, widow of the team's trainer, Ernie Biggs.

Members of the team presented Geiger with a gigantic check for $50,000. The money, proceeds from the reunion banquet and a silent auction of memorabilia items, is earmarked for the Fred Taylor 1960 Team Basketball Scholarship fund as well as Buckeye Boosters' annual contribution to OSU athletics.

One of the most enjoyable portions of the evening was a four-minute highlight video of the championship game against UCLA played to Frank Sinatra's "Here's to the Winners."

The thing that impressed me tonight was the feeling we all got from watching that 1960 national championship game occur," Lucas said. "That's something I'll never get over. Those were some of the most rewarding times of our lives and they'll never be forgotten."

Indeed, as the final words of that Sinatra classic go, "Here's to the winners all of us can be."

As anyone who attended the 35th anniversary reunion of Ohio State's 1960 national championship basketball team will attest, the banquet was an exciting, entertaining and well-run affair. There were no players or coaches who made up the team, and the banquet was well-documented throughout the evening.

But after having a chance to meet and work with several of the players and coaches in preparation for this event, I can also say that the members of the team are true gentlemen, as well.

It was especially rewarding to work with Dick Furry, so many years later, as one of the lesser-known players from the team, but one of the most tireless workers in making the reunion a success.

It was also exciting to work with the team's head coach, Fred Taylor. His willingness to work with the media to help publicize the event aided in ensuring a sellout in the 1,000-seat Hyatt Regency Ballroom. His anecdotes from his years at OSU were both entertaining and informative and his affection for his players obvious.

My favorite Taylor quip dealt with one of his lesser-used players, one Bobby Knight.

"I always tell Bobby that he coaches defense a lot better than he played it," Taylor said. "To which Bobby replies, 'Well maybe you didn't teach it very well.'"

About the only thing that could have made the banquet even more exciting was the presence of Knight, the only living player who failed to attend. But he was very much a part of the proceedings as he was frequently on the receiving end of barbs from teammates and others who spoke.

In noting that Knight would not be in attendance, master of ceremonies Bill Hosket suggested, "Maybe we could just take his chair and throw it off the podium," in reference to Knight's penchant for throwing something other than basketballs.

The highlight of the evening, to me, was film from the NCAA championship game against Cal.

You get a real feel for where Knight got the basis for his offense at Indiana, watching the Buckeyes run a precision offense with precision passing to the inevitable open man. It was like you would draw it up on a chalkboard, an offense that many of today's one-on-one players would be unequipped to execute.

And I also won't soon forget the vision of Joe Roberts shying for a ball off the boards in that championship game. Roberts had five rebounds in the contest, to go along with 10 for Jerry Lucas and six for John Havlicek. They all might have had more, but there was very little to clean off the offensive glass, as that precision offense helped OSU shoot better than 67 percent.

I quote these game statistics from a copy of the March 20, 1960, San Francisco Chronicle that BSB assistant publisher Karen Wachman was kind enough to buy for me at the evening's silent auction, which raised about $15,000.

Proceeds from the event, sponsored by team members, the OSU athletic department and Buckeye Boosters, will go toward a scholarship in the name of Taylor and the 1960 team and the Boosters' annual contribution to the athletic department.
Cagers start season at ‘Midnight Madness’

By Ryan Jarvis
Lantern sports writer

Madness erupted on campus Saturday night — Midnight Madness that is, as Buckeye roundball enthusiasts gathered to support the Ohio State men’s basketball team as they began practice for the 1995-96 season Sunday at 12:01 a.m.

Yes, it is that time of year again. Die hard bleacher creatures are emerging from their six-month slumber, b-ball junkies are getting a jump on their March tourney kicks and Dick Vitale is polishing up his chrome dome and warming up his vocal chords.

“I’m really excited about this year,” said head coach Randy Ayers as he addressed the crowd. “We have the depth and numbers to get back playing the Ohio State way.”

The evening got underway as former OSU players such as Jay Burson, Tom Brandawe, Jamie Skelton, Antonio Watson, Jerry Francis — who is currently a Buckeye assistant coach and crowd favorite Jim Millard took to the court for the alumni game. Millard scored the first point ever in St. John Arena. The alumni game brought back glimpses of past Buckeye greatness intertwined with a thick coating of rust. Burson still looked like a boy battling off giants with his slick array of passes and Skelton’s trigger was still smoking as the search continued for a shot he didn’t like. The announcer called for oxygen breaks throughout the contest and continually joked with the family-oriented crowd.

After the oxygen masks had been put away and the former players had been wheeled off the court, the crowd had the opportunity to meet the 1995-96 Buckeye edition up close during a team autograph session. Two young Buckeye fans, Nick Harris and Ryan Curry, both 13 and from Delaware, Ohio, waited anxiously in line for nearly 40 minutes hoping to get their basketball signed by each member of the team.

“I especially want Shaun Stonerook’s autograph,” Harris said. Following some gayest contest giveaways, Ayers came out and spoke to the crowd about the upcoming season.

“I’m very happy with the way the veterans came back,” Ayers said. “Rick Yudt has had an excellent pre-season of conditioning and Carlos Davis is about two pounds heavier and stronger. I think you will see great leadership out of those two guys.”

The squad contains eight freshman, the largest number of newcomers since the 1992-93 season. Ayers said the freshman have come in great shape and he expects them to continue to get better. “I think they are going to give us some excellent moments on the court,” Ayers said.

The Buckeyes hope to improve on last year’s 8-22 season and their 2-16 mark in the Big Ten, which matched Ohio State’s worst Big Ten record ever.

Rick Yudt, a 6-foot-7 senior forward, averaged 12.8 points per game last year and is the Buckeyes’ lone returning starter. The squad also returns John Lumpkin, a 6-foot-9 sophomore center; Carlos Davis, a 6-foot-4 sophomore guard; Kevin Martin, a 6-foot-5 sophomore forward; Don Jannello, a 6-foot-2 junior guard and Steve Betler, a 6-foot-8 senior center.

The freshmen include Ohio’s reigning Mr. Basketball Damon Stringer, a 6-foot-9 guard from Cleveland Heights; Neshan Coleman, a 6-foot-3 guard from Toledo; Shaun Stonerook, a 6-foot-7 forward from Westerville North; Scott Gradney, a 6-foot-9 freshman from Louisville, Ky.; Jami Bozley, a 6-foot-1 guard from Massillon; Mark Howard, a 6-foot-10 center from East Canton; Jason Singleton, a 6-foot-6 forward from Detroit, Mich. and Jermaine Tate, a 6-foot-6 guard from Toledo.

Stringer, Coleman and Stonerook could all crack the starting lineup immediately.

“I think it’s such a young team that it’s hard to anticipate what might happen,” said former OSU standout and Buckeye basketball television analyst Bill Hoskett. “I think they’re a bit more athletic than they were last year, but I think anytime you go into a season when you’re relying on so many freshman you can be optimistic or you can be scared to death.

“But I do think they are going to be an exciting team to watch,” Hoskett said.

At midnight the entire arena exploded inside the arena. Each player displayed their finest dunk as they were introduced in front of the appreciative crowd. The lights were then turned on, a 30-minute scrimmage followed and the season was underway.

Yudt said he wants to have St. John Arena rocking this season. “We need you (the fans) to get behind us this year.”
For Immediate Release  

April 4, 1996

Belter, Jantonio and Tate take top awards at men’s basketball banquet

Columbus, Ohio -- Steve Belter, Don Jantonio and Jermaine Tate took the top three awards as the Ohio State basketball team closed its season with its annual awards banquet Thursday evening at St. John Arena.

Belter, a senior from Lakota, Ohio, received the Fred R. Taylor Award for Academic Excellence. A 1996 academic all-Big Ten selection, Belter will graduate this spring with a degree in exercise science. Jantonio, a junior from Mentor, Ohio, was honored for the second time with the John Havlicek Most Inspirational Player Award. Tate, a Toledo native who averaged 11.0 points and 6.9 rebounds per game, was named OSU’s Freshman of the Year.

Two additional top awards were presented to senior captain Rick Yudt and Jason Singleton. Yudt, from Portage, Ind., was honored with the Coaches’ Award for outstanding contributions to the success of the team. Singleton, from Detroit, came on strong at the end of the campaign and was named the team’s Most Improved player.

Statistical awards were presented to: Shaun Stonerook and Tate (top rebounders); Tate (highest field goal percentage); Yudt (highest free throw percentage); Damon Stringer (most steals); and Neshanu Coleman (best assist-to-turnover ratio).

Tate set a freshman record this season by shooting 56.9-percent from the field, while Stringer set a freshman assists mark with 125. Seven of the 12 players from this year’s team were freshmen, and 10 of the 12 return for the 1996-97 season. Head coach Randy Ayers started a lineup featuring at least four freshmen in 25 of the 27 games. The team finished 10-17.

“I don’t mind saying that we should have won more games,” Ayers said. “I do feel good, however, about the way the team grew from start to finish. These guys were exposed to a lot, and they learned a lot.

“I can’t say enough about the seniors. Rick Yudt and Steve Belter did so much for this team. They both came to play every day. But they also showed the younger guys the other side of basketball...the academic side. They, and Don Jantonio, set great academic standards for us.”

-- Go Bucks --
Ayers dismisses Bosley, Gradney

By Justin Sparks
Lantern sports writer

So much for second chances. Ohio State basketball coach Randy Ayers announced Friday that freshmen Jami Bosley and Scott Gradney have been dismissed from the team and will not have their scholarships renewed for next year.

"I believe it is a privilege to play basketball at Ohio State, and when you accept a scholarship to play here, you also accept the responsibility that goes along with that scholarship," Ayers said in a written statement. "We constantly stress to our players the importance of being good role models."

Ayers' decision came after University Police filed charges May 21 against Bosley and Gradney in connection with the May 12 break-ins of three cars in the Arps Hall parking garage.

"The action taken by Jami and Scott clearly go against everything we stand for and simply cannot be tolerated," Ayers said in the statement. "For that reason, they are off the team immediately and will not have their scholarships renewed at the end of the current academic year."

Bosley was charged with one count of attempted theft, a second-degree misdemeanor, for allegedly trying to take a car stereo system. Gradney was charged with two counts of theft, both first-degree misdemeanors for allegedly taking a Club anti-theft device and a wallet.

If found guilty, Gradney could face up to 180 days in jail and pay up to $1,000 for each charge. Bosley could receive up to 90 days in jail and a fine of up to $500.

"My final decision to dismiss them came Thursday night, but it was an ongoing process and I had conversations with a number of people," Ayers said. "I wanted to wait until our police were finished with their investigation before I made a decision."

Athletic Director Andy Geiger said that he fully supports Ayers' decision to dismiss the two from the team.

"Randy is the basketball coach and he made the decision," Geiger said. "He did discuss it with me as well as many other people and I support him."

Ayers said he was surprised, as well as disappointed, when he heard that Bosley and Gradney had been involved in the break-ins.

"It disappointed me because we did a lot of team-building activities throughout the year and the players knew what we expected from them," he said. "When you invest time into someone for the last two and a half years by living with them daily it is tough. But ultimately they chose to do what they did. I feel all parties will be benefited by this decision."

Geiger said this incident will hurt the OSU basketball program's already tarnished image.

"I don't see how this will help our image," he said. "I think we conduct our program as well as we can. The student-athletes are given a clear message on what appropriate behavior is."

As for the future of the OSU basketball team, Ayers said he is looking for someone to become a leader.

"It is now time for someone to step up for us," Ayers said. "We have seven guys returning and four new recruits coming in, so we will have to continue to work hard to improve."

Ayers said the two scholarships held by Bosley and Gradney will most likely be hold over until next season.
OSU BASKETBALL

Buckeyes set for African adventure

By Tim May
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Shaun Stonerook has the eye of the tiger.

Make that lion. Tigers don't live in South Africa.

That's where Stonerook and the other six members of the Ohio State basketball team are headed Friday with a contingent of academic advisors and administrators, including OSU president Gordon Gee. The group will spend five days touring the country, and the team will play at least five games as well as participate in clinics and the like.

Stonerook and his buddies expect to see new things. Stonerook, for one, wants to see lions.

"I want to see them in the wild, eating something, tearing something up," the forward said, laughing. "Something we never get to see."

Don't get the wrong idea. The players know the country is more than a wild kingdom. They were briefed on what to expect by manager Michael Duga, who was part of a logistics tour a month ago.

"He said it's just like it is over here; he said they have cities like Las Vegas and Atlantic City," guard Neshan Coleman said. "So I think we're going to have fun as well as learn a lot of stuff while we're there."

As long as the ball is regulation and the rims are 10 feet high, coach Randy Ayers will be happy. He's already pleased by what he has seen in the 10 practices allowed by the NCAA. Ex-OSU players, including Jim Jackson and Chris Jent, spiced up the competition.

"With Lawrence (Funderburke) in here, and Tony Watson, they've been pushed around a great deal," Ayers said. "The good thing is there has been some good interaction, verbal interaction, between some of the (former) players and some of our current players."

A trip to a far-off land might help the current players put the recent past — the release of Jami Bosley and Scott Gradney from the team after they were accused of breaking into cars — behind them.

"We're going to take it seriously when it's time to play basketball," point guard Damon Stringer said. "But off the court, we'll do everything together ... and get to know each other as a team."

Coleman said, "We're already a close team. ... But going to South Africa we're really going to have to stick together and watch out for one another while we're there."

Ayers recalled taking his team to Europe five years ago. With Jackson having to stay home because of an injury, players such as Jent and Mark Baker blossomed.

"I just want to see us come together," Ayers said. "You do have certain goals for certain players: Stringer, to give us a little more leadership; (Jason) Singleton has probably had the best camp, and you'd like to see him continue to grow and develop on this trip."

"In terms of (Jermaine) Tate ... as he gets more time his development will only get better. And then Stonerook is a guy who needs to shoot the ball more."
Africans send thanks to OSU delegation

By Amy Christensen
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State professors, administrators and basketball players have returned from Africa and with them have come the faces and letters of thanks from African people.

"You don't know how much it meant to us," wrote one person.

Such messages have been coming consistently since the return of OSU's delegation from South Africa, said David Williams, vice president for student affairs and a delegation member.

"We really met and exceeded our expectations on this trip," said OSU President Gordon Gee.

The two-week trip was taken to develop relationships with the universities in South Africa and Uganda, said Malcolm Baroway, executive director of University Communications and a delegation member.

"When we got there, you could see that what we were in fact talking about was being part of a world economy and getting involved in the really important transitions that are taking place in these two countries," Baroway said.

OSU and other universities have a role to play in shaping these changes, Baroway said.

"More than anything else, what really stays with me is the role of higher education, specifically Ohio State's role, in changing parts of the world for the better," he said.

"This was one of the greatest things this university has done," Williams said. "A professor told me that they've had many universities visit South Africa, but Ohio State is the first to come into the townships and that meant a lot to them."

Baroway said the changes these countries are trying to make include lowering the income tax rate, equalizing schools and improving agriculture.

"We saw first hand how a nation could benefit from the agricultural techniques that are learned at Ohio State," Baroway said.

Baroway said some of the most spectacular banana trees, a major staple of South Africa, were planted by people who had been educated through OSU.

Another real eye opener of the trip was the potential social impact of basketball,

"We really met and exceeded our expectations on this trip."

–OSU President
Gordon Gee

Jermaine Tate works with a group of children on their basketball skills at the Soweto basketball clinic June 17.
Basketball team assists in S. Africa

By Marty Lerman
Lantern sports writer

After a two-week trip to South Africa, the Ohio State men's basketball team, accompanied by University President Dr. E. Gordon Gee and a team of 30 administrators, became the first United States college basketball team to visit South Africa.

The basketball team was one part of an educational and administrative developing program that will further develop the academic program between OSU and the University of Natal.

The basketball teams' role in the program was to promote the game of basketball, since it is in its beginning stages in South Africa.

"The kids in South Africa fell in love with the team. After clinics and games it would take us an hour to an hour-and-a-half to get out of there because of the kids wanting autographs," Vice President of Student Affairs David Williams said.

The basketball league in South Africa, known as the Premier Basketball League, is three-years old.

OSU played and won all six games against the South Africa's Premier Basketball League.

While both rugby and cricket are the most popular sports in South Africa, basketball is the fastest growing sport in the country.

Seven OSU players and four coaches conducted youth and coaches' clinics to teach the fundamentals of basketball.

Between 50-200 "campers" participated in the clinics.

"The kids were very receptive. It was enjoyable because they were too receptive," OSU's basketball head coach Randy Ayers said.

"Many of the kids played in hard shoes, dress shoes, and no shoes at all when they participated in drills."

"I was proud of my guys, I thought they hung tough, and some positives came out of the trip," said Ayers about the team.

There were positives from the play of the team; we took care of the ball, and we didn't have as many turnovers as we had during the season, Ayers said.

Jay Crawford, the only TV sportscaster from Columbus' Ch. 10 that traveled with the team, said, "The team played together well, and they're better players now than last year."

Developing team chemistry and bonding was important for this trip.

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Developing team chemistry and bonding was important for this trip.

The most impressive thing about the team was that the team came together, Ayers said.

"Living together for 17 days, you tend to learn things about each other," he said.

While holding camps, they also had a chance to tour the country and hear President Nelson Mandela speak.

"It's a beautiful country, I had a very good time, and I enjoyed being with my players," Ayers said.

OSU basketball player, Jason Singleton, said, "I liked it a lot, we had a nice time and it was a very beautiful country. The whole team had a good time together."

"The interaction between athletics and academics was very good for us. It helps us keep that academic, athletic piece as part of the University," Williams said.

The cost of the trip estimated $5,000 per person, according to Gee. It was paid for by Athletics and the discretionary fund, meaning non-tuition and non-state dollar, he said.
Bosley fined, sentenced for attempted theft

By Jonathan Montes
Lantern staff writer

Former Ohio State Basketball player Jami Bosley pleaded no contest yesterday to attempted theft and was sentenced to 10 days in jail and a $558 fine.

Franklin County Municipal Judge Bruce Jenkins will consider suspending the sentence if Bosley pays the fine and makes some form of restitution before Aug. 2, according to court documents.

Bosley and fellow Buckeyes teammate Scott Gradney were dismissed from the team May 24, three days after being charged with three car break-ins at Arps Hall. Bosley was accused of trying to steal a car stereo system. Gradney was accused of stealing a wallet and an anti-theft device.

Gradney, a 6-foot-9-inch center from Louisville, Ky., pleaded guilty June 7 to two counts of petty theft. He is scheduled to be sentenced July 9 in Franklin County Municipal Court. He could receive up to one year in prison and a $2,000 fine.

Bosley, a 6-foot-1-inch guard from Massillon, is looking to transfer to another school to play basketball, according to a source close to the team. Among the schools Bosley is considering are Tallahassee Community College, University of Akron, Valparaiso University and Kennesaw State.

Bosley was scheduled to be sentenced at 11 a.m. He was sentenced earlier prompting speculation that he or his attorney wanted to avoid media attention. Bosley's attorney, Paul Scott, did not return Lantern phone calls.
DEMPSEY
Benton A. Dempsey, age 92, of Columbus, Monday, December 30, 1996 at Park Medical Center. Retired Founder of the Ben Dempsey Insurance Agency and the O.H.I.O., a 1928 Graduate of The Ohio State University, School of Business and a member of the first Big Ten Championship Basketball and Baseball teams and was still actively in charge of the "Sideline Controllers" for OSU Football Games. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Louise (Hubbell) Dempsey, granddaughter, Susie Sachs and grandson, Todd Dempsey. Survived by his daughters and son-in-law, Mignon and Dick Dannah, son and daughter-in-law, Ben "Skeeter" and Carolyn Dempsey; grandchildren, David (Jamie) Sachs, Leigh Sachs (Tom) Beal, Scott (Molly) Dempsey, Laura (Michael) Bray and Debbi Lloyd; 9 great grandchildren; 1 great great grandson; and special friend, Vivian Saul, Member of the Mortar Board Society, Sphinx Honorary Fraternity, Alpha Chi Rho Fraternity, a Charter member, and Past President Bexley Lions Club and was an International Counselor, Charity Newsale, Capital City Lodge #56 F & AM, Scioto Consistory of the A.A.S.R., Valley of Columbus, Aladdin Temple Shrine, Elks Lodge #37, Order of the Moose, past President of the Agonis Club and a member of the Agonis Bowling League, Columbus Masonic Home Club and the Lancaster Country Club. Funeral service 11:30 a.m. Friday, January 3, 1997 at the RUTHERFORD-CORBIN CHAPEL, 515 High St., Worthington. Rev. James Wessel officiating. Interment follows at Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens. Friends may call at the funeral home on Thursday from 2:30-8:30 p.m. Capital City Masonic Lodge Service will be held 8:00 p.m. Thursday. Family requests in lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to The Ohio State University Scholarship Fund, 2400 Olentangy River Rd., 115A Fawcett Center, Columbus, OH 43210 or the Bexley Lions Jula C. Smith Fund, c/o Fer(g) Theibert, 62 S. Ardmore Rd., Bexley, OH 43209.
Judge slaps Gradney with $100 fine, suspends jail time

Former OSU basketball player ordered to get counseling

By Jonathan Montes
Lantern staff writer

Former Ohio State basketball player Scott Gradney received a suspended jail sentence and a $100 fine for his part in three car break-ins at Arps Hall.

He was sentenced July 9 by Judge Janet Jackson of Franklin County Municipal Court on two counts of misdemeanor theft charges.

Jackson ordered Gradney to attend an alcohol counseling program as well as make five presentations to children involved in DARE, an anti-drug educational program. He was also told to pay restitution charges of $350 to the owners of the two cars he smashed while attempting to steal a wallet and anti-theft device.

Gradney, a 6-9 center from Louisville, Ky., pleaded guilty to both counts on June 7.

He and teammate Jami Booley were stripped of their scholarships and were kicked off the team May 24 after being charged in the break-ins.

Gradney is transferring to a community college in Texas to continue his basketball career, said his attorney, Terry K. Sherman.

Scott Gradney

Gradney will complete his drug counseling and make his DARE presentations in Kentucky, Sherman said.

Booley, a 6-1 guard from Maitland, was convicted on one count of attempted theft on June 26 and was sentenced to 10 days in jail and a $500 fine. Municipal Court Judge Bruce Jenkins said he would consider suspending the jail sentence if Booley pays a $558 fine and makes some form of restitution before Aug. 2.

Among the schools Booley might transfer to are the University of Akron, Valparaiso University and Kent State University, according to a source close to the team.

Booley was previously considering Tallahassee Community College. That is not an option anymore.

"We decided to give our last scholarship to a freshman from Chicago," said Tallahassee coach Mike Gillespie. "We had a lot of interest in Jami. But, we felt it would serve us better to take a chance on a player that would be here for two years. This is not a personal decision. We really liked Jami as a person."
For Immediate Release  

THREE PLAYERS OFF OHIO STATE BASKETBALL TEAM

Columbus, Ohio – First-year Ohio State University men’s basketball coach Jim O’Brien today confirmed that three individuals - Shaun Stonerook, Jermaine Tate and Trent Jackson - will no longer be members of the basketball team.

“While I continue to evaluate the direction of our program, I feel that Shaun, Jermaine and Trent have failed to live up to their obligations as student-athletes at The Ohio State University,” O’Brien said. “Thus, I have concluded that it is in their best interest and the best interest of the Ohio State basketball program that they continue their education elsewhere.”

Stonerook, a 6-7 forward from Westerville, Ohio, was the Buckeyes’ leading rebounder as a sophomore last season and he ranked sixth in the Big Ten Conference with an average of 7.7 rebounds per game. He also ranked third on the team in scoring (11.6 points per game) and he was second in both assists (3.7) and steals (1.6). A veteran of 52 starts, he was recently declared academically ineligible for the fall quarter.

Tate, a 6-9 junior center from Toledo, Ohio, sat out the final 11 games of the 1996-97 season after being diagnosed with a heart condition known as cardiomyopathy. He had started 41 times in his first two seasons and had career averages of 12.1 points and 6.7 rebounds per game.

Jackson, a 6-4 sophomore guard from Rochester, N.Y., played in 14 games last year as a true freshman.

-30-
If you've been hearing a bugle on the Ohio State campus lately, it's probably being footed for the men's basketball team.

Since Jim O'Brien and company replaced Randy Ayers and staff in early April, a new brand of leadership has been in place, one that challenges the Buckeyes to be all they can be.

Associate head coach Rick Boyages said the team has been required to report for weightlifting and strength training exercises at 7 a.m. four days a week. So far the Buckeyes have been, well, troopers.

"Our philosophy is get out of bed, it's a good way to start a productive day, to lift, go home, shower, and be wide awake for class, which is always a good thing," Boyages said.

"So far they've been pretty receptive to it and they've been open to the changes we've put on the table. There have been no dissenting voices."

One reason for all the compliance is that the alternatives aren't real good. Players who miss a workout session or class with no viable excuse get to come in even earlier and run laps.

"I think they've got the message," Boyages said. "We're especially cracking the whip on attending classes because going to class is the most important thing. Some guys are more academically gifted than others, but there's no excuse for a lack of effort."

Despite the boot camp approach, player mumbling has been minimal.

"I guess you could say they're laying down the law, but any change is fine with me," point guard Damon Stringer said. "Those guys are always around when we do something and I think it's good they show that much interest. They've been successful before and I know everybody here wants to win."

Boyages knows the disciplinarian approach doesn't always work, but the staff is pleased with the results so far.

"I think these guys want to get something going here," he said.
OSU basketball players suspended

By Michele Egan
Lantern staff writer

Two Ohio State basketball players have been suspended from the team while University Police investigate a possible connection between the two and weekend car break-ins.

Jami Bosley, a 6-foot-1-inch guard from Massillon, Ohio, and Scott Gradney, a 6-foot-9-inch forward from Louisville, Ky., were indefinitely suspended, according to a statement released by the OSU sports information office.

News reports linked Bosley and Gradney to car break-ins at the Arpa Hall parking garage early Sunday morning.

According to a University Police report, Student Safety Service members Patrick Shaffer and Mitchell J. Kaspy were patrolling on bikes along High Street when they heard the sound of breaking glass in the parking garage at 1:40 a.m.

Kaspy and Shaffer said they saw a red Pontiac Firebird parked next to a Pontiac Sunbird around 3 a.m. The Firebird's engine was running and its lights were off. A man was standing at the rear of the Sunbird going through the trunk.

The patrol officers also said the driver's side window of the car was broken.

According to the report, the man slammed the trunk of the Sunbird when he saw the patrol officers. He then got into the Firebird carrying a small brown bag and a red object. The Firebird, driven by another man, sped away.

The Firebird was stopped after a chase by police in a parking lot off Lane Avenue. A television station reported yesterday that University Police Chief Ron Micheal, impounded the car after he found out it was registered to Bosley's brother.

Micheal declined to identify the suspect. He said no charges have been filed and he hopes to finish his investigation by Monday.

Steve Snapp, director of Sports Information, confirmed yesterday that Bosley and Gradney have been suspended from the men's basketball team indefinitely, pending the outcome of investigations by University Police. No further comment will be made on this incident until the investigation is completed, Snapp said.

Neither OSU basketball coach Randy Ayers nor Athletic Director Andy Geiger commented on the incident yesterday. Neither player was available for comment.

Since December 1993, four OSU basketball players have been involved in police incidents. Three players were arrested and three were suspended from the team. This is the first time Bosley and Gradney have been reported in trouble.

This season, Bosley started in 18 games and played in all 27. He averaged 5.6 points and 2.3 rebounds each game. Gradney played 29 games off the bench and contributed an average of 1.6 points and 0.8 rebounds per game.

Basketball blotters

By Anna Glenn
Lantern staff writer

This week's suspensions of Ohio State basketball freshmen Jami Bosley and Scott Gradney are the latest in a string of run-ins with the law involving OSU basketball players.

Since December 1993, four OSU basketball players have been involved in incidents. Three — Greg Simpson, Gerald Eaker and Charles Macon — were kicked off the team as a result of their legal troubles.

Simpson, Ohio's 1992 Mr. Basketball and Big Ten Freshman of the Year in 1993, had eight encounters with the law in nine months.

The first incident happened Dec. 30, 1993 when Simpson, a starting point guard, was convicted of speeding. On Jan. 7, 1994, he was convicted of reckless operation of a motor vehicle. He was charged with a misdemeanor count of grand theft. But charges were later dropped.

On March 17, in his hometown of Lima, Ohio, Simpson was arrested and fined $200 for charges of drunken driving, driving at night without lights and underage possession of alcohol.

Simpson was placed on indefinite suspension June 20 and was kicked off the team Sept. 24 after allegedly assaulting a woman at the Ohio Union.

Macon, a former Mr. Basketball of Indiana and OSU forward, was suspended after he was arrested on charges of speeding, failing to pay for gasoline, and possession of marijuana. He pleaded no contest and was ordered to pay a $200 fine and $115 in court costs.

Eaker, a center, was kicked off the team for allegedly using a gun to shoot the tires of a car belonging to teammate and roommate Anthony Watson. Although he was not suspended or kicked off the team, Eaker and football tight end Rickey Dudley also had a run-in with the law. He was arrested on charges of drunken driving, driving with expired tags and driving with a revoked license. Dudley pleaded no contest June 15, 1994 to charges of drunken driving. He was fined $300 plus court costs and entered an alcohol-treatment program in lieu of jail.
Cops have break-in confession on tape

By Lantern staff writers

Two suspects in the break-ins of three cars Monday morning in a campus parking garage confessed their actions to police in taped conversations, according to previously unreleased police reports.

According to the report:

"At the police department both subjects issued taped admissions to me (Michaels) after Miranda Warning Rights were issued. Both subjects had deep cuts to their hands requiring stitches. It was decided to release them for treatment," the report said.

According to Grant, Riverside and University hospitals the two were not treated.

Police have refused to release the names of the two suspects listed on the report. The names were blacked out. They also have refused to link the suspensions of freshmen players Jami Bosley and Scott Gradney, both 19, to involvement in the break-ins.

However, according to a report last night on WCMH-Channel 4 News, Bosley and Gradney confessed to the break-ins.

When asked to confirm the report, University Police Chief Ron Michaels denied that the confessions had been made. Michaels did not return a phone call from the Lantern, but said through Lt. Richard Mormon that he could not confirm the confessions. Mormon said the only information Michaels would confirm was the original police report released Tuesday.

Morman also said the information should not have been public because the break-ins are still under investigation. However, when pressed, the reports were released with names blacked out.

In the original report, police said that two suspects were caught breaking into cars about 3 a.m. Monday in the parking garage next to Arpe Hall. Subsequently, Bosley and Gradney were suspended indefinitely on Tuesday. Gradney's roommate said Gradney could not comment and Bosley was out for the evening.
Info on break-ins not easy to obtain

By Chad Snow
Lantern staff writer

Obtaining information that's supposed to be public from University Police isn't always easy.

Ask Rich Skidmore, an investigative reporter for WCMH-TV (Channel 4). Skidmore spent last week gathering information on who broke into three cars in the Arps Hall parking garage at 3 a.m. on May 12.

A one-page police report was issued to the public on Tuesday.

Skidmore, however, said he felt basic information was missing from the report and pressed University Police.

"The victims' cars should have all been included in the first page," he said.

Skidmore said he was forced to use the Freedom of Information Act to obtain the reports he wanted. After lawyers had been consulted, University Police came up with seven more pages.

The extended report revealed that the suspects captured that morning confessed to the break-ins. The report also stated the two had cuts on their hands requiring stitches.

After OSU Medical Center confirmed that OSU basketball players Jami Besley and Scott Gardiner had been treated and released for lacerations on their hands, Skidmore reported that the two had confessed to the break-ins.

Skidmore's report aired at 11 p.m. Lantern staff members immediately called Michalec and asked him what information had been released. Michalec told the Lantern they received the same information Channel 4 had.

"The information Channel 4 reported was not the information Michalec had released to us," said Lantern Editor Cinnamon Cooper.

Skidmore, however, acknowledged he had received the extended police report hours before the program aired. Michalec later said university lawyer Steve McDonald was responsible for releasing the police report to Channel 4.

After the Freedom of Information request, McDonald had been asked to determine what information the police had to release.

Michalec also denied commenting on whether or not confessions had been made, although Thursday a University Police spokesman said no confessions had been made.

"I neither denied or affirmed it," Michalec said. "Whoever said that is a bald-face liar."
OSU athletes, suspects treated for deep cuts

By Chad Snow
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State basketball players Jami Bosley and Scott Gradney received treatment at OSU Medical Center early on the morning of May 12, a spokeswoman for the center said Friday.

University Police reported on Thursday night that two suspects caught after three cars were broken into in the early-morning hours of May 12 "had deep cuts to their hands requiring stitches. It was decided to release them for treatment."

Martha McCray, a spokeswoman for the medical center, confirmed that Bosley and Gradney were treated and released from the center for cuts on their hands.

Media reports have linked a series of car break-ins to Bosley and Gradney, both freshmen.

The two were suspended indefinitely from the team last week pending the outcome of an investigation by University Police Chief Ron Michalec. Results of the investigation are expected today.

A Columbus television station, WCMH-TV (Channel 4), reported late last week that Bosley and Gradney had confessed to the break-ins, but university lawyer Steve McDonald denied that information could have been obtained from the police report.

"They are drawing assumptions about things," McDonald said. "They may or may not be right."

The OSU police report stated the suspects had confessed breaking into cars. The suspects' names were blacked out on the report.

Two suspects were caught after they sped away in a Pontiac Firebird from the Arps Hall parking garage. One of the two had been seen going through a trunk of a car by Student Safety Service members at about 3 a.m.

The suspects were later caught near the courtyard of the North Campus residence halls, and the car was discovered to be registered to Bosley's brother.

This is the latest in a string of incidents involving the OSU basketball team since Randy Ayers became head coach. Nonetheless, Athletic Director Andy Geiger said the latest suspensions will not affect Ayers' status as coach. "Not in the short run," Geiger said. "Don't blame him (Ayers) for the individual actions of the two members of the basketball team anymore than you can blame the parents responsible for the kids throwing rocks at the firemen on Friday."
Goodwill mission takes OSU men’s basketball to S. Africa

By Mark J. Sarver
Lantern sports writer

In June, the Ohio State men’s basketball team and President E. Gordon Gee will research educational partnerships and exchange ideas with developing universities in three countries; South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Uganda.

They will depart Friday, June 7 from New York’s JFK Airport and arrive in Cape Town, South Africa Saturday, June 8 after a 14-hour flight.

Coach Randy Ayers and his team will visit South Africa and Zimbabwe, while President Gee’s contingent will visit South Africa and Uganda. The two groups will visit a total of five South African cities including its four largest: Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Pretoria.

“They (the other countries) are extremely interested in athletics, as well, and want to learn more about basketball, in particular,” Ayers said. “We see this as an opportunity for our basketball team to gain a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and at the same time provide a valuable service to the people of South Africa by putting on clinics and playing games against various club and professional teams.”

Some of the clinics will be specialized for coaches and advanced players, but most will be for children, Ayers said. The team, which will include five players who will be sophomores next season, two juniors and one senior, will be allowed 10 practice days beginning May 23 in preparation for the trip, he said.

Ayers said that while the team will gain from the additional practices and game situations, they will gain much more educationally.

“South Africa is such an unknown place that the cultural experiences learned from a trip like this are going to be immeasurable,” he said.

Vice President David Williams explained that Ohio State first looked at the possibilities of setting up relationships with South African universities in the Spring of 1994, right after the South African elections.

“We sent a delegation that summer to South Africa and we found that one of the schools, the University of Natal, was crying out for help in agriculture,” Williams said. “Because one of our strengths is agriculture, we decided to see if we could further some relationships with the University of Natal, which also has a number of Ohio State University graduates.”

The University of Natal has had a number of people going back and forth, and Williams said that is why OSU is starting to explore, implement and exchange educational ideas. He said that is why Gee will be joining them.

“There are many fields and disciplines that Ohio State University clearly has a lot to give to an emerging country,” Williams said. “But we also feel that there is so much for us to learn.”
OSU basketball players charged

By Chad Snow
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State basketball players Scott Gradney and Jami Bosley were charged Monday in connection with the May 12 car break-ins at the Arps Hall parking garage.

Gradney was charged with two counts of misdemeanor theft. One charge was for allegedly taking The Club anti-theft device, valued at $45, from a 1993 Pontiac Sunbird. The other charge was for allegedly taking a brown leather wallet from a 1989 Honda Accord.

Bosley was charged with one count of attempted theft, also a misdemeanor, for allegedly trying to take a car stereo system from a 1992 Toyota Paseo.

If found guilty, Gradney could spend up to 180 days in jail and pay a fine of up to $1,000 for each charge. Bosley could receive up to a 90-day jail sentence and a $500 fine, if found guilty.

They are scheduled to appear May 30 in Franklin County Municipal Court.

Bosley and Gradney have been unavailable for comment since reports linked them to the break-ins.

OSU police apprehended Bosley and Gradney after Student Service Safety members Mitchell J. Kasey and Patrick Shaffer observed two men breaking into cars in the Arps Hall parking garage.

The two were indefinitely suspended from the OSU basketball team shortly after the break-ins.

Athletic Director Andy Geiger said OSU has not decided whether to further punish Gradney and Bosley.

"We haven't met to talk about that," he said. "We will have something to say after we talk to the young men and their parents."

The suspensions will last at least through the Buckeyes' June 7 trip to Africa.

"They will not be going to South Africa," Geiger said.

Bosley, a freshman from Massillon, Ohio, started 18 games and played in all 27 games for the Buckeyes last season. He averaged 5.6 points and 2.3 rebounds per game. Gradney, a senior from Louisville, Ky., played in 20 games and scored 1.6 points per game.

They are the fourth and fifth OSU players to be suspended for legal reasons in the past two and a half years.
OSU cagers may be axed from team

By Chad Kuney
Lantern staff writer

Following the latest incident of Ohio State men's basketball players getting into trouble with the law, the popular Buckeye sport may lose two more players.

Head basketball coach Randy Ayers said he would announce, either this week or next, whether the indefinite suspensions of two freshman players from the team will be made permanent.

Ayers was quoted yesterday saying incidents such as the one involving freshmen Scott Gradney and Jami Bosley, charged in connection with a series of automobile break-ins in the Arps Hall parking garage, reflect on his program.

"You know it bothers me, this is not what I stand for," he told the Associated Press.

Bosley was charged with attempted misdemeanor theft. Gradney was charged with two counts of theft, also a misdemeanor.

The two are scheduled to appear in Franklin County Municipal Court May 30, OSU Police Chief Ron Michales said.

Ayers said he is concerned about his program and about all his players.

Bosley and Gradney have withheld comment. Bosley's roommate said Bosley would have a statement, "maybe in a few days."

This is not the first time Ayers and the basketball team have faced this type of decision.

Three players from the 1992 recruiting class — Charles Macon, Gerald Etker, and Greg Simpson — were kicked off the team after various brushes with the law.

Simpson, who transferred to West Virginia University to play basketball, wound up being kicked off that team also.

OSU athletic director Andy Geiger told reporters he didn't think the Buckeye basketball program is out of control, and that Ayers has been unlucky.

Geiger said blaming Ayers for the actions of his players would be a silly thing to do.

He also said he didn't think there was any problem with discipline in Ayers' program.

"He doesn't strike terror into their hearts as a way of managing them or controlling them," Geiger said. "And I think any coach is vulnerable to an incident or incidents like this."

Geiger said it is not realistic for Ayers to be responsible for his players every waking and sleeping minute of their lives.

Ayers has a contract that guarantees his position as head coach for three more basketball seasons, through the 1998-99 season.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.
Geiger hires O'Brien away from BC

By Dave Dewees and Jamie Babb
Lantern sports writers

College basketball's Big East Coach of the Year has become Ohio State's next hope to win the Big Ten.

Jim O'Brien, who shared Big East Coach of the Year honors, officially took over the reins Wednesday as the 12th men's basketball coach in Buckeyes' history.

"I've long respected Jim O'Brien for his work and how he's done it," OSU Athletic Director Andy Geiger said. "I'm delighted he has accepted our offer."

O'Brien, who was voted the Big East Co-Coach of the Year, has compiled a 168-156 record in 11 seasons as head coach at Boston College.

Boston College offered O'Brien a contract extension, but he declined it to take the Ohio State job. He felt that admission standards at Boston College were too tough for his teams to be competitive.

"The thing that's impressive to me is that when he's able to have competitive players, he went very far," Geiger said.

O'Brien will arrive in Columbus today to meet with the players and the media.

"I think we want to get a meeting as soon as possible," said two-year starting guard Damon Stringer. "As soon as we bridge a relationship, the faster we can rise as a team."

Ohio State has already signed three recruits for next year, but according to Geiger, O'Brien will start recruiting today.

O'Brien's five-year contract has a base salary of $150,000. According to the Boston Herald — with outside endorsements and radio and TV contracts — the total package could be worth around $650,000 a year.

"I have long respected Jim O'Brien for his work and how he's done it," Geiger said. "I think a coach should be a good manager."

Geiger stressed that O'Brien "is a total manager."

"He's a first class person on and off the court," said Alan Segel, who covered Boston College basketball games for 12 years with WBZ in Boston. "He'll bring OSU to where they want to be."

The average Ohio State fan may not have known about O'Brien, but, "within basketball circles he is a big name, a respected name," Geiger said.

O'Brien's hiring ends a three-week long search.

Geiger talked seriously with four other candidates about the job and offered it to two of them before Wednesday's hiring.

O'Brien replaces Randy Ayers, the national coach of the year in 1991, who was 124-108 in his eight years as coach of the Buckeyes.

O'Brien led Boston College to the NCAA Tournament three of the last four years — all years in which the Buckeyes finished with a losing record — including this past season, when the Eagles finished 22-9.

"He's a great guy that everyone's going to love," Segel said.
St. John, Boston Garden both Siegfried favorites

When Larry Siegfried talks about St. John Arena, his thoughts drift to Boston Garden, another basketball shrine where he teamed with fellow Ohio State graduate John Havlicek as a member of the Boston Celtics.

"I'm not saying they should or shouldn't," Siegfried said, referring to the Buckeyes' move to Schottenstein Center for the 1998-99 season. "But if you played in Boston Garden, that was electricity. It's the same thing with St. John Arena. Even though Boston Garden is gone, you can't really replace it. I understand, but I'd take the old Garden.

On the other hand, what Siegfried accomplished at OSU — and what he took with him — was a resolvable asset.

When Siegfried, recruited out of Shelby High School, averaged a team-high 10.6 points as a sophomore in 1963-64, the Buckeyes struggled to an 11-11 record. That was the third year for St. John Arena and Fred Taylor's first as head coach.

One season later, it didn't seem to matter whom the Buckeyes played, or where.

BUCKEYES WERE SMART, TOO

Siegfried said one key statistic was the cumulative grade-point average of the squad in 1961 — 3.0 out of 4.0.

"That translated into an academic approach, along with the talent," Siegfried said. "You could put our amount of error, in terms of exceeding the game plan, at least 10 percent. If you're playing a team that is not on that page, you're going to beat them.

"We never called plays. The play was signaled by where the first pass went. Whenever a team pressured us, we had 'automatons' that we ran. We had the ability to learn something, retain it and apply it.

OSU reeled off streaks of 56 straight wins in St. John Arena and 27 straight Big Ten wins, and won the NCAA championship.

In Siegfried's senior year, 1961, the Buckeyes carried a 27-0 record into the NCAA final, losing to Cincinnati in overtime. They were 25-2 in 1960, again bowing to UC in the title game.

"I didn't go to Ohio State for St. John Arena. I went because of the people I met there," Siegfried said.

"I'm grateful for that opportunity, not just because we won, but because of the beauty of the whole situation. When I look back, I was so fortunate to be part of those kids and those coaches." Siegfried took 60 fewer shots than he had as a sophomore, averaging 13.2 points to Lucas's 20.3, during OSU's 1959-60 season. But his field-goal percentage climbed from 39.9 to 44.6, then went to 48.1 (with a 15.2 average) his senior season.

"We'd get teams down by each huge margin, no one got that many shots," Siegfried said. "There was a lot of firepower, a lot of strong-willed, strong people, and it was to the coaches' credit that they carried the thing.

Taylor was assisted by Jack Graf and Frank Truitt. Bob Barchfeld, who had played with Taylor on OSU's 1960 Big Ten champions, came aboard in 1965.

What Siegfried called "the thing" included some of the best teamwork ever witnessed at the college level.

OSU's cast of starters changed slightly each year around Lucas, Newell and Havlicek. Senior forward Rehie Hoyt succeeded outgoing co-captain Joe Roberts in 1961. Dick Rosebuck moved in for Siegfried in 1962 when Doug McDonald replaced Hoyt.

"We had key ingredients in that 1960 club (of 2595)," Siegfried said. "We couldn't have won the title without Joe Roberts, Dick Furry, Howie Nourse or Dave Bark er. There was a happy blend of sophomores, juniors and seniors."
OSU MEN'S BASKETBALL

Penn made his points with OSU teammates, not on floor

Point guard led players-only practice meeting

By Bob Baptist
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Scoone Penn did not score in double figures on Tuesday for only the fourth time this season. Nevertheless, he was one of three players singled out by Ohio State men's basketball coach Jim O'Brien after the Buckeyes overwhelmed Purdue.

While scoring just six points, the junior point guard had six assists and did not commit a turnover in 28 minutes. He also had an improbable three blocked shots — his first of the season — as he contributed to a defensive effort that had the No. 16-ranked Boilermakers in a double-digit sinkhole after just 10 minutes.

"Penn was in control of the entire game," O'Brien said after the 72-43 victory in the Schottenstein Center. Actually, he took control of it two days before tipoff.

Penn, one of the team's three captains (seniors Jason Singleton and Neshaun Coleman are the others), convened an impromptu players meeting on Sunday afternoon — one day after an unsightly loss at Michigan and mere moments after O'Brien had bruised some egos at practice.

"I felt we needed to do it," Penn said. "We had lost two games in a row and I saw guys' heads hanging. I've been in situations like this before where there's guys right on the edge and you don't want their confidence to break because you need them.

"We all went downstairs and just sat in the locker room and we spoke about what we want to do, how important this is to us, and everyone stepped up and said things we liked and said things we didn't like. When we have communication like that amongst the team, I think it's great. It brought us closer together the last couple of days and we were able to come out here and perform."

Ohio State (14-5, 4-2) was ranked in the Associated Press top 25 last week for the first time in six years before losses to Iowa and Michigan made the moment fleeting. The 84-74 setback at Michigan was unsettling, with the unranked Wolverines leading by 23 points down the stretch.

After a sensational performance against Iowa, Penn did what he could to rally his troops against Michigan, hitting two three-point shots and a free throw to help the Buckeyes trim their deficit from 17 to nine with 9:41 left. But they got no closer.

Sunday, he prodded them in a different manner, after a practice session O'Brien called "not pleasant because...I said some harsh things to a couple of guys."

The next thing O'Brien knew, Penn was calling his teammates off the floor.

"Guys wanted to do some extra shooting and he made sure everybody went downstairs," O'Brien said. "It was obvious they were going to do something. I didn't even want to ask them what it was about, because if they wanted me to know, they would have invited me. The coaches were left out of it."

Because Penn led it, though, O'Brien was not concerned by the exodus. This is their fourth season together, the first two having been at Boston College.

"I was just happy he was organizing it because I knew something good would come of it," O'Brien said. "I have a lot of trust in what he's doing with our team.

"I still don't even know what was said, but maybe we should have another meeting tomorrow."

Penn has injected a "refuse-to-lose" competitiveness in a program that had lacked it since Jim Jackson, Jamaal Brown and Chris Jent left seven years ago.

"He's changed a lot of things for us," O'Brien said.

Such as the record, which gradually is moving toward making Ohio State worthy of postseason play.

Penn boldly predicted before preseason practice began that the NCAA Tournament was a realistic goal for a team that finished 8-22 last season.

Three months later, he is still raising eyebrows. The target he has in his sights now, though, is No. 17 Minnesota on Saturday. It will be the Buckeyes' last home game until Feb. 9, and one of only four they have remaining in the Schottenstein Center, where they are 10-1 this season. They play their next three games, and six of their final nine, on the road.

"We've got to put (Purdue) behind us, get back in the gym and prepare for Minnesota because every game in this league is going to be very tough," Penn said. "Yes, it's great to win a game like this, but before you know it, you have another tough game in a couple of days."
Boston Buckeyes

Thanks to a new coach and point guard from BC, Ohio State is enjoying a dramatic revival

By Grant Wahl

Before James (Seconie) Penn could help put Ohio State back on the basketball map, he had to learn how to find it on a map. "Ohio? Where's Ohio?" he asked Jim O'Brien, his coach at Boston College, when O'Brien announced two years ago that he was leaving for Columbus. "The perception in the Northeast is that there's only one spotlight out here," says O'Brien.

Most folks had forgotten that basketball was played there too. But as of Sunday, less than a year after O'Brien's first Ohio State team went 8-22 and finished last in the Big Ten with a 1-15 conference record, the Buckeyes were 19-6 and ranked No. 11. They were also in second place in the conference with a 9-3 mark after last Saturday's 73-69 win at then No. 19 Iowa. As a result O'Brien has become, along with Auburn's Cliff Ellis, one of the two leading contenders for national coach of the year honors.

The other reason for the Buckeyes' revival is Penn, a 5'10'', 185-pound junior point guard who was averaging 16.3 points and 4.4 assists a game through Sunday. Penn led BC to the second round of the NCAA tournament in his freshman and sophomore years but then headed to Ohio State after O'Brien split BC, but over what he felt were admissions policies that unfairly thwarted his recruiting. While sitting out last year, Penn fought through a "state of depression," as he puts it, by treating practices as if they were games. Says O'Brien, "Most of the time Seconie would play on a team with three walk-ons and another player and beat our first team."

Now that he's on the first team, Penn is one half of one of the nation's top backcourts, along with Michael Redd, a 6'6'' sophomore whose 19.4-point scoring average leads the Buckeyes. "Last year I needed to have the ball more to be just as productive," says Redd. "Now that Seconie's around, I've become a lot more patient."

With Penn and his pals heading to the NCAA tournament
(Ohio State's first trip in seven seasons), it's as if Columbus has discovered a new world. Just months after only 600 students bought season passes, scalpers are charging as much as $100 for a ticket at the Buckeyes' new $105 million, 19,500-seat Schottenstein Center, commonly known as the Schott, which is as warm and classy as the state's other famed Schott isn't.

Only a year ago, all O'Brien needed was a slobbering Saint Bernard by his side and he would have been just as unpopular as Marge. When his hiring was announced, "the fans' first reaction was 'Jim who?'" says O'Brien. "All they knew was that they didn't get Tubby Smith or Rick Barnes or Bob Huggins." Nor did it help when O'Brien, who at first considered himself an outsider at Ohio State, dismissed three players (two of them Ohio-bred) from the team for bad conduct before he had even coached a game. "That was the toughest part of the year, not losing all the games," he says.

As for his bitterness at BC, which is his alma mater as well as his former employer, O'Brien says that's behind him. (A lawsuit he filed against the school alleging breach of contract and slander was settled out of court last year, but not before O'Brien made enemies in Massachusetts by claiming BC's admissions office operated "with an apparent bias against African-Americans"). "For me it's not about Boston College anymore," he says. "It's all about Ohio State. I'm happy here."

So is Penn, who in two years has developed an uncanny mastery of Ohio geography. Asking him for directions to any Columbus destination is, in fact, like asking him to take your team to the NCAA tournament: He'll get you there.

Reed has teamed with Penn to form the fiery backcourt that has led the Buckeyes' breakout.
Ken Johnson, right, of Ohio State looks to stuff a shot by Auburn's Daymeon Fishback during the first half of OSU's victory.

Buckeyes join the Elite

By Ken Gordon
Dispatch Sports Reporter

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — With
arm-pumping, chest-bumping en-
thusiasm, the Ohio State basket-
ball team celebrated last night.

Buckeyes guard Brian Brown
had just blocked an Auburn shot
and spotted teammate Jason Sin-
gleton alone downtown.

Singleton took a pass and
slammed the ball home with a
minute remaining, putting a
punctuation mark on a 72-64 vic-
tory in an NCAA South Regional
semifinal game in Thompson-Bol-
ing Arena.

The many Buckeyes fans in
attendance rose as one and yelled
approval.

When the final buzzer sounded,
OSU point guard Scoonie
Penn heaved the basketball near-
ly to the rafters and the band
played in celebration.

The crowd saluted him with
chants of "Scoonie! Scoonie!"

And with that, the wild eleva-
tor ride that has been this season
climbed one floor closer in the
pace area.

(6-0) will face St.
John's (29-8) on Saturday in
Knoxville at 6 p.m. in the Elite
Eight. St.
John's defeated Mary-
land 75-62 in last night's other
semifinal game.

Auburn was the regional's top-
seeded team. Ohio State is seed-
ed fourth.

Penn led the Buckeyes with 26
points despite foul trouble.

This marks the furthest a
Buckeyes team has gone in
NCAA play since a Jim Dickey-
seeded team made it to the Elite
Eight before losing to Michigan
in 1982.

Saturday's winner will travel
to St. Petersburg, Fla., for next
weekend's Final Four.
OSU fans bask in surprise run to Final Four

From staff and wire reports

Ohio State University fans held an impromptu reception for the basketball Buckeyes early this morning as several hundred supporters greeted the team at the Schottenstein Center about 12:40 a.m.

As the bus arrived from Port Columbus, fans shouted, "Final Four" and "Let's go, Bucks."

Among the crowd was the Worthington family of Tim Lor; his wife, Brenda; and their daughters Brittany, 15; Jackie, 12; and Carly, 9.

When they heard that the team would be going to the arena, they decided to go "to savor the moments," Mr. Lor said.

"They've brought a lot of pride back to this program, and we want to show them how much we appreciate it," his wife said.

The feeling was mutual.

"This season wouldn't have been possible without all of you guys supporting us," Scoonie Penn told the fans. "I'd love to see all of you in Florida" when OSU plays Connecticut on Saturday in St. Petersburg.

The fans were positioned behind a fence when the team bus arrived just west of the arena at Lane Avenue and Olentangy River Road. Coach Jim O'Brien, Penn and other players spoke through a megaphone to the crowd.

But as fans waved pennants and held up cameras to try to get photos, several members of the team ran up the hill to shake hands and "high-five" their supporters.

Earlier in the evening, stunned fans who hadn't seen a winning team in five years screamed, sang, danced and cheered as they watched OSU clinch its first Final Four appearance since 1989.

"Unbelievable!" shouted Steve Kozak, 27, of Columbus, a lifelong Buckeye fan who watched the game at a campus bar and stayed to celebrate the 77-74 victory over St. John's.

"Obviously no one expected us to be here," Kozak said. "I can't comprehend it; I can't put it into words."

It was standing room only at the Varsity Club, 278 W. Lane Ave., packed with hundreds of fans.

"We knew they would be better, but we didn't think they could come this far," said 1997 graduate James Boyd, who never saw the Buckeyes field a winning team during his college years.

"This is better than a football win in Ohio State," said Dave Ahlers, a 22-year-old engineer walking down a campus street.

Scott Ferguson, an OSU employee who lives in Grandview Heights, admitted he wasn't sure the game was going to go the Buckeyes' way.

"I'm a Cleveland fan. I'm used to losing at the last minute," Ferguson said.

Except for a few honking horns and shouts of "Go Bucks," the streets were relatively quiet immediately after the game. The school was on spring break.

During a professional ice skating show last night at the Schottenstein Center, fans watched the game on tiny televisions as skaters performed. The fans sometimes groaned out loud during the game.

Skater Scott Hamilton, an Ohio native, teased the audience about the distraction, jokingly scolding them. Later, he stood at the center of the ice with a microphone to announce the victory. The audience cheered.
Final Four!

Ohio State adds another chapter to its dream season with a 77-74 win over St. John’s

By Ken Gordon
Dispatch Sports Reporter

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — The sun was flat on his back, almost in the air, as predawn snow blazed around him. The season. James “Scoonic” Penn had predicted Ohio State would make the NCAA Tournament. Buckeye fans snickered, knowing that would take a turn around of historic proportions.

Penn’s prophesies proved true, of course. But last night, the Buckeyes took it further than anyone could have imagined.

OSU defeated St. John’s 77-74 in the NCAA South Regional final, earning the Buckeyes a berth in the Final Four for the first time since 1988. Ohio State will face Connecticut on Saturday night in a national semifinal in St. Petersburg, Fla.

While Penn galloped around the court at Thompson-Boling Arena, leviathan Ohio State fans roared. Some tried to rush the court only to be restrained by teachers.

After cutting down the nets, the Buckeyes danced at center court.

While all this was going on, the mother stood calmly by her seat, simply nodding as if she knew this was going to happen when her son left Salem, Mass., and transferred to Ohio State last year.

“I told him a week ago we were going to Florida, that we would play St. John’s and beat them,” said Allegro Penn. “I always taught him to think positive and set high goals. That makes you strive a little more.”

As he has all year, Penn carried OSU last night. He scored a team-high 22 points, added eight assists and seven rebounds, and harassed St. John’s guard Erick Barkley into the decisive turnover as Barkley brought the ball downcourt with 10 seconds left.

Michael Redd added 20 points, and Jason Singleton (15 points) and Ken Johnson (12) played key roles. The celebration was still raging when Scoonic Penn climbed into the seats and hugged his mother.

“Final Four! Final Four! I can’t believe it!” he said, proving that maybe even he had had a few double.

Ohio State’s Scoonic Penn is mobbed by his teammates after leading the Buckeyes to the Final Four.

Road to the Final Four

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Description:
- Defense was the story, as the Buckeyes held the Racers to a lowly 24 percent shooting. Michael Redd’s 27 points helped OSU build a 19-point lead at one point.
- The Buckeyes turned the tables on the defense-minded Titans, who missed 17 of their first 28 shots. George Reese (16 rebounds) helped OSU dominate.
- Foul-plagued OSU was down six before Scoonic Penn got hot. His 10-second-half points turned a close game into an emphatic Buckeyes win.
Quick study

Ken Johnson learned a lot in a short time

By Bob Shortz
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Not many teams have ever quickly covered the distance the Ohio State men's basketball team has to the Final Four. When measured in terms of winning percentage, only Wisconsin — which was 1-3 in 1930 and won the NCAA championship the following year — ever came closer than the Buckeyes of last season.

Thrown into the State's team incredible journey, however, is a player — Ken Johnson — who has come to be a key factor.

"This is almost like a miracle to me," Johnson's grandmother, Peri; said this week.

"He really didn't want to play ball. He didn't need until he was in high school, and he really didn't want to play then, but his coach kept encouraging him and he finally relented.

"I would hear people laugh and think, 'What am I doing here? Why am I playing?'"

Ken Johnson on his high school days

When Ohio State basketball coach Jim Osborn sat down last week to discuss the 6-foot-11 junior who had 12 points and seven blocked shots against St. John's in the NCAA East Regional final, he said: "I didn't think Ken Johnson would be the difference." Osborn asked Johnson if he was the difference.

"No," Johnson said. "I'm just one of the players. I'm just a part of the team."

"Why are you here? Why are you playing?" Osborn asked.

Johnson replied: "I'm here to help. I'm here to contribute. I'm here to work. I'm here to win."

Johnson, 21, and his twin sister, Kim, were raised by their parents, Tom and Pam, in their mother's home when they were 10 months old. Ken said he does not know his father.

Doris, a retired Ford Motor Co. accountant, The couple moved into a house in St. Paul, Minn., when Johnson was 12. For six months at age 12. For six months at age 12. For six months at age 12. For six months at age 12.

It was bad for me to show [family members] who I was," he said. "I was just trying to express how I felt."

Johnson's growth transformed his game.

He said he had no knowledge of basketball before he came to Ohio State.

"I would have people laugh and think, 'What am I doing here? Why am I playing?'" Johnson said.

Carter told him he would be able to play with the team. He showed him the team's playbook and helped him learn the game.

"I was in a point in my life where I was going through tough times and the coach helped me through."

Johnson used to play on the junior varsity as a freshman and told Carter at the end of the season that he wanted to quit. Later in school made him feel that he had better game and was able to play. They called him "Gimp."
to break down," he said. "I needed help and I didn't have anyone I could turn to because no one really understood me or what I was going through. The only one I could turn to was Christ. He has always been there for me."

The first ray of hope came during a practice in Johnson's junior year. Maurice Taylor, who had beaten up on him in practice the previous season before moving on to Michigan, came back for more one day and Johnson swatted a few of his shots.

"He said, 'Ken, if you keep on playing and get bigger and stronger, you can be all right at this game,'" Johnson recalled. "So I kept on playing and kept on getting better. It meant a lot."

By the time he was a senior, Johnson averaged 14.1 points, 13.5 rebounds and 9.5 blocks per game and had his choice of scholarships from Ohio State, Michigan, Maryland and Detroit. Ohio State prevailed in part because it was far enough from Detroit without being too far.

Again, though, Johnson met adversity. His high-school test score and grade-point average were not sufficient enough for him to play or practice as a freshman.

"If ever there was a good rule for somebody, it was for Ken Johnson," O'Brien said.

The NCAA rule, known as Proposition 16, recently was set aside by a federal court, which could give Johnson two more seasons of eligibility instead of one. By keeping him off the practice court for an entire season, however, it arrested his development at a crucial time and had him starting almost from scratch again last season.

Slowly, he has improved his skills and raised his competitiveness to the level that last weekend made him an unstoppable influence at both ends of the floor.

"There's a tremendous difference in Kenny from last year to this year," guard Scoonie Penn said. "I see him as a person with a lot more self-confidence on and off the court. Now he is probably the most confident he's been in his life."

Doris Johnson, unable to get a seat on a flight to Florida, is leaving today on a 22-hour bus ride to St. Petersburg. Carter plans to drive there, even though he does not yet have a ticket to the game. He'll get one, no matter what it costs, he said, because Johnson is the first player he has coached who has ever played in the Final Four.

"We couldn't be any prouder of anyone than we are of Ken right now," Carter said. "I talked to him (Tuesday) right and (Wednesday) morning and said, 'Boy, you're a hero around school now. When you come back and walk down the hall, you're going to get mauled. All the kids are talking about now is Ken Johnson.'

They aren't calling him "Gump" anymore, either.
The Buckeyes AND THE FINAL FOUR

its OSU defense on fast track

Scoinnie Penn checks out a sign given to him by Jeannie Sykes, hidden, before boarding a bus at the Schottenstein Center for the start of the Buckeyes' trip to the Final Four. Sykes, a secretary at the Fawcett Center, was among hundreds of fans who came to see the team off to the airport yesterday afternoon.
Penn has a fan

By Todd Jones
Dispatch Sports Reporter

Scooeee Penn is drawing so much praise from Ohio State fans he might be bronzed and placed at a Schottenstein Center entrance.

If there's going to be a Scooeee statue, Carlos Davis would like to help erect it. One of Penn's biggest fans, ironically enough, is the player he replaced.

"He's a really smart player and can do a lot of things," said Davis, who completed his eligibility at Ohio State last season. "He helped us. He can shoot, he's very strong and fast. He brought a lot to the table. The main thing about him is his leadership, it's just so strong."

Penn's play in his first season of eligibility after transferring from Boston College, is credited as the biggest reason why Ohio State (27-8) is playing Connecticut (32-2) today in the NCAA Final Four after an 8-22 season last year.

Davis, a transfer student, doesn't interpret praise for Penn as too-many criticisms of his own play as the senior starting point guard all 35 games last season.

"I look in the paper," Davis said, "and see they're comparing Scooeee to the past point guards and I see my name and I say, I wasn't any point guard. I was playing out of position."

Davis was forced to slide over from shooting guard last year because Penn was ineligible under NCAA transfer rules and Damon Stringer, the expected starter at point, suffered a season-ending back injury in preseason.

Jim O'Brien, in his first season as OSU coach after coaching Penn at Boston College, acknowledged that Davis was better-suited to play shooting guard, but there were no other options at the point.

"Everybody knew I wasn't a point guard," Davis said. "I was an out-of-position point guard and still finished third in the Big Ten in assists."

Davis averaged 4.2 assists, 8.8 points, 4.5 rebounds and 3.5 turnovers in 31 minutes per game.

"You can't just sit there and say any real point guard would have changed that team around," he said. "Scooeee knew the system. He had played for coach [Mike] O'Brien for two years."

"I tried not to be negative about anything," Davis said. "If I had given any negative reactions, it would seem like I was giving up. If I gave up, there's no telling who would have given up."

Davis said the losing last season toughened this year's Buckeyes. He also said O'Brien's fast-break style was better than predecessor Randy Ayers' run "upright" approach.

"When O'Brien came in, you could see the things he was doing and look at him and tell he's a winner," Davis said. "From the plays he made up for us, you could tell he was good at his job. When I played for him I loved it. I wish I could have had more years with him."

Penn practiced throughout last season and impressed Davis with his play and hard-working attitude.

"What you're seeing on TV and in the games (from Penn) we saw in practice every day," Davis said. "I read about how when he wasn't playing last year the white team (reserves) would beat the red team (starters). He was doing all the scoring when

the white team was beating us. It wasn't like the whole team was beating us. We knew things would turn around once he got to play."

Davis said he, like Penn, thought before the season that this year's team could land OSU its first NCAA Tournament berth in seven years. But Davis said no one predicted the Final Four.

"It's good for the seniors," Davis said. "I'm glad Nesbitt (Coleman) and Jason (Singleton) are getting a chance to experience something like this. The question everybody asks me, How do you feel? Don't you wish you had redshirted a year? I always say God makes things happen for a reason."

Davis with O'Brien's encouragement, attended OSU's home games this season and was a fixture in the postgame locker room. He remains close friends with Singleton.

"I told Jason I don't want to see him until Tuesday morning," said Davis, an Eastmoor High School graduate who is scheduled to graduate from OSU this summer with a degree in sport and leisure studies. He also hopes to play professional basketball overseas.

Davis plans to watch OSU's game today on television. He said Connecticut presents a tough challenge but likes the Buckeyes' chances.

"When I've watched games with my cousin," Davis said, "I've said, 'If they keep it close at the end, coach O'Brien won't let them lose.' He'll think of something. Hopefully he will again."
Bosley’s cheering for his old school

By Todd Jones
Dispatch Sports Reporter

"So optimistic was Ohio State’s eight-man freshman class four years ago that the young Buckeyes even dreamed about playing in the Final Four.

"We all talked about it," Jami Bosley said. "We said, ‘we’re young, we’ll take our lumps with basically four freshmen starting, but something when we’re juniors and seniors we’ll be whipping on guys. Obviously, it didn’t happen.

"Not quite as planned. OSU did indeed make it to a Final Four, where it will play Connecticut today. But only two members of the 1995-96 freshman class, all recruited by former coach Randy Ayers, still play for the Buckeyes: starting forward Jason Singleton and reserve guard Nathan Collier.

"I’m really happy for them," said Bosley, a guard from Mansfield, Ohio. "They stuck it out. They could have left when things got bad. It’s good to see they stuck around and are doing what we talked about as freshmen."

"The other six ’95-96 freshmen — Bosley, guard Damon Stringer, center Mark Howard and forwards Jermaine Tate, Shaun Stoneroak and Scott Gradney — never played for current OSU coach Jim O’Brien.

Bosley and Gradney had their scholarships revoked by the school in May 1996 for disciplinary reasons. Howard never played at OSU because of hemophilia.

"O’Brien dismissed Stoneroak and Tate before the start of this season for what he said was a "failure to live up to their obligations as student-athletes," And Stringer, who sat out last season with a back injury, left OSU last May after an off-court incident.

Bosley transferred to the University of Akron, where he led the 18-9 Zips in scoring (18.7) and assists (3.8) this season. But he still keeps up with the Buckeyes and plans to cheer them on today.

"I watched probably at least half of their games this year," he said. "I’m excited. I love watching them. I root for them.

Bosley said he’s happy at Akron and has no jealousy of OSU because “everything happens for a reason.” Nor does he have bitterness toward the school for letting him go after he and Gradney were caught breaking into parked cars in the campus area.

"I know I was young, made a bad decision and you obviously live and learn," Bosley said. "I have no bitterness toward Ohio State. There’s no reason for me to. Some of the former players do have bitterness, but that’s just someone blaming someone else.

"I’m happy I played for Ohio State one year. Obviously, I wish I had played longer. But I played for the Buckeyes. That was my dream.

"The five other players in Bosley’s OSU recruiting class could not be reached for comment.

Where are they now?

Jason Singleton and Nathan Collier are the only two players remaining from Ohio State’s eight-man freshman class of 1995-96. Mark Howard had to quit playing basketball because of hemophilia. Here’s a look at where the other five former Buckeyes are playing:

Jermaine Tate
Averaged 4.3 points and 4.7 rebounds as a junior on a 27-6 Cincinnati team that lost in the second round of the NCAA tournament.

Jami Bosley
Helped Akron to an 18-9 record this season as a junior by leading the Zips in scoring (18.7) and assists (3.8).

Shaun Stoneroak
Averaged 13.6 points for the 16-10 Ohio University Bobcats, who scored their biggest win of the season by knocking off host Syracuse in the Carrier Classic.

Scott Gradney
Averaged 4.4 points and 2.0 rebounds as a senior at Texas Christian, coached by Billy Tubbs, who led Oklahoma to the Final Four in 1988.

Damon Stringer
Sat out the 1996-97 season under NCAA transfer rules. He’ll be eligible next season as a junior at Cleveland State.

Dispatch photo
THE BUCKEYES AND THE FINAL FOUR

OSU NOTES

A footnote: Dudley will suit up

Injured freshman won't be seeing any game action

By Bob Baptist
Dispatch Sports Reporter

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Freshman Will Dudley has not worn his uniform since he sustained a fractured right foot in practice on Jan. 17 and has not been cleared to resume play with the Ohio State men's basketball team.

But Dudley participated in the team's Final Four shootaround yesterday attended by 2,766 -- and will be in his warm-up suit on the bench today when the Buckeyes (27-8) play Connecticut (22-9) in an NCAA semifinal.

"It's too great of an experience to not be able to participate in some way, and his orthopedist concurred," trainer Mike Bordner said. "So he'll be in uniform, have his name in the official scorebook, but he won't be available to play."

Dudley said he has been doing some light work in practice recently and that when coach Jim O'Brien saw that he could do layups and the like, he told him he could suit up.

"He said you'll remember the Final Four for the rest of your life, so you can run out with the team," Dudley said.

"I was happy. I was hoping he would say it. I was going to ask him if he didn't."

GUARDED — The player with the most media around him in the OSU locker room yesterday was freshman Boban Savovic, whose homeland of Yugoslavia is under attack by NATO forces seeking to stop the Serbian army's aggression against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

Many reporters asked Savovic, a Serbian, about the bombings, but Gerry Enig, athletics communications director at OSU, continually asked them to limit their questions to basketball.

Savovic would say only that yesterday morning he talked to his parents, who live in the republic of Montenegro, and that they told him they would be watching today's game on television. Savovic has not seen his parents in two years because the U.S. embassy will not issue them a visa. Savovic is in the United States on a student visa.

"They're happy for me. They're happy I'm doing well in basketball," he said. "They want us to win."

FEELING STRONGER — NeShaun Coleman, who missed the Buckeyes' first two NCAA games in Indianapolis because of strep throat, played little last week in Knoxville, Tenn., after his three-point shot from the top of the key in the first half against Auburn came down short of the rim and bounced out of bounds.

"I was weak, very weak," he said. "During practice I thought I felt good, but once I stepped out on the floor it just seemed like my body felt like fell-O."

Coleman rated himself at about 95 percent now.

"I lost 8 pounds, so I think that really hurt me a lot," he said. "But I'm a lot quicker and I can jump better now. I think it's just a matter of me taking my time and trying to pace myself and not getting tired."

MOST FOUL — Continuing a seasonlong struggler from the free-throw line, Ohio State made only 24 of 41 free throws (53.6 percent) and missed the front end of five 1-and-1 situations in wins over Auburn and St. John's last week.

O'Brien remains concerned, but there is absolutely nothing we can do about it (now).

"I've been telling our kids all year long that if we don't improve, one of these games our free-throw shooting is going to do us in. We dodged another bullet in that regard (because..."

Want more?
Can't wait for Sunday's Dispatch coverage of OSU's Final Four clash with Connecticut? Then call up the Dispatch's basketball Website for updates soon after the game.

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"I've been telling our kids all year long that if we don't improve, one of these games our free-throw shooting is going to do us in. We dodged another bullet in that regard (because..."
Penn downplays jersey mystery

By Bob Short

PITTSBURGH — Neither Seonnie Penn nor anyone else on the Ohio State team knew after the game where his missing No. 12 jersey was.

Penn said he wore a T-shirt under his warm-up suit before every game and did not change into his game jersey until the team went into the locker room for the final time, just before the finality of the national anthem.

He said it had been hanging in his locker when he went on the court to warm up.

"I came in to put it on before we went back out and it was gone," Penn said. "We really didn't take a whole lot of time to look for it because we had to go back out."

Penn ended up wearing No. 35, the so-called "blood jersey" reserved for a player who is forced to remove his jersey because of blood on it. "It may be in here somewhere or someone took it, I don't know," Penn said.

If someone did take it in the minutes before the biggest game of his life, Penn said it didn't bother him.

"I don't care. I mean, I'll just get a new one," he said. "It didn't make any difference to me as long as I had a jersey to go out there and play in."
Senior Jonn Singleton shows off Ohio State's national semifinalist trophy to the hundreds of fans who gathered at the Schottenstein Center to welcome the Buckeyes home from Florida.
Buckeyes' 1998-99 basketball stats

Roster

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Statistics Recap

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December 9, 2004

University Announces Self-Imposed Sanctions on Men's Basketball Program
NCAA rules violations spur action

COLUMBUS – Ohio State President Karen A. Holbrook and Director of Athletics Andy Geiger announced today that the University has implemented self-imposed sanctions on its men's basketball program for violations of NCAA rules.

"We believe, based upon the information that we have gathered to date, that there were violations of NCAA rules," said Ohio State Director of Athletics Andy Geiger. "And we believe there is a need for immediate responsive action on our part."

The self-imposed sanctions for the men's basketball program include:
- The dismissal of the head men's basketball coach – which occurred on June 8, 2004;
- A one-year ban on NCAA and NIT post-season competition following the 2004-05 season.

"Today's action reflects the forthrightness and seriousness with which the University has dealt with this matter from the beginning. Our investigation has raised the need for further institutional action," said President Holbrook.

The University, along with the NCAA, has been conducting an exhaustive investigation since first learning of possible violations, and that investigation is continuing.
Ohio State Announces Men's Basketball Sanctions -- 2

Geiger said the self-imposed sanctions are based in part on case precedents of other NCAA member institutions who have been cited for rules infractions, and were made in consultation with legal counsel.

“We have talked to numerous people and we have had lengthy discussions internally,” said Geiger. “We believe that the sanctions we have identified are appropriate at this stage of the investigation. It is important to remember that this team and this coaching staff need to move forward.”

Recognizing Geiger as “among the most respected athletic directors in the country,” President Holbrook added, “Ohio State remains fully committed to maintaining an academically sound, ethical, and successful intercollegiate athletics program in all 35 sports serving 1,000 student-athletes, our student body, alumni, fans and friends of the University. Ohio State has a proud tradition of intercollegiate athletics and a position of leadership in the Big Ten and the NCAA and thus we are disappointed that we are here today to announce the action we feel we must take.”

###
O’Brien fired
Coach admits giving $6,000 to recruit | NCAA investigation of OSU under way | Assistant named interim head coach

Major players
Coach Jim O’Brien is among the basketball coaches at Ohio State for giving $6,000 to a recruit who never enrolled at OSU.

Andy Geiger, above, OSU director of athletics, is revoking O’Brien’s contract, citing violations of NCAA rules. He indicated that OSU and the NCAA are continuing to investigate.

Aleksandar Radulovic is the Oregon State player who received the payment. He had a short career in the NBA.

Rick Bagges, O’Brien’s top assistant, has been named interim coach.

By Bob Baptista
The Columbus Dispatch
Ohio State men’s basketball coach Jim O’Brien was fired yesterday after giving $6,000 to a recruit who never enrolled at the university.

O’Brien’s firing could be the tip of the iceberg in an investigation by the university and the NCAA involving recent off-campus recruiting at O’Brien’s seven-year tenure.

In addition to the payment to the recruit, a civil lawsuit filed in August by a Gabonese woman says the provided financial assistance to Sobocan “Boban” Suvacic during his four years as an OSU basketball player. It alleges that former assistant coach Paul Biancardi knew of the arrangement and had received payments from Sobocan, who was a close friend of O’Brien.

Biancardi, now head men’s basketball coach at Wright State University in Fairborn, did not respond to messages left by The Dispatch.

Asked last night whether the arrangement as described in the lawsuit constitutes an NCAA violation by Biancardi, Ohio State Athletics Director Andy Geiger said, “That’s part of the investigation.” He refused to discuss it further.

O’Brien declined to answer specific questions during a brief interview at his Columbus home yesterday. A suitcase and travel bag were inside the front door; O’Brien said he was leaving the house in about five minutes.

“I have nothing to say about anything,” he said.

O’Brien said his side of the story is “coming . . . but not now.”

Asked whether he planned to contest his firing or was contemplating legal action against the university, he refused questions to his attorney, Jim Zeznak, of Pittsburgh, who did not return a call to his office from The Dispatch.

Zeznak told ESPN that O’Brien was “crushed” by the firing. “He is hurt that he would not have the opportunity to clear his name.”

See PAGE A3
portunity to discuss this (with officials from) Ohio State.”

"I am troubled that a rule was admittedly violated and it took us five years to find out about it," Geiger told a hastily called news conference in the Schottenstein Center.

He told the media he had spoken with O'Brien earlier in the day.

"The coach was given a chance to resign or come to this conclusion, and he chose not to resign," Geiger said.

He named O'Brien's top assistant, Rick Boyages, interim coach and said all other staff members will be retained while the university searches for a new coach.

Boyages, head coach at William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va., for three seasons before returning to Ohio State last year, was on the staff at the time the violation occurred. But Geiger said he was "assured by (Boyages) that he was not involved in this, and unfamiliar with it."

O'Brien had a 133-88 record at Ohio State. His team reached the Final Four in 1999, his second season, won shares of two Big Ten championships, won a Big Ten Tournament title and played in the NCAA Tournament four times.

He had five years remaining on a contract that paid him about $900,000 in total compensation this year. Under terms of the contract, he could be voided immediately if he were found to have broken NCAA rules.

Geiger said O'Brien was "terminated for cause" for violating NCAA bylaw 12.2.1, which deals with illegal inducements.

Geiger said Ohio State reported the violation to the NCAA on May 18 and "since then, we have been working jointly with the NCAA and legal counsel on a complete and thorough investigation into the issues raised by the lawsuit and any other issues...that may arise in the course of that investigation."

The violation was a $6,000 payment O'Brien made to Aleksandar Radujevic, a 7-foot-3-inch center from Yugoslavia — and a friend of Savovic's — who signed a national letter of intent with Ohio State in November 1999 while at Barton County Community College in Kansas.

Radujevic never enrolled at Ohio State. In May 1999, the NCAA ruled him ineligible for accepting $13,000 in 1997 from a Yugoslavian club team for which he played two games.

That summer, Radujevic was the 12th player drafted by the Toronto Raptors in the NBA draft. He no longer is in the league.

Geiger said O'Brien made him aware of the lawsuit — filed in Franklin County Common Pleas Court — involving Savovic's beneficiaries last August but did not tell him until April 24 that he had given Radujevic money.

"He said that he was informing me because he was certain that it would be disclosed as a part of the lawsuit," Geiger said. "The coach explained to me that he gave (Radujevic) the money because he was concerned about the Radujevic family in Yugoslavia. Alex's father passed away on Sept. 6, 1996, his mother was unable to work due to disability, and Alex has two sisters and a brother. It was intended that Alex would send the money home to his family."

O'Brien's attorney said that if the money "got there at all, it was after he was declared ineligible. If that was the case, then it would not be a violation."

Geiger said O'Brien realized he violated NCAA rules by giving Radujevic money.

"He admitted that he knew that he did, and a couple of weeks ago he offered to resign. I told him that as early as it was in our investigation, that he should get very good advice and then make his judgment. Our next conversation about it was today.

Geiger said it was his understanding that the money was not from university funds.

A source familiar with college basketball recruiting said last night that Savovic, Radujevic and fellow Yugoslavian Slobo-
dan "Cobe" Ozolcolic, all of whom signed with Ohio State in a six-month period from May through November 1996, were brought to the United States with the help of Semi Pajovic, a New York restaurateur who was interviewed by a Dispatch reporter while on the OSU campus with Radujevic and Ozolcolic in May 1996. Biancardi was the lead recruiter on all three players.

Savovic spent one year at a Newark, N.J., high school before enrolling at Ohio State. Ozolcolic was at Madison Washington High School for two years and played at OSU for two years before finishing his career at Weber State in Ogden, Utah.

Geiger said he hoped the investigation would not hinder the school's attempt to hire the best candidate to replace O'Brien.

"We will be candid with all candidates as to what circumstances we find ourselves in," Geiger said. "We hope that we can weather the storm and head forward with a good basketball program."
By Dan Williamson

Here's the unpopular truth: Ohio State fans don't enjoy football.

When the OSU football team wins, fans worry about the next game. When the team fails to cover the spread, they want Coach Cooper fired.

But somehow the basketball team—this basketball team—has made these same fans downright giddy. With grit, grace and good behavior, this team has become the feel-good story of a generation for Ohio State sports.

The curmudgeons who had declared Ohio State's hoops program dead are this week funding about Bronnie and Kenny like they're old friends. Content Chinese who hadn't watched a college basketball game in five years can now be heard pontificating about Michael Jordon's inside moves.

In part, it's the improbability of it all. Only three-eyed dinosaurs predicted Ohio State would go to the NCAA Tournament this year. A winning record and a probable NIT bid was considered a more realistic—but still challenging—goal.

Even when Ohio State did make the NCAA's, Sports Illustrated predicted the team would lose in the first round to Murray State.

Now, there No. 1 seeds and OSU, at No. 4, are headed to St. Petersburg this weekend.

But there's also something about this group of kids that makes you want to root for them—not just their Ohio State uniform.

"They are fun to be around," Coach Jim O'Brien said Sunday. "They have just the right amount of mischief." And with these kids, happily, "naught" doesn't mean nothing.

O'Brien trusts his players so much that he allowed James Singleton to act the clown in Knoxville last week.

"It was two nights before the game," O'Brien recalled, "I said, 'Well, what about 17?' And Jones says, 'Well, 1:15. We were thinking about 1:15.' And I said, '1:15. That's OK with me.'"

The idea of trusting Ohio State basketball players with the crucial during the NCAA Tournament two or three years ago would have been unthinkable.

But there, so would the idea of OSU playing in the NCAA Tournament.

Even when Jimmy Jackson left for the NBA in 1989, the basketball program has been plugged by kids who didn't go to class and couldn't stay out of trouble.

On the court, frankly, the team...
O'Brien won't apologize for dancing

second half— and then makes three treys in a row to prove it. 

Fenn's hard-hitting, making field goal attempts from almost midcourt have left O'Brien unsure whether to pass or shoot for the 3-point basket. But in the 3-point contest, O'Brien led the team with 10 points.

"Snoopy," Fenn's nickname for the Buckeyes' leading scorer, made 5 of 10 3-point attempts. His three-point shooting has improved significantly since last year, when he averaged only 3 points per game.

This season, Fenn's scoring average has increased to 22 points per game. He is now the leading scorer in the Big Ten Conference and is considered one of the top players in the country.

The Buckeyes have won seven of their last nine games, including victories over Penn State and Michigan State. With a win over Ohio State, they will move into first place in the conference standings.

Golden boy

Just about everyone would be ticked off if Snoopy Fenn's name was changed by any name other than his own. But when the Buckeyes beat the Ohio State Buckeyes last week, Fenn was ticked off by the fans who started chanting his name.

"I don't mind being called Snoopy," Fenn said. "But the fans are getting a little out of hand. They should save their enthusiasm for the team, not for an individual."
The kid

With OSU clinging to a two-point lead Saturday night, freshman guard Brian Brown went to the line for a one-and-one foul shot opportunity.

In front of a national audience, Brown ... missed, giving St. John's the opportunity to tie or take the lead with 19 seconds left on the clock.

Too much pressure for the new kid?

"It was no pressure, actually, I was really confident," Brown said Monday. "It just rattled right in and out."

It's worth noting that for most of the year, Brown's contributions came off the bench. Only recently was he promoted to replace sophomore Jon Sanderson as a starter—just in time for the NCAA Tournament.

No pressure? Believe it, said Redd.

"Me and Scoonie have talked to him numerous times about staying composed," Redd said. "He really is handling it well. His mind is focused."

Jim O'Brien raised a few eyebrows after Saturday's victory by joining his team in the "Dirty Bird" dance on the court.

Was this any way to behave with a semifinal left to play?

"There's an awful lot of very good coaches out there that will not even get this opportunity," O'Brien said.

"That's why when people say, 'Did you overdo it again with your celebration, with the dancing and all that?' Absolutely not. I mean how many times are we going to be here?"

In other words, O'Brien knows it might be another three decades before the Buckeyes get to the Final Four again.

And even if they make it next year, could it possibly be this much fun?
OSU fans letting it all hang out

With or without tickets, die-hard Buckeye backers enjoy Final Four frenzy.

By Jim Massel

ST PETERSBURG, Fla. — For his 75th birthday, Terry Russell gave himself a tattoo.

Not just any tattoo, mind you. Russell is self-styled "the Ohio State Buckeye, the only something tastefully done in a society and gay block "IT" would do.

"I had to have something," said Russell, showing off the 50-year-old artwork on his left calf. "I came home excitedly." Waddy Hays would understand.

Waddy Hays, who was married yesterday to his 90-year-old bride in the front-row seats at Tropicana Field, site of the NCAA Final Four. The two have been married since growing up in the neighborhood around St. John Avenue.

The Russell, married 32 years, were around 3:00 p.m. at Tropicana Field, when the Ohio State Buckeyes came to the stadium to watch the 11-hour game for the Final Four. Their beloved Buckeyes were first on the floor.

"This is what we do," said Russell, adding: "Our hobby. To get to come down here and watch the Buckeyes play."
— plane tickets, hotel tickets, everything — the Thursday before the Michigan State football game,” he said — so the Russells weren’t about to miss the basketball team’s ride to the Final Four.

“After Saturday’s game, we started calling around looking for plane tickets,” Mr. Russell said. “We could not get Wednesday-, Thursday- or Friday-anything. Finally, we got tickets for Tuesday, 6:30 in the morning flying to Newark, N.J., down to Tampa.

“To go home, we have to drive to Orlando, fly to Cleveland and come in on Wednesday. It’s tough duty to have to take eight days instead of four days. But we’ve been on the beach since Tuesday.”

The Russells arrived in Florida with game tickets, Mr. Russell having driven to Richmond, Ind., to get them.

Wayne and Darlene White, transplants from Groveport now living in Tarpon Springs, Fla., don’t have tickets, but they bought their 1-year-old son, Brandon, to yesterday’s workout. He was decked out in Ohio State colors and sporting a soft pretzel.

“This is the best thing going,” Mr. White said of the practice. “We can’t buy tickets so we’d thought we’d come to this.”

When hundreds of OSU fans began chanting “O-H-I-O,” White turned to his wife. “This is already giving me goosebumps,” he said.

Two Westerville families attended the workout in hopes of finding tickets. Mark and Dana Klabunde and their children — Katy, 14, J.D., 12, and Nathan, 6 — were in the area on vacation when the Buckeyes qualified for the Final Four. Bruce and Cindy Werhan have since joined them with their kids, Lisa, 14, and Michael, 12.

Lisa Werhan, who was carrying an “I love Michael Redd” sign, said the families would do anything for tickets, and proved it by volunteering her mother and Mrs. Klabunde for a stunt a radio station was promoting.

“The mothers will take their clothes off for tickets,” Lisa said. “I’m not kidding.”

Her mother returned from the concession stand and, told of her daughter’s comments, nodded in agreement.

The promotion never came off, but she wasn’t kidding.

That sort of devotion doesn’t surprise OSU forward George Reese. He has learned how much Buckeye fans love their team.

“They follow us wherever we go,” Reese said. “I thought after Indianapolis and the first round, the fan interest would drop off. It seems like it got better. The farther we’ve advanced, the better it’s gotten.

“I’m having a lot of fun. I’m living it up. The fans want to live it up just as well.”

Would he like a tattoo to celebrate?

“Oh, no, I’m not doing anything like that,” he said, laughing.

Reese, an Independence High School graduate, didn’t follow the basketball Buckeyes while growing up.

“Nope, I had never been to an Ohio State game,” he said. “This past summer when I was playing was like my first time going to St. John Arena.”

Mr. Russell used to cut through the arena on his way to junior high school. His wife lived on Lane Avenue. Jerry Lucas, John Havlicek and Bob Knight played on the OSU teams of that era.

“I used to come to their practices. You can’t do that now. I’d always stop in there. I didn’t know what it was then, being that young.”

Both know now. Their three children all graduated from Ohio State.

In Mr. Russell’s mind, one perfect scenario exists — and it involves the Spartans.

“Michigan State is going to beat Duke and we’re going to beat Connecticut and then it’s going to be payback,” he said. “We’re going to hurt them. Then it just shows that God shines on Ohio State.”
The bubble bursts

UConn squelches OSU's offense to reach NCAA final

By Jim Manzo
Sports Reporter

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — The Ohio State basketball season's sweetest tour of the NCAA Tournament ended the way the best trips always seem to — too soon for everyone involved.

The Buckeyes lost a national semifinal to Connecticut 64-58 last night before a crowd of 11,194 in Tropicana Field.

The difference, though, was far more than Connecticut's blinding defense on OSU star point guard Swampy Penn. The Buckeyes (31-2) were supposed to be here at tournament's end, clinching off an eight-win season a year ago. The Buckeyes' 25-7 were expected to be happy to break even. To the delight of their fans, they beat the Pepper.

The team's sudden rise was more unlikely than any story that ever began, "three upon a time". No one was involved. Instead, the players and coaches transformed themselves from frogs to princes by virtue of hard work, the incredible Penn and Michael Foxx, and a group of undersized players.

The game, high on an eight-win season a year ago, the Buckeyes (25-7) were expected to be happy to break even To the delight of their fans, they beat the Pepper.

"We all appreciate the season that we had," said senior forward Jason Singleton. "We just wish we could have won tonight against UConn and made it to the championship game." In four years in the program, Singleton has seen it fall to extreme depths only twice into the same season.

"I'm very happy that the Buckeyes are leaving on a high note," he said. "We're leaving the program where we're on top. Even though we had to leave on a losing note, we're going out of Ohio State with a good team, and I'm very happy about that."

OSU trailed 36-35 at the half and ended the first 20 minutes with some momentum after a pair of blocks by Ken Johnson and Singleton. Penn, whose No. 12 jersey turned up missing before the game, wore No. 36. The change of clothing didn't seem to matter in the first half as he hit 2 of 3 three-point shots.

In the second half, however, Connecticut's Ricky Moore had him in 1-for-10 shooting from the floor. He finished with 11 points, six below his season average.

Overall, OSU made only 6 of 22 shots after halftime. The cold snap proved fatal.
Fans welcome back Bucks

By Nancy J. Smeltzer
Dispatch Staff Reporter

Hundreds of fans lined the driveway to the Schottenstein Center yesterday to welcome their heroes — the buckeye Buckeyes.

"Who would have thought it?" asked Earl Norcross of Dublin of the team's rise from the eight-win season a year ago. He said the Buckeyes should be an inspiration about the importance of character for anyone facing challenge.

The challenge for Josh Tarleton and his father, Gaylord, was dividing their attention Saturday night between the Buckeyes action inside of Value City Arena during the state high school boys' basketball finals. The pair from Worthington ended up watching the Buckeyes on a handheld TV, then stayed yesterday to see the team return.

"Adam Hirsch, 14, sported one of the baseball caps embroidered with the Final Four logo. He and his mother, Barbara, were among those who sent the team off to Florida and thought it only right to welcome it home. "It's been the highlight of spring break," said Mrs. Hirsch of Upper Arlington.

Dorothy Logan and Connie Vandegrift traveled from Newark. They managed to score autographs from Shonner Herron and Steven Smith.

Sam Wade of Massillon shook hands with Penn and Jason Singleton.

Dave and Janet Gainer of Upper Arlington stood with a group of people at the end of the driveway to show their support as the players drove off.

"Mrs. Gainer made a prediction: 'They'll be back next year.'"
Bucks Make History With Final Four Run

By STEVE HELWAGEN
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Editor

In the annals of college basketball, historians note the accomplishment of Kentucky's 1991-92 team known as The Unforgettables.

That Kentucky unit, led by third-year coach Rick Pitino, included obscure seniors named Richie Farmer, Deron Feldhaus, John Pelphrey and Sean Woods.

As freshmen, these Wildcats had endured a 10-19 season — the school's first losing mark in 61 years. Over the next two years, the Wildcats had to operate under the cloud of NCAA probation and the distraction of their roster.

But Pitino slowly rebuilt the program and, by the time these players reached their senior year, the NCAA-imposed sanctions had been lifted and superstar sophomores Jamal Mashburn had joined the mix. The result was a 26-7 season, punctuated by the Christian Laettner buzzer beater in the NCAA's East Regional finals that sent Duke to the Final Four.

Still, that UK team had restored respectability to their school's tradition-laden program. The Wildcats would play in four of the next six Final Fours and claim two national championships.

Much the same way, Ohio State returned to respectability in 1998-99, led by its own version of The Unforgettables.

After five largely forgettable losing seasons, marked by its own bout with NCAA probation and a spate of off-the-court problems, the Buckeyes returned to prominence in college basketball with an unlikely NCAA Final Four run, perhaps doing UK's Unforgettables one better.

OSU seniors Jason Singleton and Nesbitt Coleman had endured three straight losing seasons. But they, along with superstar talent like transfer point guard Scoonie Penn and sophomore shooting guard Michael Redd, helped second-year coach Jim O'Brien do the unthinkable.

"I'm hoping that in some small way we were able to restore some of the respectability to Ohio State's basketball program," O'Brien said after his team's national semifinal loss to eventual NCAA champion Connecticut.

"If that's the case, maybe some of the younger players in the state of Ohio will take a closer look at our program. That is going to continue to be the lifeblood of our

ONE MORE YEAR! — OSU junior point guard Scoonie Penn (right) flashes a smile as he and coach Jim O'Brien listen to a chant of "One more year!" for Penn during the team's appreciation rally April 1 on the Oval.

IN THIS EDITION OF BSB:
• A look at OSU's break-through season (Pages 10-11)
• Buckeyes fall to UConn in national semifinal (Pages 12-13)
• Penn, Redd share spotlight (Pages 14-15)
• Final Four photos (Page 16)
• Court Report (Pages 18-19)
we were in the running for the Big Ten Conference all year, we made it to the Final Four.
I think people will remember us as a team that kind of put Ohio State back on the map. After five straight losing seasons, we’ve given the people of Ohio something to remember for the future.”

Special Recognition
The powers that be at Kentucky were so taken by Farmer, Pelphrey et al., they retired their jerseys.
That is not likely to happen at Ohio State, where not even Jerry Lucas — the star of the 1960 team — has his famed No. 11 officially retired.
Rather, there will likely be a Fourth participant banner hung high in the rafters at the brand-new Jerome Schottenstein Center’s Value City Arena. For a team that played in its top 10, 

SINGLETON SPEAKS — OSU captain Jason Singleton addresses the crowd at the April 1 appreciation rally on the Oval. Singleton and fellow captains Nesham Coleman and Sconnie Penn took turns thanking the crowd.

Steve Helman

"Something To Remember For The Future"
Continued From Page 1

program.
I think we’ve been able to restore some of the dignity this university deserves and we’ll just go from there."
A year ago, Redd was the only remarkable player on an OSU team that finished 8-23. That season brought the curtain down on St. John Arena after 42 seasons.
"We were rock bottom a year ago,” Redd noted. "This is one of the biggest turnarounds in the history of college basketball. What a tremendous thing to go from 8-23 to the Final Four in the next year."
Redd is correct in regard to turnarounds. A win over UConn would have guaranteed Ohio State the record for the best turnaround since the NCAA began keeping that statistic in 1974. Instead, the Buckeyes, 27-8 this year, finished fourth on that list with an improvement of 16 games.
The only OSU turnaround that even comes close to this one came in the 1960 national championship year when coach Fred Taylor’s Buckeyes improved 11 games from 11-11 in 1959-60 to 25-3.
"I think this team will be remembered for accomplishing something tremendous,” said Penn, who followed O’Brien to OSU after playing for him two seasons at Boston College.
"After last year’s season the expectations for this year weren’t that high for us. We did as well as making the top 10, 

"That’s due to Coach O’Brien. He deserves to be coach of the year.”
O’Brien shrugged when asked to discuss his team’s place in history.
"Absolutely nothing is going to happen to take away my feeling of accomplishment or just appreciation of what our kids did this year,” he said. "This really hurts, but when I think back on how this whole thing has gone it’s not going to be that bad.”
 Even in their ultimate defeat, these Buckeyes refused to go quietly. They rallied twice from nine-point deficits to put a scare in the Huskies.
"This shows we’ve got heart,” Redd said. "We came back and made some defensive stops and cut the lead down to one. We could have packed it in but we didn’t.
"We have nothing to be ashamed of. We should hold our heads up. This should inspire us to come back next year and do the same thing.”
Singleton appreciated just being a part of a magical season, a year that almost matched the number of wins he and Coleman had enjoyed in their first three years combined (29).
"The Columbus fans are probably the greatest fans in America," he said. "Even when we were losing we were still getting 10,000 a game and they were still behind us.
"I think this team this year will have a special place in the heart of Ohio State fans. If you look at the history of the program, this is one of the greatest comebacks ever.
"That’s due to Coach O’Brien. He deserves to be coach of the year.”

20 • BUCKEYE SPORTS BULLETIN April 10, 1999

Going Forward, Looking Back
O’Brien admitted it will be hard to enjoy this season until he has some time to look back on it. Even then, the specter of trying to duplicate or exceed it next year could be a daunting task.
"This was a nice year, but I know we will have to start all over again next year,” O’Brien said. "You’re always hoping to be successful, but I am always cautious to discuss where we’re going.
"We have to be very thankful for what we accomplished this year.”
But no less an authority than the governor of the great state of Ohio, Bob Taft, appearing at a rally for the team on the Oval April 1, summed up this team’s place in history.
"Thank you for giving us a season we will never forget and memories we will cherish forever,” Taft said.
Final Four

Buckeyes Return To National Prominence In St. Petersburg

THE BALL IS TIPPED — OSU center Ken Johnson and UConn's Jake Voskuhl sky to get the tip in the national semifinal game. This game, played before 41,940 at St. Petersburg's Tropicana Field, marked OSU's return to the Final Four after 31 years.

THE PRESIDENT SPEAKS — OSU president William "Brit" Kirwan addresses the crowd during an appreciation rally for the team on the Oval April 1.

LEAVING REDD-FACED — At left, OSU sophomore guard Michael Redd is consoled by assistant coach Paul Biancardi after his team's 64-58 loss to Connecticut in the national semifinals. At right, Redd converts a UConn turnover into a fast-break layup as Huskies guard Ricky Moore comes back to defend. Redd led the Buckeyes with 15 points and eight rebounds in the loss.

HANG ON SLOOPY — OSU fans rejoice as the basketball band plays "Hang On Sloopy" during a TV timeout. Ohio State had at least 8,000 fans among the crowd of 41,940 at the national semifinals.
A YEAR To Remember
Commemorating Ohio State’s 1998-99 Athletic Season

Germaine Leads OSU To Big Ten Title, Sugar Bowl Win
Penn Guides Buckeyes To Miracle Turnaround, Final Four
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Editor's Notebook

For Buckeyes, This Was A Year To Remember

By Steve Helvagen

Following the 1996 football season, we here at Buckeye Sports Bulletin decided to commemorate Ohio State's Rose Bowl victory with our first-ever color, magazine-format yearbook.

The results, you told us, were fabulous.

The "Rose Bowl Championship Yearbook" covered 112 pages and included a look at each game and many of the key figures connected to OSU's 1996 Rose Bowl champions.

Two years have passed, but here we are again with our second color, magazine-format yearbook. We committed to do this yearbook in January, after the football Buckeyes returned from New Orleans with their first-ever Sugar Bowl victory and a No. 2 finish in the final polls.

But as the weeks passed through the basketball season, it became apparent we would have to find a way to commemorate the men's basketball team's return to prominence. That team's trip to the NCAA Final Four — still viewed largely as a miracle after the school endured five straight losing seasons — was the cherry on top of the sundae.

And, for good measure, Ohio State began a new era in November 1998 with the opening of the $10 million Jerome Schottenstein Center.

As you can see, Ohio State's athletic exploits during 1998-99 made one a "Year to Remember."

No Title, But A Few Good Wins And A Few Good Men

If you are the standard-issue Ohio State football fan, you probably look back on the 1998 season as a lost opportunity.

After all, the Buckeyes were picked by nearly everybody in the preseason to win the national championship. They were the nation's No. 1-ranked team for 10 weeks.

But it was Michigan State, an enigmatic team that had blasted Notre Dame yet couldn't get out of its own way against the likes of Oregon or Minnesota, that spoiled OSU's unbeaten season with a 28-24 upset Nov. 7 at Ohio Stadium.

The loss dropped OSU out of serious contention for the first-ever Bowl Championship Series title game at the Fiesta Bowl, which Tennessee won over Florida State.

No, Ohio State did not deliver on its national championship promise and, yes, the drought between such titles stood at 30 years and counting.

But I want you to read this next part closely: 1998 was still a remarkable year for the Buckeyes.

It isn't every year that Ohio State beats teams like West Virginia, Penn State and Michigan — and by double digits, no less.

It isn't every year that Ohio State posts 11 double-figure victories.

It isn't every year that Ohio State simply beats Michigan (I know you know all about that already).

And, it isn't every year that Ohio State beats Michigan and wins its bowl game, this time around a convincing triumph over Big 12 champion Texas A&M in the Sugar Bowl.

In fact, the 1998 season marked just the sixth time in OSU history and first since 1982 that the Buckeyes made good on that double. It was also OSU's first Sugar Bowl win in three tries. OK, you're still not convinced.

Another reason I liked the 1998 Buckeyes was the personalities.

This team had great leadership from the unlappable Joe Germaine, heady and steady Jerry Rudzinski, and dynamic and diminutive Antoine Winfield.

That's probably because almost all big games on TV in those days, while hardly any OSU football games made the tube.

I remember staying up late to watch knock Herb Williams, Kelvin Raney and Kellogg out of the NCAA Tournament.

I was in the house in 1987 when Hopson set the school scoring record against Florida International.

I was in the front row when just laid down the lane twice, once at the end of the season and again at the beginning of the season in 1991.

And I was in Lexington, Ky., in the Fab Five deny the 1992 Buckeyes from Region's top seed, an almost-certain No.

Michael Wiley pumps up the crowd after he scored during the Buckeyes' victory over Toledo.

A Basketball Season We Will Never Forget

I have spent probably 26 or 27 of my years on this planet following Ohio State basketball.

That's probably because almost all big games on TV in those days, while hardly any OSU football games made the tube.

I remember staying up late to watch knock Herb Williams, Kelvin Raney and Kellogg out of the NCAA Tournament.

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BSB'S A YEAR 2 TO REMEMBER
Men's Basketball

Buckeyes Provide Thrills On Trip Down Tournament Trail

OSU’s Ken Johnson and UConn’s Jake Voskuhl sky for the jump ball to start the national semifinal game, played before 41,340 at Tampa Bay’s Tropicana Field.

OSU point guard and captain Scoonie Penn cuts the net at Tennessee’s Thompson-Boling Arena after OSU’s South Region win over St. John’s.

Scoonie Penn just misses a chance to block a layup attempt by UConn’s Rashamel Jones.
At Wendy's we’re big fans of the Ohio State Buckeyes!

You work up a big appetite after cheering for the Buckeyes. So, after the game, head over to Wendy's. Whether you're a fan of hot n' juicy cheeseburgers, delicious chicken sandwiches or just an order of golden fries, we’ve got something to cheer about.
Game 1
A New Era Opens As Ohio State Debuts In The Schott

By Jeff Rupp

It had been a long time since the Ohio State men's basketball team was in a shooting zone against a zone, but, hey, there were a lot of firsts in the Buckeyes' 89-61 win over Oakland University Nov. 13.

The visiting Golden Grizzlies, playing for the first time in program history as a Division I participant, tried to keep OSU's athletic scorers at bay with a zone defense. But the Buckeyes, playing before 11,533 in the "real" debut in the brand-new Jerome Schottenstein Center, found the stroke from the outside then destroyed Oakland with full-court pressure.

The result was a blowout win for the Buckeyes in the season opener for both schools.

"I'm very happy with our kids," OSU head coach Jim O'Brien said. "We did something against the zone tonight that we did not spend two seconds talking about this year. They picked up on it, and we got a load of open threes."

The Buckeyes didn't need to use their height advantage against undersized Oakland. They shot 64.9 percent and hit 8 of 12 threes in the first half en route to a dominating 58-25 lead.

At first a bit stunned at being left open on the arc, the OSU players eventually began firing — and connecting.

The biggest benefactor was sophomore guard Michael Redd, who shook off the shaky outside

Game 1: Ohio State 89, Oakland 61
Nov. 13, 1998 — Schottenstein Center; Columbus, Ohio (ESPnR)

Oakland

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Percentages: FG - 45.3%, FT - 59.7%, 3-Point Goals: 10-26, \( 0.384 \)

Ohio State

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Totals: 202-22-51-11-11-61

Percentages: FG - 45.3%, FT - 59.7%, 3-Point Goals: 10-26, \( 0.384 \)

Neshan Coleman scored 11 points on 4-of-7 shooting in the Buckeyes' 89-61 victory over Oakland, the first regular-season game at the Schottenstein Center.

shooting he showed in the two exhibition games in the new building and registered a game-high 29 points on 11-of-16 shooting.

"It was an example to come to me early, and it came to me tonight," said Redd, who picked up right where he left off last year when he led OSU in scoring as a freshman. "I felt real confident. My teammates found me on the baseline all night and I just hit my shots."

Oakland coach Greg Kampe admitted slugh-
Bucks Nip Alabama In Dedication Game

Game 2

Jason Singleton was second in scoring with 19 points as Ohio State knocked off Alabama 78-70.

had team highs in points (18) and rebounds (eight). Reese was effective for the most part in his 24 minutes of relief with nine points and five boards. Penn led OSU with 23 points, 17 in the first half when Michael Redd was held to just three.

"Help has arrived and his name is Sconie Penn," O'Brien said of his transfer point guard. "We would have been behind the eight ball if Michael had struggled like that prior to this year."

Redd still came through with 17 points and several clutch baskets on hanging drives. His leaner gave OSU a 55-54 lead, and moments later he came up with a steal and outletted the ball to Brian Brown, who found Singleton for an alley-oop dunk.

Alabama fought back to take a 64-62 lead, but another Singleton jam pushed OSU back in front 65-64 with 4:49 to play and Redd scored moments later on a clearout. After Redd and Singleton converged on Chancey Jones and caused a turnover, Singleton drove the lane and threw down another dunk.

The basket was wiped away because of a foul on the floor, but Singleton calmly sank a pair on the line — a rare sight last season when he was a miserable 36.1 percent from the stripe — and suddenly the Buckeyes held a 69-64 edge.

Alabama would go on to a 17-15 season with a first-round NIT defeat.
Ohio State Enjoys First Year In Jerome Schottenstein Center

By Steve Helwagen

Ohio State's magical ride to the Final Four — after five consecutive losing seasons — reads like a fairy tale.

The cherry on top, though, was the fact the Buckeyes accomplished so much in their inaugural season at the Jerome Schottenstein Center. After 42 seasons at St. John Arena, the Buckeyes moved down the street to their new arena.

"We had a wonderful first season for the Jerome Schottenstein Center," OSU athletic director Andy Geiger said after the season. "The number of events and the kind of events we were able to host was very gratifying."

"The fact we were able to convert the building from one event to another as quickly as we did was very gratifying."

Four years of careful planning and 2-1/2 years of painstaking construction culminated in a stellar first season at OSU's $110 million arena. An NBA exhibition game was originally scheduled as the first big event. But with that league sidelined due to a labor dispute, the Buckeyes opened the building themselves with a Nov. 3 exhibition game.

Geiger admitted it was a struggle down to the final day getting all of the building's final touches in place. In fact, the arena shop, christened "The Winning Schott," and the Hall of Fame Room did not open until later in the season.

"We really struggled to get it open on time," he said. "Everybody worked extremely hard to get it finished, and we immediately ran a whole series of events. In the main, I think everything went extremely well. We know there are areas we can improve, and we'll be working over the summer on a whole lot of things."

"We want to expand greatly the parking facilities we have around the building. The biggest problem we've had is traffic and parking. We think we have some good solutions for that."

Geiger reflected on the building project that he and former senior associate athletic director Paul Krebs, now athletic director at Bowling Green, had shepherded since mid-1994.

"Seeing it evolve has been the best thing," Geiger said. "You have an idea and a dream, and then you see it actually come through and it's better than you thought it would be — that's a wonderful feeling."

The 700,000-square-foot building has a listed seating capacity of 19,500. However, with the rush to complete the building, a number of temporary seats were not used for the first year.

OSU listed the official attendance for its Nov. 20 men's basketball game with Penn State as an estimated 19,500. But as the season wore on, actual ticket counts were used and the largest crowd was 18,701 for the Jan. 23 Minnesota game.

The Buckeyes gave the home folks their best, winning 14 of 15 regular-season games in their new arena. The lone loss to Iowa was a 71-68 heartbreaker. Although Oakland University was the first regular-season opponent Nov. 13, the arena was dedicated with a win over Alabama two days later.

The school's women's basketball and men's ice hockey programs also took up residence in the building, which also hosted a spate of entertainment events in its first year. Sellout crowds enjoyed the likes of Billy Joel, the Rolling Stones and Luciano Pavarotti.

"This is a full-service building, a complex and center that the entire community will enjoy for decades to come," Geiger said.

The arena had an original price tag of $75 million when plans for it were unveiled in June 1995.

But strong fundraising efforts, coupled with cost overruns, raised the bar subsequently to $85 million, $95 million, and $106 million the spring of 1998. The total actually inched ahead $4 million more in the closing months, partially because OSU had to cover heavy overtime wages to get the building done on time.

But Geiger has reason to smile: OSU raised over $40 million through the sale of advertising panels, seat licenses, luxury suites and naming rights — including $12.5 million from the family of the late Jerome Schottenstein and Schottenstein Stores Corp.

Through that agreement, the actual playing arena was christened the Value City Arena.

The Jerome Schottenstein Center as it looks from C-Deck at Ohio Stadium.

During a pre-opening media tour, OSU athletic director Andy Geiger points out some of Value City Arena's many features.
Value City Arena has a listed capacity of 19,500 for basketball. Forty-six of the 52 luxury boxes were leased for the initial season, at $45,000 to $65,000 a year.

Other naming gifts such as the $5 million Livingston Club, $2.5 million from the Kroger Co. to the Hall of Fame, and $1.5 million from Nationwide Insurance for the terrazzo floors also helped.

OSU leased 46 of the building's 52 luxury suites for $45,000 to $65,000 a year. All of the 4,300 seat licenses were sold at prices of $4,000, $6,000 and $15,000. Those seat licenses gave purchasers the right to buy season tickets and a first right of refusal on all entertainment events.

"We're confident," Geiger said. "We're in good shape financially."

The initial $15 million for the project came from the state of Ohio. OSU, which will use no bond money or general funds to finance the project, will sell bonds to cover the final $55 million. Fauretawas will be used to pay off the debt service on those bonds for the next 30 years.

"I don't know how this will be paid," Geiger told the media at one arena tour last season. "I can tell you that we have sold 13,500 season tickets for men's basketball. That is larger than the capacity at St. John Arena.

"I have the excitement of the new building as well as the excitement of the rebirth of the basketball program."

Key features within the building include terrazzo floors in each of the four main entrance areas, a huge one depicting former OSU coach Fred Taylor as a Buckeye baseball player, a 175-foot video board hung at center court, and an atrium Hall of Fame display and OSU athletic office located near the concourse on the entrance level.

Before the arena opened, the road leading into the Schottenstein Center was named after legendary men's basketball coach Fred Taylor (left). Inside, there is a terrazzo floor depicting Taylor during his days as a Buckeye baseball player.

Geiger, OSU's proactive AD, even cracked a smile when a reporter incredulously asked whether this state-of-the-art building is actually located on the campus of the once-staid Ohio State University.

"We are still learning," he said. "It's a great time at Ohio State.

"The Schottenstein Center has been a joy and a very important facility for the city. I say that knowing the (downtown) Nationwide Arena is a year away from being a reality. I do think there will be enough business and enough activity to keep two arenas busy and successful."
rebound off the OSU bench, and Brown scored eight points to go with a pair of steals.

**Game 4**

**Bucks Prevail In Big Ten Opener Over Penn State**

Everyone associated with the Ohio State men's basketball program expected to witness a maturation process and a renewed vigor on the court this season with a brand-new arena and several talented newcomers.

But no one expected it to be this enjoyable.

Jim O'Brien's Buckeyes started the good feelings with a 3-0 start and decided to roll the dice and see where they were with NCAA hopeful Penn State making an unprecedented Nov. 20 visit, the earliest conference game in Big Ten history. The Bucks rolled a seven in a 70-62 win over the Nittany Lions, played before the first capacity crowd of 19,500 at the Jerome Schottenstein Center.

"I know it's early in the year and I hate to get melodramatic, but I am exceptionally proud of these kids right now," O'Brien said at the postgame, "and I continue to be impressed with how hard they have worked from the first day of practice. Once again we struggled a little bit on offense, but our defense carried the day."

That defense ended up being the downfall for the Nittany Lions who fired up 25 attempts from long range and hit on just seven (28.0 percent).

The deep ball proved too tempting, especially because Penn State got few medium-range jumpers out of its half-court offense. Calvin Booth did damage inside with 19 points on 8-for-12 shooting, but the rest of the Lions struggled to penetrate the OSU defense.

Penn State (1-1, 0-1) finished 20 of 59 from the field (33.9 percent) and committed 18 turnovers, many setting the OSU fast break in motion.

Michael Redd led the Buckeyes (4-0, 1-0) with 21 points.

The Buckeyes played with a single-digit lead virtually the entire first half and went to the locker room with a 33-32 edge when Redd popped off a jumper off an isolation play with eight seconds remaining.

OSU quickly built the lead to 39-32 when Redd scored off a nifty flip-back pass from Jon霍 Singleton, and reserve guard Brian Brown knocked down a trey moments later to up the advantage to 42-34. A well-timed alley-oop from point guard Dan Earl to a dunking Booth trimmed the score to 44-40, but PSU never drew closer, missing on various scoring chances while the Buckeyes were willing in baskets.

OSU won the rebounding battle 43-36 as four players had at least seven. Scouring Penn suffered a sprained ankle before the end of the first half and was not a factor offensively with just five points and one field goal.

The game was played in November when efforts to find a December date fell through due to each school's holiday tournament commitments.

---

**Game 3: Ohio State 61, Robert Morris 49**

Nov. 18, 1998 — Schottenstein Center, Columbus, Ohio (ESPN)

Robert Morris  m  a  o  t  p
Weilsh 23 36 0 0 3 8
Jenni 20 17 0 4 2 4
Hopkins 0 2 0 1 0 3
Naylor 37 3 0 5 6 3 7
Cook 32 10 2 2 2 1 11
Pettyjohn 19 16 1 1 2 7
Jackson 25 37 0 4 1 2 0
Shiley 12 35 0 0 2 4
Smith 11 2 0 2 0 1
Peters 0 0 0 0 0 1

TOTALS 200 259 3 4 36 7 19 49

Percentages: FG: 33%, FT: 75%. 3-point goals: 6-17.

Ohio State  m  a  o  t  p
Belcher 26 17 0 1 2 4
Sanderson 16 17 1 1 1 3
Johnson 27 37 0 0 2 6
Pitt 34 11 11 1 0 2 7
Redd 27 5 1 2 3 3 13
Collins 25 13 2 5 5 2 10
Reese 19 35 1 0 2 5 12
Brown 21 12 4 0 2 9
Savovic 13 9 2 1 1 0 1
Dudley 3 11 0 0 1 0 2

TOTALS 200 369 3 6 18 10 12 61

Percentages: FG: 43%, FT: 60%. 3-point goals: 1-55.

The Buckeyes got 10 points from Brian Brown in a 70-62 home victory over Penn State.
Michael Redd, scoring here on a fast-break finger roll, notched a team-high 19 points as OSU whipped Army 86-45.

**Game 5**

**Army No Match for Athletic OSU**

 Much was made of Ohio State's unimpressive conference schedule, and few gave the Buckeyes much of a chance before the season. Michael Redd led the way for the Buckeyes, scoring 19 points, but Will Dudley added 11, and Szorty netted 10 and Shamar Herron pile in five points and seven boards off the bench.

The victory, a day after the euphoria of a 61-55 victory over rival Michigan, left the Buckeyes unbeaten and thinking about the NCAA Tournament.

"We're happy to get off to a 5-0 start," said coach Jim O'Brien. "We've shown we can win games right now and part of that is because they haven't been playing at their best. That will continue to be how we play and we're going to have to get used to the game we're going to have to go back to the second half of the season."
Game 7

OT Loss At Vandy First For Buckeyes

A true team effort had propelled Ohio State to its first six games, but coach Jim O'Brien had reason for concern — namely rebounding — heading into the first road contest of the season at Vanderbilt Nov. 28.

The coach proved prophetic when his Buckeyes were slaughtered on the boards but somehow still took the Commodores to the wire in a 92-86 overtime loss before 12,810 at Memorial Gym in Nashville, Tenn.

"I was very happy with how our guys responded to get the game into overtime, which, quite frankly, we didn't deserve to be in," O'Brien said.

The Buckeyes fought back from deficits as high as 14 points and reversed an eight-point halftime disadvantage with a 49-point output in the second half. But in the overtime, Vandy (6-1) owned the glass and hit timely shots in the win.

And still the Buckeyes (6-1) outshot their hosts (45.2 percent field goal shooting to 39.7), committed just 10 turnovers in the 45 minutes and hit 22 free throws. But OSU managed just 21 defensive rebounds and 36 total while Vandy produced numerous second-chance points with 23 offensive boards and 47 overall.

OSU twice cut a three-point lead to one with a pair of free throws by George Reese with 3:24 left in the extra session and two more by Michael Redd with 2:23 to play.

Vanderbilt, which was 21 of 23 at the charity stripe, iced the game with free throws.

The Commodores held a late 78-70 edge, but OSU scored 10 of the next 12 points to force the extra session. OSU drew even when Scoonie Penn drove in from the left wing on a clear-in.

At Vanderbilt, floor leader Scoonie Penn went off to the tune of 23 points on 7-of-15 shooting.

With 5.7 seconds remaining, Penn's bank shot missed a runner in the lane and Michael Brown and Ken Johnson collided on the tip attempt, sending the ball out of bounds and touching off a massive on-court celebration by UT students and fans.

Penn finished with 24 points and logged 16, but OSU's other three starters combined for just nine and only George Coleman (nine points, five rebounds) factored in.

"We had a lot of point-blank opportunities that we didn't cash in on," said OSU's O'Brien.

Game 8

Missed Chances Big At Toledo

The largest Toledo home crowd in 18 years in appropriately named Savage Hall — a frenzied throng of 9,228 — showed up to see its beloved Rockets take out the state's most famous university.

The result was a wild on-court party as UT sneaked past a somewhat bumbling band of Buckeyes, 64-63 on Dec. 5. OSU (6-2) had a week to prepare for its in-state rival after a Saturday night overtime loss to Vanderbilt but didn't look too focused.

Unbeaten Toledo (6-0), meanwhile, had the upper hand throughout and thwarted an OSU comeback to preserve the win.

The game was not as Ohio State officials had envisioned when they signed on with Toledo a couple years earlier to ensure homecoming appearances for Toledo natives Neshua Coleman and Jermaine Tate, who projected to be in their senior seasons.

Tate was kicked out of the program before the 1996 season, which prompted a transfer to Cincinnati, and Coleman, a former prep standout at Toledo St. John's Jesuit, played six minutes with no statistics to show in the box score.
Game 9
Skyhawks Cure Losing Streak

Ohio State got just what it needed after losing back-to-back games for the first time all season — a huge win over Tennessee-Martin.

The Buckeyes defeated the undersized Skyhawks 92-56 Dec. 14 in Columbus. That was the needed tonic for the Buckeyes, who built a 29-7 lead and cruised to victory.

“The biggest thing was we needed a win,” point guard Sconie Penn said. “It doesn’t matter who it comes against. We were stuck on six for a couple of weeks and it was time for No. 7.”

Ohio State’s lead grew to 31-24 at halftime as the Buckeyes canned 20 of 31 shots. They finished with a team shooting percentage of 63.8 with another strong showing (17 of 27) in the second half.

The Skyhawks finished a respectable 24 of 50 from the field but were dominated on the boards, 36-15, and committed 18 turnovers, seven of them OSU steals.

Michael Redd led OSU with 22 points, including 4 of 5 from three-point land, Jason Singleton hit 6 of 7 shots for 12 points, Jon Sanderson added 10 points and seven rebounds, and freshman Boban Savovic led the reserves with a career-high 16 points.

OSU (7-2) finished with a well-spread-out 24 assists and executed throughout.

“When was a good game for us in that it enabled us to get a lot of young kids a little bit more time,” OSU coach Jim O’Brien said. “You just want to give guys opportunities to feel a little bit better about themselves.”

The game marked the 250th career coaching win for O’Brien, who began his college coaching career at St. Bonaventure and spent 11 years at his alma mater, Boston College, before heading to Columbus in time for last season.

Jon Sanderson skied against the Skyhawks, putting up 10 points in OSU’s 92-56 victory over Tennessee-Martin.

Game 10
Redd, Penn Too Much For FAU

Ohio State outshot, outrebounded and outplayed everyone else Florida Atlantic in a 99-70 win at the Schottenstein Center Dec. 17. By picking up their eighth win in 10 games, the Buckeyes matched their win total of the previous season.

“It means a lot,” said Michael Redd, a rare bright spot in that dismal 8-22 campaign of the year before. “Obviously we’re feeling we’re going to have a better team, but it’s great to have this many wins already.”

Redd helped sink FAU with a team-high 26 points on 9-for-16 shooting that included 6-of-9 marksmanship from three-point range. Sconie Penn also had the touch from outside with 21 points and three treys of his own. Not to be overlooked was Jon Sanderson, who hit all seven of his shots and finished with 14 points, seven rebounds and five assists.

But Penn was the catalyst, keeping the Buckeyes in an offensive flow throughout.

“Tough to beat, clearly ahead early on that we had to play,” OSU coach Jim O’Brien said, “and when he gets that, he perks up a little bit, and I think he felt that he really had to get something done.”

Conversely, the visiting Owls, who had used hot outside shooting to stun a ranked Oklahoma State outfit earlier in the season, never got settled while missing up 37 threes, connecting on 13.

Ahead 55-36 at halftime, OSU reeled off 19 of the final 28 points in the second half to take its bigger lead at 74-40.

The only suspense came when walk-on Kwadjo Steele drew a foul with 11 seconds remaining and had a chance to put a crowd-pleasing 100 points on the scoreboard. He missed 1 of 2 free throws, however, as Boban Savovic rimmed out a long jumper at the buzzer to the sound of groans.

Ohio State easily won the board battle (49-23) and played enough defense to improve to 8-0 at home.

Game 12: Ohio State 99, FAU 70
Dec. 17, 1998 — Schottenstein Center; Columbus, Ohio (ESPn)

Game 30: Ohio State 99, FAU 70
Dec. 17, 1998 — Schottenstein Center; Columbus, Ohio (ESPn)

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Game 11: Ohio State 71, UAB 64

If Ohio State beat Alabama-Birmingham and no one saw it, does it count? It definitely did.

The Buckeyes set the tone for their Puerto Rico Holiday Classic championship by getting out a 71-64 first-round win against a Blazers team before a listed crowd of 250. OSU would go on to win 20 games and make the NCAA Tournament.

You’ve got to go in stages," OSU coach Jim O’Brien said of his team’s progress, “and we have to be very happy, very happy to win a game like this because this is a pretty good basketball team we beat.”

Michael Redd led the Buckeyes (9-2) with 28 points and 12 rebounds, scoring 18 of them in the first half as the Buckeyes built a 34-31 lead.

OSU gradually built its lead in the second half and pushed the lead to 49-42 on a drive by Scoonie Penn with eight minutes left.

Brian Brown added a basket from beyond the arc to make it 71-52 with 4:50 left and Marqueese Aubele gave OSU a 68-57 lead with 1:17 left, scoring a layup off a steal by Boban Savovic.

UBA trimmed the gap to 69-64 with three-pointer with 15 seconds left, but Penn iced the game with two free throws with 14 seconds left to make the final score 71-64.

Penn added 14 points and Reese and Jason Singleton each had 10 as OSU held UAB without a point for six of the game’s last nine minutes.

Damon Cobb scored 14 points to lead UAB, which shot just 36.1 percent from the floor.

The game was OSU’s first ever in Puerto Rico.

Game 12: Ohio State 81, N.C. State 64

On paper, what appeared to be OSU’s toughest contest in the Puerto Rico Holiday Classic turned out to be the easiest as the Buckeyes wiped out North Carolina State, 81-64, in a Dec. 22 second-round matchup.

The Buckeyes (10-2) blistered the nets, shooting 65.9 percent from the field (29 of 44). They did so against an N.C. State team (8-3) that had been holding its opponents to 37.2 percent shooting.

OSU led 35-35 at halftime before exploding with a 30-11 second-half run. The execution was near flawless as the Buckeyes hit 75 percent of their shots in the second half. The defense wasn’t bad either — OSU allowed the Wolfpack just four assists and forced them into 20 turnovers.

“This is a terrific win for us,” head coach Jim O’Brien said. “We played focused and I really like the way we worked for good shots.”

Michael Redd reached the 20-point plateau for the fourth straight game with 23 points. Jason Singleton, who hit all seven of his field goal attempts, added 17 points and 10 rebounds. Scoonie Penn chipped in 16 points and eight assists.

Versatile Adam Harrington was hard to handle in leading N.C. State with 19 points, but the Wolfpack were held to 20 points below the season average of 81.5 and shot just 38 percent, compared to their previous season mark of 22.4.

The win was OSU’s first against an ACC team since the Buckeyes defeated North Carolina 65-61 in the 1992 Southeast Regional semifinals.

N.C. State was left to go on finish a 19-14 after the second-round loss.

In game 11, Ohio State 71, UAB 64


In the first-round win over UAB at the Puerto Rico Holiday Classic, George Reese came off the bench to score 10 points and grab eight rebounds.


Game 12: Ohio State 81, N.C. State 64

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“This is a terrific win for us,” head coach
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A Great Collectable for the True Buckeye Fan!
Game 13
OSU Wins Classic
Over Ole Miss

As far as their reality-driven head coach was concerned, the Buckeyes weren’t going to consider their three-game holiday tournament showing a success unless OSU won two games.

But after the Buckeyes managed that feat by upsetting Alabama-Birmingham and North Carolina State on the first two days of the Puerto Rico Holiday Classic, Jim O’Brien and company decided to get greedy against Mississippi.

Again looking like the hungry team, the Buckeyes (11-2) pulled ahead of Ole Miss in the final minute and churned out a 67-62 win Dec. 23 to become the unlikely champions. OSU won its first in-season holiday tournament since 1992, when the Buckeyes took the two-game Far West Classic in Oregon.

O’Brien was concerned with the Rebels’ backcourt defense and with fatigue, especially considering normal sub Neshan Coleman again was held out of action. But the Buckeyes had enough energy to make all the big plays at the end and stage a gleeful on-court celebration, even with only a high school-like gathering in the Guerrera Gym.

“Our kids played hard and hung tough for three games, and this game was very, very difficult for us,” the coach said proudly. “It was like two fighters going into the 12th or 13th round and it was almost a matter of who was left standing.”

With OSU trying to hang on to a one-point lead, Jason Sinclair produced a three-point play that gave OSU a 64-60 lead with 25 seconds remaining, and Sconnie Penn later canned crucial free throws to ice the win.

Michael Redd finished with 19 points and seven rebounds and was named the tourney’s most outstanding player. Penn had a team-high 20 points but had to just two assists and committed six turnovers.

The loss dropped Ole Miss to 9-3. The Rebels would end the year 20-13 after a second-round NCAA Tournament loss.

Game 14
Miami’s James
Quite A Load

With tired legs and weak shooting, Ohio State was done in by a pretty talented Miami (Fla.) team 72-64 Dec. 27 at the Orange Bowl Basketball Classic in Sunrise, Fla.

The loss came on the heels of Ohio State’s surprising Puerto Rico Classic crown days earlier.

The Buckeyes (11-3) connected on just 8 of 29 shots against the Hurricanes in the first half and trailed by as many as 14 during the opening 20 minutes.

OSU trimmed the margin to three early in the second half, but in the end it was too much Tim James — Miami’s All-American caliber forward — for the Buckeyes to handle. James finished the evening with 29 points, 11 rebounds and five blocks.

“We just got outplayed to beginning to end,” Buckeye boss Jim O’Brien said. “There is no other way to camouflage it.”

The Buckeyes failed to score for one first-half stretch of six minutes and fell behind 30-16. But OSU rallied behind a three-pointer by Sconnie Penn and a driving one-hand shot by Michael Redd with two seconds left to trim the lead to 30-21 at halftime.

Redd ended up leading OSU with 19 points. Jon Sanderson added 13 points while Penn had 11.

An 11-3 OSU run, marked by six points from Sanderson, trimmed the Miami lead to 54-50 with 4:57 left. OSU still trailed 58-54 after Redd made a pair of free throws with 1:54 left. Penn had a chance to cut the deficit to one but telegraphed a three-point try, which James swatted away. The Miami star retrieved it, drove to the other end, scored and was fouled. His free throw gave Miami a 61-54 lead with 1:38 left. Six points was the closest OSU would come after that.

“We had no answer for Tim James,” O’Brien said. “He had a huge game. He was a difficult match-up for us. That type of big man is a match-up we fear in the conference.”

The loss in Miami’s back yard just a half hour from the Canes’ Coral Gable’s Stadium was no disgrace. Miami went on to knock off eventual national champion Connecticut in Big East play and was a No. 2 seed in the NCAA tournament.

Sconnie Penn called out the Buckeyes on the court after the game and it seems the Buckeyes made the best of the situation and embraced the moment. The Buckeyes ended up finishing the holiday tournament and were able to win two games in a row.

**Game 14: Miami (Fla.) 72, Ohio State 64**

Dec. 27, 1994 — National Car Rental Center, Sunrise, Fla. (SPCB)

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**BSB’S A YEAR 70 TO REMEMBER**
Redd, Brown Help Buckeyes Pull Out OT Win At Wisconsin

By Jeff Rapp

After spending six weeks all alone in first place in the Big Ten, Ohio State was not going to give up the top spot without a fight.

And, because of that tenacious effort and timely scoring, the Buckeyes ended a grinding road trip on a high note—a 78-74 overtime triumph over No. 19 Wisconsin Jan. 2 in Madison, Wis.

1998 ended with a loss at Miami (Fla.) and some doubts about how the Buckeyes would fare against top-10 competition. But 1999 began with a win that required several clutch moments late in regulation and overtime.

OSU (12-3, 2-0), which hung on to the Big Ten lead it grabbed with a late November win over Penn State, got a season-high 30 points from Michael Redd.

But it was freshman guard Brian Brown's one-pointer with .57 seconds left in overtime that ended a one-point deficit into a two-point lead for the Buckeyes.

"Those kids really stepped it up," OSU coach Bob Bino said. "We had a couple of chances up to that point. We were down a couple of points with 10 seconds left, but we were fortunate to get the ball in.

"As an example of Redd's dominance, he and OSU's last 12 points of the first half and first five points of the second half. With the game winding down, he nailed a free throw in the lane with 16.3 seconds left in regulation to give the game 68-68 and force the overtime.

Ohio State ended a six-year drought from the national rankings with an overtime victory over Wisconsin. Scoonie Penn had 18 points and six assists in 43 minutes for the Buckeyes.

"We just made a determination that we didn't think they had anybody who could guard Michael," O'Brien said. "We decided to just make it simple and get him the ball. We let him just back it down, and it worked well for us."

Point guard Scoonie Penn, who chipped in 18 points, six assists and three steals in 43 minutes of work, hit on 3 of 7 three-point attempts and the Buckeyes as a team nailed 8 of 16 from deep.

The Buckeyes (12-3, 0-0) hit OSU with a barrage of three-pointers, keyed by sharp-shooting Sean Mason, to forge a 33-25 lead late in the first half. Wisconsin held a 48-41 edge with just under 11 minutes left when OSU unleashed a three-point barrage of its own.

The Buckeyes went on a 19-7 run, keyed by three treys from Penn and two from Boban Savovic, that gave them a 60-55 lead with 5:37 left.

Wisconsin battled back and took a 66-64 lead with 1:27 left in regulation on a pull-up jumper by Mason, who led UW with 22 points.

OSU's George Reese swished a pair of key free throws with 34.3 seconds left to tie the game, but the Buckeyes mistakenly fouled Mike Kelley while trapping. Kelley hit both his free throws with 23.9 seconds left for a 68-66 lead.

That set the stage for Redd's all-important jumper to tie the game. Mason missed a three-point try just before the regulation buzzer for the Badgers.

In the overtime, OSU climbed out of a 74-71 hole on a pair of Redd free throws, a defensive stop and Brown's corner three.

OSU center Ken Johnson grabbed one of his game-high 12 rebounds on a Mason miss with 41 seconds left and the Buckeyes sealed the win when Redd sank a pair of free throws with 11 seconds left.

The win was OSU's first road overtime win in 13 years, dating to January 1986 win at Northwestern. The victory also broke OSU's 10-game losing streak to ranked teams and was OSU's first over a ranked team since Nov. 19.

It propelled the Buckeyes into the national rankings at 25th in the Jan. 4 USA Today/ESPN coaches poll, ending a six-year OSU drought from the rankings.
Penn Became Driving Force Behind OSU's Final Four Run

By Jeff Rapp

By now, everyone who follows the Ohio State men's basketball program is aware that a legend was hatched during the 1998-99 season. He came from another part of the country, practiced behind closed doors and sat on the OSU bench as a mere spectator while the Buckeyes languished with an 8-22 mark the year before, then made his mark. He took over at a position where a guiding hand was sorely needed and meshed with all components.

He came up with loose balls, ripped key rebounds and sank big, big shots. He zipped passes to Jason Singleton on the move, encouraged freshmen Boban Savovic and Brian Brown, set up shooters Jon Sanderson and Neshan Coleman and found Ken Johnson and George Reese in the lane.

And when he wasn't doing all that he was joining forces with Michael Redd, giving the Buckeyes one of the most dynamic backcourts in the country.

His name is James Penn, but there is no need to call him by anything but his lovable nickname Scoonie. It didn't take long for Ohio State fans to realize Penn was a special breed, and that his leadership abilities and flair for the dramatic come naturally.

"Being a leader, I have to stay positive," said the effervescent Penn, who, at less than 5-10, after just one season could be considered among the best mighty mites ever to don the scarlet and gray. "And if things aren't going my way or my shots aren't falling, I have to help out and find other ways to help us win."

That's exactly what Penn did as a junior point guard, leading the Buckeyes to a school record-tying 27 wins and the program's first Final Four appearance since 1968.

"He's a very competitive kid," said OSU head coach Jim O'Brien, who recruited Penn to Boston College, watched him mature into a difference-maker, then welcomed him to Columbus soon after he himself came here in 1997. "The thing I've always enjoyed about him is he does not want to lose at anything. Even when we have shooting games, he turns it into a competitive situation.

"And with Scoonie we can sit there and not go crazy because we know the guy with the ball knows what's going on. He understands what has to get done and for the most part he is probably going to make a pretty good decision."

In his first year with the Buckeyes, Penn averaged 16.9 points and 3.9 rebounds per game and led the team in assists (154), steals (70), three-pointers (88), three-point percentage (38.4), free-throw percentage (74.1) and minutes per game (34.6). Those numbers and his uncanny ability to pull the Buckeyes through in a 12-4, second-place Big Ten campaign helped him earn league player of the year honors from the media.

"He's shown great leadership throughout the season," Redd said as the team prepared for the Final Four. "He's gotten on fellows when they've needed it. That's what it takes.

"Plus, he believes in his abilities and that he can play with anybody."

With his on-court exploits, the Final Four appearance and the cool nickname, it didn't take long for James "Scoonie" Penn to become an OSU legend.

"The guys just took me that way right away," added Penn. "I didn't come into this program being bossy and being a leader and trying to take over. I was just myself.

"I think the thing this program needed was a leader. Because I had experience, they looked at me as a leader. I told the guys what could happen if we continued to work hard and worked together. They bought into it, and I'm happy they did."

Penn didn't just show up and take the ball, though. He displayed his tenacity every day in practice in his sit-out season and won strength and conditioning coach Sean Sheppard's summer workout heptathlon.

"It helps coaching when your best player — or in this case, with Scoonie and Michael, your best players — are your hardest workers," O'Brien said. "That rubs off."

So did Penn's broad smile and thirst for success. As the Buckeyes began mounting enough wins to make historians research the greatest turnarounds in NCAA history, it was clear Penn was the team's ultimate barometer for success.

OSU looked downright vulnerable when Penn was injured crashing to the floor in a regular-season finale loss to Penn State. With Penn still smiling, the Buckeyes lost to Iowa in the Big Ten tournament, causing many to downsize the team's chances in the NCAA tourney.

As it turned out, his play in the South Regional semifinals and finals was among the best all year. He tallied 26 points, hitting 4 of 7 three-pointers, and dished out four assists as OSU's upset of top-seeded Auburn

Then, two days later he nearly pulled off the school's first triple-double, scoring 22 points, grabbing eight rebounds and dishing out eight assists in the win over St. John's.

"He totally halts me," Johnson said of Penn while the team was in Knoxville, Tenn. Penn was solved for degree in the nation semifinal loss to Connecticut when Big Ben Moore held him to 13 and 11 from the field and NBA.

"He's a very special player and person for all of us coaches for the last couple of years."

That bond and the opportunity to reach even greater heights helped Penn decide to stay another year for his senior year, putting off his elevation in the NBA.

He also spoke of attaining his degree in psychology when he publicly announced his decision on March 27, exactly one month after the conclusion of OSU's magical season.

"We're just happy he looked at the big picture — and it just shows what type of kid he is," assistant coach Dave Spiller said.

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By Steve Helwagen

If there were any doubts whether this Ohio State team was for real, they were allayed when the Buckeyes dealt Indiana its worst defeat in the series under 28-year coach Bob Knight.

Jason Singleton scored 17 points on 8-of-9 shooting as the 25th-ranked Buckeyes downed No. 13 Indiana 73-56 before 18,066 fans Jan. 9 at the Schottenstein Center.

The year before, OSU failed in three tries to upset Indiana, the most frustrating loss coming at home as Luke Recker picked off a flip pass intended for Michael Redd and dashed for a game-winning slam.

But this time the Buckeyes held Recker to a mere two points. Mired in foul trouble, he played just 12 minutes.

"I thought Ohio State played very well," Knight said. "One thing we couldn’t do tonight was get knocked out of the box at the start of the second half, and we did. We just got into a position where things kind of snowballed on us."

In fact, there’s no telling how ugly this one would have gotten if it weren’t for the A.J. Guyton sideshow. IU’s all-league guard popped threes from all angles and scored 27 points, but it still wasn’t enough to overcome the balanced Buckeyes, who improved to 13-3 and 3-0 in the Big Ten.

George Reese gets off a shot over the right hand of Hoosier Kirk Haston. Haston scored 10 points for Indiana, but OSU prevailed in a big way, 73-56.

"Everyone is focused now and every piece is finally here now," said OSU center Ken Johnson. "We’re just playing ball!"

Johnson worked overtime. Even though he was the only OSU starter out of double figures with eight points, he took advantage of an unimpressively IU front line by grabbing 11 rebounds and adding five blocks.

"He’s really been a factor," OSU coach Jim O’Brien said of his center after watching him pull down 10 or more boards for the third straight game. "He alters some shots, he gets his hands on stuff, he’s quick to get to the ball, and when we were playing zone in the second half, he seemed to be getting to all the defensive rebounds."

The high level of play trickled all the way down. All five OSU starters had at least four field goals and combined to shoot 26-for-48 (54.1 percent). Redd had 14 points, while Seconie Penn finished with 12 points, six assists and six steals.

The Buckeyes also clobbered the reeling Hoosiers (14-5, 1-3) on the boards 40-27 and caused them to shoot 37.7 percent from the field while forcing 21 turnovers.

"When we’re at our best, it’s kind of hard to beat us," Redd said. "This is the way I imagined it from the beginning, and this year it’s coming true." OSU led 35-30 at halftime before taking control with a 9-0 run to start the second half. Jon Sanderson, who chipped in 10 points, started it with a three-point play.

Guyton’s jumper on the other end rolled around and out to a rebounding Johnson, and Sanderson made it hurt again with a three-point bomb at the other end. Moments later, Penn grabbed one of his steals, set the fast break in motion by outletting to Redd and canned his return pass.

That upped the score to 44-30 and sent Knight to the bench for the first of three timeouts at the 18:04 mark.

"I think that was the absolute key part of the game," Knight said afterward.

Indiana later pulled to within eight at 44-36 on Recker’s lone hoop of the night, but OSU never tightened from there as OSU put back another 9-0 run keyed by four free throws from Boban Savovic and a layup from Redd.

"This is the biggest win of my careermaking Indiana," Redd said. "It was some reward for us after they beat us three times last year."

The Buckeyes were 3-0 in conference for the first time since the 1991-92 season, which was also OSU’s biggest win over the Hoosiers since a 100-83 win on Feb. 14, 1970.

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Game 16: Ohio State 73, Indiana 56
Jan. 9, 1999 — Schottenstein Center, Columbus, Ohio (ESPN2)

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TOTALS 22 22 0 0 0

Percentages: FG: .377, FT: .567, 3-point goals: 8-26

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**Game 17**

Iowa Deals OSU Lone Home Loss

The first of many special moments for Ohio State came Jan. 12 when 12th-ranked Iowa rode into town with the Big Ten lead on the line.

Few of the 18,554 fans crammed into the home Schottenstein Center will forget the Buckeyes’ 71-68 setback to the Hawkeyes, which was filled with big plays and down-to-the-wire thrills.

The raucous crowd yelled for the 23-ranked Buckeyes from the beginning to the end of the game — which was telecast on ESPN — but still wasn’t totally prepared for the disappointment of a defeat that hung in the air until Sonnie Penn’s three-point attempt clanged away as the buzzer sounded. The loss likely wouldn’t have been if Dean Oliver hadn’t made an improbable, leaping three-pointer on the game’s final possession.

It also was difficult for fans to see Ohio State (13-3, 3-1) come within an eyelash of Iowa on a tight when leading scorer Michael Redd was too tall to even warm up. He played 28 minutes with flu and missed 10 of 16 shots.

“I think it was a close game,” OSU coach Jim O’Brien said of Redd, who finished below his 20-point average with 12 points. “He had nothing in his legs. But he was a high-lail tonight and he gave what he could.”

But even Redd’s weakened condition didn’t prevent O’Brien from drawing up a play for him with OSU trailing 69-68 in the final seconds. Ball never got the chance, though, as Iowa ended the half and forced freshman Boban Jovicic to miss connections with Jason Thompson on an inbounds play with 5.8 seconds running. Oliver then hit a pair of free throws to produce the final points.

The tense final two minutes were set up by a pair of clutch threes by an otherwise quiet Kent McCausland. Penn grabbed a steal with 3:11 to play, but Iowa was awarded the ball on a defensive tie-up — a new rule instituted prior to the season — and McCausland canned a trey moments later to tie the score at 63.

Penn put OSU back in front, 68-66, by coming off a Ken Johnson screen and nailing his third three-pointer of the evening.

With OSU shadowing McCausland and J.R. Koch and denying Jess Selles the ball, Oliver drove into his left shoulder into Penn and forced up a long jumper that floated through with 22.5 seconds to play.

Penn played 37 near-flawless minutes against Iowa’s pressure, turning in 21 points, eight assists, four rebounds and four steals. In all that action, he turned the ball over just once and hit a multitude of big shots.

He also put the Schott into its biggest frenzy all season by knitting through traffic and flipping a Magic Johnson-like lookaway to a dunking Redd that gave OSU a 59-55 lead.

Scoonie Penn scored in 13 points and five boards, with Ken Johnson led OSU on the glass with nine rebounds.

Iowa (13-1, 4-0) won its 11th straight game and dealt OSU its first loss in its new arena.

**Game 18**

Asselin’s Assault Leaves OSU Blue

In what turned out to be the season’s low point, Ohio State lost 84-74 to Michigan at Crisler Arena Jan. 16. It may also result in a 40-point loss, because that’s what it felt like.

“We didn’t do anything today,” OSU guard Michael Redd said. “We didn’t play any defense, we didn’t run our offense. When you do that on the road you’re going to get beat every time.”

Ohio State (13-3, 3-2) allowed UM post player Josh Asselin to have a career day with 22 points and 10 rebounds. The 21st-ranked Buckeyes looked disjointed on offense much of the afternoon and watched in horror as UM guards Louis Bullock and Robbie Reid put on a three-point shooting clinic. That, of course, delighted the 11,334 in rejuvenated Crisler Arena and disgusted OSU head coach Jim O’Brien.

“We were not very good today,” he understood. “We had a hard time scoring. It was another game where we didn’t shoot the ball particularly well.”

Usually part of the solution, Redd also added to OSU’s woes by scoring a career-low eight points. He was held in single figures just one other time — when he scored nine points vs. BYU in a three-point clinching in Hawaii last season — in his two standout seasons at OSU.

Reid finished 3 of 12 from the field and running mate Sonny Weems, forced to try and pick up the load, was 5 of 15 with 17 points.

The Buckeyes clanged 17 of their 32 free-throw attempts, many of the misses coming as...
By Jeff Rapp

Almost nothing was as it was supposed to be, or had been in recent times, as Ohio State unleashed its belt and lashed No. 16 Purdue 72-43 in front of 18,595 in the Jerome Schottenstein Center and an ESPN national television audience Jan. 19.

The Buckeyes entered play with two straight losses, including a throwaway showing at Michigan days earlier, and figured to have their hands full with Purdue, a perpetual Big Ten contender and thorn in OSU's side under Gene Keady.

But one year after the Boilermakers handed OSU its worst loss ever in St. John Arena, Keady's troops didn't take well at all to the new digs.

"Never in a hundred years would I have thought we would have won by this margin," a stunned Jim O'Brien said to start his postgame address.

The Buckeyes (14-5, 4-2) did it by jumping out to a 12-3 start highlighted by crowd-rousing baskets such as a Jon Sanderson three, a Michael Redd backdoor hoop off a Sanderson feed and a similarly nifty backdoor play by Jason Singleton from Redd.

Defensively, OSU was even better, forcing the Boilermakers (14-5, 2-3) into a shot-clock violation on the game's first possession and half with an improbably comfortable 42-22 lead.

"Reserve Boban Savovic ignited that blitz with a three-pointer and subsequent steal that led to a Redd lay-in."

"I'm very, very proud of our guys for the way they responded," O'Brien said after the Buckeyes improved to 3-1 against ranked teams on the season. "It's probably a little early to talk about must-wins, but certainly this was a very important game for us."

The sense of urgency was not lost on point guard Sconie Penn, who called a team meeting after practice two days before the game.

But as focused as Ohio State's effort was, Purdue's performance was dismal with a rancid shooting percentage of 32.1 and a 1-of-15 showing from three-point range.

Most stunning of all was Purdue's lack of fight, a staple under Keady. The Boilermakers had no answer for OSU in the inspired play and didn't show much resolve to stop it.

During the game, Keady often sat with arms folded, muttering.

"I have no idea what he was telling his team to do. He could tell me he was pretty frustrated," Sanderson said.

Redd was at his season average — 19 points — at halftime and finished with a game-high 30. His brief first-half showing was capped by a pull-up jumper that swished through the buzzer sounder. His performance came just a few minutes after being held to a career low eight points at Maryland.

No other Boilermaker besides Redd reached double figures, as.

Kevin Evert

POINT IN THE BUCKEYES' 72-43 VICTORY OVER PURDUE

"I was all Michael Redd on the offensive end and free throws in the first 5-1/2 minutes of action," Purdue seemed to seethe, whether it was the score to 18-11 or the automatic foul from the official.

"It was all Michael Redd on the offensive end and free throws in the first 5-1/2 minutes of action," Purdue seemed to seethe, whether it was the score to 18-11 or the automatic foul from the official.
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Ohio State Shows Merit With 89-60 Romp Over Minnesota

By Jeff Rapp

Consider this Exhibit B.

Anyone who thought Ohio State's 29-point win over 16th-ranked Purdue was an aberration had to be convinced when the Buckeyes churned out a carbon copy days later.

The next roadkill was No. 17 Minnesota, which was splattered by the same margin Jan. 23 in one of the rowdiest night games in memory. In improving to 15-5 overall, 5-2 in the Big Ten and 11-1 in the Schottenstein Center, OSU got to the game's first television timeout with an amazing 16-point lead and ducted off the Golden Gophers 89-60 before a hyped-up throng of 18,701.

"They did a tremendous job," Minnesota coach Clem Haskins said without hesitation. "They just kicked our fannies from start to finish."

The Buckeyes deflected some of the credit for that to the crowd, which set the tone as the teams aligned for the opening tip by offering thunderous encouragement.

"I was sitting there getting the chills, to be honest with you," OSU coach Jim O'Brien said. "It's the first time I've ever been at a game where a team got a standing ovation before they threw the ball up."

"How can you not get excited to play?"

Michael Redd, who helped overwhelm Purdue with 30 points, got right back in the groove. He drew a foul 10 seconds into the game.

Michael Redd (22) face-guarded Minnesota's Quincy Lewis tightly in the Buckeyes' 89-60 victory. Lewis scored 23 points to Redd's 19.

with an explosive drive and hit a pair of free throws. Then, he nailed a top-of-the-key three-pointer seconds later after a Minnesota turnover.

And before most could rub the sleep out of their eyes for this early Saturday game, the Buckeyes had a 7-0 lead as Jason Singleton wrestled the ball away from UM sharpshooter Quincy Lewis and threw down a rim-swinging two-handed dunk.

When the first mandatory TV timeout came at the 15:44 mark, OSU had a 21-5 lead and Redd, who would end up with 19 points, already had 10.

Guard Kevin Clark hit a corner jumper and a three for the Gophers (12-4, 3-3), but no one else got untracked.

With the clear advantage early, OSU concentrated on its team defense, which often featured a triangle-and-two to slow down Lewis and Clark, both among the league's top five three-point shooters.

And neither of them was a particularly adept ball-handler in the open court, a point that was exposed by an OSU press that helped force Minnesota into 18 turnovers.

The Buckeyes tallied the first seven points of the second half, this time on hoops by Singleton and Redd and a long-range three by Scottie Penn.

Lewis gave Minnesota a breath of hope with a three of his own, trimming the score back to 50-35, but Penn, who scored a game-high 19, keyed in a 20-6 run that got the UM bus warm.

Meanwhile, OSU center Ken Johnson was dominating Minnesota's highly touted freshman pivot, Joel Przybilla, who fouled out with eight points, four rebounds and one block. Johnson finished with 10 points, eight rebounds and two blocks.

Days after exacting a measure of revenge, Purdue, the Buckeyes detailed Minnesota, which beat OSU 76-53 in the only meeting between the teams the previous season. Hauser had his top player, forward Sam Jacobson, on the court in that game's final stages to keep points-a-game streak alive.

"We were motivated. The last time we played them they kind of rubbed our noses in it," said Penn, who had to sit out last year as a transfer.
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OSU coach Jim O'Brien uses a bullhorn to address an after-midnight crowd that greeted the Buckeyes at the Schottenstein Center after the team returned home from their March 20 NCAA South Region win in Knoxville, Tenn.

By Jeff Rapp

Those removed from the Ohio State program may remember Jim O'Brien as one of college basketball's runners-up in 1999. His Buckeyes were a feel-good story, rising from the ashes of the Big Ten all the way to the grandeur of the Final Four before losing to eventual titlist Connecticut.

And with a near-record turnaround, O'Brien's handiwork was an obvious magnet for national coach of the year, which also just missed out on. Instead, that honor went to Auburn's Cliff Ellis, who won the biggies from the Associated Press, the U.S. Basketball Writers Association and The Sporting News.

But O'Brien isn't about to associate OSU's 27-8 season — which tied a school record for wins — with shortcomings.

"When you think about being one game away from the national championship, it's almost a surreal experience for me. That's the disappointing thing — to get this far and not win the whole thing," O'Brien told the media moments after the heartbreaking loss to UConn. "But I think about when we first started practice in September with the running, (losing) is not that big a deal to me right now."

Showing the same amount of grace as a glowing success as he did in his initial season in Columbus when the Buckeyes were just 8-22, O'Brien did pick up a national award days after the NAAs concluded. He was chosen as the winner of the Clair Bee Coach of the Year award, given to the active Division I basketball coach "who has made the most significant positive contributions to his sport."

He also was honored as the Big Ten coach of the year, edging out fellow Final Four participant Tom Izzo of league champion Michigan State's Dick Bennett, who also had a season beyond expectation.

"It's a real nice honor, especially in the conference," O'Brien said after the media watched the award, "because in my mind the best coaching in this conference is as good as place in America, top to bottom."

"But the thing that makes this most gratifying is where we were a year ago."

Nothing wakes up America to the new coach like a Cinderella season, the coach make someone's "hot" list.

Sure enough, there were immediate reports O'Brien would be courted away after the Big Ten tournament. All over the country, athletic director Andy Geppert made someone's "hot" list.

There were even rumors O'Brien's OSU's brand-raging during a big in Minnesota.

"I've never heard a star player say they would stay in the A when they could not get paid."

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"I'm hoping it's something athletic director Andy Geppert and the Buckeyes' 16-0 season wouldn't be possible."

I'm hoping it's something athletic director Andy Geppert and the Buckeyes' 16-0 season wouldn't be possible."

Try in a big w
Basketball Profiles

Assistants Behind O'Brien Every Step Of The Way

By Jeff Rapp

Behind every conquering leader and behind every person who is credited with special achievement there are the much less-known guiding forces who also deserve the plaudits.

In the case of the Ohio State men's basketball program, led by town hero Jim O'Brien, the stagehands are a staff of assistant coaches who may be as capable as any in the country.

Knowing this would be a key to success, O'Brien happily welcomed all three of his full-time assistants at Boston College — Rick Boyages, Paul Biancardi and Dave Spiller — to Columbus when he accepted the post at Ohio State in 1987. He also learned from BC strength and conditioning coach Sean Sheppard and Randy Shront, who was hired on as OSU's new director of basketball operations.

"We've known each other for so long and everybody knows what he has to do," said Boyages, who serves as OSU's associate head coach. "We don't need people to pat us on the back all the time because we're already thankful that we're working with great people."

But the praise came anyway when O'Brien was chosen as the Big Ten coach of the year following the 1988-89 regular season. A year after enduring an 8-22 season that included a 1-15 mark in conference play, O'Brien and staff pushed the Buckeyes all the way to the Final Four with a 27-9 mark and second place in the league with a 12-4 mark.

"It is very important for me, in our situation, to point out that we are much more than a one-man operation," O'Brien said after accepting the award. "A lot of it is due to our staff and the hard work they put into it."

That notion was echoed by star guard Sconie Penn, yet another BC refugee who sat out during the last-place season.

"I'm so happy for the coaches," Penn said. "The reason why is last year, even when we only won once in the conference, the coaching staff never stopped coaching. They coached every day in practice. They kept pushing guys and tried to make everybody improve."

Added Jerom Singleton, a senior starter during OSU's amazing turnaround season, "They mean a great deal to the team. Those guys and (video coordinator) Jamie (Kachmark) work hard every night breaking down film. They come to (free-throw) practice early in the morning to watch us and help us.

"This is a true team. Everybody works together as a unit, and that's why we've been successful."

However, some of O'Brien's staff members are finally beginning to make a name for themselves. Spiller and Biancardi, who both have been considered candidates for open head coaching jobs since arriving at Ohio State, were singled out by Sports magazine as two of the assistant coaches "On The Rise."

Spiller, in fact, was in line for the top position at Fordham after the 1997-98 season before former NBA head coach Bob Hill was hired to the post.

"Certainly the visibility from the Final Four has helped me, Paul and Rick as assistants," Spiller said, "and Obie is definitely not one to get in the way of something like this. He's like a big brother to us and he's always said he'd do anything to help us. If I called him at 2 in the morning and asked him to get on a 7 a.m. flight to talk to people for me, he'd do it.

"But O'Brien, like the OSU players and fans, is in no hurry to lose an assistant."

"I can't tell you how comforting it is to have these guys," he said.
By Jeff Rapp

Funny as it sounds, Ohio State gained worlds of respect nationally after a 76-71 loss at Michigan Jan. 27.

The Spartans were the odds-on choice to win the Big Ten and the Buckeyes were supposed to be also-rans, but both teams let it all hang out for 40 minutes and the Buckeyes gained some admirers after the loss.

Both teams would continue to impress all year, each making the Final Four and holding the Big Ten banner high.

The 15th-ranked Buckeyes played almost flawless defense in the first half and kept Mateen Cleaves and the MSU running game in check in leading 37-33 at the break. A surprising dose of the OSU offense came from reserve George Reese, who collected 12 first-half points.

But after Reese's lone second-half basket gave the Buckeyes (15-6, 5-3) a 46-42 edge, the No. 8 Spartans (17-4, 6-1) finally discovered the energized run they were looking for, posting a game-winning 14-3 spree.

The Buckeyes, to their credit, fought back.

Michigan native Jason Singleton helped settle his team with a tough turnaround in the post and moments later made an anticipation steal of a pass intended for A.J. Granger in the middle of the floor and threw down a two-handed dunk. After Granger missed the front end of a one-and-one, Sconnie Penn drained a jumper over Jason Klein to pull OSU within one.

But Michigan State had all the answers. Klein hit his fourth three of the night to give MSU a 59-55 lead and when Michael Redd banked in a turnover shot over a pair of defenders to trim the score to 61-59, Cleaves answered with a flip shot in the lane from his hip and Charlie Bell added a slam off a Morris Peterson steal to push the lead back to seven.

Three-pointers by Neshan Coleman and Redd added a little suspense to the final minute of play, but Cleaves hit six straight free throws down the stretch.

The game was billed as a showdown between the league's two best point guards, Cleaves and Penn, and it lived up to its billing. It didn't hurt that Cleaves hit a dagger late in the game to keep the Spartans rolling. The MSU point guard was held to just two points in the first half but finally

OSU center Ken Johnson goes up for a shot against Michigan State's A.J. Granger as OSU guard Michael Redd prepares to rebound.

Penn finished with 17 points, six of those two turnovers while Redd led OSU with 15 points. Reese tallied 14 points.

Bell scored 14 off the pine for MSU Peterson added 10. Meanwhile, SBHovicei scored just two points in 19 minutes, Alien Brown did not score in 11 minutes, and his key double dribble with 1:34 left in the game was whistled for a key double dribble with 1:34 left in the game.

Osborne ended everything but the final buzzer by whistling Buckeyes an average 5 of 14 for the range for 35.7 percent while MSU hit 11 of 22, with Coleman and Redd both hitting their shots, but Penn was 1 of 7 and Savovic 0 of 2.
By Mike Wachsmann

Even in a dream season, there are land mines everywhere. Ohio State avoided a major blowup when it came away with a hard-fought 64-61 victory at Illinois Jan. 30.

"I would be making a mistake if I don't talk about how proud I am of these guys," said OSU coach Jim O'Brien, whose Buckeyes secured their first winning season since 1993 with the win. This was one game where we did not have a whole lot going for us, but we did the things we absolutely had to do to win the game.

Ohio State (16-6, 6-3) survived despite holding the lead for just two of the game's 40 minutes. But the Buckeyes rallied behind a timely three-point shot by Neshan Coleman, strong defense, and a handful of key free throws — including a pair by point shooter Brian Brown with 5.1 seconds left.

The Illini (9-13, 1-8) were coming off their first Big Ten win of the year Jan. 28 at Michigan, and behind a career-high 29 points and six three-pointers from freshman guard Cory Bradford, Illinois was primed to upset the Buckeyes.

Illinois led 28-22 at halftime and was clinging to a 41-33 advantage with eight minutes left. The teams took turns making runs at each other in the second half. OSU reeled off seven unanswered points to cut the Illini lead to 41-40 in 10:23 left.

Illinois forward Cleois Brown, who finished with 15 points, hit a three-pointer and Bradford made back-to-back treys in a 9-3 spurt that pushed the lead back to 50-43 with 8:39 left.

OSU slowly chipped away, getting a three-pointer from Coleman and a driving layup by senior Pent before taking the lead at 56-54 on a Pent free throw with 3:09 left.

Brian Brown only had two points in OSU's victory over Illinois, but they were a huge pair: He nailed two free throws with 5.1 seconds left in the game to give OSU a three-point lead that would hold up.

The Illini regained the lead at 58-57 on Bradford's 10-foot jumper in the lane with 1:38 left.

But Coleman stood tall when Jason Singleton dished to him in the right corner. He buried the trey to give OSU a 60-58 lead with 1:12 left.

Singleton hit 1 of 2 free throws to make it 61-59, but Michael Redd fouled Illinois' Lucas Johnson on the second one. Johnson swished both of his free throws to knot the game 61-61.

After an OSU timeout, Redd was fouled on a drive with 29.8 seconds left, and he hit 1 of 2 free throws. The Buckeyes led 62-61, but the Illini had possession after Victor Chukwudebe rebounded the miss.

Bradford missed a foul-line jumper, but the Illini retained possession when Penn knocked the ball out of bounds. After a timeout, Sergio McClain inbounded to Chukwudebe. His shot over Ken Johnson was short, but McClain grabbed the miss and tried to heave it out of bounds as he was being dragged to the ground.

The wild scramble ended with Redd rebounding the errant shot and outletting it uneventful to Brown, who was fouled with 5.1 seconds left. He made both free throws to give OSU its biggest lead of the game at 64-61.

Penn and Redd finished with 15 apiece and Coleman, Johnson and Singleton added 10 each.

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Buckeyes Sidestep Upset Bid, Escape Illinois With 64-61 Win

By Mike Wachsmann

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Penn and Redd finished with 15 apiece and Coleman, Johnson and Singleton added 10 each.
Reed, Penn Engineer Rare Season Sweep Of Boilers

Ohio State led 49-34 at the half and pushed the advantage early in the second stanza.

OSU started the second half by taking the crowd out of the game, opening a 60-30 advantage. Reed, who scored on his first touch to start the game, nailed a three-pointer seconds into the second half. Johnson then put together a dominating showdown with a dunk, sweeping hook and tip-in all in less than two minutes.

With 16:30 to play, Purdue was down 22 and simply playing for pride. But that pride came through as the Boilermakers made things tense — for a short time, anyway.

Purdue kept chipping away and pulled to 72-64 on a Jarare Cornell leaner at the four-minute mark. But that only spurred Penn, who hit back-to-back threes and scored off a drive with 1:47 to play to complete the day’s scoring.

Purdue’s inability to get a good look at the basket for the first 30 minutes of the game compounded the situation. Purdue point guard Carson Cunningham was just 4 of 15 from the floor, had no assists and four turnovers.

The win gave the Buckeyes a much-needed momentum and allowed them to keep pace with front-running Michigan State and on game up in the loss column on Wisconsin and Northwestern.

OSU swept Purdue for the first time since 1992.

By Mike Wachsmann

Game 23

It was unusual enough that Ohio State

men’s basketball coach Jim O’Brien could

offer as pregame motivation Feb. 6 OSU’s

chance at sweeping Purdue.

But moving into second place in the Big Ten in the process?

Yes, 15th-ranked OSU actually talked about moving into sole possession of second then

walked the walk in a second domination of No. 18 Purdue, 30-69, before 14,123 stunned Boiler

lovers in Mackey Arena.

Playing for the third straight time away from home, Ohio State (17-6, 7-3) improved to 3-2 on the road in conference play and followed up a 29-point Jan. 19 home win over the Boilermakers (16-7, 4-5).

OSU guard Michael Redd was the eye of the storm in the first meeting, scoring 30 of OSU’s 72 points. He again led the Buckeyes with 20 points, only this time the heroics were

spread out.

Scoonic Penn attempts to circumvent defense provided by Purdue’s Evan Eldridge during OSU’s 80-69 victory. It marked the first time since 1992 that the Buckeyes

swept the Boilermakers.

Purdue

Cardinal

Eldridge

Greg McGaughy

Cunningham

Allison

Stephens

Robinson

Gary McGaughy

Lawlis

Smith

Mayfield

Kerfoot

Totals

Percentages: FG: 57, FT: 62, 3-point goals: 11

OSU

Cardinal

Eldridge

Greg McGaughy

Cunningham

Allison

Stephens

Robinson

Gary McGaughy

Lawlis

Smith

Mayfield

Kerfoot

Totals

Percentages: FG: 39, FT: 75, 3-point goals: 0
Late Free Throws Help Bucks Stop Upset-Minded Michigan

By Jeff Rapp

Revenge against Michigan usually is saved for the gridiron, but Ohio State had a look of motivation when the Wolverines came calling Feb. 9. And the 13th-ranked Buckeyes walked away with a narrow but sweet 74-69 home victory.

Michigan was less than ideal in league play on the road but was frisky nevertheless thanks to a dominating win over Ohio State three weeks earlier. The Wolverines (10-15, 4-8) traders the lead with their hosts for the entire second half and led 53-52 with 4:35 to play when the dangerous Lewis Bullock nailed a three-pointer.

It was up to OSU's dynamic backcourt of Michael Redd and Seconnie Penn to pull out yet another win for the Buckeyes (16-6, 8-3).

"We did a pretty good job on Penn and Redd at the first half," Michigan coach Brian Nittsche said. "Their big guns made big plays down the stretch."

Penn gave the Buckeyes a 68-67 lead with a layup and the game at, of all places, the free-throw line. OSU connected on just 15 of 32 charity tosses in its first meeting with Michigan but made a better this time (12-18). Penn finished with 21 points, five assists and four steals, another phenomenal effort, and was complemented by ball, who led all scorers with 22 points on 9-of-14 shooting.

Redd also was clutch in other phases of the game.

With the Buckeyes still clinging to a 68-67 lead, Redd scooted down the lane, spun through traffic and whipped a pass to Ken Johnson, who drove down rim-rattling dunk.

Moments later, Redd notched his only steal of the game and OSU worked the ball to Johnson, who was fouled with 15.4 seconds to play. He missed both, but the 6-6 Redd managed to slap the rebound back to Penn, who was fouled with 11.1 seconds left and calmly sank a pair.

Redd made three key plays without scoring a point, but it was his highlight-worthy pass that was the buzz in the locker room.

"Sometimes those things just happen," Penn said while shaking his head. "You can't plan to do that."

With their third straight win, the Buckeyes remained in sole possession of second place in the Big Ten and finally were able to at least address the possibility of being invited to the NCAA Tournament.

OSU led 38-37 at intermission and the contest stayed close throughout, with neither squad leading by more than five points in the second half. A Josh Asselina dunk gave Michigan a 60-55 cushion with just under eight minutes to play, setting the stage for a frantic finish. A Penn layup off a steal gave the Buckeyes a 61-60 lead and set off maybe the loudest roar of the year in The Schott.

Robbie Reid scored 16 points and Bullock scored 11 in the backcourt, while Asselina again came up big on the front line, leading Michigan in points (17) and rebounds (7).

Unlike their first meeting with the Wolverines, the Buckeyes found an answer to UM's inside game and never allowed it out of hitting distance.

"It's just another indication of a group of guys that, I think, have a lot of heart and a lot of character," OSU head coach Jim O'Brien said.

"We did a lot of good things against a team that plays very well against us. It seems like you have certain teams that you just have tough match-ups with, and this is a team we have a very difficult time matching up with."

A dunk by Ken Johnson (32) late in the game gave OSU a 70-67 lead that would propel the Buckeyes to a five-point victory over Michigan.
Big Second Half Helps OSU Avenge Home Loss To Iowa

By Mike Wachsman

The old saying is that the numbers never lie, but in the case of Ohio State's journey to Iowa City to take on the Hawkeyes Feb. 13, nothing was further from the truth.

No. 13 Ohio State shot just 38 percent for the game and was outrebounded by the taller Hawkeyes, yet crept out of town with a stirring 73-69 victory, avenging a home loss to the 19th-ranked Hawkeyes earlier in the season.

As usual, the Buckeyes (19-6, 9-3) were fueled by stars Michael Redd and Scoonie Penn, who combined for 49 points. Penn hit 24 of his game-high 27 in the second half, including some momentum-changing treys in the final six minutes.

"We just made a decision that in the last six minutes of the game that we were going to put the ball in Scoonie's and Michael's hands and have them try to win the game because I didn't think they could guard us on the perimeter," OSU coach Jim O'Brien said. "If ever there was a team that won a game on sheer toughness, it was this game today, because it just didn't look like we had much going for us."

The dynamic duo put on separate sidetows on clearouts in the second half then teamed up for the biggest basket of the game. With the clock winding under a minute and OSU clinging to a 66-64 lead, Redd began to work a dribble at the top of the key, drew a double-team and zipped a pass in the corner to Penn, who nailed his sixth trey of the half with 42.1 seconds to play.

OSU's glue was short-lived as Iowa's Jacob Jakes earned a top-of-the-key three for Iowa with 23.1 seconds to go. But Jakes fouled out on the ensuing inbound to Penn, who calmly sank both free throws. OSU allowed Iowa point guard Dean Oliver to sneak to the other end for an uncontested layup, but Penn was fouled again — and came through again with a game-clinching pair that closed the scoring.

The Buckeyes made just 23 of 60 shots for a field-goal percentage of 38.3. They also were a modest 18 of 30 at the line even with Penn's clutch showing at the end.

The Hawkeyes (16-7, 7-6), however, endured their own problems at the charity stripe. Iowa was just 21 of 39 (53.8 percent) and missed four straight in the final minutes. OSU often failed to corral the misses, though, and was outrebounded 48-37. The hyperactive Jacks led the way with 15 boards.

The Hawkeyes were rolling much of the second half and looked like they'd make it a sweep of Ohio State, but the Buckeyes had other ideas.

Penn nailed a three off a top-of-the-key screen by George Reese to cut the score to 46-39, and Redd answered a hoop by Iowa's J.R. Koch by throwing down a dunk off a look-out pass from Jason Singleton.

Redd later hit a runner but missed a chance to further cut into the Iowa lead with a pair of missed free throws. Penn bailed him out by nailing another triple to cut the deficit to 50-47.

After the Hawkeyes got hold of a 55-50 lead, the Buckeyes mounted a 15-5 run that began with a long-range three by Penn and ended with a 10-foot leaner in the lane by Redd that gave the Buckeyes a 65-60 lead with a little more than two minutes to play.

OSU led for most of the first half but had to settle for a 27-27 tie at the break. Iowa tied twice to start the second half and led throughout until Penn hit a 27-foot three that put OSU back on top 58-56.

The win came on the 10th anniversary of Jay Barson's career-ending neck injury, suffered in Carver-Hawkeye Arena, and was the last time OSU would face Iowa coach Tom Davis, who was ushered out of the program the end of the season.

Game 25: Ohio State 73, Iowa 69
Feb. 13, 1999 - Carver-Hawkeye Arena, Iowa City, Iowa (ESP)

OSU's Joey Range leads the way with 15 points. Getty Images

COURTESY: THE VOICE OF THE HAWKEYES

Ken Johnson stuffed Iowa's Joey Range (34) and grabbed six rebounds in a 73-69 victory that locked up a winning Big Ten season.

By cee lnd yea

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Ken Johnson stuffed Iowa's Joey Range (34) and grabbed six rebounds in a 73-69 victory that locked up a winning Big Ten season.
Penn's Late Charge Gives OSU Rare Victory At Assembly Hall

By Steve Helvagen

You name it. Ohio State has found every conceivable way to lose basketball games at Indiana's venerable Assembly Hall over the years.

That's why OSU's 69-67 win over the 19th-ranked Hoosiers on Feb. 17 in Bloomington was that much more impressive.

Point guard Seconne Penn scored his team's first 10 points and then helped the 11th-ranked Buckeyes deny IU in its final possession. Michael Lewis' last-second, off-balance heave missed the mark, taking off a rare Buckeye victory at Assembly Hall's center court.

Among the hoopla, OSU coach Jim O'Brien sent his right fist in the air. Penn jumped onto a bevy of players hugging on the court, and senior Charles Coleman cried like a baby while a stampeding gathering of 17,142 filed out quickly.

Not a first-year OSU player but a veteran star of the team's losing in Bloomington, Penn scored the game halfs at 49 feet in the air as IU coach Bob Knight reached for his ``Red'' hand.

"That was just pure excitement," Penn said. "I made a great defensive stand to get a great 3." "Red" added Michael Redd, "This is very, very special. I think is probably the biggest win of our career here. This just doesn't happen too often." "That's for sure. The Buckeyes (20-6, 10-3) improved to 3-2 all-time in IU's famed Assembly Hall and were 20-56 all-time in Bloomington. With their 17-point home win in January over Indiana and a 2-1 record against Purdue in the 1998-99 season, OSU swept the Hoosier State for the first time since 1985.

The credit could be spread around the OSU roster but had to start in the backcourt. Penn led all scorers with 20 points. Redd pitched in 16 points, largely on the strength of 10-of-12 shooting from the free-throw line. In fact, OSU, easily worst in the league in the league at the stripe at less than 60 percent, was an unsurprising 38%.

But it all boiled down to defense. Trailing 61-66, Penn intercepted a pass and was fouled on a layup attempt. His two free throws gave OSU a 68-67 lead. Then he added another free throw with 29.3 seconds left after OSU forced an errant shot by IU's A.J. Guyton.

That closed the scoring as, out of a timeout with 24.7 seconds to play, Indiana (19-9, 6-7) never even got a good look at the basket.

O'Brien told his team "one stop" in the huddle then got it as Lewis' heave hit the backboard and ticked the side rim. Guyton, Luke Recker and Lewis all handled the ball in the sequence but could not get off a jumper.

"I thought the very last possession as good a defensive stand by any team that I've ever coached," O'Brien said. "I thought we were quick, we were aggressive and we were real tough on that play. We were switching like crazy."

Knight was visibly livid, looking around for a blocking foul on Redd.

"I didn't think there was any way they could blow the whistle on that," O'Brien said. "Michael Lewis clearly jumped into him, and there isn't any foul in my mind."

Freshman Brian Brown failed to score off the bench but played a huge role by guarding the ever-dangerous Guyton on the final two IU possessions. Guyton finished with 14 points on 5-of-13 shooting. Recker, who had just two points in Columbus, was 3 of 11 for seven points.

OSU bolted out to leads of 21-8 and 27-13 before IU trimmed the halftime deficit to 33-30. The contest tightened like a vise from there. In fact, the teams traded the lead 18 times and there were three ties in the final 20 minutes.

The Buckeyes were staring at the biggest deficit for either team in the second half — four points — when Penn cut the score to 65-64 with a trey out of a 20-second timeout.

"We needed it," Penn said. "That was a point where they could have stretched it out a little bit more. But it comes down to who's going to make big shots, and tonight we made it."

The Buckeyes have swept Indiana in the three seasons in which they won in Assembly Hall. Along with the two-game sweep in 1998 and this sweep, OSU won a pair from the Hoosiers in the Big Ten championship season of 1991.

Ohio State's thrilling victory in Assembly Hall was preserved when Hoosier Michael Lewis' shot went awry. OSU's Michael Redd (left) defends on the play.
Basketball Profiles

Coleman, Singleton Reached Promised Land As Seniors

By Steve Helvogen

Bad times, sad times and despair — seniors Neshan Coleman and Jason Singleton had seen it all over their three previous years in the OSU men's basketball program.

Coleman and Singleton arrived at OSU in the fall of 1995 as part of coach Randy Ayers' eight-man recruiting class. Over the next four years, though, six of their classmates left the program.

The news was almost as bleak on the floor as the Buckeyes went 10-17 their first two years before regressing to 8-22 as juniors.

But through all of that and the coaching change to Jim O'Brien, Coleman and Singleton stuck it out. Their patience and resolve were more than rewarded by OSU's incredible Final Four run.

Each was appreciative to be a part of OSU's magical 27-9 season, a year that nearly matched the win total from their first three years combined.

"It's definitely been a blessing to have an opportunity to play ball here," Coleman said. "The fans stuck behind us through thick and thin. We couldn't have done this without them."

Singleton added, "Ohio State will be in my heart forever. Thank you for a beautiful four years."

Coleman hails from Toledo, where he was a star at St. John's Jesuit, historically one of the top prep programs in the state. He led the Titans to a four-year mark of 86-16 and three city championships. Similarly, Singleton won 80 of 96 games at Southgate Aquinas High School and won four Detroit Catholic League championships.

But all of that success did not prepare them for what they would face at Ohio State. When classmate Damon Stringer, Coleman's roommate, was booted from the team after a brush with the law in the spring of 1998, that left just Coleman and Singleton as survivors.

"I think that was pretty much rock bottom for me and Jason because we came in with those guys and we were all good friends," Coleman said. "Then to go through the season we went through last year, that was the bottom of everything."

"To come back and have the season we had this year is like icing on a cake."

O'Brien gave both Coleman and Singleton the chance to leave the program with the rest of their class wiped away. They passed and instead are now reaping the rewards.

"There's no way I was going to leave," Coleman said. "This is the place that I wanted to be at since I was in junior high school, and I think I made the right decision."

An impressive athlete who arrived in need of basketball knowledge, Singleton started 28 of 29 games in O'Brien's debut season and averaged 10.7 points and 4.8 rebounds. As a senior, his numbers were slightly lower (8.9 and 4.6), but he developed into one of the best defensive players in the league and was tops in the Big Ten in field-goal shooting at 63.5 percent.

"I just put my faith in God and continued to work hard, hoping I would be blessed," Singleton said. "I think I've been blessed with a good situation here my senior year."

Coleman relinquished his role as a starting off guard with the emergence of Michael Redd and played sparingly early in the year as O'Brien tried to acclimate freshmen Boban Savovic and Brian Brown to the college game. But Coleman didn't dare complain with the Buckeyes piling up wins.

Serving as the team's designated three-point shooter off the bench, Coleman ended up 32 of 88 (36.4 percent) from behind the arc, averaged 4.6 points per game. He made his career as the school's career-three-point leader with 147 treys.

Coleman repeated as captain, Singleton and junior Scoonie Penn.

"My role was just to be a leader on and off the court," Coleman said. "I think I've been a positive role model to the young guys. I feel like I've been captain two years in a row."

"He's been a great mentor and leader of the team," O'Brien praised his two seniors for their leadership.

"I'm very happy for both of them," he said. "Those kids have been very loyal to the program and very solid all the way around, but they've had three unsuccessful seasons. Now they come out as leaders and they can walk out of here with their heads held high."

Jason Singleton (left) and Neshan Coleman, the only seniors on the 1998-99 OSU squad, were vital cogs during OSU's run to the Final Four.
**Game 27**

**Buckeyes Box In Eschmeyer, NU**

There was a thought that one of Ohio's own — a skinny but talented center named Evan Eschmeyer from New Knoxville — might come back and haunt Ohio State in this season of destiny.

But even Eschmeyer's transformation — from an injury-plagued stick to a prime-time player — wasn't enough to derail the 11th-ranked Buckeyes, who stifled the big man and won 59-49 on Feb. 20 at the Schottenstein Center.

"You play this team and, as somebody mentioned, it's like a trip to the dentist," OSU boss Jim O'Brien said of Northwestern. "It's hard to play these type of games. There aren't that many possessions and every single possession becomes that much more valuable."

But in winning its sixth straight game, the Buckeyes (21-6, 11-3) did well with those opportunities down the stretch. Leading 45-42 with 8:34 to play, OSU looked to be in for a long finish when leading scorer Michael Redd earned a one-and-one and shot an air ball at the free-throw line.

Moments later, though, Scoonic Penn sprang to the floor to corral a steal, somehow maintained his dribble and fed Neshama Coleman for a jumper.

Coleman drilled the 14-footer then made a backcourt steal and finger-rolled home another long to give the Buckeyes a 49-42 advantage.

After a 20-second timeout by NU coach Kevin O'Neill, Jason Singleton completed a pair of defensive stands with steals inside and Coleman stuck again, nailing a three off a feed from Redd to produce a 52-42 lead with 6:58 to play. Northwestern never got within seven from there.

The Buckeyes held Eschmeyer, a 20-point scorer, to just five shots and 10 points, largely on the strength of Singleton's scrappy defense. The 6-11, 255-pound Eschmeyer also ripped down eight rebounds, three below his league-leading average, before fouling out in frustration.

The Buckeyes, who trailed 23-22 at halftime, finished 20 of 45 (44.4 percent) from the field and seemed to spark only after the crowd urged them.

Penn finished with a game-high 19 points and three assists, Coleman added a season-high 16 and Redd chipped in 13 points and six rebounds. Julian Bonner led NU (14-10, 6-8) with 14 points.

Ohio State received 16 points from Neshama Coleman as the Buckeyes knocked Northwestern 59-49. Vaunted Wildcats center Evan Eschmeyer was held to 10 points.

**Game 28**

**OSU Tops UW In Defensive Clash**

If anyone had told you at the beginning of the season that Ohio State and Wisconsin would be battling for second place in the Big Ten on Feb. 24, you would have immediately called the guys with the white coats. It was a crazy thought.

But it also was reality, and when the dust settled on the improbable tussle, Ohio State was on the winning end of a 63-54 contest in its home finale. The Buckeyes (22-5, 12-3) got through despite Wisconsin's trademark slowdown tactics, fighting their way to a 22nd victory a year after losing the same number.

It was Scoonic Penn to the rescue, and his long-range bombs kept the Buckeyes in the game and gave them the lead at a crucial juncture. Penn finished the night with 30 points, needed in the face of Michael Redd being held to 14.

With OSU trailing 42-32 with less than 15 minutes to play, the Wednesday night crowd became even more vocal and the 5-10 Penn responded on cue.

He drew a foul and hit a couple free throws then added a three-pointer and pulled up shot at the elbow in successive possessions to cut the score to 42-39.

Now into the game, the Buckeyes crept closer when Jon Sanderson stole the ensuing inbound pass and threw down a dunk. Moments later, Penn missed a foul on a Sanderson grab and the offensive rebound, drawing another UW foul. He hit the first of two to bring OSU all the way back.

The Buckeyes missed a bit from there, highlighted by a Neshama Coleman three off an acrobatic left-handed pass to the corner by Penn that gave OSU a 49-47 lead.

After Sean Mason answered Coleman with a three at the other end and Mike Kelley added a free throw for a 51-49 Badger lead, OSU put on the clamps, holding Wisconsin scoreless from the 6:28 mark until Mason hit a meaningless three with 5.6 seconds to play.

While UW (21-7, 9-6) missed 10 consecutive shots, OSU built a double-digit lead largely off more antics from its on-court leader.

Penn hit 9 of 14 shots from the field, 6 of 6 from the line and added six rebounds, three assists, a steal and just one turnover in 35 spectacular minutes.

Included in that effort was a 6-0-9 showing from behind the three-point arc with range that would make Reggie Miller proud.

Penn gave OSU a 52-51 lead with a pair of free throws, hit a pull-up jumper moments later and fed Redd for a fast-break hoop with 3:15 to go to up OSU's advantage to 56-51. With 1:27 left, Penn put the icing on the cake by splashing a 25-foot three-ball with the shot clock ticking under five seconds.

Coleman replaced Sanderson in the starting lineup and he and Jason Singleton were in a stirring pregame ceremony before their final home game as seniors.
Penn State Snaps OSU Streak Behind Heroics From Crispin

By Jeff Rapp

Playing before a crowd of 15,435 and intent on sending off seniors Dan Earl and Calvin Booth as winners Feb. 27, the Penn State Nittany Lions played right with visiting Ohio State all afternoon, weathered a comeback at the end of regulation and put on a show in overtime winning 98-85.

The Lions (13-13, 5-11) gave themselves reason to hope for an NIT bid pending their showing in the Big Ten tournament.

The 10th-ranked Buckeyes (22-7, 12-4), meanwhile, ended their regular season on a downer and had new concerns with point guard Sconia Pen and his bruised lower back.

The Buckeyes also missed a chance to log an undefeated February and never asserted themselves defensively while allowing the most points in a game all season.

And when it came to Lions guard Joe Crispin, a 6-1 sophomore and 38.4 percent career shooter from the field, OSU had nary a clue. A bomber without inhibition, Crispin hit 9 of 17 shots and was 7 of 14 from three-point range on route to a career-best 29 points.

He did his best work in overtime. On the first possession of the extra session, he fired an errant three, caught a pass from a rebounding Booth and canned a trey from the same spot. Moments later, he took OSU freshman Brian Brown to the hole for another basket, then, after an Ohio State miss, fired up and hit another three off a 2-on-1 fast break.

After an OSU timeout with 3:54 left in OT, Neshan Coleman hit a three, but the Buckeyes never got within five points the rest of the way.

Penn State hit 14 of 16 free throws while scoring 24 points in the overtime, but Crispin’s spree spelled the difference. His performance was nothing short of spectacular, especially considering he changed all 10 of his field-goal attempts in the Big Ten opener at OSU in a game staged way back in November.

“I don’t know how (PSU coach) Jerry Dunn does it with Joe Crispin,” said OSU head coach Jim O’Bren, whose team’s seven-game winning streak was snapped. “It’s like Russian roulette.

“We told our guys that if he gets it going he can be very, very difficult to guard.

“He scores eight points in about a minute, and that was basically it.”

In regulation, Crispin grabbed an offensive rebound and hit a turnaround jumper to give Penn State a 70-64 lead with 3:49 to play. OSU countered with a Ken Johnson hoop off a Penn feed just before the shot-clock buzzer and a Penn free throw moments later.

But Earl hit a tough leaner in the lane and after Johnson followed up a Penn miss with a hoop, Crispin hit both ends of a one-and-one with 36 seconds to play, providing a 74-69 PSU lead.

Michael Redd, who led OSU with 26 points, kept the visitors alive with a hoop with 29 seconds left, and Coleman added a game-tying three with 18 seconds left.

Penn finished with 22 points but was not a factor after he was fouled by Earl on a driving layup attempt and landed hard on his backside with 10:16 to go in regulation.

“He was basically going on one leg and he was doing what he could do, but that was real cutting into our offense,” O’Bren said.

Only Redd picked up the slack with 29, somewhat hobbled. The two were a combined 19 of 33 from the field while no other Buckeye had more than three field goals or nine points.

Penn State’s Joe Crispin (left) terrorized the Buckeyes in the NCAA Tourmament scoring a game-high 29 points on 9-of-17 from the floor. Buckeye forward (22) notched 26.
Buckeyes Crush Michigan To Open Big Ten Tournament

By Mike Wachsmann

Playing a team that has nothing to lose — especially one that’s already beaten you during the season — in a one-and-done format is never very appetizing, and that’s exactly what Ohio State was staring at in a Big Ten Tournament quarterfinal round contest with Michigan.

The 10th-seeded Wolverines defeated Purdue a night earlier, but their backcourt of Louis Bullock and Robbie Reid went a combined 82 minutes. That made Ohio State’s game plan easy — run each and every backcourt player at the Wolverines.

The result was made-to-order as OSU’s backcourt reserves combined for 23 points and helped the Buckeyes come from behind, blow open the game, in an 87-69 victory before 20,297 March 5 at Chicago’s United Center.

“We got contributions from a lot of guys, especially guys off the bench,” OSU coach Jim O’Brien said.

The most surprising and welcome performance came from freshman Boban Savovic, who produced eight points, five rebounds, two assists and four steals.

“I was so hungry tonight because I hadn’t

In a game featuring strong contributions from the bench, Brian Brown was the best of the lot, scoring 10 points as the Buckeyes beat Michigan 87-69 in the first round of the Big Ten tournament.

Injury suffered in the regular season finale at Penn State, scored a respectable 14 points in 31 minutes of action but looked stiff at times.

“I was going to play regardless,” Penn said.

“I didn’t practice all week. At first, I was a little hesitant. But as the game went on I got into the groove.”

Michael Redd scored a game-high 19 points, reserve Brian Brown added 10 points and four assists and Neshan Coleman hit a key three in the first half, a shot that helped him pass Jamie Skeiton as the school’s all-time leader in career three-pointers (145).

Meanwhile, Bullock (19 points) and Reid (13) faced waves of defenders and struggled in their final college game, combining to hit just 8 of 25 shots.

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OSU enjoyed a 44-34 advantage on the boards with three players getting six or more. That was a welcome sight against a team that plays three front-liners in the 6-11 range.

Scoonie Penn, feeling the effects of a back injury suffered in the regular season finale at Penn State, scored a respectable 14 points in 31 minutes of action but looked stiff at times.

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Game 31
Last-Place Illinois Makes All Right Moves in Tourney Upset

Mike Wachsmann

When creating a perfect scenario for the Big Ten tournament, one couldn’t have been drawn up better for Ohio State. The Buckeyes beat 10th ranked Michigan and were to play 11th seed Illinois. How sweet it all had been.

Illinois had won just two times in 16 Big Ten regular-season games I was playing its third in three days. But Illini took it right at the 11th-ranked Buckeyes and pulled off wild 79-77 upset over 20.659 at `s United Center.

“In my mind, they unquestionably the last-place team in America,” OSU coach said. Michael Redd led the Illini with 32 first-half points. He scored 48 in the second half.

The Buckeyes, rallying from 17 points down, took the lead with 1:19 left. They missed 10 of 11 free throws in the final :08.

“There was a surprise,” Penn said. “It’s going to be tough to keep that up.”

Illinois led 68-57 after Sergio McClain combed a three-point play with 4:31 left. But the Buckeyes forced four Illini turnovers in the next possessions and went on a 13-2 run, capped a three-pointer from Nesham Coleman, to tie 70-70 with 1:13 left.

But the Illini took the lead for good on their next possession as Penn fouled Big Ten freshman the year Cory Bradford. His two free throws gave the Illini a 74-70 lead.

Redd cut the lead to 74-72 by flipping in a nifty reverse with 4.2 seconds left. But he was nailed with a ticky-tack foul on the backcourt on Illinois guard Robert Archibald, who appeared to travel, with 36.7 seconds left. Archibald made the first one to stretch the lead to 75-72. McClain coralled the long rebound on Archibald’s missed second shot and was awarded a timeout as he fell out of bounds.

OSU fouled again, sending Nate Mass to the line, and he made both free throws for a 77-72 lead with 32.7 seconds left.

OSU’s Brian Brown. McClain knocked the ball to Bradford, who was fouled by Penn with 50.6 seconds left. His two free throws gave the Illini a 74-70 lead.

Redd rebounded a Coleman miss and scored to cut the lead to 77-74 with 25.2 seconds left. He then stole the ball in the backcourt and drove to the basket, but his shot attempt was blokced and OSU’s Boban Savovic fouled Bradford with 19.2 seconds left. He made both free throws to make it 79-74.

Redd’s driving layup with 13.1 seconds left cut the gap to 79-76.

The Buckeyes got a huge break when McClain missed two free throws with 12.6 seconds left. Redd rebounded the second miss and got the ball to Penn, who missed a three-pointer. The rebound went out of bounds off Illinois, giving OSU one last possession with 3.6 seconds left.

The Illini fouled Penn on the inbound play. He made the first free throw and purposely missed the second to set up a chance for OSU to tie the game.

The plan nearly worked to perfection as Redd got his hands on the ball on the left baseline, but his fading 8-foot jumper hit the rim and bounced off.

“I couldn’t be more proud of our guys,” said Illini coach Lon Kruger. “They just lined up and fought for 40 minutes.”

The win allowed the Illini to match their regular-season total of Big Ten wins in just three days at the tournament. Illinois advanced to the title game, where top seed Michigan State prevailed 67-50.

Game 32: OSU

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Game 31: Illinois 79, Ohio State 77
Big Ten Tournament Semifinals
March 6, 1999 — United Center, Chicago, Ill. (005)

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Racers No Match In NCAA Opener

There was more than a little concern about OSU’s first-round game of the NCAA Tournament with Murray State. The Buckeyes were still trying to get injured point guard Sconie Penn back into form and, like Penn’s backside, they were still simmering from a surprise loss in the Big Ten tournament to last-place Illinois.

Sensing the team needed redirection, head coach Jim O’Brien spent the week stressing defense and working freshman guard Brian Brown into the starting lineup to take a little pressure off Penn.

The result was a 72-58 besting of the 13th-seeded Racers in a South regional match-up at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis March 11.

Entering play as the No. 4 seed, the Buckeyes played with renewed intensity in holding Murray State (27-6), the Ohio Valley Conference champs, to its season-low point total and 27.3 percent shooting. It was a good time to crank up the D as the Racers (24-8) played in the NCAA Tournament for the first time in seven years and before a crowd of 27,959.

Penn hit just 1 of 8 three-pointers and finished with seven points, but Brown, starting in place of forward Jon Sanderson, played his role to perfection by helping distribute the ball and harassing Aubrey Reese, the Racers’ leading scorer.

Sanderson, meanwhile, ended up being a spark off the bench. His steal and hoop opened up a 26-15 OSU advantage, and after a pair of free throws by OSU’s Michael Redd, Sanderson scored again when he took a lob feed from Brown and threw down a two-handed dunk.

Redd finished with a game-high 27 points and forward Jason Singleton added 10 points.

Ohio State guard Boban Savovic (right) bounces a skip pass to the post ahead of the outstretched arms of a Murray State defender.

Game 33

Defensive Steals Show Vs. Detroit

The Ohio State men’s basketball team entered its second-round NCAA Tournament game in Indianapolis hoping simply to advance past upset-minded Detroit and into the Sweet 16.

Sometimes, but certainly not always, you get even more than hoped.

In their 75-44 dismantling of the Midwestern Collegiate Conference champs March 13, the Buckeyes (25-5) put on a defensive clinic in the first half then appeared the 17,000 or so Osu fans in an RCA Dome crowd of 32,758 with a bench-clearing offensive barrage.

“This is definitely a bonus,” OSU point guard Sconie Penn said in the team’s euphoric locker room. “We would have been happy to win by one point. Everybody got a chance to play in the NCAA’s tonight, and now we get to move on.”

Penn ripped down a career-high 12 rebounds — all defensive — and tied Michael Redd for team scoring honors with 15 points. George Reese led an inspired effort from the corps of reserves with five points and 15 rebounds, and freshman Brian Brown started for the second straight game, hitting all three of his three-point attempts and dishing out four assists.

Shammar Herron, who played in just his 10th game the season, helped punctuate the win with a couple of late baskets, including a dunk that had the OSU bench hopping with delight. Fellow Detroit natives Jason Singleton (seven points, five rebounds) and Ken Johnson (eight points, five blocks) also contributed to the cause.

But the team effort offensively still didn’t match the mastery OSU displayed with its rainy defenses. The Buckeyes held the Titans (25-6) scoreless for the first 9:49 of the game in building a 12-0 lead and took a 25-12 advantage to the locker room at halftime.

“They were definitely frustrated,” Redd said, “and you have to give the credit to our defense.”

Point guard Rashad Phillips ended his team’s 0-for-17 embarrassment with a runner at the 10:11 mark.

The Buckeyes pulled away shooting 58.8 percent — including 8 of 12 from three-point land — in a 50-20 second half.
Big Finish Helps OSU Oust Top-Seeded Auburn

By Steve Helwagen

The odds were stacked against fourth-seeded Ohio State as it ventured deep into the heart of SEC country to tackle the South Region’s top seed, Auburn.

But the Buckeyes made all of the key plays down the stretch and upset the fourth-ranked Tigers 72-64 in an NCAA regional semifinal before 23,898 March 18 in Knoxville, Tenn.

The Buckeyes (26-8) rallied from a six-point deficit in the second half, overcoming deep foul trouble and a marked rebounding disadvantage, to send the Tigers down to just their fourth defeat in 33 games.

“Thi thing that keeps hitting me right between the eyes is the way these guys have consistently come to try and accomplish a little bit more,” said OSU coach Jim O’Brien. “They are surprising me a little bit. Just when I ask myself if they are capable of doing more, they surprise me and do even more. Tonight they did it in difficult circumstances.”

Three OSU starters — Sconie Penn, Jason Singleton and Ken Johnson — played most of the second half with fouls. But none fouled out.

In fact, Penn returned to the game with four fouls with 10:14 left and the Buckeyes trailing 52-46.

“I wasn’t going to lose the game with my best player on the bench,” O’Brien said.

Penn, hobbling in recent games by an injury suffered in OSU’s regular-season finale, broke out of a prolonged slump. He hit 9 of 16 shots from the floor — including 4 of 7 on three-pointers — to post a game-high 26 points. Michael Redd

added 22 points and 10 rebounds for the Buckeyes.

Penn returned to the game and served notice the Buckeyes would be in it for the long haul, burying a three from the top of the key and then hitting a one-handed runner as he fell out of bounds to trim leading to 52-51 with 8:45 left.

The game was tied at 61 after Auburn’s Scott Pohlman connected on a three-pointer with 3:01 left. But the Buckeyes used their defense to fuel an 11-3 run to close the game and advance to the Elite Eight for the first time in seven years and just the second time since the tournament field expanded to 64 teams in 1985.

“Of course one of those games where whoever had the lead at the end of the game was going to win,” Penn said. “We played good defense and hit our shots when it counted. It came down to a three-minute game because it had basically been even the whole time.”

OSU’s Brian Brown opened the run by making 1 of 2 free throws to give OSU a 62-61 lead with 2:41 left. After Pohlman missed a three at the other end, Redd was fouled by Auburn’s Chris Porter while rebounding his own miss.

The foul was costly as Porter, the SEC player of the year, fouled out with a team-high 15 points and 11 rebounds.

Redd made both free throws for a 64-61 lead with 1:57 left. Auburn’s Doc Robinson missed a three at the other end, and Redd rebounded. Penn then stuck a baseline jumper to lead the to 66-61 with 1:10 left.

Auburn’s Bryant Smith attempted a three-pointer, but Brown converged and blocked the shot from behind. He started out on the fast break, dishing behind the back to Singleton, who finished the play — and effectively the Tigers — with a two-handed slam to make it 68-61 with 58.4 seconds left.

“Brian’s man (Robinson) brought the ball up and threw it to the man I was guarding,” Singleton said. “He tried a three-pointer, but Brown switched over and blocked the shot.

“We had a two-on-one break, and he threw it behind the back to me for the dunk. That was probably the key turning point in the game.”

Robinson canned a three-pointer in the closing seconds, but the Buckeyes cinched the win at the foul line. Penn gave his team’s final shot margin with a pair of 5.5 seconds.

“We showed a lot of heart tonight,” Penn said. “We played pretty well, and nobody could have had us here, but we were enough to win it.”

Penn threw the ball in the air and it was an easy bucket.

“It was just a sigh of relief,” he said. “It was just a hard-fought game. This is a victory of my whole life. It felt great to do that.”

Auburn had averaged 19 offensive rebounds a game during the season. But the Buckeyes were successful in keeping the Tigers off the glass, allowing just three offensive rebounds in the second half and looking down the shot clock game over between the two sides.

“We went into the game knowing they were a very good team,” said Adjussi Ellis, who edged O’Brien for the SEC coach of the year honors. “Our defense put up excellent defense. Our guys played this game, and give OSU State credit. They played hard, played us tough.”
Win Over St. John’s Gives OSU Regional Title, Final Four Bid

By Jeff Rapp

"It’s been a nice ride, but..."

That was the sentiment for the Ohio State men’s basketball team heading into a March 20 South Regional final with red-hot St. John’s in Knoxville, Tenn.

The Buckeyes had provided good copy with their cuddly new action heroes named Seconic and Ohiob, but no one expected them to actually complete the miracle and prove worthy of being in the Final Four.

After all, this was the same program that was just 8-22 the year before, when Jim O’Brien was brought on board to bail water out of the sinking ship left by the fired Randy Ayers.

But as the game unfolded, it was apparent the Buckeyes were playing for keeps. They got to the first media timeout up six, eight at the second, then seven, then nine, then eight again when Michael Redd hit from the top-of-the-key just ahead of the halftime buzzer.

It was more of the same in the second half until the gut-wrenching final minute and a half, when it looked like someone was about to pull the plug on OSU’s magical season.

But despite allowing a late nine-point lead to dip all the way to a single point, the fourth-seeded Buckeyes hung on for an epic 77-74 win over the third-seeded Red Storm before an Ohio State-partisan crowd of 24,248 in Thompson-Boling Arena.

What followed was one of the most joyful scenes in the history of Ohio State athletics. Seconic Pen raced into the stands to hug his mother, Allegria. Players embraced on the court. School officials wiped away tears of joy. Many of the approximately 15,000 OSU fans who headed south for a chance to see history hung around long after the Buckeyes provided it.

Even the said O’Brien was not immune. He bear-hugged both of his daughters, Erin and Amy, in one particularly heartfelt moment then was seen performing a rough rendition of the “Dirty Bird” with his players in a show of sheer delight.

“It’s hard to imagine we’re going to this thing," O’Brien told reporters on the court after putting away his dancing shoes. “It’s such a nice feeling, but I don’t know if it’s going to sink in. I’m just emotionally spent right now.

“I thought we were on E the last two minutes, but I think that’s a credit to St. John’s. They really turned up the heat and I thought we got a little scatty.”

The apprehension began after an acrobatic Jason Singleton layup off a Penn feed that put OSU (27-8) up 73-64 with 2:47 to play. For whatever reason, that touched off a fast-dish 10-2 charge by the favored

The Buckeyes (28-9), trailing 75-73, actually had a chance to tie with 12.2 seconds to play when reserve Chudney Gray drew a foul on OSU’s George Reese after OSU’s second consecutive front-end one-and-one miss at the free-throw line.

Gray made just one try and Penn split a pair at the other end, but the Buckeyes were saved when freshman point guard Erick Barkey lost the ball off his knee and Redd scooped it up. He raced down the sideline and drew a foul with 0.7 of a second to play. Redd hit one of his free throws for the final margin of 77-74.

Barkey’s counterpart, Penn, finished with 22 points, eight rebounds, eight assists and was named the most outstanding player of the Shootout.

OSU’s historic return to the Final Four — the program’s first since 1968 — will forever be linked to Penn and Redd, but the dynamic duo got a little help in the clincher from Singleton (13 points) and center Ken Johnson (12 points, seven blocks). Johnson set a defensive tone with two rejections on the game’s first possession and altered several more shots as St. John’s was held to 39.4 percent from the field.

St. John’s played from behind all night thanks to an impressive 9-2 OSU start that consisted of a breakaway Redd dunk off a Penn feed and three-point shots by Penn. After Barkey canned a trey, OSU’s front line got involved as Johnson threw down an alley-oop pass from Singleton.

“I think it was important to get out to not so much of a big lead, but just show that we were going to be able to play with these guys," O’Brien said.

“And the way the game started out, we felt we were going to score some points against them.”

The Buckeyes managed to hit 29 of 53 shots (54.7 percent) despite the Red Storm’s much-publicized zone defense.

But in the end, it was OSU’s defense that catapulted the Buckeyes all the way to Florida.

---

OSU center Ken Johnson skies for a shot over St. John's forward Ron Artest (15). Johnson had 12 points and seven blocks in the Buckeye victory.
Game 36

UConn Claims Semifinal Over OSU In Defensive Struggle

By Jeff Rapp

The hordes of reporters covering the Final Four at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, Fla., were quick to remind us that the Ohio State men’s basketball team had nothing to be ashamed of after losing to Connecticut March 27.

Certainly that notion had lots of merit, but the fact remained that the Buckeyes regrettably lost a very winnable game, 64-58, even if it was to the eventual NCAA champions in a national semifinal.

"The closer you get the more it hurts, I think," said Michael Redd, who once again led his team in points (15) and rebounds (eight).

With the defeat, Ohio State closed out one of its most improbable seasons ever with a mark of 27-9. The win total tied for the most ever in OSU history and came on the heels of last year’s 8-22 campaign.

But the evening had a bad feel to it right from the start as point guard Scoonie Penn played with a Halftime: Connecticut 36, Ohio State 36, Tshone

Jones with a lab for a layup with 1:18 left.

The Buckeyes still led 55-46 when OSU again chipped away, scoring eight of the next 10 points. Redd’s driving layup off a pass from Jason Singleton after an El-Amin turnover of the lead to 57-54 with 4:16 left.

But the Buckeyes would get no closer.

El-Amin hit an off-balance jumper in the lane with Singleton’s hand directly in his face to give the lead to 59-54. Penn then made one of two free throws to cut the lead to four.

Out of a controversial UConn timeout at 2:29 left — awarded as UConn center Jordan Sibert appeared to be fumbling the ball on the baseline — Hamilton inserted the dagger with 12-foot pull-up jumper just before the shot clock buzzer.

That deflating sequence put OSU behind 55 with 1:42 to play.

"That was critical," O’Brien said.

UConn, the East Region’s top seed and nation’s No. 3-ranked team, ended the year after knocking off top-ranked Duke 77-74 in the national title game.

George Reese (40) is faced with pressure from Connecticut’s Kevin Freeman (15) but is able to get the shot off. Reese had five points in the loss to the eventual national champions.

been doing that to teams all season," Penn said.

Hamilton, a 6-6 two-time Big East player of the year, scored 24 points on 10-of-17 shooting and the flashy El-Amin also tallied at all the right times. He hit 8 of 15 shots, scored 18 points, dished out six assists and registered three steals.

OSU’s offensive execution and team defense were nothing of beauty at key times in the four NCAA wins that earned the team a ticket to St. Pete. But this time the artistry was handled by OSU’s opponent as the Huskies resembled the 1982 Lakers on the break.

"When you play Connecticut you have to take care of the basketball and be efficient with the shots that you take," OSU head coach Jim O’Brien said. "When you take shots that you’re accustomed to taking and turn the ball over, those are baskets for them. They turn your mistakes into baskets as well as anybody in America."

When the Huskies weren’t igniting their fierce fast break, they were contesting every OSU shot and confounding Penn and Redd, who shot just 32 percent (10 of 31) and logged a combined 26 points. With those two struggling, OSU was a woeful 8 of 33 from the field in the second half.

That was due in large part to the efforts of UConn guard Ricky Moore, who worked hard to hold Penn to 11 points on 2-of-13 shooting.

"Moore was tremendous — I think he was the MVP of their team tonight," Penn said. "I only got one or two open looks throughout the game."

Penn looked like he was up to his old tricks when he nailed a three off a save by Redd to give the Buckeyes a 29-18 lead.

But UConn quickly embarked on a 14-3 run keyed by a Hamilton three. Seconds later, Kevin Freeman completed a three-point play off a behind-the-back, fastbreak fast break pass from El-Amin, a play that made all the late-night highlight reels.

A Hamilton follow on another fast break gave UConn a 32-23 lead and caused O’Brien to burn his second timeout with 7:14 left in the half. His team’s influence paid off as the Buckeyes ripped off a 10-0 run with their own fastbreak that included a 32-32 lead with 2:07 to the clock. OSU trailed just 36-35 at the break.

However, the Huskies opened the second stanza with a 15-6 run over the first nine minutes to take their biggest lead at 51-41. The capper was a precision fastbreak as El-Amin hit a sprawling Rashamel Jones with a lob for a layup with 1:08 left.

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Redd Accepts Role, Becomes Perfect Complement To Penn

By Mike Wachman

It's probably fair to say that Michael Redd was viewed as a consolation prize for Ohio State when the Buckeyes landed the guard out of Columbus West High School.

He ran behind fellow Columbus products Kenny Gregory and Doug Davis in recruiting hype, and people figured if he was choosing Ohio State, he must not be as good as the others.

Redd committed to Ohio State during his senior season at West. That was when Randy Ayers was still the coach and the OSU program was mired in the fourth of what would be five straight losing seasons. People viewed the fit as wrong.

After two stellar seasons, the only things wrong have been Redd's doubters.

"I had a lot of second-guessing from my friends," he said. "They're like, 'You've got Cincinnati and the rest of the Big Ten recruiting you. Why Ohio State?'"

"But there were a couple of reasons. I wanted to stay close to home and I wanted to see the program do well."

Redd and running mate Scoinnie Penn were big reasons Ohio State not only did well in 1998-99 but put together one of the biggest turnarounds in college basketball history.

OSU was 8-22 in Redd's freshman campaign and won 27 games and advanced to the Final Four a year later.

In two seasons, Redd had amassed 1,361 points in 66 games with the Buckeyes — an average of 20.6 per game.

Even though the left-handed Redd showed a more well-rounded arsenal his sophomore season, he had to settle for second team all-conference honors. That gave him a bit of fuel for the post-season, where he ended up the third leading scorer in the NCAA Tournament behind Connecticut's Richard Hamilton and Duke's Elton Brand.

"I think I've kind of proven to people I was overlooked," said Redd. "But my main objective is winning always. Team goals come first. I'm going to try and play as hard as I can for the team."

"I'm sure people are watching and saying, 'How is this kid not elected to any of these teams?' They know. All I can do is play as hard as I can."

OSU coach Jim O'Brien shared how he felt Redd blossomed as a sophomore.

"Michael Redd is a much better player than he was a year ago," O'Brien said. "Last year, he got away with murder. He took a lot of shots and we allowed him to have the green light. We wanted him to score."

The 6-6 Redd averaged a Big Ten-high 21.9 points as a freshman while Penn sat out his transfer year. It became apparent early the next season, though, that Redd would not match that average.

He ended up scoring 19.5 points per game, while the 5-10 Penn ended up scoring 16.9 points per contest. O'Brien was asked whether Redd had to suppress his ego and give way to Penn.

"Absolutely, and that's what he's done," O'Brien said. "Here's Michael scoring all the points last year. He leads the conference in scoring. He clearly was the man and our go-to guy."

"Now, all of a sudden, you have somebody else show up. Michael knew we knew Scoinnie was very good and now Scoinnie was getting some notoriety."

"Losing some of the spotlight was not necessarily a bad thing for Redd."

"Mike was our go-to guy a year ago," O'Brien said. "Knew Scoinnie was going to put himself in position to share that. I think the fact they became good friends and Michael was a willing learner as a young player was the reasons things have worked out the way they have."

And the way they have worked together spelled great success for Ohio State.

"That's all that matters.

Michael Redd had to change his role somewhat for his sophomore season, but look where it got the Buckeyes. On the way to the Final Four, Redd averaged 19.5 points per game — just two points off his freshman-year clip."
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Basketball Notes

Crowd Shows Its Appreciation For Buckeyes At Rally On Oval

Coach Jim O’Brien (left) and point guard Scoonic Penn are pictured at a campus celebration for OSU’s Final Four team.

By Steve Helvagen

A crowd estimated at 3,000 attended an appreciation pep rally for OSU’s Final Four men’s basketball team April 1 on the Oval.

The noontime rally allowed members of the campus community and local dignitaries a chance to say one last public thank you to coach Jim O’Brien and his team.

Among those who spoke at the rally were Ohio Gov. Bob Taft and Columbus mayor Greg Leisheka.

“They believed in themselves and they put teamwork above individual glory,” Taft told the crowd. “They set high goals and they exceeded those goals.”

OSU president William “Brit” Kirwan added his analysis on the team, which snapped a string of five straight losing seasons in a big way.

“I’ve been watching basketball for 50-plus years and I’ve never seen a coaching job as good as what Jim O’Brien did this year at Ohio State,” Kirwan said.

O’Brien stepped to the podium, intent on thanking the fans — many of whom greeted the team at the Schottenstein Center after its South Regional final win March 20 and again congregated several days later to send the team off to the Final Four — for their support.

“When they told us we would have a rally, they said it would be a chance for the fans to say thanks to us,” O’Brien said. “But I also think this is important on the other side for us to say thank you for your tremendous support.”

OSU’s three captains, junior Scoonic Penn and seniors Neshan Celem and Jason Singleton, also took turns at the microphone.

Penn, who was still pondering whether he would return for his senior year (he subsequently decided to return for the 1999-2000 season), was besieged by chants of “One more year!”

Singleton, reflecting on a rocky four-year stay that ended on a magical note, said, “Ohio State will be in my heart forever. Thank you for a beautiful four years.”

But Gov. Taft perhaps summed it up the best: “Thank you for giving us a season we will never forget and memories we will cherish forever.”

Johnson Comes Up ‘Big’ At Right Times For OSU

A lot was made of the contributions of Penn and Michael Redd during OSU’s NCAA Final Four run. But it was likely the play of the Buckeyes’ soft-spoken 6-11 center Ken Johnson that put the team over the top.

Johnson stood tall in OSU’s South Regional final win over St. John’s, scoring 12 points and blocking seven shots in the 77-74 win over the Red Storm.

Throughout the year, O’Brien referred to Johnson as a “man” after similar efforts.

“Ken was that and more,” O’Brien said after the win that locked down the school’s first Final Four berth in 31 years. “I thought they couldn’t guard him in spots around the basket because he’s so much bigger. And, with his defensive ability blocking shots and altering a lot, he came up big again.”

Johnson missed his freshman year in 1997-98 due to academics. His scoring was down a fraction of a point (6.8 to 6.4) from his sophomore year. But Johnson’s impact was felt as he avoided foul trouble, allowing him to play an additional five minutes per game as a junior.

He improved his rebounding average from 4.2 to 5.7 per game and nearly doubled his blocked shot total (58 as a soph to a school record 100 as a junior).

“I’m just happy to do whatever it takes to help this team win,” Johnson said.

Brown Assumes Role As OSU’s Third Guard

As the Buckeyes prepared for the NCAA
Tournament, O'Brien decided that they needed more backcourt help — especially with Penn hobbling after taking a tough spill in the regular season finale at Penn State.

He inserted freshman guard Brian Brown into the lineup for the NCAA opener with Murray State in place of sophomore Jon Sanders, who had started all but one of the previous 31 games at small forward.

"That was just for the match-ups," O'Brien said. "We did that because of the quickness we were facing on the perimeter!"

Brown and classmate Boban Savovic each provided OSU a needed pick-me-up as they entered NCAA play.

"I think Brian and Boban each got their second wind," O'Brien said. "I think they got their legs back and were lively again."

Brown and Savovic each averaged just over five points in OSU's five NCAA games. Brown also provided sticky defense in the backcourt, while Savovic came up big with timely three-point shooting and hustle plays.

Sanderson's role diminished as the season wore on and, after not playing in the national semifinal game against Connecticut — the first game he missed in two seasons as a Buckeye — he decided to transfer to Ohio U.

Miscellaneous Notes

- OSU's meteoric rise from the Big Ten's scrap heap was nearly the college game's biggest turnaround ever.

- The Buckeyes, 8-22 (.266) in 1997-98, capped a 16-game turnaround with their 27-9 final record. That was a half-game shy of the largest turnaround since the NCAA began keeping that statistic in 1974.


- Only one school has had a worse winning percentage the year before earning a Final Four berth. The 1940 Wisconsin team was 5-15 (.250) before bouncing back to win the 1941 title.

- OSU also set a school mark for the biggest turnaround in Big Ten play. The Buckeyes, 12-17 in conference play, improved 11 games over their 1-15 mark the year before.

- Ohio State ended a six-year drought from the national rankings when it entered the AP/USA Today coaches poll at 25th on Jan. 9. At the time, the Buckeyes were 12-3 after picking up an overtime win at Wisconsin.

- The Buckeyes were ranked for the first time since January 1993.

- Back-to-back losses to Iowa and Michigan dropped OSU out of the rankings, but they refused to stay after consecutive 29-point drubbings of Purdue and Minnesota in February.

- OSU rose as high as 10th in the Associated Press poll in late February after a seven-game winning streak. That was the school's highest ranking since being No. 3 in 1992.

- The Buckeyes ended the regular season ranked 14th after a Big Ten tournament upset at the hands of Illinois.

- OSU was 10-3 against ranked teams, including two wins each over Indiana, Purdue and Wisconsin. The losses were against No. 12 Iowa (Jan. 12 in Columbus), No. 8 Michigan State (Jan. 27 in East Lansing) and to No. 3 UConn at the Final Four.

- Redd became the second fastest Buckeye to reach the 1,000-point plateau in his career when he scored 30 points against Purdue on Jan. 19. That was his 49th game as a Buckeye.

Legends' Jerry Lucas reached that milestone in his 38th game as a Buckeye, playing as a junior in 1961.

- Redd joined former OSU stars Herb Williams (1978-81) and Jim Jackson (1990-92) as the only Buckeyes to reach 1,000 points during their sophomore seasons.

- OSU remained relatively injury-free during the season, losing Cohn for two NCAA games due to a bout with strep throat.

- "That was the worst feeling I've ever had — to wait for this for so long and not be able to play," said Coleman, who returned for South Region action against Auburn and St. John's.

- Freshman forward Will Dudley, who had played sparingly early in the year, missed the last 18 games after undergoing surgery on his foot. Sophomore center Shamar Herron also missed three weeks due to an ankle sprain.

- Herron, who played in just 10 games, transferred to Eastern Michigan at season's end.

- With OSU opening the new 19,500-seat Jerome Schottenstein Center, the Buckeyes established a new mark for home attendance.

In 15 home dates, OSU attracted 258,348 fans or an average of 17,223. The total eclipsed the mark of 212,416 set in 16 home dates at St. John Arena in 1991-92. The average bested the previous mark of 13,591 in 1979-80, although seating restrictions had limited the SIA capacity to 13,726 in recent years.

- OSU's fans showed they could travel, too, with as many as 16,000 of them in attendance among the 32,758 at the team's NCAA second-round game with Detroit in Indianapolis. They also made up a healthy majority of the 24,248 in Thompson-Boling Arena in Knoxville, Tenn.

Thousands of Buckeye fans make an "O" with their hands during the playing of "Hang On Sloopy" at the Final Four at St. Petersburg's Tropicana Field.

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STEVE HELLWAGEN

for the South Region final.

OSU fans gave the team a standing ovation when it simply rose to go to the locker room during the Auburn-Okahoma State game in Indy.

"I couldn't believe that," Redd said. "That shows how great our fans are in Columbus and throughout the country."

Coleman added, "The fans have been waiting for something like this to happen. They have continued to support us through the hard times and this was for them."

OSU's breakthrough season will mean it will be easier to find the Buckeyes on television in years to come.

The school ended a five-year drought from network television when it advanced to the Big Ten tournament semifinals, televised nationally by CBS. All five of OSU's NCAA games were also televised by that network, which drew a 9.2 national rating for the national semifinal game between OSU and UConn.

In Columbus, local affiliate WBNS-TV (Ch. 10) drew a 40 rating and 67 share for that game, numbers comparable to that market only for the biggest OSU football games like Michigan and Penn State.
Men’s Basketball Banquet

It’s A Tie! Penn, Redd Share OSU MVP Honor

By Jeff Rapp

When the Buckeyes returned to Columbus from Knoxville, Tenn., with Final Four invitations in their pockets, you’d think The Beatles had just arrived.

Fans went berserk as team members deplaned and the largest cheers were saved for head coach Jim O’Brien, who was handed a bullhorn and told to address the rabid crowd like a recently elected official.

Some of those same fans no doubt were a little miffed when it was learned the team would hold a private banquet on April 21 at the Schottenstein Center instead of the normal, more fan-friendly affair. But O’Brien and staff were adamant that they weren’t trying to take the appreciation out of appreciation banquet.

“We were looking at three weeks, we’re scrambling and a lot of it fell on (director of basketball operation Randy Shroat’s) shoulders,” associate head coach Rick Boyages said. “So one of the problems we ran into is, even if you keep it somewhat private — administrators, staff, family — you’re still looking at 500 to 600 people and where do you go?

“Luckily we have a great facility here and that worked out.”

Once assembled, team members, coaches, school officials, family and “friends of the program” reminisced about the great season that was and singled out a few players for major awards.

In the case of the team MVP award, which is named for former great Jerry Lucas, two players were doubled out — guards Scoonie Penn and Michael Redd.

Penn, who led the team in assists, steals and three-point shooting, was an obvious choice since he is perhaps the chief reason for OSU’s dramatic turnaround and he had already been tabbed as a media choice for Big Ten player of the year. But it’s hard to overlook Redd, who again led the team in scoring (19.5 point per game) and was equally productive in the clutch.

O’Brien hinted at sharing the award late in the season and his staff agreed.

“You can say what you want about one or the other, but they just worked so well together and I think they learned from each other,” Boyages said. “They create match-up problems, they’ve been so smooth together, unselfish, and they both have team goals and try to win.

“It was kind of a no-brainer, I think.”

Senior forward Jason Singleton also put his name alongside an all-time great when he won the John Havlicek Award as the team’s most inspirational player. Singleton had his finest year while starting all 36 games. He thrived in OSU’s more up-tempo look and shot 63.5 percent from the field, second best in school history for a single season.

But mostly, Singleton was a blur of hustle, diving on the floor for loose balls, making athletic rebounds and slowing down players of all sizes.

Also solid was the season turned in by 6-11 center Ken Johnson. He won the award for the Most Improved Player after becoming a force in the middle and swatting an even 100 shots.

“Jason had a hell of a year and I think came a long way, but Kenny just came on like crazy,” Boyages said. “His whole approach changed. He committed himself in the weight room and started to gain his confidence.”

Also recognized was junior forward Kwadjo Steele, who won the Fred R. Taylor Award for academic excellence. A zoology major, Steele earned a scholarship after serving as a walk-on for two years and appeared in 13 games in 1998-99.

Ohio State associate head coach Rick Boyages said it was “a no-brainer” and a lot of Buckeyes would agree: Michael Redd (left) and Scoonie Penn shared the team’s MVP award.
Men’s Basketball Facts And Figures

Overall: 27-9; Big Ten: 12-4

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**TEAM REBOUNDING**

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1988-99 Game-By-Game

**Final Four, Big Ten Data**

NCAA FINAL FOUR RESULTS

Saturday, March 27

National Semifinals — St. Petersburg, Fla.

Connecticut 64, Ohio State 58

Duke 68, Michigan State 62

Finals, Monday, March 29

National Finals — St. Petersburg, Fla.

Connecticut 77, Duke 74

**FINAL BIG TEN STANDINGS**

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^Won regular season, Big Ten tournament championships.

**ALL-BIG TEN TEAMS**

**Coaches Vote**

First team — Mateen Cleaves, Michigan State; Evan Eschmeyer, Northwestern; Quinl Lewis, Minnesota; Scoonie Penn, Ohio State; Morris Peterson, Michigan State.

Second team — Calvin Boothe, Penn State; Louis Bullock, Michigan; A.J. Guyton, Indiana; Sean Mason, Wisconsin; Michael Redd, Ohio State.

Third team — Jaron Cornell, Purdue; Dean Oliver, Iowa; Luke Recker, Indiana; Antonio Smith, Michigan State; Cory Bradford, Illinois; Brian Cardinal, Purdue; Dan Earl, Penn State.

Player of the year — Mateen Cleaves, Michigan State.

Freshman of the year — Cory Bradford, Illinois.

Defensive player of the year — Mike Wiley, Wisconsin.

**Media Vote**

First team — Cleaves; Eschmeyer; Lewis; Penn; Peterson.

Second team — Boothe; Bullock; Guyton; Mason; Redd.

Third team — Ty Calderwood, Wisconsin; Cornell; Oliver; Recker; Smith.

Player of the year — Scoonie Penn, Ohio State.

Freshman of the year — Cory Bradford, Illinois.

Coach of the year — Jim O’Brien, Ohio State.

**808-2000 Game-By-Game**

808-2000 | 204 | 236-708 | .333 | 482-704 | .685 | 443-792 | 1235-343 | 706-1940 | 636 | 85 | 193-234-64.8

**OSU State**

36 | 7275 | 986-2108 | .468 | 218-611 | .357 | 505-826 | .611 | 478-825 | 1303-636 | 651-12498 | 509 | 148 | 297-2957-49.74

**B$B’S A YEAR TO REMEMBER**

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©HF Health Plan Orange Bowl Basketball Classic, Sunrise, Fla.

©Big Ten Tournament, Chicago

©NCAA First and Second Rounds, Indianapolis

©NCAA South Regional, Knoxville, Tenn.

©NCAA Final Four, St. Petersburg, Fla.

*Opponent’s game day AP ranking is in parentheses after its name; OSU’s game day AP ranking is in parentheses before opponent’s name.

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©NCAA South Regional, Knoxville, Tenn.

©NCAA Final Four, St. Petersburg, Fla.
Ohio State Athletic Programs Enjoy Success During 1998-99

The baseball Buckeyes celebrate in the center of the diamond after winning an NCAA regional, the first one ever held in State. The Bucks were a game away from making it out of the new Super Regional, but Cal State Fullerton took the next games to keep OSU out of the College World Series.

By Mike Wachsmann

The last year of the decade was indeed a memorable one for Ohio State sports fans.

In addition to the lofty heights scaled by the football and basketball teams, many other Ohio State contingents made their presence felt.

The following is a look at the breakthrough seasons put together by some of OSU’s best teams and individuals.

- Men’s Gymnastics — OSU finished as national runner-up at the NCAA Championships, a year earlier than coach Miles Avery expected. He felt his 1999-2000 team would be the one to contend for honors, but veterans Doug Sibel, Tim Elsner and Peter Landry combined with youngsters Jamie Natalie and Daren Lynch to make Ohio State a major force on the gymnastics scene.

If you count former Buckeye Blaine Wilson’s ascent to the top of America’s gymnastics ladder, things were even better.

- Baseball — After years of struggle, Bob Todd finally saw his team’s ability rewarded. The Buckeyes hosted their first-ever NCAA regional, sweeping through in three games. In most years that would have been enough to secure a berth in the World Series. But this time it was the first step.

The NCAA came up with an unusual Super Regional, which the Buckeyes hosted. Perennial powerhouse Cal State Fullerton invaded Columbus, and Buckeyes won the opening game. But it looked like the luck that had helped keep them out of Omaha was about to change. A 3-1 Purdue upset the way champions can win game 5 and rolling in game three led to

BSB’S A YEAR TO REMEMBER
Still, you can’t take away from Ohio State the fact that it may have finally arrived on the national scene. The Buckeyes won 50 games for just the second time in school history and tied their own Big Ten record with 25 victories. They also topped the school record for consecutive wins with 21.

In Justin Fry, E.J. Laratta and Todd, OSU had the Big Ten’s pitcher, freshman and coach of the year.

• **Women’s Basketball**
  - Guided by high-energy Beth Burns, Ohio State made its first trip to the NCAA Tournament since 1997, winning 17 games despite having just one star in Marita Porter and an otherwise youthful roster.

  The Buckeyes figured they were pretty good with an early-season upset of Rutgers, and confidence after that wasn’t hard to find. Three clashes with Purdue produced two close games, and a good showing in the Big Ten tournament secured an NCAA berth.

  OSU lost to Boston College 72-59, but just getting there was something of a victory. Burns also reeled in the nation’s second-ranked recruiting class for 1999-2000, so it was a pretty good year for the Buckeyes.

  • **Robert Sessley** — He kept alive wrestling coach Russ Hellickson’s streak of having at least one All-American every year of the ‘90s with an eighth-place finish at the nationals.

  Sessley was one of the few bright lights in an otherwise disappointing mat season, but oh, how bright he was. He put together a 35-10 record, far away the best on the team. His record the previous year was 1-6, so the strides Sessley made were huge.

• **Women’s Volleyball** — Despite an up-and-down campaign, Ohio State once again found itself among the nation’s best by gaining a spot in the NCAA Tournament.

  The competitive Big Ten was difficult for the Buckeyes to navigate, and they finished third. At the nationals, the Buckeyes lost in five games to Florida, which made the Final Four, in Gainesville, gaining much-needed experience on a team that had little of it.

• **Women’s Tennis** — It appeared to be the dawning of a new era as the OSU women’s tennis team made huge strides.

  Sophomore Kristy Dascoli made the NCAA Tournament for the second straight season as an individual and teamed with classmate Briana Harris for a fight with Duke in doubles. The Buckeye pair went three sets before falling to the nation’s third-ranked combo from Duke.

  OSU also qualified for the first time ever as a team, falling to LSU in the opening round.

  For his efforts, Buckeye coach Chuck Merzbacher was named Big Ten coach of the year.

• **Men’s Lacrosse** — Joe Breschi continued to inject life into a previously moribund program, taking the Buckeyes to a 10-3 record and to the brink of a first-ever NCAA Tournament appearance.

  Breschi assembled a hungry, young team, built by getting some of the East’s best players to leave their territory and turn Ohio State into something special.

• **Hockey** — Coach John Markell’s Buckeyes returned to the NCAA Tournament after reaching the final four in their first tourney appearance the year before.

  Center Hugo Boisvert became the school’s first two-time All-American, while goaltender Jeff Maund cemented his case as the school’s best goalie ever.

Beth Burns’ young Buckeyes, including guard Lauren Shenk (left), won 17 games and made it to their first NCAA tournament since 1997.

Senior Tim Elnser helped coach Miles Avery’s men’s gymnastics team finish second in the nation in 1999.
O’Brien in no hurry to fill vacancy

By Lauren Finch
Lantern sports writer

After Ohio State Men’s Basketball Associate Head Coach Rick Boyages accepted his new position as head coach at the College of William and Mary, Buckeye fans wondered who would fill the new opening on Coach O’Brien’s staff.

According to Coach O’Brien, there has been no shortage of candidates so far, and the list is still building. The candidates represent a combination of big and small schools, but O’Brien wants a new associate who is well rounded, like Boyages. He said he is looking for someone with “experience and the type of personality to mesh with the team.”

Boyages was the head coach at Division III Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, before he joined O’Brien’s staff at Boston College in 1991. He stayed with O’Brien and assistants Paul Biancardi and Deve Spiller when they came to Ohio State in 1997.

“It would have been more difficult for me (to find a replacement) had these guys not come with me when we got here,” O’Brien said. “The value of the continuity is you don’t have to spend any time worrying about who is doing what and what the abilities of these guys are.”

Boyages’ duties included preparing game and practice plans, scouting reports and videotape breakdowns of opponents, as well as helping coach the backcourt players.

O’Brien is looking for someone qualified to take over all of these duties. Recruiting abilities are not essential to candidates for the opening, because recruiting is primarily handled by Biancardi and Spiller.

O’Brien said that he was in no hurry to name Boyages’ replacement.

“I’m really not going to rush into anything,” he said. “There’s really no need to find somebody to do what his obligation would have been during the summer.”

Other than some summer-camp obligations, Boyages schedule was not heavily filled.

Over the summer, O’Brien does not plan on having any temporary help. He is expecting himself, Biancardi and Spiller, to work together and help out until a replacement is found.

O’Brien has made it clear that he is in no hurry to find a replacement for Boyages. Though the list of candidates is building, O’Brien does not have a set time when interviewing may start. O’Brien said that he has a busy month of July, and he does not plan on dealing with the situation of finding a replacement until sometime in August.
Where are they now?

Mel Nowell

By Duane St. Clair

For The BUCKEYE Insider

Mel Nowell did something perhaps no other Ohio State basketball player has; he started every game, went to the Final Four three times and came away once with a national championship.

Nowell was a starting guard during those glory years four decades ago with teammates who were higher on the marquee, such as Jerry Lucas, John Havlicek and Larry Siegfried.

An all-Ohio player at Columbus East High School, Nowell enrolled at some many schools. However, a couple key reasons landed him at Ohio State. One was Lucas decision in the summer of 1958 to come to Ohio State after a vaunted career at Middletown. Lucas, Havlicek and he played together that summer on an all-star team.

"That’s when I realized I could play at that level."

At the same time, the University of Cincinnati was heavily recruiting Nowell. Their running style of play, led by everything Oscar Robertson "seemed to fit me." He visited the campus and went to a party with Robertson where most people Robertson excluded—smoked and drank. "I felt that wouldn’t be for me. I didn’t smoke. I didn’t drink and I wasn’t about to.

Lucas’s decision to play for Coach Fred Taylor, along with Nowell and Havlicek, too, created a much-ballyhooed team that would spend 12 months preparing for varsity play. In those years, freshmen played only in jayvee games prior to the varsity games, but they practiced against the older players. It afforded Nowell, who starred all his jayvee games, too, the chance to learn by practicing against the likes of Siegfried, an All-America guard.

When the highly touted sophomores opened the season against Wake Forest, Nowell was scoring leader with 18 points. It was the first of 23 victories that year. In his last game in St. John Arena in 1962 against Indiana, Nowell canned 21 to lead all scorers, thus creating unique bookends to his career.

The sophomores marched through that first year to the Final Four with only three losses. Coincidentally, Cincinnati was in the Final Four, too. The Bucks won their game and sat in the stands on Friday night as Robertson’s team lost to California. The next night—there was no day off between the semis and the finals—the Bucks overwhelmed California 75-55. As he reflects, Nowell thinks that Cincinnati could have won with him on the team because defenses collapsed on Robertson, so that others were open and Nowell was a shooter.

The following year, the team was undefeated in 26 games until the NCAA championship game when Cincinnati, absent Robertson, downed the Bucks 70-65 in a major upset. As seniors, the team finished 26-2, losing again to Cincinnati in the Final Four, this time 71-69. They had been defeated only six times in three seasons.

Nowell was second-team All Big 10 all three years, was an honorable mention All-America and played in the East-West All-Star game. "I don’t feel like an under-achiever. It was an honor to be one of the top 10 players" in the league.

And he got the chance to play in the National Basketball Association when it was only a nine-team league. He landed a spot on the Chicago Zephyrs, a second-year team, but he was released midway through the season as general manager Frank "Trader" Lane sought to improve the team’s losing record. (He didn’t).

Nowell moved to the Eastern League, a notch below the NBA, and played for Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Married with a growing family, Nowell returned to Columbus to finish his degree in education, majoring in health and physical education, while playing in the Pennsylvania league and working for the Ohio Department of Finance.

In 1967, the American Basketball Association was formed and Nowell sent a resume to the New Jersey Americans. He successfully negotiated a no-cut contract. It was during those years, Nowell says, "My whole world opened up and developed as I began to understand how the world functioned." Several of his earlier decisions were made with a lack of knowledge or understanding.

After a year in the ABA, Nowell returned to state government and was named Budget Director a post he held for three years. With the change of administration in 1971, Nowell left to pursue a career in real estate.

Nowell teamed with his brother, Jerry, a schoolteacher in Cleveland, to build a 47-unit apartment complex off Hamilton Road near the Eastland Mall in Columbus. They later built a 42-unit facility for the elderly in Baltimore, Ohio. Subsequently, he developed office condominiums in a half dozen buildings along East Broad Street in Columbus, capping a run that involved approximately $7 million in projects.

A true entrepreneur, Nowell even tried his hand as a Wendy’s franchisee in Lima—owning three stores. Eventually, he sold all of his real estate investments, but now, he is looking toward retirement and gradually building a new portfolio of investment properties, often with co-investors.

One of his professional pursuits is providing “knowledge exchange,” which is teaching those who want to invest how to do it. And he runs a homeowners’ assistance program that helps those who can marginally afford to buy a home.

For a few years, Nowell helped recruit OSU ballplayers, such as Herb Williams, Clark Kellogg, Todd Penn and Carter Scott. He was disappointed that their OSU teams didn’t attain the success that was expected.

Nowell, who lives in northwest Columbus near Upper Arlington, says he and ex-wife Marty have remained friends and both frequently attend family affairs. They have three daughters and a son and “nine grand children, soon to be 10.”

“We’re together in a lot of ways,” he says.
OSU spectators have to learn to hoop it up — or else

Ohio State University has launched a secret effort to increase crowd exuberance at men's basketball games. So To Speak has learned.

Project Enthusiasm will require seat-license holders to take "rowdiness lessons" aimed at making them more boisterous and studentlike, said sources who asked to remain anonymous.

OSU revealed last week that it also is studying the possibility of moving students closer to the floor to increase crowd spirit.

The complicated effort could take months to accomplish. Meanwhile, seat-license holders will attend remedial classes in how to behave like rabid basketball fans.

"They need a little work," a highly imaginary source said. "They're older and wealthier than students. Some of them cheer only when a stock splits."

Conventional wisdom in college basketball holds that raucous home crowds intimidate visiting teams. Crowd enthusiasm reaches a fever pitch at some of the more famous venues. At Duke University's Cameron Indoor Stadium, groups of students occasionally light themselves on fire to distract opponents.

Students at Indiana University's Assembly Hall bring howler monkeys, whose incessant screeching frequently unnerves visiting players.

The University of New Mexico plays its games in "The Pit," an abandoned mine infested with bats and lighted by torches. There, the screams of fans echo off the walls in an eerie din.

Value City Arena, in contrast, is considerably more staid. Early this season, a group of monkees was seen meditating in Section 111 during the game against Nike Elite.

Officials have accepted some of the blame.

"Should we have sold out seat licenses in one section to the Circleville Knitting Club? Probably not," a source said. "But we had no idea they would spend the entire Eastern Illinois game making booties."

Project Enthusiasm requires each seat-license holder to complete several courses on college-basketball behavior.

OSU refused to release the course catalog, but So To Speak obtained a copy.

Among the course offerings:

**Introduction to Chest Painting**

Unlike students, who boldly slather their torsos in scarlet and gray paint, seat-license holders tend to be overly fastidious, an official said.

"You can tell a lot of them are homeowners: They want to compare paint chips. One guy insisted on applying primer first. By that time, the game was over."

Properly painted license holders could make a significant contribution to the game atmosphere, he said.

"Picture a half-dozen beefy lawyers and lobbyists sitting together, shirtless. You're talking about an acre of painted flesh. The TV impact could be awesome."

**Foam Finger Waving: Theory and Application**

Fans learn the history and significance of giant foam fingers and receive lessons in their display.

Officials are particularly concerned about low foam-finger use in the luxury suites.

"Corporate executives in expensive suits are a little finicky about their accessories," a finger coordinator said. "We're experimenting with a better-muscled finger to see whether they find it more appealing."

**Basketball Insults: 1932-1996**

The course reviews the history of insults, including classics such as "Miss it!" "Air ball" and "Yo' mama."

Some seat-license holders, reticent about yelling insults, prefer more formal methods of communication, an official said.

"It's the corporate culture. Middle managers want to e-mail the insults to the opposing university's Web site."

The university's following among state bureaucrats also poses problems, he said.

"They draft insulting memos — in triplicate. I'm telling you, these people are a project."

*Joe Blundo is an Accent columnist. jblundo@dispatch.com*
OSU wins conference tournament

Senior Brian Brown leads the celebration after Ohio State defeated Iowa to win the Big Ten Tournament trophy at Indianapolis. The Buckeyes had finished the regular season in a four-way tie for the conference title.

NCAA spot out West leaves Buckeyes baffled

By Bob Baptist
Dispatch Sports Reporter

INDIANAPOLIS — Everything went according to script yesterday for the Ohio State basketball team. Everything within the team's control, that is.

The Buckeyes, having vowed to separate themselves in the conference tournament from the Big Ten's three other regular-season champions, did just that, finishing off Iowa in the title game, 84-64, in Conseco Fieldhouse.

Less than an hour later, however, they might have wondered what good it did them for the NCAA Tournament.

Despite having proved themselves the undisputed Big Ten champs, the Buckeyes (29-7) received a No. 4 seed from the tournament selection commit-
tee and were assigned to the West Regional in Albuquerque, N.M.

OSU will play Thursday against No. 13 seed Davidson (21-9), winner of the Southern Conference Tournament.

"It kind of seems a little wacky," coach Jim O'Brien said. "It just reinforces the confusion and how much I don't understand about how this all works."

For the first time this year, the NCAA is experimenting with keeping as many teams seeded fourth or better as close to home as possible for the tournament's first two rounds.

Of the four No. 4 seeds, however, OSU was the only one not to benefit.

Illinois — beaten twice by the Buckeyes this season, including Saturday — will play in Chicago, Kentucky in St. Louis and USC in Sacramento, Calif.

Illinois was one of four teams that shared the Big Ten regular-season championship. Neither Kentucky nor USC won either the regular-season title or the tournament championship in its conference.

"We wanted to play somewhere close to home," OSU forward Zach Williams said. "But we're going out to New Mexico, and we've just got to take care
of business once we get out there.

"We're on a high now ... and we're going into this tournament with some momentum."

Ohio State, which won at Michigan on March 2 to earn a share of its second Big Ten championship in the past three years, won three games in as many days in Indianapolis to win the conference tournament for the first time.

On a guard-dominated team characterized by dogged defense and unselfish offense, senior Boban Savovic stepped to the fore yesterday, scoring a career-high 27 points, including 12 in a 16-5 run late in the game that decided the outcome.

Savovic was named the tournament's most outstanding player as his parents, Nikola and Olivera, visiting from their home in Yugoslavia, watched amid the sellout crowd of 18,996.

"It's a great feeling," Savovic said. "My teammates deserve as much credit as I do. It was just me this game that stepped up. I had a lot of open shots."

bbaptist@dispatch.com
by Steven P. Gietschier

T
ime was, in sports at least, that bigger was not necessarily better. In the middle of the last century, most athletes, even those renowned for their strength, were normal physical specimens. Take Joe Louis, heavyweight champion of the world from 1937 to 1948, baseball slugger Jimmie Foxx, so feared that he was nicknamed “The Beast,” and Otto Graham, star quarterback of the league-dominating Cleveland Browns. Each stood a bit above six feet and weighed around two hundred pounds.

Basketball was different, but not much. In the first dozen years of the National Collegiate Athletic Association Tournament, inaugurated in 1939, only once did the starting center for the championship team top six feet eight inches. Many college and professional players, in fact, were less than six feet tall. In 1949, when the Minneapolis Lakers won the first of their five National Basketball Association championships, only two of the fourteen players on their roster exceeded six feet four inches. These players were bigger than most Americans, for sure, but they certainly were not nearly the giants who stalk NBA courts today.

The simple truth, or rather the assumption, underlying this pattern was that big men, with rare exceptions, could not be good athletes. Big men were slow; they lacked coordination; they were awkward; they lacked stamina; they were, in a word, nonathletic. Neil Johnston did not defy this convention. At six feet eight inches and 210 pounds, he was hefty but frightfully angular. He ran with his hair flying and his elbows flapping, and the pejoratives that usually sullied other big men besmirched him, too. Syndicated sports columnist Milton Gross said he bore “a vague resemblance to a lantern-jawed scarecrow,” and Sport Magazine headlined a profile of him “Clumsy Sharpshooter.” But Johnston’s performance defied the stereotype. He not only played professional basketball but also professional baseball, and he developed his court skills so well that he led the NBA in scoring three times and gained admission to basketball’s Hall of Fame. The NBA’s first great big man was the Lakers’ George Mikan, but Johnston was its second, a true scoring machine, and he does not deserve to be forgotten. “Neil’s the most effective awkward guy I’ve ever seen on a basketball court,” said Joe Lapchick, coach of the New York Knickerbockers and himself a former stand-out player, in 1953. “The guy’s just amazing.”

Donald Neil Johnston was born in Chillicothe on February 4, 1929, the youngest of four brothers. He played youth basketball at Mount Logan grade school, and then at Chillicothe High he added baseball, football, tennis, and the high jump to his repertoire. “My dad had been a semipro pitcher,” he told the Sporting News in 1952, “and his ambition had always been for me to be a big leaguer.” But after his sophomore year, when he stood only five feet ten inches, he really started to grow, and basketball took priority. “It was my first love,” he admitted, and, as a senior playing for coach Howard Young, he averaged twenty-three points a game. Chosen as the center on the all-state team, he enrolled at Ohio State University that autumn.

Through college and into the professional ranks, Neil Johnston worked diligently to perfect the sweeping hook shot that helped him become a high-scoring center. Nancy Banks Collection
Big men were slow; they lacked coordination; they were awkward; they lacked stamina; they were, in a word, nonathletic.

Under the rules then governing college sports, OSU officials were able to give Johnston a job handling towels in an athletic supply room. "I had a chance to work twice as hard as anyone else for my tuition," he recalled. "And then I did not have money for anything else." Nor was life on the Buckeye basketball team all that exciting. After two consecutive appearances in the Final Four in 1945 and 1946 — though it then took only one victory to do so — new coach William "Tip" Dye's teams suffered through two tough seasons, losing twenty-three of forty games.

Johnston started as a sophomore and earned a letter, but the best player on the team was forward Dick Schnitker, who would be an All-American. Coach Dye encouraged his big man to develop the hook shot that he had used ineffectively in high school. Johnston gave it a go but did not perfect the shot until several years later. Come the spring, he played baseball as a freshman and a sophomore, but did not win a letter.

After two years of college, Johnston was close to dropping out. "I was running out of funds," he said. Salvation came from baseball, not basketball. While pitching for the Chillicothe Colts, a semipro team, in the summer of 1948, he attracted the attention of Heinie Groh, once a star third baseman with the New York Giants and the Cincinnati Reds, then scouting Ohio for the Philadelphia Phillies. In the years immediately after World War II, the Phillies, chronic losers, were a team on the move. They would develop enough young talent to win the National League pennant in 1950 with a team nicknamed the "Whiz Kids." Groh induced Johnston to sign a contract giving him enough money up front to return to school in the autumn and report to the Phillies in 1949. "The bonus I got for signing enabled me to pay for the completion of my education and buy a car," he said. "So although basketball was my first love, I decided to give baseball a fling."

Becoming a professional athlete cost Johnston his college eligibility, so he spent the winter of 1948–49 going to class and playing for Harris Jewelers in the Columbus Basketball League. The Jewelers played only once a week, so Johnston was able to work in the odd game or two for another Columbus team, the Mariners, or even a third for a team in Newark. Industrial-league basketball could
Johnston towered above his male classmates at Chillicothe High School. *Ross County Historical Society*

Johnston was a member of Chillicothe's tennis and track teams. He also served as vice president of the senior class. *Walter Johnston Collection*

Frances Breth, Photographer

While playing basketball for Chillicothe High School, Johnston scored 1,028 points in fifty-two games. He also averaged 11.1 rebounds during his three-year varsity career. *Ross County Historical Society*

Neil, the fourth and youngest son of Alex and Edna Johnston, grew up in the family's North Poplar Street home on the east side of Chillicothe, Ohio. *Robert Johnston Collection*
be a pretty rough game, and the competition tended to be uneven, but Johnston did get to hone his skills. He improved his shooting touch and learned even more from playing against traveling pro teams.

Johnston left school early in 1949 to attend the Phillies' spring training camp in Clearwater, Florida. Despite his enthusiasm for his new profession, it soon became clear that the club would punch his ticket for the minor leagues. His destination was the Terre Haute Phillies, a team in the Class B Three-I League. Johnston put in a good rookie season — albeit in a league four steps below the majors — winning ten games and losing twelve with a 3.14 earned-run average for a club that finished third. He yielded less than a hit an inning (159 hits in 166 innings), and he struck out 129 batters while walking only 73, all good numbers for a youngster. In addition, he pitched five shutouts and seemed to get better as the season wore on. Yet, by his own admission, he was "entirely a fast ball guy, no curve at all. I was all right for six innings — then watch out."

Come 1950, the Phillies took Johnston to their minor-league camp in Dyersburg, Tennessee, and then reassigned him to Terre Haute. Although his team finished first and won the post-season playoffs, Johnston's numbers were about the same as they had been the year before: eleven wins, twelve losses, and a 2.89 ERA. But he lost seven of his last eight decisions. The organization promoted him anyway, sending him for the 1951 season to the Wilmington, Delaware, Blue Rocks in the Class B Interstate League. Here, Johnston floundered. He pitched only 115 innings and won but three games while losing nine. His earned-run average skied to 5.40.
Eddie Gottlieb (left), nicknamed the "Mogul," was a legendary basketball coach and promoter from Philadelphia. After graduating from college in 1918, he helped organize a semipro team under the auspices of the South Philadelphia Hebrew Association. This team eventually dropped its all-Jewish lineup and became the nucleus of the Philadelphia Warriors. In 1946 the team joined the new Basketball Association of America, forerunner of the NBA, and Gottlieb led the Warriors to their first league championship that season. He served as chairman of the NBA's Rules Committee for twenty-five years, suggesting innovations that have helped sustain fan interest. The Eddie Trophy, named in his honor, is awarded annually to the NBA's top rookie. *The Sporting News*

Gottlieb, co-owner and coach of the Philadelphia Warriors. A phone call led to a meeting at which Gottlieb saw that Johnston was earnest, if inexperienced, and an invitation to the Warriors’ training camp in Hershey, Pennsylvania, with round-trip fare included, followed.

Johnston told Gottlieb at their first meeting that he was six feet six inches, but, when he got to camp, the Warriors’ public relations director, Herb Good, grabbed a tape measure and discovered the newcomer to be six feet eight inches. Gottlieb grinned. "That’s the first guy who ever told me he was shorter than he really was." So painfully quiet that his teammates quickly nicknamed him “Gabby,” Johnston nevertheless summoned up the courage to ask Gottlieb for a weekend off to return to Chillicothe to get married. Johnston and the former Phyllis Wilson, a nurse, had a "honeymoon" of sorts in Hershey. Once practices started in earnest, Johnston demonstrated the rugged game he had learned in Columbus. Unrefined and aggressive, he pummeled teammates, who yearned for the end of each scrimmage. But near the offensive basket Johnston proved surprisingly adept. His shots went in with uncanny regularity. In an exhibition game between the Warriors and the Lakers, Johnston showed his mettle. Going after a loose ball against the mighty George Mikan, Johnston wound up with the ball. Mikan wound up on all fours. "That’s what I like

He developed the injury that has undone so many pitchers, a sore arm. "I was a fastball pitcher without a fast ball," he lamented. "I lost confidence; I lost my control; I lost my interest. I really liked baseball until that summer."

After a particularly bad outing, the righthander turned to the club’s business manager, Jim Ward, and, in a conversation he later recalled for sportswriter Stan Baumgartner, announced, "I’d like to try pro basketball this winter. I couldn’t be any worse than I am in baseball." Ward provided more than a sympathetic ear and a shoulder on which to lean. He was a basketball fan and a friend of savvy Eddie

Signed by Eddie Gottlieb as a free agent in November 1951, Johnston got minimal playing time but attracted praise for refusing to be intimidated by the size or reputation of other players. Even with limited time, his field goal percentage dwarfed that of veteran players and hinted at greater things to come. 

*Nancy Banks Collection*
about him,” Gottlieb said. “He isn’t impressed by the other guy’s reputation.”

Gottlieb handled his rookie carefully, using him as the understudy to starting center EdMilkan, George’s brother, and at first playing him only in games helplessly lost. For the season, Johnston averaged fifteen minutes and six points per game. He didn’t take enough shots to qualify in the official rankings, but his shooting percentage of .472 surpassed that of fellow Warrior Paul Arizin, the league leader. The Warriors again finished fourth in the Eastern Division and lost the first round of the playoffs.

That summer, 1952, Johnston decided to give baseball another try. He signed with the Tri-Cities Braves in the Class A Western International League, but quit after just a few starts. “The cold and rain in the state of Washington then gave me an arm ache. I was utterly dejected,” he said. But there was a side benefit to this excursion. “My wife and I took a delayed honeymoon through Yellowstone Park on the way home.”

Over the next several seasons, Johnston’s NBA star soared, but the Warriors remained earthbound. He won three straight scoring titles (1952–53, 1953–54, 1954–55), one rebounding title (1954–55), and led the league in field goal percentage three times (1952–53, 1955–56, and 1956–57). He augmented his hook shot with a reliable, one-handed, fifteen- to twenty-foot set shot and played outstanding defense. “I like the hook,” he said in 1957, “because that’s what I do best. I’m not much on sets but I’d be foolish not to have a change.” The latter phrase, a pitcher’s term, makes sense in light of his mound career.

In 1953–54, he averaged 24.4 points per game and finished more than five points per game ahead of the runner-up, Bob Cousy of the Boston Celtics. He tallied fifty points one night against Syracuse and on November 19, 1953, went sixteen for twenty-three against the Knicks. In that game, he was guarded, none too successfully, by Harry Gallatin, New York’s tough center. “That Gallatin,” Johnston joshed. “I knew him away back. He was pitching for Decatur in the Three-I League when I was with Terre Haute. I pitched against him a few times. He just had a knuckleball, and nobody, including...
Gallatin, ever knew where it was going. I always beat him and Decatur, too. That was the one team I could beat, without fail."

Johnston had developed into an extremely workmanlike, if unspectacular, player. He lacked flash of any kind, but with his long legs he took a huge first step and confused opponents with his fakes. "The players tell me that when he has the ball, he leaves them with the impression he's not going to do anything with it, but he does everything," said Joe Lapchick. "He has tremendous moves. All they got to do is get the ball in to him, and he'll score."

Johnston was strong, too. "If someone hitched him to a plow," the Knicks coach predicted, "he probably could pull it."

The next year, Johnston scored forty-five points against the Rochester Royals and grabbed thirty-nine rebounds against the Syracuse Nationals, both league highs. In his career, he played in six straight All-Star games and was named to the NBA's post-season All-Star team four years running. Still, Johnston never
The March 8, 1956, game against Boston in Philadelphia was designated as Neil Johnston Night. Showered with gifts that included a new Dodge automobile before the game, Johnston sank eight of thirteen field goals and thirteen of fourteen foul shots to help his team score a record-setting 142 points. *Nancy Banks Collection*
who had played three years of college ball at Kansas and one with the Globetrotters. "The Stilt," as he was known, was an incredible athlete, and he remained so for many years, but he and his team repeatedly finished second behind the Celtics. In both of Johnston's seasons at the helm, the Warriors were runners-up to Boston in the Eastern Division, and neither time did they advance beyond the playoffs.

The NBA's 1961 expansion to nine teams was overshadowed by the birth of Saperstein's brainchild, the American Basketball League. Saperstein lured Johnston back to the playing ranks with the league's Pittsburgh franchise and made him coach, too. Johnston played only five games before retiring to the bench, but led the team to second place in its division. Halfway through the next season, he packed it in.

After his stint in Pittsburgh, Johnston lived a peripatetic life. He worked for a while for the United States Rubber Company, but, having taken a master's degree in education from Temple University, he eventually followed the urge to teach and coach at the college level. After two seasons coaching the Wilmington, Delaware, team in the Eastern Basketball League, he became assistant basketball coach (1967–72) and head baseball coach (1969–71) at Wake Forest University. When basketball head coach Jack McCloskey moved to the NBA's Portland Trail Blazers, Johnston went, too, as an assistant (1972–74). Later, he served as head coach at Chemeketa Community College in Salem, Oregon, and then as head coach and athletic director at North Lake Community College in Irving, Texas. On September 27, 1978, he suffered a fatal heart attack while playing a pickup basketball game. He was only forty-nine. Having scored 10,023 points in just eight NBA seasons, Neil Johnston was inducted into basketball's Hall of Fame in 1990, joining Mikan, Arizin, Gola, Chamberlain, Russell, and, of course, Eddie Gottlieb.

In 1959 Johnston was plagued by a knee injury — some said it occurred when Boston Celtics center Bill Russell blocked a hook shot — that put his playing future in question. While Johnston reached his goal of 10,000 points, he played little the rest of the season. Nancy Banks Collection
Chillicothe native Neil Johnston, a top player in the National Basketball Association in 1957, would go on to the Basketball Hall of Fame. Nancy Banks Collection

See: "A Better Big Man"
2003-2004 Team

Maui Classic -
December 2003
OSU MEN'S BASKETBALL

Program placed in turmoil

Woman alleges grade-fixing, $10,000 of phone-card abuse

By Tim Doulin and Jim Woods
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

A woman who housed a former Ohio State men's basketball player not only alleges wrongdoing within the program but says it occurred at the direction of a former top assistant coach and with the knowledge of Jim O'Brien.

The allegations, part of testimony in a Franklin County Common Pleas lawsuit, have become the fodder for an NCAA investigation. One confirmed allegation cost O'Brien his job as Ohio State coach earlier this week.

If the NCAA finds that other allegations in the lawsuit are true, the OSU program could face penalties ranging up to being put on probation, losing scholarships and being banned from postseason play.

The lawsuit filed last year by Kathleen Salyers says a Yugoslavian player, Stobdan "Boban" Savovic, received money and gifts, had grades fixed and ran up more than $10,000 in long-distance phone calls on a calling card that belonged to the father of a New York sports agent.

The activity occurred while Savovic was a member of the Buckeyes from 1998 through 2002, according to Salyers' deposition. Savovic lived with her and her family in Gahanna while he attended Ohio State.

The details are spelled out in the 801-page deposition of Salyers, who filed suit against Dan and Kim Rostovic. She seeks more than $300,000. Her deposition revealed that O'Brien paid $6,500 to a recruit, Aleksandar Radojevic of Yugoslavia, in 1999, which O'Brien acknowledged before he was fired Tuesday.

Salyers says the Rostovics promised to pay her $1,000 a month plus expenses for allowing Savovic to live with her family. She said Paul Biancardi, a former top assistant to O'Brien who is now coach at Wright State, orchestrated the arrangements.

"There were many, many calls from Paul Biancardi requesting that I pay something for Boban," Salyers' deposition says. "He knew that the Rostovics asked me to take Boban. He knew they were supposed to give me money."

Biancardi, in a statement issued by Wright State, denied the allegations.

"I am disappointed and frustrated over the situation that has evolved.

See PROGRAM Page D2
from a lawsuit in which I am not a party. ... Statements, having no basis in truth, have been used to make decisions affecting the lives of dedicated individuals," Biancardi said.

Eris Dawley, an attorney for Dan Roslovic, released a statement yesterday that the lawsuit is "false and completely fabricated."

"Dan never had any agreement with her to pay her any money and he had in no way contributed any of those facts," the statement said. Roslovic's company, Roslovic Builders, has donated money to Ohio State.

When questioned by the Roslovic's attorneys, Salyers acknowledged she did not have a written agreement with the Roslovics and was unable to produce receipts and documents for expenses she said she incurred in taking in Savovic.

The Roslovics' attorneys say Salyers "volunteered" to take in Savovic.

Salyers says Savovic was living with the Roslovics but Mr. Roslovic said that violated NCAA rules because he was an OSU contributor and he had to leave.

After Savovic moved in, Salyers says, she learned from Kim Roslovic that Mr. Roslovic had discovered that his wife and Savovic had a sexual relationship. Salyers said she knew from the start that Savovic was going to have trouble with college coursework.

"I gave him a newspaper article to read about himself and he couldn't read it," she said in her deposition.

The Roslovics' attorneys said allegations expected to be of interest to NCAA investigators include:

- Salyers, Kim Roslovic and others wrote papers for Savovic and did other coursework.
- Biancardi told Salyers he had professors in two courses change grades so Savovic could remain eligible to play basketball. Questioned by attorneys, Salyers could not name the courses or professors.

Biancardi asked Salyers to pay Savovic's international tax bill so he could remain eligible. He expressed doubt when he learned that the Roslovics hadn't been paying her expenses.

Salyers paid for a round-trip plane ticket for Predrag Savovic, Doban's brother, so he could come to Columbus from Hawaii. Mark Comstein, a professional agent, regularly talked to Savovic and other OSU players.

Salyers says Savovic ran up a long-distance phone bill of more than $10,000 on a calling card belonging to Comstein's father. She said Savovic told her that Comstein said he could use the card anytime he wanted.

In her deposition, Salyers says O'Brien knew about some of the things that were going on.

"I know that when Paul called me about Boban using an agent's father's credit card to make a business account for over $10,000 in long-distance phone calls, that Jim O'Brien knew about that."

Salyers said, "I don't really remember discussing that with him, to be honest with you. It's possible, but I don't remember." Asked again whether she told the reporter about the cover-up story, she said, "I don't remember telling him that... I know he knew the story."

Editor Benjamin J. Marrison said Baptist denied knowledge of the possible NCAA infractions, or of the arrangement that brought Savovic to the Salyers home.

"The charge is an unfounded fabrication," Marrison said.

In her deposition, Salyers also details the $6,000 transaction involving O'Brien and Radojevic.

The 7-foot-3 Radojevic was attending a junior college in Kansas when he received the cash from O'Brien. The coach instructed Radojevic to send the money to his family.

Radojevic, however, went to the NBA after he was declared ineligible for college because he had been paid for playing for a pro team in Montenegro. Biancardi phoned Radojevic and asked him to return the money, Salyers says.

Radojevic came to her house and dropped off money in an envelope, she said, so someone could pick it up.

After six months, no one had come for the money, and when she called Radojevic, he told her to keep it. Salyers said she used the money to pay her mortgage.

In a motion to have the lawsuit decided in Salyers' favor, her attorney, Jeffrey E. Lucas, described the case as being about "the abuse of a college athletic system that is broken and needs fixed."

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Serbian ties cited in aid to player

By Tim Doull
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Michael Sierawski was sitting in a restaurant six years ago when the Sunday sports page when a story about an Ohio State University basketball recruit caught his eye.

Slobodan “Boban” Savovic, a standout player at a high school in New Jersey, was to arrive in Columbus for a recruiting visit.

Savovic originally was from Montenegro, same as Sierawski’s grandfather.

Sierawski, a member of the St. Stefan Serbian Orthodox Church on the North Side, found out when Savovic was arriving at Port Columbus and met the flight at the gate.

He spotted a young, tall passenger coming off the plane and took a chance.

“I asked him in Serbian, ‘How are you?’” Sierawski said. “And he spoke back in Serbian. That’s how I knew it was him.”

Sierawski told The Dispatch yesterday how he and others in Columbus went on to provide housing and care for Savovic with the understanding that then-OSU assistant basketball coach Paul Biancardi knew of the arrangement.

Sierawski said Biancardi “knew that Boban was being supported by somebody at all times. It varied from me to Dan (Koslovic) to Kathy (Salyers) or Semi’ Pajovic, an East Coast man who brought Savovic to the United States from Yugoslavia, throughout the four-year period when Savovic attended Ohio State, Sierawski said.

On Sunday, Biancardi, now head basketball coach at Wright State University near Dayton, issued a statement denying any wrongdoing. He refused to answer any questions.

The May 3, 1998, meeting between Sierawski and Savovic at Port Columbus would lead to other relationships, which ultimately would result in a lawsuit. OSU head coach Jim O’Brien firing and an NCAA investigation into alleged wrongdoing within the basketball program.

Savovic’s relationship with Koslovic, a prominent member of the Serbian community and church, his now ex-wife, Kim, and Salyers is at the center of a $350,000 lawsuit filed by Salyers. Salyers, a former baby sitter and housecleaner for the Koslovics, contends the Koslovics reneged on an agreement to pay her $1,000 a month plus expenses in exchange for caring for Savovic during his four years at OSU.

O’Brien was fired after admitting he paid $5,000 to another Serbian basketball recruiter, Alexandar Radovic, who ended up not attending OSU. O’Brien’s payment first came to light in Salyers deposition for her suit.

Sierawski said he spoke with OSU compliance officials last week and may be called to meet with an NCAA investigator. Salyers met with the NCAA yesterday.

The 51-year-old Sierawski said he is speaking publicly for the first time because his name has been mentioned in court filings. He said he had no prior ties to the OSU men’s basketball program and did not personally know any of its coaches when he met Savovic.

In the time it took to walk from the airport gate to a restaurant in the concourse where Biancardi was waiting, Sierawski had convinced Savovic to come to him near the church, which happened on the day that day to meet other Serbians.

Biancardi had planned to take Savovic to campus, but the player indicated he wanted to go to the church, and Biancardi grudgingly relented, Sierawski said.

The warm reception at the church may have helped solidify Savovic’s decision to attend OSU, Sierawski said.

“I told Paul if there is anything I can do, let me know,” Sierawski said of Biancardi, who had gone to the church dinner, too. Biancardi took Sierawski up on his offer to help find a place for Savovic to live until school started in the fall, said Sierawski, who arranged for Savovic to live with the Koslovics for the summer.

“Since we were supposedly legal, I felt if we wanted to leave a paper trail,” Sierawski said. “I thought it was an asset rather than a liability. In case it came up down the road.”

Later that summer, Savovic and Radovic attended a church picnic. Salyers contends in a deposition that Savovic collected about $600 at the gathering for her to give to Savovic and Radovic as spending money.

Sierawski said the money was collected to cover the cost of the picnic. He said he planned to put any leftover money toward supporting Savovic and Radovic, in the form of cash, food or clothing.

But that afternoon, Dan Koslovic told him that the OSU athletics department said Savovic’s living arrangement might be acceptable.

No money was given to Savovic and Radovic, Sierawski said.

He said that several months later he gave Salyers $600 “because she was financially strapped.”

When OSU’s compliance office learned of the $600, the NCAA would have known Savovic was receiving some form of outside support.

“Kathy would have known that even though we were supposed to leave a paper trail,” Sierawski said. “I think everyone on the team would see her drop him off at practices.”

Sierawski said he had reached out to Savovic because he was Serbian, not because he was an athlete.

It was not uncommon for members of the church and others in the Serbian community to befriend recent Eastern European emigrants, he said.

At the time, Yugoslavia was being torn apart by war. “It is our upbringing,” Sierawski said. “If you can extend a helping hand, you do so.”

The church was unaware of any wrongdoing involving the OSU program, said David Koss, board president of the church.

“Our involvement with the players was to welcome them and let them know that if they needed to be with people from their country, there was a place where they could come and be welcome and be comfortable,” Koss said.

Others who attended the summer picnic said they knew of no money being collected for the young men.

“They are blowing that way out of proportion,” said Nancy Vukovich, who said she attended the gathering. “To my knowledge, nothing was given to them.

You see these kids and, yes, people do want to help them.”

Vukovich said Savovic and Radovic could not necessarily financially, but be nice to them and teach them what to do.”
Savovic had deal with broker while at OSU, Salyers says

Serb native known for steering players to U.S.

By Tim Doulin
and Aaron Portzline
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

As a player at Ohio State, Slobodan “Boban” Savovic had an agreement to be represented by New York-based basketball broker Spomenko “Semi” Pajovic, said a woman yesterday whose lawsuit led to the firing of OSU men's basketball coach Jim O'Brien.

Kathleen Salyers said she discussed the arrangement with Savovic on several occasions.

“Semi offered him this opportunity,” she said. “There would be a kickback.”

Student-athletes who enter such an agreement — oral or written — violate NCAA rules.

The OSU men's basketball program is under NCAA investigation. O'Brien was fired last month for paying $6,000 to Serbian-born Aleksandar Radojevic, who was declared ineligi

See SAVOVIC Page B2
Former OSU assistant coach Dave Spiller, who shared recruiting responsibilities then with assistant coach Paul Biancardi, said a relationship with Pajovic was necessary to land the Serbian players.

"Semi was the connection you had to have," Spiller said. "He was the link between Boban and what Boban was doing and what Boban was thinking."  

"Look at the (NBA) draft. Every other player, every other prospect, is from Eastern Europe. Paul was trying to build his European base. When you are recruiting, you wouldn't think twice about that."

Cochs and players are allowed to have contact — in person or by phone — with agents, said Kaye Haines, a spokeswoman for the NCAA.

"What would be a violation would be if a student-athlete were to make any kind of an agreement with an agent, either orally or in writing, to be represented now or later," she said.

Two sources said yesterday that Pajovic brings players to the United States with the agreement that he and Cornstein will represent them as agents, in either the NBA or European leagues.

Cornstein has denied involvement in any wrongdoing alleged in Salyers’ case.


Two years later, Leibowitz was fired when it was discovered that five of his players — all foreign-born — were living in an apartment without adult supervision. The players were delivered by Pajovic and another agent.

Savovic had lived in the same apartment.

Though the Serbian-born Pajovic seems to have made an impact on college basketball, few people say they know him well.

Spiller says he met Pajovic only a couple of times in passing. Others describe him as "shadowy" and "secretive."

His name came up in Salyers' deposition in the lawsuit she filed last year in Franklin County Common Pleas Court against Dan and Kim Rozlovec. Salyers claims that the Rozlovec couple renegoted on a promise to pay $1,600 per week plus expenses for taking care of Savovic. The Rozlovics deny such an agreement.

Salyers is a former baby sitter and housecleaner for the Rozlovecos. OSIU graduates who met Savovic through Michael Sierawski, a Columbus man of Serbian descent who befriended Savovic on his first visit here.

Sierawski describes Pajovic as a "shadowy guy" who wielded considerable influence over Savovic.

"Semi was a puppeteer," Sierawski said. "He was the one calling most of the shots. Boban would listen to Semi before he would listen to Kathy."

Pajovic had considerable contact with Savovic during the early part of Savovic's college career at OSIU. But he later turned his attention to Radijovic, who was drafted by the Toronto Raptors of the NBA, Sierawski said.

"When Boban didn't prove to be a superstar, Semi kind of concentrated elsewhere," Sierawski said. "When (Radijovic) got drafted, Semi spent more time with him."

Pajovic frequently called Salyers' home and visited Columbus "dozens of times" to check on Savovic, she said. When Salyers was in town, Pajovic often spent the night in her home, she said.

Salyers doesn't believe "anybody will ever know the truth about who" Pajovic is.

"He literally hides," she said. "He will not open his front door and won't answer his cell phone."

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OSU did homework on integrity concerns

By Aaron Portzline
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Ohio State athletics director Andy Geiger had extensive knowledge of the candidates to replace fired men's basketball coach Jim O'Brien before they were interviewed.

"We (in the athletics department) spent a lot of time on everybody we were thinking of, for obvious reasons," Geiger said. "We looked at their backgrounds, their records in terms of the NCAA and issues relating to their integrity."

The OSU men's program is under NCAA investigation for numerous violations under O'Brien, including a $5,000 gift from O'Brien to a recruit who never played at Ohio State.

So before Thad Matta agreed to take the job — he was formally introduced as Ohio State's new coach yesterday — Matta wasn't put through the ringer in terms of answering NCAA-related questions.

"It was a short part of the interview.

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INTEGRITY

process," Geiger said, "because I'd done the important digging, and I had staff working on that."

Matta, in one season at Butler University and three at Xavier University, has built a squeaky clean image, with no major NCAA violations on his record. Minor violations don't always become public, but those who have followed Matta closely in his previous stops say they've never heard of any.

"(The issue of NCAA compliance) came up (in my interview)," Matta said. "That was kind of the process of the questioning of how we do things to prevent certain things from happening. I told (Geiger) I want to run a first-rate program."

"I just told him the guys I've worked for — Herb Sendek (now at North Carolina State), Barry Collier (formerly the Butler head coach, now at the University of Nebraska) and Charlie Coles (at Miami University). Those are guys who do it the right way, and that's the family I've grown up in."

It's worth noting that O'Brien had a similar reputation when he arrived at Ohio State from Boston College, and it stuck with him during his seven seasons at OSU.

Many were shocked June 8 when O'Brien was fired and the allegations in a lawsuit filed by Kathleen Salyers became public.

Salyers is suing Dan and Kim Roslovic, saying they never followed through on promises to pay her $1,000 a month plus expenses to care for former OSU player Slobodan "Boban" Savovic.

O'Brien and former OSU assistant Paul Biancardi knew of the agreement, Salyers said. She also alleges that Biancardi knew of cash, plane tickets and other gifts given to Savovic, and that he had Salyers arrange grade changes with professors.

The NCAA investigation, Geiger acknowledged, probably will go on for a "very, very long time." Ohio State associate athletics director Miechelle Willis expects it to carry on "well into next basketball season, maybe beyond."

But, Geiger said, "I would be very surprised if this coach (Matta) and this team get penalized very severely."

Geiger and Willis said there were no plans to keep a closer eye on the basketball program under Matta than their was under O'Brien or his predecessor, Randy Ayers.

Ayers had several disciplinary problems with players when he was fired in the spring of 1997.

"We're pretty even-handed in the way we deal with compliance," Geiger said. "We'll probably raise the bar everywhere, although it's pretty high right now."

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Geiger had Matta on list from the start

By Bob Baptist
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

The morning after Jim O'Brien was fired as Ohio State men's basketball coach June 8, athletics director Andy Geiger needed to look no deeper than the sixth page of The Dispatch sports section to find a replacement.

There, among seven mug shots of prospective candidates, was Thad Matta's — right under those of Bob Knight, who never had a chance, and Bob Huggins, who forfeited whatever chance he might have had when his drunken-driving arrest became public two days after the job opened.

Geiger knew that morning, if not sooner, that Matta might be his man. His instinct was no different than anyone else's. Matta was 78-23 in three years at Xavier. A three-point loss to Duke in March had denied the Musketeers a trip to the Final Four.

One month after Matta's mug was in the paper, Geiger introduced him as Ohio State's
new coach. So what took Geiger so long? It's not the first time the question has been asked. "You're not trying to get the quickest guy," Wake Forest coach Skip Prosser said. "You're trying to get the right guy."

Geiger wanted to be safe rather than sorry, especially given the circumstances Ohio State is in with the NCAA.

He and his family also needed a vacation. The Maurice Clarett flap had canceled their 2003 getaway. He wasn't going to let his sudden dismissal of O'Brien ruin this year's. He also wasn't going to start pushing forward until he had steadied himself in the wake of firing a man he had hired, trusted and been betrayed by.

"It took me a little while to get into the search psychologically. It was really hard," Geiger said Friday. "We also, simply, didn't want to race through it because we didn't see a need to."

"But then I got going."

Geiger returned to Columbus on June 21 and to the guerrilla candidacy of Knight, a native son whose minions had been campaigning through Columbus media outlets for more than a week. With Geiger out of town and mostly out of touch with the media, Knight's cronies filled the information vacuum with reports of their man's interest in finishing his career at his alma mater. He'd restore integrity, they said, and sell out Value City Arena.

"I was getting a lot of push on individuals because (they would) fill the arena," Geiger said. "If I'm going to hire somebody simply because (his) name recognition will sell season tickets next year, and then I'm going to hold on for dear life on everything else, I think that's upside down. I don't think that's the right reason for hiring a coach."

ANDY GEIGER
OSU athletics director

coach Kevin Stallings, to Cincinnati to meet Matta and to Philadelphia for Pennsylvania coach Fran Dunphy. St. Joseph's coach Phil Martelli also was on the agenda until he backed out 24 hours before his interview, Geiger said.

The next day, Geiger, associate athletics director Micheles Willis and faculty representative John Bruno met Rice coach Willis Wilson and Los Angeles Lakers assistant Jim Cleamons, a Linden graduate and former Ohio State player, in Dallas. OSU interim coach Rick Boyages was interviewed June 30. With the Fourth of July weekend looming and OSU president Karen A. Holbrook on vacation, the first of the finalists, Stallings, was not brought to campus until Monday night. He was done before noon Tuesday and followed in by Wilson.

Late that night, it was confirmed for the first time that Matta was in the mix. He had denied he was a candidate, even after his secret interview a week before. He wasn't sure that night whether to come to Columbus the following morning until speaking with Geiger by phone. He arrived in the Schottenstein Center shortly after 7 a.m. Wednesday and was out of town by noon. Geiger met with the search committee at 2 p.m.

"I really liked Thad," Geiger said, "but I wanted the committee to get to where I was."

The meeting lasted 45 minutes.

"The general consensus was that Thad Matta was the best choice," Smith said.

"For me, I've always been a guy that likes to be with people that know how to win. When you're a .500 coach, like some of the other guys on our list, (they are) great people, great teachers, but they've never spent as much time as Thad has cutting down the nets."

Geiger offered Matta the job shortly before 3 p.m.

"I took a big step back and looked at things that are important to me and what I'm trying to get accomplished from the coaching perspective," Matta said. "I also look at challenges."

At 6:30 p.m., Matta called Geiger and accepted the challenge. He agreed to a seven-year contract. He turns 37 today. He should have 20 years in him.

"It was a long process," Matta said, "and to be quite honest with you, I'm glad it's over."
COACHING CHRONOLOGY: Ohio State University Basketball:

D.C. Huddleston (1903-04): 15-6 (.714)
Thomas Kibler (1909-10): 22-2 (.917)
Lynn St. John (1912-19): Overall, 80-69 (.537); Big Ten, 24-43 (.359)
George Trautman (1920-22): Overall, 29-33 (.468); Big Ten, 10-26 (.278)
Harold G. Olsen (1923-46): Overall, 260-196 (.570); Big Ten, 154-135 (.533),

five titles; four NCAA Tournaments, championship game (1939), four Final Fours

Tippy Dye (1947-50): Overall, 53-34 (.605);
Big Ten, 27-21 (.563), one title; one NCAA Tournament

Floyd Stahl (1951-58): Overall, 84-92 (.477); Big Ten, 51-65 (.451)
Fred Taylor (1959-76): Overall, 297-158 (.653); Big Ten, 158-102 (.608), seven
titles; five NCAA Tournaments, national champion (1960), championship game
(1961, 1962), Final Four (1968)

Eldon Miller (1977-86): Overall, 174-120 (.592); Big Ten, 96-84 (.533); four NCAA
Tournaments

Gary Williams (1987-89): Overall, 59-41 (.590); Big Ten, 24-30 (.444); one NCAA
Tournament

Randy Ayers (1990-97): Overall, 124-108 (.534); Big Ten, 64-80 (.444), two titles;
three NCAA Tournaments

Jim O'Brien (1998-2004): Overall, 133-88 (.602); Big Ten, 61-51 (.545), two titles; four
NCAA Tournaments, one Final Four (1999)
Professor changed grade for athlete

By Kathy Lynn Gray
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

A professor said yesterday that he changed a grade for Slobodan “Boban” Savovic in spring 1999, a change that reportedly allowed the then-Ohio State University student to continue to play basketball.

But Doug Kennard, now an assistant professor at Mount Vernon Nazarene University, said he could not remember why he made the change in his Rural Sociology class.

The grade change has come into question as part of an NCAA investigation into the school's basketball and football programs.

The basketball probe was triggered when Kathleen Salyers, a Gaithersburg, Maryland, housekeeper, sued a Berkeley couple over money she said they owed her for caring for Savovic when he was an OSU student-athlete from 1998 to 2002. That lawsuit has been dismissed based on a technicality.

Salyers said she persuaded Kennard to change an F that Savovic received in Rural Sociology to a D so that he would remain eligible to play basketball at OSU.

Salyers also has spoken with the NCAA about the grade changes. She said its investigators confirmed to her that Savovic's grades were changed in two classes: Rural Sociology and math.

She said the math grade was upgraded from an F to a C after she talked with the professor by phone. She could not remember the professor's name.

Steve Snapp, spokesman for OSU athletics, said OSU also has looked into Salyers' allegations that Savovic's grades were changed. He declined to say what the investigation found.

But Snapp said Salyers' request would violate NCAA rules. Salyers is considered an OSU booster because she provided benefits to a student-athlete, Snapp said. A booster is not allowed to ask that a student-athlete receive special benefits, such as a grade change, he said.

Scott Thomas, who teaches numerous sections of Rural Sociology at OSU, said the only reason he ever changes a grade is to fix a clerical or mathematical error.

Blancard, now head men's basketball coach at Wright State University, denied in his deposition that he had ever talked to Salyers about having Savovic's grades changed. He has not spoken publicly about the NCAA investigation.

If a grade is changed after it has been posted, the instructor must fill out a form that lists the original grade, the new one, the student, the instructor and the reason for the change. A supervisor also signs the form, which is filed with the registrar's office.

Salyers was suing Kim and Dan Roslovic, who are now divorced, for $1,000 a month that Salyers said they promised to pay if she would house Savovic.

On Monday, the NCAA revealed nine rules violations it thinks OSU committed. They deal mostly with improper benefits that Savovic is thought to have received while he played at OSU.

The only reference to academic issues is a charge that Salyers wrote "numerous" academic papers for Savovic during his years at Ohio State, a violation of NCAA rules.

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MEN'S BASKETBALL

OSU hopes ticket deal will increase attendance

By Bob Baptist
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

First came an upset win over unbeaten Illinois in March.
Next came commitments from four of the top two dozen recruits in the class of 2006, including top prospect Greg Oden's commitment last week.
Yesterday, Ohio State did its part to try to sustain the buzz generated by Thad Matta's first year as coach of the men's basketball team by offering some season tickets for the same price each of the next four years. The offer is good until Sept. 10.
"Frankly, we've had a lot of people stop being season ticket-holders," said Richelle Simonson, associate athletics director for ticketing and event management. "We had to try to figure out if there is a way to build on the momentum of the end of the year. The Illinois game was tremendous."

The 3,235 season tickets sold to the general public for men's games last season were more than 1,300 fewer than the previous year, Simonson said. Average attendance in 19,200-seat Value City Arena fell for the fifth consecutive season, to 13,716.
The final home game against undefeated Illinois on March 6 was one of only two sellouts.
"We had to extend an olive branch to our season ticket-
holders, to try to re-establish a relationship with (them)," Simonson said. "We don't have a lot of leverage with them sitting in (the) upper bowl, not in the lower bowl (reserved for seat-license holders, faculty, staff and students). We had to figure out what is attractive. Eventually, it became price. Locked in, it might be attractive."

The four-year guarantee is only for season tickets in the upper bowl, priced at $391, $306 and $221. Only the lower two price levels, located in the corners and top five rows of the arena, are available to new buyers, Simonson said.

The complete schedule for this season has not been released, but the 17 home dates will include games against Virginia Tech on Nov. 28 in the ACC-Big Ten Challenge and Louisiana State on New Year's Eve.

Simonson also said the athletics department is "leaning toward" selling student tickets this season on a single-game basis, at $12 per game, rather than in blocks of games, as has been the case in the past.

Students are allotted 4,000 seats in the arena — 2,000 apiece in the lower and upper levels — but only 757 bought season ticket packages last season, Simonson said.

Improving the location of students' seats that are mostly in the west end and southwest corner of the arena is "always open for discussion," she said, but changes are not imminent.

"The configuration we have, we don't think it's necessarily bad," Simonson said. "Anybody who was at (the Illinois) game would have a hard time saying we don't have a good atmosphere. We have to figure out why the Illinois game was the way it was and try to harness that for a whole season."

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NCAA ordered to assist O'Brien

Judge allows access to OSU basketball probe

By Kathy Lynn Gray
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Former Ohio State University basketball coach Jim O’Brien says in his lawsuit against the university that he was a “sacrificial lamb” who was fired so problems in the school’s Athletics Department wouldn’t be revealed.

A judge’s ruling Monday could help prove that, O’Brien’s attorneys say.

Ohio Court of Claims Judge Joseph T. Clark said the NCAA must release all documents regarding its investigation of the OSU men’s basketball program to O’Brien, and that those documents need not be kept confidential.

The NCAA still could appeal Clark’s ruling.

Clark also ruled that O’Brien’s attorneys can question Athletics Director Gene Smith and Kansas lawyer Michael Glazier, who is advising OSU on the NCAA investigation.


O’Brien is suing the university in the Ohio Court of Claims over his firing in June 2004, seeking $5.8 million he would have been paid under his contract.

The NCAA had objected to O’Brien’s request to see and copy all of its investigative documents regarding the men’s basketball program. The association had allowed O’Brien to view information pertinent to his case, court documents show.

The NCAA argued that it had provided O’Brien’s attorneys with all information relevant to his lawsuit and should not have to release other investigative information.

O’Brien is trying to obtain that comprehensive information to use before the NCAA’s Committee on Infractions, not in his own lawsuit, the NCAA argued.

That committee will hear the NCAA’s case against OSU this fall, and O’Brien will have a chance to give his side of the story in front of the committee.

The committee is made up of representatives of member colleges and universities, not of NCAA staff members.

The NCAA also had argued that even if O’Brien’s attorneys were granted access to its records, the records should not be disclosed outside the case.

Disclosure would “discourage witnesses” from talking to the NCAA, court documents state.

Clark’s ruling against the NCAA could be appealed in Franklin County Common Pleas Court, said Miles Dufty, clerk of the Court of Claims.

OSU attorney David Coppins said he’ll abide by the judge’s decision in regard to Smith and Glazier and make them available for depositions.

O’Brien’s lawsuit also says that Glazier tried to persuade the NCAA to accuse Ohio State of violations beyond those that the association found.

Murray said yesterday he became convinced of that after viewing letters Glazier wrote to the NCAA.

In them, Glazier urged the association to include in its findings against OSU an NCAA bylaw that OSU had used as its rationale for firing O’Brien.

“The only reason to do that would be to gain an advantage in this litigation,” Murray said.

The alleged violation, court documents show, was O’Brien’s signature on a document filed annually with the NCAA stating that the signal had reported all knowledge of any violations of NCAA rules.

The NCAA did not include that violation in its findings against OSU issued in May.

OSU hired Glazier, a former NCAA investigator, more than a year ago.

Through the end of June, OSU had paid him $126,246, all from the school’s Athletics Department budget.

Glazier said yesterday he could not comment on O’Brien’s lawsuit.

OSU fired O’Brien after he admitted giving a basketball recruit $6,800 in 1998, a lean O’Brien says was allowed because the recruit wasn’t eligible to play college ball.

In his lawsuit, O’Brien says his contract did not permit dismissal over an NCAA violation unless the NCAA had started a major investigation into OSU infractions and had sanctioned the university.

That investigation began after O’Brien’s firing.

O’Brien’s lawsuit is scheduled for trial Oct. 11.

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"Nobody knows who the heck I am. I'm just another student trying to get it done."

CHRIS JENT | Former OSU basketball player and current student

Jent takes timeout from pros to hit books

By Bob Baptist
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

He's almost 6 feet 7, his listed height back in the day. Yet Chris Jent said none of his fellow students at Ohio State has yet asked him if he plays basketball. If they did, he'd tell them yes — in 35-and-older leagues.

"Nobody knows who the heck I am. I'm just another student trying to get it done," Jent said.

"If their parents were in (class), they'd probably remember. But (the kids) don't. They were probably, what, 5 years old when I was playing ball here?"

Thirteen years after helping Ohio State win a Big Ten championship and get one step from the Final Four, Jent has returned to the school to earn the year's worth of credits he needs for a degree in mass communication. He hopes it pays off in a job coaching basketball in college or the NBA.

Jent, 35, was an NBA assistant with the Philadelphia 76ers (under his former OSU coach, Randy Ayers) and Orlando the past two seasons and was Magic's interim head coach for the last 18 games last season. His lack of experience was a factor in him not being retained.

After also failing to land a job as an assistant this season, he decided that after 10 years playing in the NBA, CBA, Australia, Italy and Greece, and a couple more coaching in the pros, it was time he finished work on his degree, which he needs if he wants to coach in college.

"I'm going to try to do what I can to stay in Columbus," Jent said. "I really want to coach, and there's coaching opportunities in a lot of different places, but I'm just tired of moving around. My son (Jimmy) is 9 and he's lived in six different European cities and five different U.S. cities. It's not great for stability. It'd be nice to stay here."

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JENT
FROM PAGE E1

Ohio State coach Thad Matta has no openings on his staff, but that hasn't stopped Jent from starting to pay his dues. Though NCAA rules prevent him from coaching OSU players, he worked as a manager with them during voluntary off-season workouts, doing what NCAA rules allow. He plans to continue in the same capacity now that practice has begun.

"I can't be another coach, but I can give them a realistic view of where they are as players and where they are as a team," Jent said. "Maybe I can say some things that coaches can't say as far as attitude goes and approach to the game. I feel I have a very good idea of what it takes to win. If I could just communicate that to them, then I'm useful."

Matta and Jent exchanged letters a year ago when Matta invited former players to a party at his home after he was hired as OSU coach.

"I thanked him for the invite and told him how much it meant to the former players that he was reaching out to them," Jent said. "All the guys I played with were really excited about being reincorporated into the program."

Matta consulted Jent last spring when Matta and OSU women's coach Jim Foster searched for a new strength and conditioning coach for their programs. Jent had been hired in that role with the 76ers, but was not qualified for the job at the college level.

"He told me he wanted to get his degree, and I knew Ohio State has that program for ex-players to come back and work on their degree," Matta said. "He was going to register for classes at Connecticut (where Jent lived). I said, 'Hey, come on back to Ohio State.'"

Matta said Jent is "absolutely" someone he would consider someday for an opening on his staff.

"He's a phenomenal guy," Matta said. "A great personality, very sharp, sincere — and he loves Ohio State."

That's at least a year away, though. In the meantime, Jent has plenty to keep him busy.

"Right now," he said, "I'm just trying to graduate."

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Ohio State is off to its best start in 15 years and boasts the nation's hottest coach in charismatic Thad Matta. And this is all sweet prelude to next season, when a dazzling recruiting class arrives

BY GRANT WAHL

Photograph by Jamie Sabau

THAD MATTA, the pride of Hoopeston, Ill., had a plan. In the fall of 1995, as a 28-year-old assistant coach at Western Carolina, Matta made a list of 100 goals, an idea he'd taken from the book Super Self. Matta's to-do list was ambitious, to say the least: become a head coach by age 33, reach the NCAA tournament by 37 and advance beyond the first round by 38. He also wanted to coach a college player of the year, get a job in the Big Ten and sign the nation's top high school player. He might as well have vowed to land on Mars. Yet 10 seasons later Matta, now the second-year coach at Ohio State, has already checked off each of those accomplishments. "There were some crazy things on that list," says Matta, a folksy mix of Norman Dale and Norman Vincent Peale who began his basketball odyssey in a Hoosiers-style farm town—hoops-mad Hoopeston, just eight miles from the Indiana border—and started his meteoric head-coaching career at 32 on a literal Hoosiers set (Butler's Hinkle Fieldhouse, site of the film's final scene and the arena where Matta was a Bulldogs guard for three seasons). If anything, Matta has reached his goals ahead of schedule, a pattern that's continuing at Ohio State, which may be on its way to competing for a Final Four berth (one of Matta's few unmet objectives) a year earlier than expected. At midweek the No. 18 Buckeyes were a surprising 10-0, their best start since 1990-91 and evidence that Matta has turned Ohio State into the nation's fastest-rising program just 18 months after replacing Jim O'Brien (who was fired after admitting he'd given $6,700 to a recruit). "The coaches have changed my attitude toward basketball and life," says senior forward Matt Sylvester. "They have rejuvenated the program."

But wasn't this revival supposed to happen next season? Wasn't it supposed to coincide with the arrival of the so-called Thad Five—one of the highest-rated recruiting classes of the past 25 years—led by 7-foot center Greg Oden, the best high school player in the land? Somebody forgot to tell...
the incumbent Buckeyes. "Nobody talks about right now, and that bothers me," says Matta. "I had to tell these guys last season that we weren't going to the postseason [the result of self-imposed sanctions in the wake of O'Brien's departure], but I needed them to lay the foundation for the future."

Just as hard, Matta says, was delivering some disappointing news to his team before its 81-74 victory at Saint Joseph's last month. Matta had flown in from Indianapolis, where he had hoped the NCAA infractions committee would clear Ohio State for the 2006 postseason. Instead, the hearing was postponed until Feb. 3, leaving the Buckeyes' future under a cloud. "I couldn't tell them anything except, 'By God, you'd better play hard tomorrow,'" says Matta. "And they did. I love that about them." The relentlessly positive Matta has never faced a stiffer test. "I would be shocked if the NCAA did anything to these kids," he says. "Everyone keeps telling me we're going to be all right, but I want to hear it from them."

In hindsight, perhaps more should have been expected from Ohio State this season. The Buckeyes have nearly all the main figures back from last year's outfit, which went 20-12 and handed them 29-0 Illinois its only regular-season loss. (Matta has become the Merchant of Death for undefeated teams, having the year before at Xavier ended Saint Joseph's 27-game unbeaten run.) Senior center Terence Dials has anchored a thin front line by averaging 14.7 points and 7.1 rebounds, but the key has been a steady backcourt that provides solid perimeter defense and an attacking spark. No Big Ten player has been more efficient offensively than senior guard Je'Kel Foster, the Buckeyes' leading scorer (16.5 points a game through Wednesday), who was shooting 57% from three-point range. A transfer to stick it to the program that spirited away Oden and point guard Mike Conley Jr. from Indianapolis's Lawrence North High. Ohio State coaches are still amazed at how exposed by LSU on Dec. 31, when the Buckeyes needed a late 12-0 run to survive, 78-76, at home. Indeed, now that the Big Ten season has begun and "real bullets are flying," as Foster puts it, Matta's players will find out just how good they are. Their first conference test comes on Saturday at No. 16 Indiana, where Hoosiers fans will no doubt want CENTERPIECE Matta's big dreams came true in the form of 7-foot high schooler Oden, the crown jewel of the Thad Five.

It was the Matta 100 all over again. Yet the coach believed he could land all four. He still had strong ties in Indiana from his days at Butler, and his reputation had only grown during his three years at Xavier, where he coached 2003 national player of the year David West and took the Musketeers to within a whisker of the '04 Final Four. There were intangibles, too. "You can sense his passion for building Ohio State basketball," says Buckeyes assistant John Groce. "This is a terrific school in a great league with tremendous support, but the biggest reason those kids chose OSU was Thad."

Cook committed first, paving the way for his summer-league teammate Oden and Conley. (Lightly and forward Othello Hunter, a transfer from Florida's Hillsborough C.C., would fill out the Thad Five.) For the Indiana duo, Matta's energy and disarming youthfulness carried the day. Before last March's upset of Illinois, he made a big impression by flying to Lawrence North games. And during their on-campus visit Matta had Oden and Conley in stitches with a dead-on impression of their high school coach. Conley noted that Matta lifts weights with his players and regularly participates in drills. Says Sylvester, "If we're not practicing as hard as he wants and the ball's rolling toward the sideline, he'll dive on it just to get us going."

Perhaps Matta's most remarkable achievement was pulling off his recruiting haul without raising any suspicions. "Thad was just smarter than everyone else," says North Carolina's Roy Williams, who pursued Oden and Cook. "He did a better job reading the landscape."

Matta's rise is a testament to a work ethic that traces back to his hometown, where his father, Jim, was a coach and the athletic director at Hoopeston-East Lynn High. ("All I wanted to be was my dad," Thad says.) You Matta and his staff "have changed my attitude toward basketball and life," says Sylvester. "They've REJUVENATED THE PROGRAM."

from Chipola J.C. in Marianna, Fla., Foster signed with the Buckeyes in April 2004 but nearly changed his mind after O'Brien was fired. "I was nervous until I talked to Coach Matta," Foster says. "But we hit it off, and I knew I still wanted to come here."

The Buckeyes aren't without flaws. "We're not good enough to have bad nights and still win," Matta says. His team's lack of size was their historic recruiting class came together. In August 2004 Matta laid out his targets in a closed-door staff meeting: Oden, Conley, shooting guard Daequan Cook of Dayton's Dunbar High and forward David Lighty of Cleveland's Villa Angela-St. Joseph High. "Get the hell outta here! Oden's going to the pros?" assistant coach Dan Peters told him. "But Thad dreams big," Peters says now. can still detect an Illinois accent in the way Matta says "Huston," and you can hear the respect in his voice for the town's farmers and for the workers he'd see on break from the American National Can plant.

Now he's bringing the same attitude to Ohio State. If the man from Hoopeston can turn Columbus into a hoops town, anything's possible.
Formidable foursome

Seniors fuel Buckeyes’ surprising run to Big Ten championship

By Bob Baptist
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

"Truth be told now, Matt Sylvester saw what many Big Ten basketball observers did before the season."

"As much confidence as I had in myself and my teammates, I looked at us as maybe a middle-of-the-pack type of team," he said.

That's all Sylvester had known in the three previous seasons he had played for the Ohio State men's basketball team. The Buckeyes finished eighth, ninth and sixth, respectively, in the Big Ten those years.

In retrospect, Sylvester understated two things: what he calls the "genius" of coach Thad Matta and his staff, and the value of experienced hands in a season in which the Big Ten has a lot of good teams but no great one.

As a result, ninth-ranked Ohio State (23-1, 11-6) can win its first outright conference championship in 14 years today - it plays Purdue (9-17, 3-12) at noon in Value City Arena - in part because of a starting lineup that includes three fifth-year seniors and a fourth who came via junior college. They arrived at different times and under different circumstances. They have bonded by the adversity they've shared, some more than others, and the joint captaincy Matta awarded them their final season because of the leadership abilities he saw in each.

"I wanted them to know this was their team, and I wanted them to have tremendous responsibility for this team," said Matta, who inherited Sylvester, Terence Dials, J.J. Sullinger and Je'Kel Foster in July 2004, a month after the coach who recruited them to Ohio State, Jim O'Brien, was abruptly fired.

"I think back to their innocence when I first met them," Matta said. "The thing that will always stick out to me was their commitment to the program. When a (new) coach comes in, you've got two ways you can go: They can buy in or they can buy in. These kids unequivocally bought into what we were trying to do."

The heart and soul

Foster, a junior-college transfer, had not attended his first class at Ohio State when O'Brien was fired.

"I was shocked," he said. "There were a couple of (other) schools I could have gone to. I thought about it and (decided to) meet the new coach and give him a chance before I..."
SENIORS

FROM PAGE E1

made any decisions. I’m glad I stuck here.”
- The feeling is mutual.
- “What Je’Kel has meant to this program in the time we’ve been here, I don’t know if I can ever put a price on that,” Matta said.
- Foster set the bar for how hard and tough his teammates should aspire to play.
- “I can honestly say, without a doubt, that Je’Kel is the toughest player I’ve ever played with,” Sylvester said. “He plays harder than anyone I’ve ever seen. It seems like he doesn’t get tired, and when he does, he finds a way to let it affect him. He keeps playing at 100 percent, throws his body all over the floor, just makes plays that normal players don’t make. It really lifts the team.”
- The picture worth a thousand words for Matta came after Foster returned to the floor against Illinois after being treated for a bloody nose.
- “I looked out there and his shirt was half-untucked, his shorts were down, he’s got blood on his jersey, he’s hanging out of his nose and he’s looking (as if) saying, ‘What’s coming at me next?’” Matta said. “That to me is who he is.”
- Foster was the Big Ten’s best three-point shooter until falling off in recent weeks. He doesn’t care about that.
- “We’re 12s as what it boils down to,” he said.

‘Tinkerbell’ vanishes

Terence Dials earned that nickname — after the winged fairy in the Pan Fairy tale — during preseason practice in 2004. Whenever the 6-foot-9, 250-pound center played softly, assistant coach Dan Peters addressed him as such.
- “I haven’t used it once this year,” Peters said this week.
- “That’s a great compliment to him. He’s been a man.”
- Dials is an amiable, usually gentle giant. “If I had a sister, I’d want her to marry him,” Sullinger said.
- But that demeanor at times in his former was Dials’ worst enemy. He “drifted” in and out of games, Matta said. Until this season, Dials was not conditioned well enough to go for 40 minutes at the level Matta wants. He also played undisciplined at times and, as a result, found foul trouble more often than his team could afford.

Those shortcomings disappeared in the past month. With the Big Ten title up for grabs, Dials carried the Buckeyes on his back with five double-doubles in one stretch. He is a lock to be voted first-team All-Big Ten on Tuesday and could be named player of the year.
- Dials showed promise as a freshman surrounded by experienced guards who led the Buckeyes to a share of the Big Ten title. He redshirted his second year because of a back injury. Then came a losing season in 2004. O’Brien’s firing, an NCAA investigation and Ohio State’s self-imposed banishment from the tournament last year.
- “I think I’ve fought through a little bit of adversity and it made me stronger,” Dials said. “When you come to college, you come as a little kid. You want to be a man when you leave. I think I’ve accomplished that.”

Best supporting actor

Perhaps no player on this team has matured as much as Sullinger, who returned to play for his hometown team after a year at Arkansas. He loves being on stage and performing. Not until after last season did he realize his team needed his rebounding and defense more than his flair for the dramatic.
- “James is one that I’ve really seen mature and grow and get an understanding of the overall scope of what it takes,” Matta said.
- Unfortunately, it took a back against-the-wall experience before that happened: Sullinger’s arrest for drunken driving in September 2004, two months after Matta became coach. He ultimately pleaded guilty to a lesser charge of reckless operation but paid for his crime with 15 days of five-mile runs at 5 a.m., personally supervised by Matta.
- Sullinger was just thankful that Matta, confronted with the first major discipline problem of his tenure, gave him a second chance.
- “He got me back focused and seeing what was important in my life,” Sullinger said.
- Sullinger repaid him by giving this team what it lacked: a complementary rebounder to Dials and, when needed, an undersized power forward strong enough to hold his own inside.
- “What Matta has brought to the table is a relentless passion,” Matta said. “He kind of has adapted to, ‘Whatever this team needs me to do on a given day, I’m going to do it.’ You love that about him.”

The buzzer beater

Sylvester ensured his legacy at Ohio State a year ago when he made a three-point shot with 5.1 seconds left to upset No. 1-ranked and previously undefeated Illinois.
- He made another one in December, with 5.5 seconds left, to beat LSU.
- “Those were a couple of defining moments in my career,” he said.
- What Matta has appreciated more is his got cotton for Foster’s head for the game. Sylvester said he relishes being used as a point forward, “where the offense kind of goes through me and I’m expected to make the decision passes.” He can cause hands to slap foreheads with forays to the basket that result in turnovers or ill-advised shots, but overall the rewards outweigh the risk. His ranks fourth in the conference in assist-to-turnover ratio, behind those of three point guards. Despite being limited by a back injury, he’s averaging 12.5 points a game, he has 30 assists and 12 turnovers in his past seven games. Ohio State is 6-1 in that span.
- “Matt knows what it takes to win. I really appreciate that about him,” Sylvester said. “He’s got the personality of a 40-year-old man and a back to match. So you can have conversations with Matt about things and you don’t have to sugar-coat anything, you just tell him here’s what we need and he has a great perception of what it is in the game.”
- Sylvester won a state championship in Value City Arena as a sophomore at Cincinnati Moeller. Seven years later, he could cut down the nets again in his final game there.
- “It’s a great way to go out,” he said. “I don’t think you could script it any better.”

bbaptist@dispatch.com
It's official

An Ohio State spokesman confirmed that all games and accomplishments, not only those in the NCAA Tournament, will be vacated for the 1998-99 through 2001-02 seasons, as required by the NCAA sanctions against the men's basketball program.

Banners recognizing the Buckeyes' Big Ten championships in 2000 and 2002, Big Ten tournament title in 2002, Final Four appearance in 1999 and NCAA Tournament appearances all four years were hanging again in Value City Arena yesterday for the girls state basketball tournament, but with the vacated years removed.

bbaptist@dispatch.com
Lights Out

When the Buckeyes took to the floor against North Carolina Nov. 28 in Value City Arena, fans and players alike were treated to a new pregame introduction.

Just prior to the introduction of the starting lineups, a booming voice says, "Lights out," and, appropriately, all the lights in Value City Arena minus those at the newly renovated scorer's table go out. Searchlights in the rafters pan through the crowd and a highlight reel begins playing on the scoreboard with members of the team loudly asking fans, "Are you ready?"

It ends with a shot of Hunter, who says, "We are Ohio State basketball."

From there, red lighting in the rafters gives the entire arena a scarlet tint as animated flames surround the circles at both sides of the court.

Matta said the new show is the way college basketball is evolving.

"I think our people have done a tremendous job in the four years that we've been here of creating an environment in here that has that collegiality feel to it," he said. "I've been very, very pleased with the support that we've been given. I like it. I think it's been good."

Count head football coach Jim Tressel as one of those impressed by the new intro.

"I told the guys they had to be here for that opening player introduction because if that doesn't get you fired up, nothing will," he said at halftime of the game against UMBC. "We went straight to the field this morning so we could be here on time."
Dear Students,

On behalf of our coaching staff and the student-athletes who represent Buckeye fans everywhere, I would like to thank you for your continued support of the Ohio State men's basketball program.

With your enthusiasm we have achieved extraordinary success in just three short years. We've won 20 or more games each of the last three seasons and enter the 2007-08 season on a 25-game home win streak. The 18-0 record you helped us achieve at Value City Arena last season was a remarkable accomplishment. In fact, no Ohio State basketball team had ever won as many home games prior to last season. We could not have achieved this success without each of you behind us. Again, we thank you. You define home-court advantage.

The Ohio State student body was there throughout our run to the national championship game last year in Atlanta. They were there in San Antonio when we won the 2007 NCAA South Regional Championship. We heard you in Chicago when we raised the Big Ten tournament trophy most in helping win titles. We are for The Ohio State University and our program.

We certainly plan to do our part again. I'm certain you will do yours as well. for the Buckeyes and respect our fans. Just as we respect you of our team in the stands. Make alumni as proud of you as we hope this year on the court. Please continue to cheer opponents, their families on the court, you are part Buckeyes fans, friends and you are of us.

Go Bucks!

Thad Matta

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HOME SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Opponent</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 12</td>
<td>Wisconsin-Green Bay (Preseason NIT)</td>
<td>9 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Columbia or Delaware (Preseason NIT)</td>
<td>9 p.m.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Virginia Military Ins.</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>9 p.m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Glow Sticks to NutHouse members</td>
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<td></td>
<td>McDonald's® 3-point banners to NutHouse members</td>
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<td>Dec. 10</td>
<td>Coppin State</td>
<td>8 p.m.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Presbyterian College</td>
<td>Noon</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
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<td>Glow Sticks to NutHouse members</td>
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<td>Rally Towels courtesy of Nationwide</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>MD-Baltimore County</td>
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<td>Jan. 6</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Iowa</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
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<td>Buckeye Inflatable Flags to NutHouse members</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
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<td>Feb. 5</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Indiana</td>
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<td>White Out</td>
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<td>Wisconsin</td>
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<td>Rally Towels courtesy of Nationwide</td>
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<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>4/5/6</td>
<td>Purdue</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Michigan State</td>
<td>12/2/4 p.m.</td>
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<td>Glow in the dark T-shirts to NutHouse members</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pom Poms to NutHouse members</td>
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TEAM ROSTER

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<td>Tenwillinger, Matt</td>
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<td>Hunter, Othello</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>52</td>
<td>Lauderdale, Dallas</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>6-8</td>
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Fr. Minnisapolis, Minn.
Jr. New Albany, Ohio
Sr. Lima, Ohio
So. Dublin, Ohio
Fr. Cleveland, Ohio
So. Canton, Ohio
Fr. Upper Sandusky, Ohio
Sr. Brownsburg, Ind.
Sr. Troy, Ohio
Fr. Winston-Salem, N.C.
Fr. Solon, Ohio

CHEERS

STARTING LINE-UPS: For the opposing team introductions, everyone will clap twice and chant "Go Bucks!" after each player’s name is announced.

TIP-OFF: Leading up to the tip-off, all of the students in the NutHouse should be on their feet jumping up and down chanting, "Ooooooooo-0..." followed by "...H-I-O!" once the ball has been tipped.

FIRST BUCKEYE POSSESSION: During the first Buckeye possession, everyone will chant "Here we go Buckeyes, Here we go" (clap-clap).

DEFENSE: When the Buckeyes are on defense, the NutHouse will jump up and down yelling "OOOOOOOOOOOOOH!" during the entire possession or until another chant is started by the cheerleaders.
FREE THROWS: When the Buckeyes are shooting free throws, everyone in the NutHouse will make the shape of an “O” with their arms. If the shot is made, we chant (clap-clap) “O-H” (clap-clap) “1-0.” When opposing players are shooting free throws, we will do one of these.

1) STOP CHEERING - The NutHouse will be cheering as loud as possible and waving arms or towels around. When cued by a member of the NutHouse Committee, everyone will immediately stop cheering right as the player is about to shoot the ball.

2) ARM SWAY - Everyone will hold their hands straight up. When cued by a NutHouse Committee member, everyone will swing their arms left/right in unison.

3) RANDOM CHANT - At this point everyone will chant the same, random sequence of numbers, letters, months, etc.

The chant will be decided and relayed by NutHouse Committee members, and it will begin as soon as the referee gives the player the ball.

TIMEOUT ENDING: After every timeout, we will begin the “Oh-okkkh OSU” chant to get the game energy going again. This chant will begin after the second horn at the end of each timeout.

THREE POINTERS: Each time a Buckeye makes a three point basket, the NutHouse will unroll their McDonald’s® I’m Lovin’ It scroll banner and count out the total number of Buckeye 3’s made in the game. The end of the court where the 3 was made will start with a “ONE!” and the opposite side will follow with a “TWO!” etc.

TURNOVERS: If a player is called with a violation (traveling, double dribble, 3-seconds, etc.) we will start a chant. This could be “you can’t do that” (clap clap, clap clap clap) or “Which way? That way!” with arms pointing in our direction.
FOULING OUT: When an opposing player fouls out, the NutHouse will bid them farewell by singing the song “Hey, Hey, Hey, Goodbye.”

4 MINUTE TIMEOUT: After the first dead ball within the last four minutes of the game, the refs will call a time out. At this time, the band will begin playing “SLOOPY” and everybody should be up cheering and singing!!!

MISC. CHANTS: The following chants will take place between the two ends of the NutHouse, and will be started by the cheerleaders or the NutHouse Committee:

One Side: “O-H”
Opposite Side: “I-O”

Alternating NutHouse Sides:
“B-U” “C-K” “E-Y” “E-S”

All Together: “Let’s Go BUCKS! Let’s Go BUCKS! Let’s Go BUCKS!”

CARMEN OHIO

Oh come let’s sing Ohio’s praise
And songs to Alma Mater raise
While our hearts rebounding thrill
With joy which death alone can still
Summer’s heat or winter’s cold
The seasons pass the years will roll
Time and change will surely (truly) show
How firm thy friendship ... OHIO!
THE BUCKEYE SPORTSMANSHIP CREED

On game days, we come down with scarlet fever.
We sing the fight song loud and proud.
We believe every O-H deserves an I-O.
We support all of our athletes and teams.
We follow the “scarlet rules.”
We treat our guests as we wish to be treated.
We cheer for a good play and respect the other team.
We’re gracious in victory and defeat.
Athletic competition brings out the best in all of us.

PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

1. Examples of prohibited behavior include, but are not limited to, throwing objects of any kind; demonstrating unruly behavior; attempting to enter the court of play; engaging in behavior that endangers the safety of student athletes, coaches, officials or other guests; attacking or singling-out student-athletes; removing arena property; and/or taunting public safety officials.
2. Consequences for guests exhibiting prohibited behavior include, but are not limited to, loss of ticket buying privileges, ejection from the arena, and/or arrest.

HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

20 NCAA tournament appearances in school history
Nine Final Four appearances
Four national title game appearances
17 Big Ten Conference titles

2006 - 07 HIGHLIGHTS
2007 Big Ten outright regular season champions
2007 Big Ten Tournament Champions
2007 NCAA South Region Champions
2007 NCAA National Champion Runners-Up
1960 CHAMPIONS: 50 YEARS LATER

REUNITED

Being part of Ohio State’s only national championship team in men’s basketball left an indelible print on the lives of players and coaches alike

By Bill Rabinowitz
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

"The past is never dead. It’s not even past."
— William Faulkner

Fifty years. It is hard for them to comprehend.

The players who were not far removed from adolescence when they gave Ohio State its only basketball national championship in 1960 are now in their 70s, or close to it.

One by one, they say they can’t believe five decades have elapsed, even if the mirror indicates otherwise.

They’ve had careers and marriages, children and grandchildren.

Yet all of them remain at least partly defined by 1960.

For them, 1960 is not just a year from the past. Their accomplishment isn’t just a collection of yellowed newspaper clippings no longer relevant to their daily lives.

That championship remains alive for these men. It is alive when Jerry Lucas walks past the large picture of the ’60 team in his family room in California and speaks to Bob Knight and See REUNITED Page C10

Top: The 1960 team celebrates its win.
Above: Jerry Lucas cuts down the net.
REUNITED

FROM PAGE C1

John Havlicek as If they were there.

"I actually grew that many things, at least as he walked them," Lucas said. "Hey, Bobby. How am I doing? Hey, Honus. What's going on? I really can't tell. We did it. It was a unique gift, and so meaningful."

It is all for all of them, really. Not the championship, necessarily, or the ring. But being a part of the sacrifice, the camaraderie, the pride in knowing they reached the pinnacle — that feeling has never left them.

It has sustained them. It has inspired them.

"I made me want to do exceptional things," Mel Nowell said.

And they have. They have lived full lives, accomplished things. All five starters — Lucas, Havlicek, Novell, Larry Siegfried and Joe Roberts — played in the NBA and the Midwest.

But the 1969 team's success reached far beyond the court.

Every player on that team graduated. Many of them have advanced degrees. Two — Howard and Larry Landers — have a Ph.D. James Allen is a medical doctor.

Some became coaches. The most notable, of course, is Knight, a coach for over 20 years who has the most wins in NCAA basketball history.

Others have become successful business owners.

Other than reserve John Czernegorak, who died in 1969, the players from the 1969 team remain healthy and vibrant. Coach Fred Taylor died in 2002 and assistant coach Jack Graf passed away last year.

"It has been fun to watch this team be so successful as adults," said Frank Truitt, an assistant coach in 1969.

1959-60 results

**DATE** | **RESULT**
---|---
Dec. 1 | OSU 77, Wake Forest 62
Dec. 3 | OSU 82, Temple 55
Dec. 5 | OSU 84, Pittsburgh 49
Dec. 7 | OSU 69, Butler 66
Dec. 10 | OSU 81, IUP 79
Dec. 18 | OSU 96, Butler 68
Jan. 21 | OSU 97, OSU 92
Jan. 22 | OSU 83, Indiana 91
Feb. 28 | OSU 66, Penn State 64
Mar. 1 | OSU 109, Iowa 38
Mar. 16 | OSU 81, Marquette 64
Mar. 23 | OSU 85, Purdue 73
Mar. 30 | OSU 111, Indiana 69
Apr. 1 | OSU 117, Texas 68
Apr. 6 | OSU 117, Texas 68
Apr. 8 | OSU 105, Wisconsin 69
Apr. 13 | OSU 75, Iowa 47
Apr. 15 | OSU 109, Illinois 81
Feb. 20 | OSU 84, Michigan St. 92
Feb. 26 | OSU 83, Wisconsin 68
Feb. 29 | Indiana 95, OSU 83
Mar. 5 | OSU 75, Minnesota 68

NCAA Tournament

**DATE** | **RESULT**
---|---
March 11 | OSU 86, Washington 70
March 12 | OSU 80, Creighton 68
March 14 | OSU 78, New York S.U. 54
March 19 | OSU 75, Calhoun 55

Statistics

**Player** | **PPG** | **Reb** | **Stl** | **Fg%**
---|---|---|---|---
Jerry Lucas | 26.3 | 10.3 | 1.6 | 82.1
Larry Siegfried | 15.3 | 3.8 | 0.7 | 79.2
Mc Nowell | 13.3 | 3.6 | 0.7 | 82.1
John Havlicek | 12.7 | 7.3 | 0.7 | 75.3
Bar Roberts | 11.0 | 6.9 | 0.7 | 82.1
Dick Farris | 9.1 | 3.3 | 0.7 | 79.2
Howard Neuser | 3.1 | 2.7 | 0.7 | 82.1
Gary Satterfield | 2.5 | 1.6 | 0.7 | 79.2
Bill Hoyt | 2.5 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 82.1
David Baker | 1.4 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 82.1
Mike Czernegorak | 1.2 | 1.6 | 0.7 | 82.1
Jim Allen | 1.0 | 0.3 | 0.7 | 82.1
Holmes Miller | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 82.1
St. Landers | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 82.1
Gary Allmon | 0.0 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 82.1

Current Ohio State players join with members of the Buckeyes' 1969 championship team.

ON THE WEB

- For more stories about the Buckeyes, visit BuckeyeXtra.com
- See an audio slide show from last week's exhibition at BuckeyeXtra.com/multimedia
- For a blog featuring old photos and an image of the Dispatch Sports cover after the win, visit blog.dispatch.com/bucktalk

"I felt elation at the clock ran down," Nowell said. "It was the only time in my athletic life I felt elation."

Dave Barker remembers the speech that Jack Graf gave at the postgame banquet after the championship. "Graf said, 'hey guys, enjoy this championship because it may not happen again.'" Barker recalled. "I don't know how many guys remember Jack saying that, but I think that happened again.

"The Buckeyes advanced to the title game the next two seasons, only to lose to Cincinnati. UC spoiled Ohio State's unedified season in 1961, with an overtime victory. The Bearcats beat Ohio State again in 1962 after Lucas suffered a knee injury in the semifinal. Lucas played against UC but made only 1 of 6 shots in a 71-59 loss.

"Those were some of the biggest disappointments of all our lives," Lucas said.

"A lot of people like to make mistakes, but they beat us. On those two particular nights, they were a better team. You have to give them credit. A lot of people know how to win, but don't know how to lose. It's important to acknowledge the fact you played an opponent that played better than you and give them the respect and accolades they deserve."

The team scattered after that. The starters went on to the NBA, the others with their post-basketball lives. But the Buckeyes remain a part of their lives. Havlicek believes being part of that championship helped persuade Boston Celtics coach Red Auerbach to draft him. "If there was a question of people having equal ability, he would go further and take out one to two on a championship team," Havlicek said. "I think that's one of the things that went into his mind when he drafted me.

Havlicek won eight titles with the Celtics, including five championships with Bill Russell in Boston.

"It was the greatest thing that ever happened to me," he said. "From that experience, what I really did was deepen my conviction and commitment to the team concept. My entire life, everything I do, is centered around that concept.

"The Buckeyes played four seasons in the pros before becoming a real estate broker. He said being part of that championship gave him a more positive attitude.

"We've been to the championships and you know what it's all about. I think I would have been a lot more successful as a real estate broker."

The Buckeyes' 1969 season proved to be the high-water mark on the other side of the court.
This weekend, the group has returned to Columbus from around the country to celebrate the golden anniversary of their championship. Last night, they attended a “Cocktails and High-tops” gathering in St. John Arena. This afternoon, they will be introduced at halftime of the OSU-Minnesota game in Value City Arena.

Every player on the team was from Ohio. Nowell and David Barker are the only players who still live in Columbus. So this is a rare chance to get everyone together. Only Landes declined to come.

“We’ll reflect on being comrades again and talking to each other and seeing how they’ve done in life,” Havlicek said. “We had a 35th anniversary, and that’s probably the last time we were all together.”

The first time they were all together, none of them expected a national championship.

The 1958-59 team went 11-11 in Taylor’s first season. Though a national title seemed far-fetched, expectations were much higher for 1959-60 because of a sophomore class led by Lucas.

It’s hard to overstate how much of a phenom Lucas was. Only LeBron James rivals him as an Ohio high school player.

The 6-foot-8 center combined unerrung timing, anticipation and strong hands with an innate unselfishness that proved vital to team chemistry.

“When I was a senior in high school, Lucas was a sophomore at Middletown,” said Barker, who played at St. Mary’s High School in Columbus. “We played in the state championship in Cleveland (in different divisions). We played in the afternoon and they played in the evening.

“The guy was fabulous. He was very smooth, the most natural player in control of his mind and body and temperament I’d ever seen.”

Lucas would have been the most highly recruited player in the country if not for one thing — he refused to be recruited.

He made it clear to colleagues that he wanted to enjoy his high school experience without the distraction of fielding pitches from schools. When legendary Kentucky coach Adolph Rupp figured that rule didn’t apply to him and showed up at Middletown High School, Lucas crossed the Wildcats off his list.

“I never wanted to be a star,” Lucas said. “I wanted to live a normal life.”

It’s telling that Lucas decided to attend Ohio State on an academic scholarship. He was joined by a stellar recruiting class that included Havlicek, Nowell, Knight and Gary Gearhart.

Freshmen didn’t become eligible to play varsity until 1972, but that class showed a glimpse of the future when it beat the upperclassmen the last two times they played. Still, the players weren’t thinking national title when the 1958-60 season started.

“I don’t ever recall talking about, ‘Hey, we’ve got to win the national championship,’” Lucas said. “It didn’t come up in our normal conversation.”

The coaching staff thought otherwise.

“We knew we had the potential to do it all,” Truitt said.

From his varsity first game, when he grabbed 28 rebounds and scored 16 points in a victory over Wake Forest, Lucas was the clear star of the team. Others had to establish their role or adjust to a new one.

Siegfried had been the standout of the ’58-59 team.

“Fred Taylor was preaching defense, and I said to myself that if I became the best defensive player on the team, that might give me a chance to play a lot more minutes,” Havlicek recalled. Senior co-captain Dick Furry started the Wake Forest game, but Havlicek played so well off the bench that he started every game after that.

“John had that engine that just kept running,” Gearhart said. “I don’t know how he did it. If there was a loose ball, John always had it. He was just a machine in motion.”

The scoring prowess that developed in the NBA surfaced only occasionally, mostly on loose balls and fast breaks. Not surprisingly, Lucas was the catalyst for Havlicek’s biggest offensive game. Havlicek mentioned to Lucas before one game that a lot of family and friends would be coming from his hometown of Martins Ferry.

“He said, ‘You’d really like to do well tonight, don’t you?’” Havlicek said. “I said, ‘Well, I’ve got all these people here, so yeah, I’d like to do well.’” He made sure I did well because I scored 30 that night, and that was my all-time high in college.”

The Buckeyes lost only three regular-season games, at Utah and Kentucky, and at Indiana after they’d clinched the Big Ten championship.

In those days, only one team per conference qualified for the NCAA Tournament. The Buckeyes had a first-round bye before playing Western Kentucky in the Mideast Regional semifinals in Louisville, Ky.

The Hilltoppers led 43-37 at halftime before Ohio State dominated the second half for a 68-79 victory. The Buckeyes then whipped Georgia Tech by 17 points to advance to the Final Four in San Francisco.

Before leaving for California, Havlicek created some drama when he accidentally cut the fingers on