BEFORE THOUSANDS CHEER

By Vernon Gilmore, '38

LAST Fall when Clarence Albert Isaac went before the Board of Cheering Advisors in hopes of receiving the position as head cheerleader for 1938 one of the things which secured the appointment for him was his well organized plan for creating a block cheering section. Today you see the results.

Those results were not accomplished quite as easily as the above was written—in fact the work that Clancy, as everyone calls him, did would indeed be worthy of a Horatio Alger sketch.

Of course all loyal followers of the Buckeyes are familiar with the long years in which attempts to formulate a cheering section occurred every time the robins flew south. All such previous attempts either lasted but one season to lie unresurrected the next, or had a rapid demise shortly after the original formation.

The excuse has always been, and it is exactly right, that Ohio State fans study their football technically and therefore have little regard for any of the so-called more "human elements" of the game. But where that is an excuse for not having a section it should also be a reason for having one. Real experts of the game will tell you that personal contact between the students and players, through cheering, is important.

From time to time a determined few have preached the need for a cheering section. The results of their preaching, as is always the case, was negligible when the physical task of organizing such a large-size enterprise was actually confronted. They could not ask others to do the task when they, themselves, could not risk such an undertaking.

Clancy Isaac was not asked to plan the section. He saw the need and planned the remedy. His untiring work has brought about the results unveiled here today for the first time in Ohio Stadium.

His work began shortly after his appointment when he concluded his persuasion of the Athletic Department. The Department's officials graciously gave their consent and pledged their support regardless of the fact that they had seen other such help go for naught.

The head cheerleader and his few faithful assistants then sold the idea to the student body. Signatures on a petition asking for the plan and pledging assistance were obtained from the students. Each signature was accompanied by 50c which acted as a sign of good faith and a down payment on the student's ticket book. A surplus of signatures was obtained.

Then the Athletic Department assisted by purchasing all needed equipment. Naturally there would be no added expense connected with an ordinary cheering section but this was to be no such section. Capes, cards, and other equipment would be needed because the Ohio State block cheering section would use these devices to form letters, monograms, words and phrases.

Cheering is, of course, the primary aim of the section, but it is hoped that in that respect the section will mainly "pace" the other 50 or 60 thousand Buckeye fans at each home game.

With equipment purchased the technical phases of the various formations had to be considered. It was observed that the seats in the stadium branched out in a cone-shaped manner and that a section always contained more seats along the top rows than at the bottom. Allowances had to be made and seats renumbered to remedy this condition. This was but one of many jobs Head Cheerleader Isaac personally assumed last December.

Instruction cards for all members of the section had to be made for each game and then checked and rechecked against a master chart for any errors or slight imperfections. Again Clancy completed the job.

Finally the time came to start daily practises and all of Clancy's assistants responded by appearing on the 19th of September for their first warm-up session. From then until the present time daily schedules of acrobatic and vocal practise have been the rule so that the fellows could reach the top form they can now boast.

Everything is in readiness, the section's plans have been carried out to the letter, or letters as the case may be. It remains but for the student body as a whole to decide just how successful the section will be. It is the answer to a long felt need and should put Ohio State on the top of the Football World by "holding that line" and "blocking that punt" while the Varsity Band "Fights the team across the field."

Football Program: October 1, 1938.
OHIO'S BLOCK CHEERING SECTION

During the 1938 football season, the now famed Ohio State block cheering section was first organized. Charles Riegel is the present manager of the section. Under him are three juniors, six seniors, and six freshmen all working for the position of manager.

The section includes 1,200 men and women students of the University who perform their assigned tasks with no pre-game practice. Each person wears a scarlet or a grey ram cape. The scarlet capes form a block "O" against the grey background when no other formation is being created. More than thirty designs have been worked out and generally ten are used each game. Three thousand colored cards are used at each of the five home games during the season.

The majority of the mistakes made by the persons comprising the section are caused by color-blindness. Black and white and color pictures are taken of each formation and the mistakes corrected week-by-week.
BLOCK O: brighter at halftime

The lot of a football fan forced to sit on the east side of the Stadium is not an easy one. He has to rub elbows with supporters of the opposing team; he is left out of the Ohio State cheering section; he has to stare through a blinding sun to see the action.

But there’s one consolation: he has a front-row seat for the brilliant card displays of Block O — the flashcard cheering section.

This year, some 866 students will participate in the organized cheering activity, spreading across section 13A of the Stadium. The intricate designs, ranging from such slogans as “Fight Tuberculosis” to an unfurling American flag, have added an important feature to the halftime entertainment at home games.

Few of the fans who watch for each game’s flashcard program realize that no formal rehearsal is held for the designs. When Block O members arrive at the special section reserved for them, they find a packet of cards plus a colored cape on each seat of the section. The cards have been assembled in the order of their use. When the occupants don the capes, a red and white Block O is automatically formed.

When the Marching Band concludes its halftime program, the field director of Block O calls into a public address microphone: “All right, Block, get your cards out. Ready for Stunt 1.”

Each occupant selects the card marked 1 from the pack at his seat. On command, all cards go into position. As each seat of the 32 in each of the 24 rows displays the right card, the design is created for the Stadium audience.

Despite the simplicity of the procedure, occasionally something goes awry. Watching from the east side of the Stadium is an observer with a portable transmitter. When he spots a card out of order, he relays the word back to the Block O section where other monitors are in position to call out the position of the hapless flashcard flipper in time to correct the design during the short time it is held.

The performances at home games are not the extent of the Block O activity. A year of planning has gone into each of the calls which create the displays.

As soon as this football season is over, the work of the Block O will just begin for 1959. There will be a meeting, election of new officers and committee chairmen. All of Winter Quarter will be devoted to preparing a gigantic membership drive which will start in the early weeks of Spring Quarter. While the membership drive is being handled by some members, the rest of the group will be taking inventory of equipment, making necessary documentary changes, evaluating the results of this year’s performances, and reading the stunts that will entertain next fall’s football fans. A newsletter, reminding old members that their services will again be needed, must be prepared and mailed out. Preparations must be made to tap the seemingly unlimited supply of freshmen who will turn up at Pre-College Conferences during the summer.

Block O was first started back in 1939 under the direction and inspiration of Clancy Isaacs, BSc Com’39, then head cheerleader. At that time, the section extended from the 50-yard line to the 20-yard line. Scarlet and gray capes and colored cards were used for various designs. By the time World War II had started, the flashcard section was creating a script Ohio.

The war brought the end, temporarily, of Block O. After the war, an attempt was made to revive it as an independent cheering section. But the revival failed, mainly from lack of financial support. Then, in the early ’50s, Ohio Staters, Inc. revived, re-financed and re-organized Block O as a cheering section closely allied with the cheerleaders and as a flashcard activity.

Gradually, as the activity became more popular, Ohio Staters withdrew from the picture and today, Block O is an independent organization.

Indicative of the trend since 1939 is the fact that today there is a Big Ten Block Association, of which the Ohio State group is a member. There are regular meetings of the conference-wide association at which members exchange slides and ideas in an effort to provide the fans with even more colorful displays in the games to come.
TIME is a tyrant between halves in Ohio Stadium. So many things to be done, and only minutes in which to do them. Rival bands vie with one another in intricate maneuvers, drum majors strut like proud peacocks, and Block "O" flashes cards of many colors in a five-minute race with the clock just before the teams take the field again.

Of all the intermission activities, Block "O" probably has been least understood and appreciated, because half of the huge crowd hasn't been able to see what was going on down there in Section 13A. But this year there's a change. Block "O" has expanded dramatically. Now enthusiastic freshmen occupy 1 and 2-A at the closed end of the horseshoe, working their flash cards in close coordination with the upper classmen who continue to occupy 13-A. As a result, more spectators get a chance to watch the colorful designs unfold—

Much advance work goes into Block "O" performances at Ohio Stadium. Before each football game members distribute equipment, including cards, cape and instructions, in shopping bag on each seat.

Photos by Jack Hutton
Tricks

the story of Block 'O'

stunts ranging from plain block letter greetings honoring the visiting team and its followers, to the always popular script Ohio, a buck with roving eyes, and ingeniously correlated routines between the two student flash card cheering sections.

Enthusiasm for Block "O" has been growing steadily, a far cry from earlier days when it started out as just a cheering section and failed twice—once because of World War II and again due to lack of financial support. The third and most recent effort was made possible by Ohio States, Inc., which revived the block a few years ago and then gradually withdrew from the picture as the section gained strength.

Raymond Yannick, executive administrator of this year's Block "O," says the upper class group in section 13-A numbers 736 active flash card manipulators, with at least 200 extras standing (or sitting)

(Continued)
Dark and light cards held by 736 spectators in Ohio Stadium form letter "P" on white background.

**BLOCK O, continued**

by to fill any vacancies. The new freshman block is designed for 640 participating card holders, and there are 100 others in reserve.

Actually, Block "O" members pay a dollar more than other students for the privilege of sitting in the special sections and flashing the cards, but there's one compensation, says Yancek. They are sure of a seat. This seems to be a particularly attractive offer to newcomer freshmen.

Although they assume certain responsibilities in joining Block "O," such as being present for every home game or sending a substitute, members have to work only about five minutes at the close of the halftime period, and their instructions are so well organized that it is necessary for them to practice only once for the season—an hour or so in the morning on the day of the first game.

Chaos is averted by carefully checking off members as they arrive in the stadium, ushering them to their assigned spots in the stands, filling in gaps from stand-by lists and having individual packets of cards, capes and other necessary equipment ready on every seat. Sherwyn Long, this year's field director, calls out each stunt over a loudspeaker system and every

(Continued)
Ray Yancik adjusts cape on Kay Bramel's shoulders. Capes form Block "O" pattern without use of cards.

Mistakes can be spotted from opposite side of stadium and corrected with aid of short wave radio.
BLOCK O, continued

Card holder selects the color card needed for his or her position in the design to be flashed. There are occasional mistakes, of course, but these are quickly corrected by a spotter across the way in the east stands who is equipped with a short wave radio.

Behind the scenes, the Block is really more active than in the stadium. A year of planning goes into those stunts which take only seconds to perform. The group has a repertoire of some 75 to 30 maneuvers, and new ones have to be created every year.

As soon as football season is over, Block "O" elects new officers. Sam Douglass, of Columbus, is this year's president. In addition to Yanceik and Long, other officers are Karyl Olson, secretary; Jan Wheeler, corresponding secretary, and Lou Roberts, treasurer.

Then come the perennial jobs of designing new stunts, planning the next season's schedules, reminding old members that their services will be needed again and tapping the seemingly unlimited supply of freshmen who keep turning up in large numbers. That's a lot of work for a few minutes of precious halftime. Football? Oh, yes, there's usually a game going on, too.

Sherwyn Long, field director for 1959 season, calls out each stunt over loudspeaker system.

Beverly Biederman, in charge of membership in 1958, stamps hands of members as they enter Section 13-A.

Continuous Block "O" design is formed automatically by students wearing red and white capes.

(The End)
Atmel, Dempsey, Watts, Dermiston, Overmyer, Hughes, Ggenboth, H, ewis, Couldthorpe, ood, Holmgren CHEER Headed by Dwight Hughes, the 1940 cheerleading squad continued to bring forth the bubbling spirits of Ohio State's loyal students and alumni. Besides the regular corps of cheerleaders, Ohio has a crew of managers for the block cheering section, which is considered one of the best of its kind in the country. Each member of the block is given three colored pieces of cardboard, which he holds up when directed. This system was introduced in 1938 today, in addition to the block letter formations, it constructs many moving designs. Foremost among the patterns presented to the Ohio State fans by Charles Riegle, head of this year's section, were the Minnesota Gopher and the Pittsburgh Panther, a neon type of script Ohio, and a waving American flag. A trained German police dog named "Chris" was introduced this year as a Buckeye mascot. One of his best known tricks is to break out of a mega-phone covered with paper at the command of his master, Cheerleader Die Armel, and thus make his appearance before the sports public. The cheerleading squad also directs the football rallies held each year before the big games. Dick Overmyer succeeded Hughes as head cheerleader in January, with Frank Dempsey, Jack Hood and Ray Couldthorpe helping him in the direction of the squad of twenty. Dr. Willard Ashbrook is in charge of the cheerleaders' activities. Richard Jones will manage the block section next fall.

Source: OSU 1960 Yearbook
Block “O” Has 25th Anniversary

Former Buckeye Cheerleader Launched Plan in 1938

The Ohio State University Block “O” cheering section. Inset, Clancy Isaac.

Twenty-five years ago, an energetic, resourceful Ohio State University cheerleader, Clarence A. (Clancy) Isaac, had an idea.

Believing Buckeye athletic teams needed more student interest, as well as additional color, Isaac set about to form a block “O” cheering section.

With the help of James M. Wessell, chairman of the cheering committee, Isaac distributed petitions which were to serve as a guarantee to support the movement.

And it cost 50 cents to sign!

The money was held by the Student Senate until the plan either was adopted or defeated. The 50 cent deposit was to be deducted from the regular price of tickets when the member bought his student book.

Isaac, whose home then was in Bexley, spent part of the 1938 summer re-numbering student seats in the stadium and numbering five sets of 1500 cards, designating the section, row, and seat.

Shortly before, during and for a few years after World War II, block “O” ceased to exist, but it soon was enthusiastically revived by Ohio Staters, Inc.

The section now has 856 students, each paying $1 membership. The section fills from the back to the front each game. A rehearsal is held at 9 a.m., prior to the first game when equipment, including six flash cards in 12 colors and scarlet and gray capes, are issued.

During the game a speaker system is used to correct formations, the operation being from two spotters on the east side of the stadium who maintain contact with field director William Whitmer.

Special formations acknowledge Homecoming, Dad’s day and other attractions during the football season.

Isaac, who now is an advertising executive in New York City, has returned to Ohio stadium every Homecoming day to lead the block “O” section in a cheer.

The present block “O” officer list includes Raymond House, president, executive committee; Daniel Runyon, executive administrative director; William Whitmer, executive field director; John Garwood, treasurer; and Suzanne Arnold, executive secretary.

Committee chairman include Mary Ann Bricker, stunt design; Douglas Coatsen, equipment; Betty Van Sluyter, membership; Sheila Welty, attendance; Nancy Powell, publicity; Nancy Thompson, office; Kenneth Parsons, stunt card and Judy Brushwood, corresponding secretary.
Block "O" Section
Rallying Behind The Bucks

BLOCK "O", The Ohio State University's first successful flash card cheering section, was founded in 1938 after four previous attempts had failed. Failures were said to be partially blamed on the exclusion of coeds.

Clarence "Clancy" Isaac, founder, first conceived the idea to start a block cheering section after seeing a display produced by the students at the University of Southern California. Isaac began the task with an entirely new concept that a cheering section would be the catalyst of Ohio State spirit.

After a publicity campaign that involved local newspapers and radio stations, more than 1,500 students signed a petition pledging their support for a cheering section that included coeds. Clancy spent many hours designing stunts and other tasks in preparation for the football season. Just before Homecoming in 1938, an Ohio State Lantern headline declared that Block "O" was a huge success.

Today, the slogan, "Help the Block Back the Bucks" reflects the initial spirit. Block "O" still offers students an opportunity to be a part of the color and excitement of Saturday afternoon in Columbus. This year, it has returned to its pre-World War II size of approximately 1,500 in a section at the top of the horseshoe.

Block "O" stunts "travel" a long way from original ideas to final flashing. The stunt design committee submits ideas for stunts to the executive committee which may accept or reject them. Those accepted are returned to the design committee for polishing. Once a stunt has been officially approved by the executive committee, it is sent to the stunt card committee. It then stamps instruction cards for each student in the Block. While some of the stunts are designed for a particular game, Ohio State fans can count on seeing an American flag blowing in the breeze at every game.

First Game Stunts: The United States Flag; Hi Fans; Buck 'Em Bucks; O.S.U. Checkmate; Blast Arizona.
BLOCK "O" BACKS THE BUCKS

Block "O" Officers — Jay Beedy, vice president; Rick Boggs, president; Brutus the Buckeye; Tim Brown, Brutus committee; Karen Olmstead, executive secretary.

Second row: Donna Howard, membership director; Wendy Syrkin, stunt design chairman.

Third row: Tom Baginski, equipment; Dave Dickinson, treasurer; Diane Kopetz, membership; Kathy Thomas, office secretary; Billie Horne, stunt card committee; Phyllis Doelker, sgt.-at-arms; Sandy Knodel, mini-block chairman; Jennie Clouse, general chairman.

Block "O", the Ohio State University card-cheering section, is continuing its tradition of being the largest and loudest cheering section in Ohio Stadium.

Through a history dating back to the original card section in 1919, Block "O" has been located at various times in sections 17A, 15A, 13A, 11A, and, following a move and expansion in 1967, now occupies sections 1A and 2A at the north end of the stadium.

The Block underwent another expansion this year, increasing its total membership to 1424 students, 1100 of whom sit in the card section. Block "O" in its present form was organized by Clancy Isaacs, who returns every year to lead the Homecoming crowd in his traditional cheer.

The stunts performed by the Block are the end result of hours of work by committee members. Design ideas are drawn on special graph paper and are then punched onto computer cards. The cards are read by an IBM 1130 computer which prints instruction sheets for each of the 1100 seats in the card section. Through the use of these instruction sheets, a special public address system, and spotters at the south end of the stadium to look for errors, the Block is able to perform its high-precision stunts. The use of computers in printing instruction sheets was started in 1969.

Block "O" maintains several special projects outside the actual card section: Brutus the Buckeye, the official Ohio State mascot, is maintained and carried by Block "O" officers designated especially for that purpose; Mini-Block, the cheering section at all home Ohio State basketball games, was organized three years ago as a special Block "O" committee.

This year marked the first Block "O" tour to a road game when 150 members went to the game at the University of Illinois.
Club peps up game atmosphere

Block O is 'spirit booster'

By Fusun Aklar

24 Nov 71

Red, white and blue cards flashed as the president of the spirit-boosting section at football games gave the signal: “stunt number one, call number one, two, three...” With the harmony of a peacock’s opening feathers, an American flag magically appeared on the north side of Ohio Stadium.

Anyone who has ever gone to a home football game has witnessed this scene at least once. It is just one of the numerous, diversified stunts done by Block “O”, the special card cheering section of Ohio State football games and an active campus organization.

To more than 1,400 of the Block’s members Block “O” was not just a card cheering section. Being in the Block meant giving up a better seat to be part of the “spirit boosters,” and sitting in the rain and not being able to use an umbrella.

It meant sacrificing a lot of time planning, preparing and working on how to arouse and stimulate some 80,000 people and “pep” up the atmosphere.

Block “O” also means a lot of Clancy Isaac — its founder. Isaac leads the crowd in its traditional cheer at every homecoming game, a game he hasn’t missed in 30 years.

The concept of a card cheering section, however, is even older than 30 years. Buckeye fans have been entertained by card cheering sections since 1919.

The Block’s permanent seating pattern, formed by each member’s red or white cape, spells out Ohio with “H” superimposed on a red map of Ohio.

But the Block’s pattern is changed sometimes as often as 15 times in one football game.

Formerly the stunts were prepared by hand — a long and tiring job. But in 1969 Rick Boggs, last year’s president, devised a much simpler, time-saving technique — computerizing the stunts.

Each of the 1,100 participants (not all of the 1,400 members participate, the rest are reserves) have a packet under their seats ready before the game. The packet contains five different colored plastic cards (the flash cards used for the stunts) and a small IBM card.

Rabbits and skunks

The stunt numbers plus the call numbers, which indicate the colored card or cards to be held up for the particular stunt, are written on the IBM card.

So when Block “O” president Jay Beedy, a senior from Cincinnati, says “Get ready for stunt number one” and starts calling out numbers, each member knows what color card to flash. In this way Block “O” forms the American flag or a bunny rabbit or even a skunk.

The stunts of Block “O” are diverse and original. The stunts are not limited to just cheering on the Buckeyes.

In the Playboy stunt a bunny rabbit is formed while the ecology stunt urges fans to prevent pollution.

Humorous stunts like the “skunk stunt” cheer on the Buckeyes.

Besides all their stunts Block “O” is in charge of Brutus Buckeye, the team mascot. Two Block members carry the smiling mascot with the numbers “00” on its back not only at every home football game, but also at basketball games and at special events such as homecoming.

Mini Block

Block “O” is active year round. In spring and summer the Block holds membership drives. The location of Block “O” seats in the stadium cause a high rate of membership turnover, since upperclassmen are able to get better seats elsewhere.

When the football season is over the officers have regular meetings to discuss possible activities such as parties, banquets and trips, and the coming year’s stunt.
Ohio State’s Block “O” Cheering Section

One of the finest student card cheering sections in the nation is the Ohio State University Block “O”, which leads cheers and provides colorful and exciting stunts and designs for the Buckeye fans who fill Ohio Stadium.

The concept of a flashcard cheering section is not new at Ohio State. Buckeye fans have been entertained by card sections as long ago as 1919 when the original section livened up old Ohio Field. At various times in its history Block “O” has been located in sections 17A, 15A, 13A, 11A, and following the most recent move and expansion in 1967, now occupies sections 1A and 2A at the north end of the stadium. This last expansion has brought total membership up to 1,424 students (1,100 sit in the card section, the rest are reserves).

The stunts performed by the Block are the end result of weeks of work by committee members. Design ideas are drawn on special graph paper and are then punched onto computer cards. The use of computers to properly identify and code the colored flashcards used in the various stunts was begun in 1969. For each of the 1,100 seats in the section a stunt instruction sheet is provided. Distribution of these instruction sheets, combined with a special public-address system and spotters’ seats in the south end of the stadium to look for errors, eases Block’s ability to perform consistently high-precision stunts.

Block “O” maintains several special projects outside of the actual card section. Brutus the Buckeye, the official Ohio State mascot, is maintained and carried by Block “O” officers designated especially for that purpose. Mini-Block, the cheering section at all home basketball games was organized five years ago as a special Block “O” committee.

Providing its members with transportation to road games has become a popular service. This season Block “O” will take 150 fans to the game at Michigan State University Nov. 11.
Block O Celebrates 39th Birthday

This year is the 39th Anniversary of Block "O", the official card flashing and cheering section at the Ohio State University. Block "O" was founded in 1938 by Clancy Isaac, head of the O.S.U. cheerleading squad.

The Block, which is located in the closed end of the stadium, has a membership of 1,500 students, ranking it among the largest card flashing and cheering sections in the country. Membership in Block "O" is open to any fulltime O.S.U. student.

This year's Executive Head is Doug Collier, President of Block "O". Directing the card flashing and cheering is Denise Dembinski, Vice President (Football).

The Block "O" members receive individual computer printed instructions by seat number. The instructions involve matching a stunt variable with a call variable to determine which color to be used. Every instruction sheet has 40 possible card arrangements which each produce a picture or message. By calling out a stunt number and a call number, one of these colorful designs is produced.

When a card stunt is not being done, the word "OHIO", partially enclosed by a picture of the state of Ohio, is produced by red or white pullover capes worn by Block "O" members.

Block "O" is currently searching for information concerning our Alumni Officers, to aid in the planning of a 40th year Anniversary Reunion. Please contact: Block "O", Box 77, 1739 North High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43210.
Alumnus will lead last of homecoming cheers

By Cathy Conlon

Homecoming has never lost its meaning for 1939 OSU graduate Clancy Isaac, who hasn't missed a homecoming game in 40 years.

Isaac founded the Block "O" card-flashing section in 1938 when he was head cheerleader at Ohio State. He will be on the field leading a special cheer at Saturday's homecoming game at halftime, after the OSU Marching Band forms a block "Clancy."

"This will be my final cheer," said Isaac, who has performed at every homecoming game since he graduated. "It's time to hang up my spikes. I want to quit while I'm ahead."

He quickly added, "But I'll be back for every homecoming game 'til I die."

Isaac said he will be wearing his 1938 cheerleading uniform Saturday. The white blazer, sweater and white pants "still fit, but I can't breathe," he said with a grin.

Isaac is now a marketing-management consultant based in Washington, D.C. In 1963 during his 25th homecoming, he told the Lantern that while he was in the Army he traveled as far as 2,000 miles to be in Columbus for homecoming.

He has prepared a short speech to precede his farewell cheer and plans to tell the 88,000 OSU fans: "I hope you'll be as happy to come home 40 years from now as I am today."

Looking back on the first Block "O", Isaac said the 1,800 members "were stretched all the way across both sections 11 and 13 A."

Because the card flashers' patterns were not computerized like they are now, Isaac said he worked all summer devising stunts.

The unheard of stunt section had a "tremendous impact," Isaac said. In his scrapbook, he donated to the OSU archives five years ago, are clippings from New York newspapers about the unusual card-flashing group at Ohio State.

Isaac led a squad of 26 male cheerleaders in 1938. "We had gals (as cheerleaders) only for the Southern Cal game that year," he remembered, "and that was earthshattering then."

"The whole city was like Mardi Gras," Isaac said, "with all the downtown hotels filled."

"Fraternities and sororities decorated their houses; the dance was a big thing," he reminisced. "There was more of a reunion atmosphere than today."

"The spirit is still here, no question," he said. "But the loyalty to tradition is not what it was when I was in school."

Another celebrity guest at the halftime show will be entertainer Bob Hope, who has been invited to dot the "i" in the Marching Band's traditional "Script Ohio."

"We feel very sure he will do it," said band director Paul Droste. Hope will be the third non-band member in history to be given the honor, which Droste said is reserved "for a very, very special occasion."

The last guest to dot the "i" was long-time band arranger Dick Heine in 1974, and before Heine, OSU President Novice Fawcett and his wife dotted the "i" together upon the president's retirement in 1971.

Saturday, the band will also play Hope's theme song (and the homecoming theme) "Thanks for the Memories," and "I Ain't Down Yet" to acknowledge the Ohio Theatre's 50th anniversary.
No foul play in Block ‘O’

By Anne Graham

Block ‘O’ is cheering, not jeering this year.

Last year’s problems in the block with “off-color” cheers, damaged equipment and unsportsmanlike conduct “have literally disappeared,” said John Good, president of the block, a junior from Claymont, Del.

Steve Dingman, one of three alumni advisers for the cheering section, said that much of the “horsing around . . . snowballed” after the Northwestern game last season.

Dingman, a graduate student from Norfolk, Va., said members of Block “O” this year are there to cheer instead of causing trouble.

Sue Lenz, a senior from Slippery Rock, Pa., said about 1,300 members of the section are freshmen this season. The average number of freshmen in the block is normally close to 1,000.

Improved communication within the 1,500-member organization also contributed to changes this year, said Lenz, presidential aide to the group.

Lenz estimated that during the last football season less than 15 students came to each meeting. She said more than 40 members have attended the last two meetings.

Close to 40 students are coming “a couple hours early” on home game mornings to set up for cheering, Good said. There used to be “only eight or nine,” he said.
Block O breaks tradition twice

By Derek Monroe

'Three-5-81'

'Block O' is unusual enough in that it's one of just 10 remaining collegiate card-flashing sections in the country.

It recently emphasized that specialness by electing its first female president in 10 years. And, she's a sophomore in a position traditionally held by upperclassmen.

Maria Ferraro, from Roseville, Mich., was selected by a majority vote during the club's annual elections in February. She replaces Brian Coady, who graduated from OSU autumn quarter.

"I was very honored and privileged to be elected president, in addition to being the first female to head Block O in recent years," Ferraro said. "I felt that I had the qualifications, because I'm well-known for my leadership abilities that I've shown in other organizations around campus."

Ferraro is a member of the OSU Sportsmanship Council, Greek Week Public Relations Committee, and Kappa Delta Sorority. She attributes much of her success to her sorority.

"Kappa Delta has really been a big inspiration to me," Ferraro said. "They've always backed me 100 percent and given me the strength I needed for progression."

In other business, Block O will sponsor their annual banquet for outgoing officers on March 14, at the Jai Lai Restaurant. Furthermore, the OSU Synchronized Swimming team will be presented the Clancy Isaac Award that night.

The award is given to an OSU athlete, coach or team that shows good conduct, sportsmanship and athletic ability during their respective season, in addition to displaying outstanding leadership on campus. The award is given in honor of Clancy Isaac, the founder of Block O. Head football coach Earle Bruce was last year's winner.

"Coach Mary Jo Ruggieri and the synchronized swimming team are quite deserving of this honor," said Ferraro. "They've won a number of swimming titles and have done an outstanding job representing OSU, but never get the proper credit they deserve."
Computer aids in Block O designs

By Michele F. Mihaljevich
9-24-81
Computers help direct many activities and organizations on campus and Ohio State's Block O cheering section is no exception.

The 1,500-member group, one of only 10 such cheering organizations in the country, uses several hundred card formations, or stunts, which are programmed by computer, said Jim Freeze, Block O vice president.

The computer helps design the stunt and gives information on exactly what color each person is responsible for during each stunt.

Every formation is numbered, Freeze said, and cards with the computer's information are distributed to each group member. During the game, the leader calls out a number and students can check the cards to know which color to hold up.

Block O has been a highly visible part of OSU home football games almost every year since it was formed in 1919. Activities in the organization were temporarily stopped during World War II.

Members of the football team, including coach Earle Bruce, have told the group they appreciate the support and cheers Block O provides.

"They have also told us we make them nervous when we chant 'Rose Bowl','" Brian Coady, last year's president, said.

The athletic department provides funds to Block O by giving the group approximately $5 for each season student football ticket sold.

Very little practice is needed to prepare for the season. "We usually practice one hour before the first game of the year," Coady said.

About 70 to 80 per cent of the group is composed of freshmen, Coady said. An average of about 400 upperclassmen return each year.

This year, Block O will travel to Ann Arbor for the Ohio State-Michigan game. "We go every year the two teams play in Michigan," Maria Ferraro, Block O president, said.

A basketball cheering section similar to Block O, only without card formations, was started last year. The 150-member group, called Scarlet Fever, will sit by the east basket in St. John Arena again this year.
Bunch of cards in A-Deck

Block Q student card section lends support to the football Buckeyes in Ohio Stadium during Saturday's 33-22 victory over Purdue.
Block O, Brutus altered
New logos blend tradition, modern image

By EILEEN MALONE
Lantern staff writer

The Buckeyes' mascot Brutus has been transformed into a lean, mean, fighting machine and Block O is now the O in motion.

The flashy Brutus and progressive Block O are the creations of two June industrial design graduates who entered a contest sponsored by the OSU Licensing Program.

The licensing program is responsible for copywriting university trademarks, licensing logos, collecting royalty payments on their use and generating scholarships with the revenue.

"We're always looking for ways to beef up the marks that we submit to the manufacturers who are licensees of the university," said Liz Kennedy, licensing program assistant.

Kennedy said Hershner's Brutus is the first Brutus Ohio State has actively marketed.

The new Brutus and Block O were shown on the scoreboard at the Oregon vs. Ohio State football game last Saturday.

In an effort to do this, the licensing program coordinated the logo competition with the Department of Industrial Design so students could practice what they had learned in the classroom, Kennedy said.

Matthew Holloway, from Green Camp, won the competition with his interpretation of Block O.

Holloway said he researched what type of items sold well at university area bookstores and found that items with traditional OSU marks sold best.

"So I geared my logo toward alumni and brought it back to a more conservative, traditional line," Holloway said. "But I still wanted something modern-looking and energetic that conveyed the image of sports through that energy."

He explained that the horizontal lines in his design are meant to represent lanes of a swimming pool, yard lines of a football field, and lanes of the track. The lines also convey the feeling of motion, which is enhanced by the gray shadow on the right of the design, he said. This shadow adds depth to the design, he said.

Holloway also said he photostated a buckeye leaf and used its actual proportions for his Block O. Photostating is a process that uses special chemical paper to give pictures finer detailing.

The winning Block O finally "evolved" after sketching more than 20 versions, Holloway said.

"It started out as the traditional Block O that everyone knows, and it grew into different shapes, then the three dimensional idea, then the depth and energy of motion with the right feeling for the eighties, yet appeal for tradition," Holloway said.

Holloway is art director for the K Group, a printing house and design studio. He said his presentation of the Block O logo and the process packet of steps taken to reach the final version of the logo helped him get the job.

Tim Hershner, from Granville, also entered the design competition but did not win. However, his muscle-bound Brutus captured the attention of OSU officials, who bought the rights to the new "brute" mascot.

"I did Brutus instead of a Block O because he's been the unofficial mascot of the university, and I just thought I'd give him some identity," Hershner said.

Unlike wimpy Brutuses of the past, the new Brutus is tough and determined-looking because Ohio State is the home of rough-powerhouse football, Hershner said.

"He started out as a cartoon, being very linear, and I gradually used heavier lines to give him more mass, some muscle," Hershner said.

And so the new Brutus was created. Better, stronger, faster.

"The scowl on his face says 'I'm gonna get you!, kind of like the anticipation he has before going to beat up on someone,'" Hershner said.

"I liked the logos," said Jeff Smith, a graduate student from Galloway studying math education, who attended the game. "In the past, Brutus was not as aggressive as he should have been.

The new one brings out the tougher Brutus. The new Block O is more progressive and stylistic," Smith said.

"Brutus looked neat, more idealistic with the Buckeyes and more like a football player," said Mel Shammo, a freshman from Louisville majoring in communications.

"I saw the Block O on the scoreboard, and the different colors make it more eye catching," she said.

Kennedy said the new logos are not meant to replace existing logos, but are added options for licensees of university trademarks.

Ohio State contracts with 400 licensed manufacturers. To use goods with OSU logos, manufacturers pay royalties of 6.0 percent of the wholesale cost of goods sold. Last year, Ohio State collected $480,000 in royalties, one of the largest royalty amounts for any university, Kennedy said.
RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FORMATION OF THE "BLOCK O"
from Jean Metcalf Knapp

The year was 1938 - 1300 OSU students were seated on the 50 yard line
North to the 20 yard line of the stadium to form a huge block of people.
The block 0 was formed by those students wearing red oil cloth capes
while the background was formed by students wearing gray oil cloth capes.
This formed a visual scarlet and gray designation of the student cheering
section even when the card formations were not in use. Columbus Coated
Fabrics donated the brilliantly colored material which was nothing more
than a piece of plastic with a hole in the middle for the persons head.
After each game we neatly folded our capes and turned them in to a pile
to be used at the following games. Everyone cooperated beautifully.

Color cards were held by each student and each seat had a "master card"
with the numerical designation of which card was to be held to make the
called formation. As I remember, these were 20 inch or so squares of
cardboard. The starter of the cheerleaders shot off a gun so that we all
held our cards up in the air at the precise moment to "flash" a letter or
a visual formation.

This was also the year of the innovation of the co-ed cheerleaders!
The Southern Cal game saw the introduction of girl cheerleaders -- we had
a huge rally at the stadium complete with the marching band and thousands
of students. We paraded thru the campus to High Street and marched down
High to the Union Station where we met the incoming team. From there we
paraded on down to the Palace Theatre and up on the stage!! What a thrill!
The theatre was filled with the most enthusiastic cheering section any team
could possibly want to have. Myron Mckelvy was the Drum Major and the head
cheer leader was Clancy Isaacs. Not sure whose idea it was to introduce
girls to the cheering squad and I can't truly remember just how we were
chosen. I have always been proud to have been a part of the history forming
of the Block O and the girl cheerleaders.

Hopefully these newspaper clipping of this event will warrant space in the
Archives of The Ohio State University, and it is my privilege to offer them
for that purpose.

Jean
10-1-87
Ohio State to Inaugurate New Cheering Wrinkle

STADIUM STANDS TO BE LIVING SIGNBOARD

Game
MICHIGAN
Sec. 13 Row 15 Seat 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<td>7</td>
<td>RED</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>RED</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>WHITE</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>GRAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>YELLOW</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>GRAY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Equipment must be turned in IMMEDIATELY after Game to persons designated.

INSTRUCTIONS
1. Co-operate in lining up as soon as possible. It saves time.
2. Once seated, don't change seats.
3. Watch for Cheer Leaders' signals.
4. Execute UP movements on GUN
   DOWN movements on whistle.
5. Hold cards STEADY.
6. Don’t leave at half until dismissed,
   Be in SAME SEAT before second
   half starts.
7. CHEER and SING

SATURDAY'S heroes at Ohio State university will have a
new inspiration to spur them on
to victory during football games
in the stadium. Much cheering
section of 1300 students who will
operate cards to form huge fig-
ures at the direction of cheer
leaders.
The students will arrange seats
from the 50-yard line, north to
the 20-yard line. The section will
use colored capes to form a
block "O" at each game. Mem-
bers of the section who form the
letter will wear yellow capes,
while those who form the back-
ground will wear gray capes.
Other figures will be made by
holding up different colored
cards over their heads.
The group of girls pictured
here were receiving instructions
in how the block cheering works.
A signal from the leader, the
student glances down the in-
scription card shown here until
he finds opposite the number re-
quested the color of the card he
should hold. Upon a shot from
the starter's gun all cards are
raised at once.
The Buckeye fanatics pic-
tured are: Hetty Happles, Jane
Stewart, Martha Ann Hinkle,
Hetty Bick, Jane West, Elva
McArdle, Lucille Riley, Eleanor
Evans, Mary Helen Ginger,
Margaret Shaffer, Leota
Majewski and Molly O'Connell, all
of Columbus.
Dirk Smith, former varsity swimmer, is back at the old splashing grounds... Jean Mercil was seen with him.

COEDS CHEER UP

Campus Hostesses Hail Trainload of Trojans

CO-ED HOSTESSES

Tanny Goodwin
Marjorie Baird
Bobbie Moore
Alice Rose

Thirty-seven husky football players from the University of Southern California stepped off their special train into a frosty Ohio atmosphere this morning at Union Station after a cross-country ride of 60 hours.

Four University co-eds, acting as hostesses, greeted the party. They were: Frances H. (Tanny) Goodwin, A-1; Marjorie A. Baird, Ed-3; Roberta (Bobbie) Moore, A-2, and Alice Rose, A-1.

The team, with its coach, Howard H. Jones, once football coach at the University, was met by a retinue of grill followers and the Junior Chamber of Commerce. The squad will stay at the Dohler-Wallick Hotel.

Maybe it's the California influence, but there'll be pretty coeds out there in front of the stands jumping and yelling with the other cheerleaders when Southern California meets Ohio State University Saturday. For a preview of this pretty picture we give you Betty Rhodes, a freshman from Marysville, who is mighty nimble on her feet.
CO-ED GREETERS PRESENTED AT BUCKEYE FOOTBALL RALLY

THESE CO-ED GREETERS WELCOME SOUTHERN CALIFORNIANS

The Trojans got their first eyeful of Ohio "dazzle" when the four Ohio State co-eds "beauties" met them on their arrival Friday at Union station. The "queens" are pictured in the accompanying photograph as they presented Al Wessan, publisher for U. S. C., with a key to the stadium at a football rally. Thursday night on the stage of the Palace theater. Left to right they are "Tunny" Gondlin, Alene Rose, "Robbie" Moore and Margie Baird.

OHIO STATE'S CO-ED CHEERING TEAM

Among others present at the rally were the new Ohio State co-ed cheering team, Drum Major Myron McKelvey and members of Ohio State's football team. Team members pictured, left to right, are Kaplanoff, Bower and Bartsch.
October 13, 1987

Mrs. Jean Metcalf Knapp  
318 Hardesty Avenue N.W.  
New Philadelphia, Ohio 44663

Dear Mrs. Knapp:

Your package arrived safely. Many thanks for the pages of newspaper clippings and for your essay "Recollections of the Formation of the 'Block 0'."

The essay in particular is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the origins of "Block 0" and will be added to our files.

I appreciate receiving these items and your interest in preserving the history of the university.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Raimund E. Goerler, Ph.D.  
University Archivist

REG: me
Block O works hard for a roar

By Ruth Hanley
Dispatch OSU Reporter

Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Hoosier.
Hoosier who?
Hoosier favorite team?

When the Block O cheering section asked that question yesterday in Ohio Stadium, the crowd roared its reply — the Buckeyes.

That didn’t seem to bother Indiana's Hoosiers, who pummeled the Buckeyes 31-10. But don’t blame Block O, which did its darndest to keep the stadium “hand sitters” at bay.

The dreaded hand sitters is the bleacher version of the couch potato, explained Block O President David A. Stubbs II. They’re the people who just sit, unresponsive, and watch the game. Block O is out to get them all.

“That’s one of our jobs, to get those people on their feet,” he said.

About 1,500 Ohio State University students take part in Block O, with 1,100 or so squeezing into the curve of the stadium horseshoe for most home games. Students need only check the Block O box on their football-ticket application, then show up for the games.

Their purpose is to “excite the team, excite the fans.” They use cards, tapes and old-fashioned lung power to do it, said Stubbs, a senior architecture major from Sunbury, Ohio.

“The louder we are, the louder the stadium gets,” he said.

Block O antics range from flashing cards to spell out “Hi Mom Send Money” to challenging Brutus Buckeye to do as many push-ups as the Buckeyes have points. On that one, the Block O often cheats as it counts along with Brutus, “One, two, two, two . . .”

The card stunts are choreographed ahead of time by Dennis Cheyfitz, who uses a computer to coordinate colors and designs. On game day, each seat in the Block O section has a packet of five colored 14-by-14-inch plastic cards, a red or white cape, and a computer printout listing what to do for each numbered stunt.

Most of the six Block O officers show up before each home game to direct 30 to 50 volunteers distributing the packets. The process takes 1 to 3 hours, depending on how many help.

During the game, the leader at the microphone directs the students. Stubbs, who has often occupied that spot, said enthusiasm is the key. “I’m really crazy up there,” he said. “They have to see you’re excited.”

Block O is not the only reason the crowd gets roused, Stubbs said, sharing the credit with the band, the cheerleaders, Brutus, the scoreboard programmer and, of course, the action on the field.

Still, “it’s difficult for 14 cheerleaders to get the whole stadium going,” he said. “We can turn that stadium around real fast. We set the pace.”

This is the 49th season for Block O, Stubbs said. As proof of its fame, he was asked to help with the planning of two 40,000-card stunts at the U.S. Olympic Festival last July in Durham, N.C.

“Getting the crowd to raise those cards in unison was a task worthy of the Olympics,” Stubbs said.

“We know it’s not going to be perfect,” he said. “You just have to believe . . .”

When the Buckeyes are winning, Block O enthusiasm comes easy, but even when they aren’t, Block O doesn’t quit. At last year’s Michigan game, for example, “I’ve never seen kids cheer louder in my life,” Stubbs said.

“When we’re losing, people sit on their hands. It’s the toughest thing to get them to stand up.”

But he said Block O likes challenges, because “We’re . . . the best cheering section in the nation.”
Block 'O' celebrates anniversary

By Kim Sirkin
Lantern staff writer

Block "O", Ohio State's cheering section, was founded in 1938 by Clancy Isaac, a former cheerleader for the Buckeyes.

"Very few traditions have lasted this long, and I am very proud that Block 'O' has prevailed," Isaac said.

After seeing a block cheering section at the Ohio State-Southern California football game in the Los Angeles Coliseum, Isaac got the idea to start a similar cheering section at Ohio State.

He said if it could be done in Los Angeles, it could be done in Columbus.

Block "O" will be celebrating its 50th anniversary Oct. 1.

"We feel this is a big honor for Block "O" and a lot should be done to celebrate the occasion," said Sam Millit, Block "O" spokesman.

A series of events is planned for

the anniversary celebration, most of which will happen Homecoming weekend.

The first design by Block "O" was "OHIO" in scarlet on a field of gray across sections 11 and 13.

Today Block "O" performs more than 75 stunts. Forty stunts are picked out before each game, five or six of which are used.

Block "O" holds 1,100 people.

"We've had to turn down about 500 people. They realize it is fun and want to be in it," Millit said.

Millit said thanks to modern technology, Block "O" has come along way since 1938.

"The main difference now is everything is done on computers," Millit said. "We can do just about anything."

Block "O" doesn't just perform at the Horseshoe anymore. Millit said it travels on the road and will appear at the Indiana game Oct. 8.

Every football Saturday, Block "O" sets up three-and-a-half hours before kick off. Fifty-five hundred cards are distributed before the kickoff.

Block "O" is one of seven cheering sections, two of which are in the Big Ten.
Block 'O' hits 50; celebrates at Homecoming festivities

By Kim Sirkin
Lantern staff writer

Block "O," Ohio State's cheering section, will celebrate its 50th anniversary as part of Homecoming Weekend. The festivities will begin Friday at Ohio Stadium.

Block "O" made its first appearance at the homecoming game Oct. 1, 1938, said Sam Millit, Block "O" spokesman.

All students are welcome to participate in performing four or five stunts with Block "O."

For the first time in Block "O" history, the cheering section will be televised, and the event is planned to appear on WCMH Channel 4 at 5:30 Friday.

There will be 1,100 seats available for the event. Interested students must enter the stadium through the north gate no later than 5 p.m. Friday.

"It's a great chance for students to get on TV," Millit said. He also said participants in the event will be instructed what to do.

"We are representing The Ohio State University, and people in the Columbus area are very interested in Ohio State football," Millit said.

Q-FM 96 disc jockey Mark Bishop will be at the Varsity Club, 278 W. Lane Ave., at 11 a.m. Saturday to celebrate the 50th birthday of Block "O" with a 4-by-6 foot cake.

As the Buckeyes emerge onto the field Saturday, Block "O" will give the players a warm welcome by releasing 1,500 red and white balloons.

Ohio State band director Jon R. Woods said the band will perform a Block "O" formation to the music "Hang On Sloopy."
A stiff breeze, and Brutus may be waving adios

Kyle McQuaid will have his hands full when he hits the field for the last time in Ohio Stadium on Saturday.

McQuaid's alter ego, Brutus Buckeye, will carry a new Block O flag — all 12-feet-by-18-feet of scarlet and gray splendor — when he leads the Ohio State contingent onto the field.

The flying colors are a gift to the cheerleaders from Mary Eckert, owner of The Flag Lady's Flag Store at 4392 Indianola Ave. Brutus will carry it on an 18-foot aluminum pole.

Eckert said her goal was to make the biggest flag in the Big Ten, bigger than flag-waving rivals Illinois and Iowa.

"We tried to find out the dimensions of those flags, but the schools wouldn't tell us," the Flag Lady said. "So we just went ahead and added some extra yardage."

The 6-foot-4 McQuaid thinks he can carry it off.

He better hope the wind doesn't kick up.
Block "O": A 50-Year Ohio Stadium Tradition

When Francis Schmidt led his Ohio State football team onto the field on October 1, 1938, they were greeted by a typically large Ohio Stadium crowd; 67,397, to be exact. But there was something different about the throng that was gathered in the giant "horseshoe" on that special Saturday.

Nestled in Sections 11 and 13, immediately behind the band, was a group of 1,500 students who, unbeknownst to them, were about to unveil a tradition that continues today. The custom born in Ohio Stadium on that October afternoon was the famed Block "O", which celebrates its 50th anniversary today.

Block "O" was the brainchild of Clancy Isaac, OSU's head cheerleader in 1938. A year earlier, at the Ohio State-Southern California game, Isaac had witnessed a group of USC students performing card stunts and was immediately impressed. He was overwhelmed by the desire to develop a similar showpiece for Ohio Stadium, doing most of the legwork himself. Isaac spent the better part of nine months recruiting, marketing, designing stunts and just plain selling the Block "O" to the Ohio State faithful.

Isaac and the remainder of the OSU cheerleading squad, along with the College of Engineering, drew up the plans for the initial Block "O" performance. After the sketches were completed, Isaac and his crew undertook the challenge of hand-drawing the designs on each and every card that was to be utilized (approximately 75,000) during the 1938 season: a monumental task. "It took about two to three months just to put the cards together," said Isaac.

Block "O" has undergone several changes since its beginnings in 1938. Today, the frenzied, card-turning coeds are found in the north end zone.

The stunts which were once designed manually by Isaac and his crew of cheerleaders, are now constructed through the use of a computer program specially developed for Block "O". It now takes minutes to draw up a stunt, as opposed to the numerous hours that were necessary to hand-draw the diagrams a half-century ago.

Today, the weather-resistant fiberglass placards are mass-produced by a local company, eliminating the long hours and many headaches that once existed.

Several aspects of the storied tradition have remained the same over the years. The students are still outfitted in the color-coordinated capes, which create the outline of the state of Ohio in Sections One and Two. OHIO is spelled across the diagram, giving everyone the impression that a stunt is being performed, even though no cards are being used.

Block "O" still performs five or six different stunts during the course of a single football game. This amounts to about 20-25 different creations throughout the season. Even in 1938, despite the extensive manual labor needed to prepare each stunt, Isaac and Block "O" used a like number of displays.

Ohio State is one of just six schools that maintain this custom at its fall extravaganzas. Block "O" has been consulted by other universities and organizations, including North Carolina, Tennessee and the New York Mets, which have, or wish to, install card-turning sections in their stadiums.

Today, when John Cooper and his Buckeye football team sprint onto the Ohio Stadium turf to do battle against the University of Illinois, they will receive the same greeting from Block "O" that Francis Schmidt and his squad collected a mere 50 years ago. Knowing Ohio State's penchant for maintaining traditions associated with its proud gridiron heritage, it can be assumed that Block "O" will salute OSU's football coach and team in 2038, the same way it will today.
Block 'O' tradition carries on

By Missy Harris
Lantern staff writer

Football season is fast approaching and OSU fans are looking forward to cheering on the Buckeyes.

Yes, the traditional Block "O" will be there to lead the crowd through the cheers and of course "the wave."

To many fans it just wouldn't be the same without the ever-popular cheering section, but not many know who is actually responsible for this great contribution to OSU football.

"This entire organization is due to our founder, Clancy Isaac. He is the ultimate Buckeye fan," Dennis Cheyfitz, president of Block "O," said.

Isaac, 72, a former head cheerleader and graduate of OSU, formed Block "O" in 1938 and started a great tradition, said Cheyfitz, 21, a senior majoring in psychology from Chesterland.

Block "O," beginning its 52nd season, is the second longest cheering section in the United States. Only the University of Southern California's cheering section is longer, Cheyfitz said.

Isaac said he had no idea that Block "O" would turn into what it is today and would last so long.

"We worked so hard to get it started. I hoped and prayed it would last," Isaac said.

In 1938, it was a lot more difficult to get something started. The students who wanted to initiate Block "O" had to get the approval of the athletic department in order to get the large amount of money needed to fund it. And then they had to get the rest of the students to accept a new and unfamiliar idea, Isaac said.

Many students were receptive to the idea and supported it. They helped make it a success right from the start. Block "O" was considered an exclusive club and people paid extra to get in, Isaac said.

The first Block "O" consisted of 2,000 people, all males, and was located on the 40-yard line, Isaac said.

Block "O" did not have any officers when it first started, the cheerleaders directed it. Isaac, as head cheerleader, said he was in charge of the block and had to make the 2,000 cards that they used for stunts by hand.

Now Block "O" consists of 1,100 people, is co-ed and is located at the closed end of the stadium, behind the end-zone. A computer is used to design the stunts and make the cards, Cheyfitz said.

David L. Stubbs, 24, an alumni member and former president of Block "O," describes Block "O" as "a way to introduce students to the university."

"It is a great way to meet people and become familiar with the OSU spirit," Stubbs said.

Block "O" was designed for students to have a good time, to inspire the team they were cheering for and to make them feel like a part of the university, Stubbs said.

Stubbs added he really enjoyed being a part of Block "O" and admired Isaac.

"Clancy is a great guy, who started a great tradition," Stubbs said.

Isaac is still active in Block "O". He said he attends all of the alumni and homecoming games and also makes a point of stopping up in the Block "O" section as much as possible to give a speech or just say hello.

Isaac said after he graduated, he led Block "O" in cheers every year for 40 years. He said he did this up until the 1976 Homecoming Game, when he experienced the "best feeling of his life." At that particular game the OSU band spelled out his name, "Clancy," and cheered him onto the field. He said he decided to stop then because he didn't think anything could top that.

"I said to myself, I'm going to quit while I'm ahead," Isaac said.

The current president of Block "O," Cheyfitz, said there was a large turnout last year for Block "O" and he expects the same kind of response this year.

"We had a great turnout at both the games and the weekly meetings last year. All 1,100 seats were filled at most of the home games. We had approximately 150 people attend the meetings, which is three times more compared to the previous three years," Cheyfitz said.

The members showed much spirit and dedication last year and I think many of them will return, he said.

"Block "O" gets better every year. It has become a tradition and will hopefully be around for a long time to come," Cheyfitz said.
Founding 'Block O' cheerleader dies

By Howard Kalin
Lantern staff writer

C.A. (Clancy) Isaac, founder of the "Block O" tradition at Ohio State football games passed away Friday at the age of 78.

In Isaac's senior year he served as head cheerleader for the Buckeyes and thought of the idea for "Block O" after seeing a USC student organized cheering section.

"He said if they can do it we can do it," said his son Chip Isaac.

Even after his graduation (1939) Isaac came back every year through 1978 during homecoming to lead a cheer. In 1978, while he led a cheer during halftime, the band spelled out his name on the field.

"OSU was a very important part of his life," Isaac's son said.

Isaac was still active in Block O and attended Block O meetings regularly, he said.

Isaac was a marketing executive in New York for 34 years. He was the founder of Marketing Complex Inc., a company that developed marketing, advertising and promotional plans for major corporations.

He also served as a major in the United States army during World War II.

Isaac is survived by three children; Nancy, Jeannette, and Chip; two grandchildren Matthew and Daniel; and his companion Cheryl Durley.

Photo provided by Isaac family

The 1978 OSU Marching Band honors Clancy Isaac, the man behind Block O, by spelling out his name on the field.

Contributions, in lieu of flowers, can be made in his honor to the Clancy Isaac scholarship fund. For more information, call 292-9369.
Block O continues tradition of support

by Greg Reese
First Down writer

For over 30 years now Block "O" has been supporting OSU football games through a wide variety of signs, slogans and cheers.

Block "O" is a student seating section located in the center of the closed-in of the Horseshoe. This section of OSU football fans contains 1,500 Block "O" participants. These students not only cheer for the Buckeyes, they also inspire the crowd to get even more involved during every step of the game. Block "O" is led by student officers. Sheila Wilford, Block "O" activities director, said Block "O" officers arrive three to four hours before the game to set up various cards, capes and fliers telling students the order in which to show color cards.

Wilford, a junior majoring in education, said officers design the stunts and the signs students make with color cards with a computer program. The computer breaks the planned sign down into 1,500 individual color cards and capes, then numbers each individual card and cape. Five color cards are used for each student.

Jeff Mayzum, a junior majoring in mathematics, said Block "O" stunts range from player's names, television logos and a congratulation to OSU president E. Gordon Gee on his engagement to Constance Bumgarner.

It takes a lot of work and sacrifice to make sure these stunts are properly executed. Mayzum, Block "O" treasurer, said officers have to give up watching the game so they can make sure participating students are doing the stunts right and are behaving well.

OSU players look to Block "O" for support before and during games. "Being an athlete myself, I see Block "O" as a positive support group for the football team," said Wilford, a member of the OSU softball team.

"Block 'O' is an organization that strives to get students involved in the athletic programs, not only football but the other athletics here at OSU," Mayzum said. "So we basically all athletics."

Not only does Block "O" support the OSU football team at home, the organization's 600 members plan road trips to root on the Buckeyes at other colleges.

Anywhere from 35 to 100 students join the road trips, depending on the distance of the trip, Wilford said.

"I think everyone should sit on Block "O" at least once," said Laura Wilford, a freshman majoring in special education. "It is an experience in itself, besides just sitting (and) watching a football game."

Laura Wilford said people get to meet new, exciting people when they join Block "O." Also, they do more than just cheer, like have dinner parties and haunted houses, Laura said.

Students interested in joining can attend a Block "O" meetings Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. in room 170 at the Math Annex.
Buckeye-backing student group expands focus

By Alana Beltzer
Lantern staff writer

Stand up, sit down, fight, fight! Block “O” gets students to cheer for football and other sports on campus.

Block “O,” the student cheering section for Ohio State football games, has added the women’s basketball games to its cheering agenda.

“We’ve had our own section at men’s basketball games, but this is the first year for Block “O” at women’s basketball games,” said John Bolte IV, president of Block “O.”

“You are in the organization if you sit there, but some students are more active than others,” Grinder said.

Also expanding is the role the Department of Athletics plays with the group, Bolte said.

The partnership benefits both sides, said Scott Kull, co-adviser for Block “O” and assistant director of marketing in athletics.

“We help them out with their membership drive and they help us out with events like Fan Jam and the spring football game,” he said.

The section, located on the north side of the stadium, consists of 1,600 students, said Dave Grinder, co-adviser for Block “O.”

“Next game we will hopefully make the outline of the state with Ohio written through it,” Bolte said.

Block “O” is also a social organization, he said.

“Right now, we have about 80 to 100 students attending our weekly meetings,” Bolte said.

The organization plans events to accommodate the freshmen members, he said.

“Since most of the group is freshmen and a lot of them can not get off of campus, we try to get around,” Bolte said.

Block “O” was founded in 1938 by cheerleader Clancy Isaac after he saw a similar group at the University of Southern California.
Ohio State News

MEDIA ADVISORY
September 22, 2003

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Jessica Sherrick
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Block 'O' meeting focuses on 65th anniversary, Buckeye spirit
More than 1,300 students expected to attend kickoff event

On the surface, Block "O" is known as the spirited group of students whose cheers and colorful card stunts energize fans throughout Ohio Stadium during home football games.

However, beyond the sea of scarlet-and gray-painted faces, through 65 years of existence the organization has mastered the art of planning, scripting and organizing its more than 1,300 members to reflect Buckeye pride at home football games.
To begin celebrating the 65th anniversary and to gear up for The Ohio State University vs. Northwestern football game, Block "O" will have its kick-off meeting at 4:15 to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday (9/23) in the south stands of Ohio Stadium.

At the meeting, students will learn cheers and card stunts, and information about Block "O" meetings, activities, rules and community service projects. It will feature guests such as the Ohio State cheerleaders, Brutus Buckeye, Buckeye Man and Ohio State athletic teams.

Following the meeting, the Ohio State Marching Band will lead the members of Block "O" to the north end of Ohio Stadium where they will attend Scarlet Fever, a giant pep rally.

WHAT: The Block "O" kick-off meeting.

WHEN: 4:15 to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday (9/23).

WHERE: The south stands in Ohio Stadium.

WHY: To begin celebrating the organization's 65th anniversary and to gear up for The Ohio State University vs. Northwestern football game.

For additional releases go to:
http://www.osu.edu/news_db/index.php
OSU Faculty Experts guide is online at
http://www.osu.edu/news_db/experts_index.php
October 2003
From the Home of the 2002 College Football National Champions!

Calling all Buckeye Nuts!
The Block "O" Alumni Society ("BOAS") has an AMAZING Fall season lined up for you! Check out these events (details follow throughout this newsletter)...

Events Preview (Details on page 5)
• October 17-19th - Homecoming weekend
  Friday: Homecoming parade, Pep Rally, Midnight Madness
  Saturday: Tailgate commemorating 65 years of Block "O" at the OSU vs. Iowa game
  Sunday: Columbus Marathon, BOAS Board meeting
• October 25th - Road trip to the Indiana game
• February 28, 2004 - Columbus Blue Jackets vs. Colorado Avalanche
• Other possible events include OSU Basketball (Men's and Women's) and Hockey games

NEED A HOME FOR TAILGATING THIS SEASON?
For all home games this season, please consider this a standing invitation to come tailgate with members of the Block "O" Alumni Society and friends! We'll be set up in the disability parking lot between St. John and Lane Ave. For details, call Andy Frank 614-906-0543 (or e-mail him: afrank@frankgates.com). Travelers beware; construction still has the Lane Avenue Bridge closed, so remember to use the footbridge across the Olentangy just south of the bridge. Tailgates will generally begin 3 hours prior to kickoff. A great spread of food will be provided, so just bring your own beverages. Look for the 4' x 3' Block "O" flag flying on a 20' pole. Anyone welcome!

GET YOUR BUCKEYE GEAR! (YOU'LL HELP THE BOAS!)
Need any good National Championship Souvenirs or other OSU Merchandise? Please consider shopping at Conrads College Gifts on Lane Avenue (888-GIFT-OSU or www.conrads.com), and mention Alumni Group #510. When you do so, a percentage of purchases made with our code will be contributed to the Block "O" Alumni Society Endowed Scholarship fund (save your receipts).
GET INVOLVED

The Block "O" Alumni Society ("BOAS") offers you several ways to get more involved. Join a committee like Membership, Scholarship, Historical, Planning, or Meetings and Programs ("MAP"). The more, the merrier! Contact the following people if you are interested:

Shayne Cables  Planning  shaynecables@hotmail.com
Robyn Gerstein  MAP  robyngerstein@msn.com
Chris Hallstrom  Membership  christophershallstrom@hotmail.com
Andy Frank  Scholarship  afrank@frankestes.com
Andy Hare  Historical  sharelle30@yahoo.com

Also, check out our website at www.blockColumn.org

MEMORY LANE WITH . . . SANDRA WINEMILLER SEXTON

Note: This column will be a recurring feature in the newsletter as we highlight stories from our Block "O" Alumni.

Sandra was in Block "O" from 1971-75 and served as equipment chair, treasurer, and vice president. She graduated from OSU with a biochemistry degree and currently works as a programmer analyst for the Motorists Insurance Group, who donated the stained glass windows in the rotunda of Ohio Stadium. Sandra fondly remembers her years in Block "O" during the glory days of Archie Griffin and Rose Bowl trips. She recalls the rain coats they wore during wet games, the heavy plastic cards used for stubs, and wearing grey slacks and "letter sweaters," which were awarded for the last or highest officer position they held. As a Block "O" recruiter, she spent long hours at the St John Arena ticket office encouraging people to become part of the flash-card section. There were reportedly over 1200 members at the time, and they even had a mini-block for basketball games and their own version of Script Ohio with TBDTBDT. In the fall of 1972, Block "O" organized a trip to the Rose Bowl for 273 cheering Buckeyes.

Sandra’s earned her nickname “Kraut” for eating sauerkraut during weekly Friday dinner parties at Schmidt’s Restaurant. The dinners preceded the “punch, cut, and staple” parties...back in the 70s, keypunch machines were used to input the card stubs into the computer to get printouts on large computer paper. The paper was then cut and stapled to 3x5 cards for the 1200 card-flashing students. Everything was so manual back then, the officers bonded over these tasks. Sandra credits her fellow officers for keeping her at OSU; she found the school so big and overwhelming, and she was struggling with classes, but her Block "O" friends tutored and mentored her. She is still friends with several of them, and they had a reunion in the 1980s.

Sandra still keeps in touch with fellow Block "O" members Nanci Naylor (secretary 1973), Jack and Marla Gleason (Jack—equipment chair, Marla—band coordinator and mini-block chair), Dave Boyer (Brutus Buckeye 1972), and Scott Walters (equipment chair). Her most special memory came after defeating Michigan in 1972 to earn the Rose Bowl trip; she still owns a small piece of the wooden goalpost that was torn down and carried to the stadium after the victory! Sandra is currently a season ticket holder and looks forward to a repeat national championship this season.

O-HI

This will be an exciting year for all who love the scarlet and gray! OSU will be defending their 2002 Football National Championship and The Block "O" Alumni Society anticipates becoming a fully chartered alumni society within The Ohio State University Alumni Association (OSUAA), Inc.

Among the benefits that our society will gain upon becoming fully chartered will be the opportunity to request a block of tickets* to one OSU home football game, as well one away OSU game. Additionally, we would also earn our 501(c)(3) status as a not-for-profit organization. That 501(c)(3) will entitle us to a lower postage rate, as well as other economic benefits that will enable us to do more for you, our members.

We move forward with a strong Board of Governors, all of whom are eager for action as we grow our society. Some of our top goals for this year include:

- Newsletters - More content, Member Feature, more frequent & consistent, news/updates on the Block "O" student group
- Website - Updated and revamped
- Endowed scholarship growth - 1st deposits will be set up in new

* For more on the opportunity for our society to request football tickets, see the "Membership" story below.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Block "O" Alumni Society is yearly. Beginning this September, everyone’s membership (whether you joined in 2000 or 2002) comes up for renewal. In addition to receiving our informative newsletter at least four times a year, paid members in the Block "O" Alumni Society will have the opportunity to purchase tickets to one OSU home and one OSU away football game. Plus, members will enjoy access to members-only events, networking resources, entry in giveaways of OSU memorabilia, and much more.

Note: All those join or renew this year are entered to win a full-sized, limited edition Fiesta Bowl commemorative football! The Membership Application form is inside this newsletter.
This year, perhaps even more than others (i.e., defending National Champs), Block "O" President, Jarrod Weiss, said that the students cannot back down on their enthusiasm during football season. While the ten Block "O" Officers are hoping to keep Block "O" members active throughout the year, they are already intensely focused on their primary goal of keeping Ohio State in full-tlit spirit.

Winners of the Clancy Isaac Scholarship in 2003 were selected this past spring:
- Mike Saul, Game Day Coordinator and Block "O" Alumus Society Student Representative
- James Conway, Treasurer
- Erin Berry, Vice President
- Jarrod Weiss, President

Each student was awarded $500 each. The Clancy Isaac Scholarship is named after the 1938 founder of Block "O," Clancy Isaac, and is funded by the gift Clancy left to Block "O" upon his passing in 1996. It is an annual $2,000 award (split among as many worthy applicants as the selection committee sees fit) that is given to the student or those students in Block "O" that embody the truest Buckeye spirit and dedication.

The Block "O" First General Meeting will be a huge event this year, given the fact that every student who bought a football ticket designated in Block "O" simultaneously purchased a $10 membership in Block "O" (that instantly gave them 1200 paid members—even before their 1st meeting! Last year they had about 730 paid members.). On Tuesday, September 23rd, their meeting will kick off around 4:00 p.m. in Block "O" in the South Stands of Ohio Stadium. The Cheerleaders, Brutus, OSU men's baseball team, and the women's soccer & lacrosse teams will be working as volunteers at the meeting. Speakers will include Andy Geiger, Bill Hall, and Jim O'Brien (O'Brien about 90% committed).

There will be a "class" conducted, educating all about what the Block does during games (including why and when); the Block will actually be set up with cards as if it were a game day. There will also be a huge cake in honor of the 65th anniversary of Block "O." A big change Block "O" is planning on implementing this year is the use of a huge Block "O" flag. At approximately 24' x 32', it will be similar in size to the flag Sam's Army unfurls at US National soccer team matches. The flag will be unfurled and held up over the heads of the students in the lower part of the Block as the team runs out onto the field before the game (it will not be used during the game). They already have the full support from the head of OSU's Game Day operations as well as the Athletic Department. They envision taking the flag on road trips, and then leaving the flag with the "Buckeye" organization for use for years to come. That being planned, the Block "O" Officers have decided to not use the caps again this year (didn't in 2002, either). They hope to use the flag as a "compromise" (some Officers wanted to do caps while others did not). However, they still have the caps should they decide they want to use them again (i.e., the did not throw them away).

For men's basketball, the OSU band has been moved to where hockey band usually sits, so students now have whole section. Block "O" will be selling tickets into that section (the "Buckeye NutHouse") themselves and they will be able to offer premier close-to-the-court seating based on the quantity of points Block "O" members have earned through their involvement in activities throughout the year (higher involvement = better seating).

In the next Block "O" Alumni Society Newsletter, we'll give a recap of the Block "O" First General Meeting!
Block “O” Memories
by
James B. Baer - BME 1969 - The Ohio State University
MBA - Management 1977 - University of Akron

Block “O” officer and chairman terms ran for a calendar year. The current year officers selected the officers and committee chairman for the following year at the end of the regular football season.

While I was in Block “O”, it was a completely student run organization. I never met or even saw our faculty adviser until my last year in Block “O” when I called him and insisted that he attend our annual after football season party for officers, chairman, and committee members. He was a wonderful guy.

We had an office in the Student Union with weekly organization meetings and Friday “stamping” parties during football season.

Stamping parties were when we got together to “stamp” the color that was to be held up for a certain seat, for a certain “flash”, onto a card. The color to be stamped was found on a stunt design sheet. The cards for a game were passed out by seat number and attached to the back of the cape of the person in front of you.

At some point, the Student Union had us change our office location. I helped clean out our old office and relocate into the new location. It was during this cleaning out move that I came across older Block “O” memorabilia. As there wasn't room for all of the old things in the new location, and most of the old items were going to be thrown out, I kept a bunch of it. In June of 2019, I mailed these long kept items to the OSU Archives at the suggestion of Sally Lanyon, co-parent of Brutus Buckeye.

1964

My freshman year at Ohio State I sat very low in the bleachers at the South end of the stadium. At that time the Block was in section 13A and freshman were not allowed in Block “O”. I do not recall seeing the Block flash and if I did see them flashing, I would not have been able to see what the designs were due to the Block’s location and the angle of my view.

One Spring quarter day while walking across the Oval, I was stopped by several students standing in a booth who asked me if I would like to join Block “O”. Having a few extra minutes before class started, I responded “What is Block “O”?”. They quickly explained. I asked what seats were available. They explained that they seated from the top down and you could sit with your friends if you went to the stadium with them. It sounded like a good deal to me and I signed up not really knowing what I was getting into.

1965 - Equipment Committee - President Doug Coatney

In the Fall, I attended the practice session before the first game. The Block President explained how the Block flashed and we practiced several stunts. Towards the end of the practice session, someone made the announcement that anyone who was interested in being on the Equipment Committee should go down front after the practice session. I figured that I would offer my help if not many others did, but if a lot of others showed up, I would just go back to my dorm room, have lunch, and go to the game. Not many others seemed interested, so I went down to check it out. I was handed a large red (Scarlet) Block “O” letter and told to go buy a white sweater and white pants, sew the letter to the front of the sweater,
and show back up at Section 13A an hour before the game was to start.

The equipment committee, I found out, was responsible for getting all of the flash card equipment out of the Block's storage room located in the stadium near 13A, moving it up to 13A, and distributing it onto the seats. The flash cards (consisting of five cardboard cards each with a different color on each side - ten colors total) and capes for each seat were in thick plastic bags and carried back and forth in big bags with handles. We placed card packets with white capes on white numbered seats and those with red capes on red numbered seat. The capes and painted seat numbers were in the design of the Block's permanent seating pattern of a Block “O”. We then assisted the Stunt Design Committee with distributing the games stunt cards for each seat. After half-time, the students would put their cards and capes back into the plastic bags and pass them to the aisle where the Equipment Committee would place them in the carry bags and take them to the storage room. When we weren't working, we could sit anywhere around the outside of the flashing part of the Block. I usually choose to sit up high for a better view.

Papier-mâché Brutus picture. My aunt had bought a new camera and gave me her old one (it really wasn't that old). I took a lot of pictures in those days and had them made into both regular pictures and slides (look it up if you are to young to know what a slide is). October 30, 1965 was to be Ohio State's Homecoming game versus Minnesota. Sounded like a good photo op to me so I took my camera along with me to the game. Wearing my Block “O” sweater, I gained easy access to the track around the football field and got pictures of the homecoming procession. I also happened to snap a picture of someone walking around with a big brown thing on that looked like a buckeye with eyes. This picture, according to Sally Lanyon, is the only surviving picture of the original Brutus Buckeye that has come forward to date. The picture appears on page 15 of Ray Bourhis and her book 'The Autobiography of Brutus Buckeye As Told To His Parents'. Why, one might ask, is this such a rare photo. Well, I have several thoughts. Not many people took their camera to football games, had access to the stadium track to get a close up picture, or knew what the big brown thing was or what it was to become. Not only did Ohio State not have a mascot at the time, the big brown buckeye did not even have a name. Also, according to Sally Lanyon, the pictures that she had were destroyed in a flood at the Pi Phi sorority house. Probably, the biggest reason was that the papier-mâché Brutus was not around that long. We played Indiana at home the following week after homecoming and per Sally the original papier-mâché Brutus most likely showed up. The next week we played Iowa, our last home game of the season, and a new, lighter weight, sturdier fiberglass buckeye took its place. The original papier-mâché Brutus was only around for two games! Per a Lantern article of Wed., Nov. 24, 1965, Brutus finally had a name: go.osu.edu/publicationarchives.

Woody Hayes. For me, Block “O”, Ohio State football, and Woody Hayes will always go together. While I never met Woody personally, I did see him off of the football field numerous times. For whatever reason, many of the guys from our Park Hall dorm floor would usually eat supper at a table on the second floor of the Baker Hall cafeteria just outside the football player's training table room. About once every week or so Woody would show up walking past our table. We would occasionally, in unplanned unison, say “Hi Woody”. Woody would, without skipping a step, wave and say “Hi boys”! My sophomore year, we had three freshman football players living at the end of our floor in Park Hall. Once a month or so, Woody would come up on our floor to check in on them. He would say “Hi” to everyone he passed walking down the hall. Once I noticed Woody walking towards me on the Oval. I said “Hi Woody”, he responded “Hi” back. My favorite football memory of Woody was at the January 1, 1969 Rose Bowl game. Woody charged down the field yelling at a ref after the ref called an incomplete USC pass into the end zone a touchdown. Needless to say, the call stood (no instant replay
in those days) and on his way back from the end zone, Woody kicked a side line marker about twenty feet into the air.

1966 - Equipment Chairman - President Ginny Kunert

I applied for and was chosen Equipment Chairman. There really wasn't that much for me to do at the weekly meetings or non football Saturdays.

Brutus joins Block “O”. During one of first meetings of the 1966 football season, one of the committee chairman asked, “Where is Brutus? I didn't see him at the game”. As the Equipment Chairman, I volunteered to find Brutus. I called the Pi Phi sorority house having heard that a lot of the cheerleaders were Pi Phi's and asked for the head cheerleader. Lucky, someone came to the phone and said “Hello”. I asked her if she was the head cheerleader and she responded in the affirmative. I explained who I was and asked her where Brutus was. She said in a stadium storage room. I asked her why Brutus was not at the last home game. She said that they (the cheerleaders) did not have anyone to carry him. I said that Block “O” had a lot of members and that we could probably find someone to carry him at the games. She said that would be great. We arranged to meet at the stadium and moved Brutus from their storage room to Block “O”'s. I asked one of my PI Kappa Alpha (Pikes) fraternity brothers, Tom Sherer, if he wanted to be Brutus. After a brief discussion, he agreed. As per an April 18, 1967 Lantern article, Tom enthusiastically enjoyed being Brutus. Per the same Lantern article, Brutus was not officially to become part of Block “O” until the following September (apparently there was some type of delay or mix up with the adoption papers). Al Kundtz, another Pike fraternity brother, became the first Block “O” Brutus Buckeye, complete with Committee Chairman status and a Block “O” Brutus sweater letter. Al's (along with others) Brutus Buckeye story can be read on Sally's Lanyon's Brutus Blog: https://thebrutusblog.com/2018/10/25/brtus1-alan-kundtz-1966-68/, and the Lantern's article of Nov. 10, 1967, 'Brutus Buckeye Learns To Smile'.

Rain. The worst thing that could happen during the first half of a football game was rain. I remember it happening at least once. We hurried to get the cards and bags down into the storage room, but everything got soaked! We had to pull all of the cardboard cards out of the bags and stand them on their edge to dry. We dumped water out from the plastic and carrying bags. What a mess! What a smell! The good news is that almost everything was salvaged.

Hang on Sloopy. Hang on Sloopy came out in 1964. For whatever reason, the song became a favorite of Block “O”, TBDBITL, and Buckeye fans in general (good beat and easy to dance to). Lots of times we would sing “Hang on Woody” or “Hang on Buckeyes” when the band played the song often at the Block's yelling at them 'Hey band, play Sloopy'.

Band picture. Someone came up to me one day and asked me if I knew that I was on the album cover of the band's new record 'Buckeye Battle Cry'. I did not know. Needless to say, I checked it out and sure enough, there I was. Sure, the band members are in the foreground with Block “O” behind them, you would have to know what I looked like back then, and you might need a magnifying glass, but I am on the album cover. I not only bought the record, but also the cassette tape and CD of 'Buckeye Battle Cry'. I have even told various people that I was a back up singer for an all brass band and am on their record album cover to prove it.

Clancy Isaac's Block “O”. On May 16, 1966 the Lantern published an article and picture of a big two
section Block “O”. The article talks about the Block's founder and former head cheerleader Clancy Isaac. I met Clancy on several occasions when he would return to Ohio State and lead the Block in a cheer. I always held my breath during his cheers fearing he might collapse from all the energy and effort he, at his age, put into the cheers! The Block was two sections big when Clancy first started it. I was told or read somewhere that sometime during WWII the Block was disbanded. After WWII when it was restarted, it was only at one half of its former self. The upshot of the article was that all of the Block officers and committee chairman wanted to expand the Block back to its two section size.

Block “O” Expansion. At a meeting of the Block “O” officers and committee chairmen it was decided to talk to the athletic department and request that the Block be allowed to expand to its former size from just Section 13A to Sections 13A and 15A. Our officers were told that we could not expand into Section 15A because of contractual agreements with other ticket holders, but that we could relocated to the North end of the stadium into Sections 1A and 2A. There was a lot of discussion, both pro and con, about expanding and moving the Block. The con involved mostly about the view from the end zone, moving away from the band, and the expense of buying more equipment for a bigger Block. The biggest pro's were a bigger Block, more people would be able to see the Block flash (especially the home side of the stadium), TV coverage, and freshmen could be in the Block. A vote was taken of all the officers and committee chairman. The decision to move and expand the Block was passed by one vote! A Lantern article on Nov. 7, 1966, 'Block “O” Card Section To Double Membership' made the announcement of the change. The view from the end zone, in my opinion, was better than the view that we had in 13A. In 13A you could not see what yard line the ball was on or holes open up when the teams were at the South end of the field. In Sections 1 and 2A we could almost always see the holes open up, but couldn't tell very easily what yard line the ball was on (the score board came in very handy for that). Someone once told me that about 60% of all scoring on average happens at the North end of the stadium.

1967 - Expansion Chairman - President Dianne Mason

Dick Larkins and George Staton. Dianne Mason and I met with Dick Larkins, Athletic Director, and George Staaton, Athletic Ticket Director, on several occasions to discuss and plan for the Block's move to Sections 1 and 2A. Mr. Larkins said that he preferred to meet with and talk to students way more than to preform his other duties or talk to other adults. He proved this several times in our meetings. Mr. Larkins was a pipe smoker and was always cleaning, filling, and in general fiddling with his pipe. Several times during our conversations, he would get a phone call from some alumni or politician seeking football tickets to a sold out game. He would answer the phone politely, talk briefly, say no several times, lay the phone down on his desk, talk to us, pick the phone up, say no several more times, repeat the process several more time, eventually end the conversation pleasantly, and continue our discussion. Just about everything that we asked for he agreed to, even, I believe, money for new equipment! Mr. Staton was the doer of the pair. He went to the stadium with us to look over our needs for the relocated Block. He had a platform built for the Block officers to stand on in front of the Block over the entrance way to the stadium between the two sections, provided electrical power and wiring for our PA system that was used to call stunts to the Block, wiring relocated for our spotter's communications with the Block from across from Section 13A to beside the Bell Tower in the South end of the stadium, and provided us with a different equipment storage room closer to Sections 1 and 2A, just to mention a few of the things that he did for us.

Other Expansion Items. A decision was made to switch to plastic flash cards so that we would have an “all weather” Block and less of a mess if we did get rained on. I had no idea where to get them. Lucky, one of the other committee chairman did. Another chairman had a connection with Coca-Cola and got
them to agree to furnish new capes. Seat cushions had to be obtained to fit in the aisle between the two sections so no gap would exist when we flashed. I have no memory of where we got them, possibly Mr. Staton took care of this item also. The seats had to have red or white numbers painted on them. Again, my memory fails me. I don't recall if the Block did the painting or Mr. Staton stepped in again and had it done. More plastic card and carry bags had to be purchased. I have no memory of who took care of these. The Stunt Design Committee also had a lot to do. A new Block layout had to be made and all new stunts designed. My favorite was Script Ohio which had over 100 calls.

Pike Fire Engine. At the end of one of our conversations with Mr. Larkins and Mr. Staton, we were asked if there was anything else. I hesitated and then asked if there was any place that our fraternity could park its fire engine near the stadium on game days. They both said sure. I was told that it should be parked on the walkway in front of St. John's arena! What a parking place. As I had to be at the stadium early, I never got to ride on the fire truck to a game, but a lot of my fraternity brothers did! I was told that a pledge who was not attending the game was usually put in charge of guarding the fire truck.

Transporting Brutus. As Sally and Ray mentioned in their book, transporting Brutus was not an easy task. Al and I solved this problem for us by him wearing Brutus and sitting behind the seats on top of the trunk of my MGB. We were in at least one night time prep rally parade in this configuration.

Baby/Mini Block “O”. I believe it was Leslie Howe of the Women's Recreation Association that came to one of our weekly Block “O” meetings and ask if their small basketball cheering section, which was located at mid court, could become part of Block “O”. My recollection is that she said they had problems at times filling their cheering section and they thought that with Block “O”’s size and support that they would be a stronger group. After some discussion, it was decided to incorporate their group into the Block. Leslie was appointed the committee chairman. A Lantern article on Jan 3, 1968 made the announcement that a Baby Block “O” would be flashing at the coming Saturday's Purdue basketball game. on Sat. Jan. 7, 1968. I don't remember the group being called the Baby Block “O”, I remember it being called Mini Block “O”. Either I remember it wrong, the Lantern got it wrong, or it was soon changed from Baby to Mini Block “O”. I do remember attending a least one basketball game and sitting with the group. What a great seat!

1968 - General Chairman - President Catherine Rieth

This was an easy year for me, I really don't remember having much to do.

Carrying Brutus. Before one game (I don't remember which one) either this year or the previous year, Al was late getting to the stadium. Brutus needed to make an appearance. I got some help and put Brutus on and went out for the flip of the coin. What a thrill! Later, I was told that I really did not make a good Brutus - too tall.

1969 - President

Rose Bowl trip. The Buckeyes won the Big Ten and were Rose Bowl bound, and I was selected President for the coming year. Late 1968 Lantern articles document the attempt we made to arrange Block “O” going to the Rose Bowl as a group. Our efforts were for naught, except Mr. Staton did arrange for Block members to purchase tickets and sit in the same area of the Rose Bowl.
Forgotten Brutus. Lantern articles, Sally and Ray's book, and Al Kundtz's Brutus Blog fairly well document Al's and my Forgotten Brutus episode. However, I believe, they all failed to mention several things. We all saw the picture of Brutus with a tear and note in the Lantern when we returned for classes after the Rose Bowl (in which the Buckeyes won, managed to squeezed the juice out of O.J. in the process, and were named national champs). Al and I got together and arranged to go out to the Columbus airport after classes to pick Brutus up. We searched high and low, but no Brutus. We finally figured out, or someone suggested to us, that someone from the Lantern probably took him back to campus after taking his picture. When we got back to the fraternity house, I called the Lantern and asked for the editor. The person who came to the phone claimed to be the editor, but said that they had no knowledge of where Brutus was. My temper was rising. I called their bluff accusing them of taking/stealing/kidnapping Brutus and I was going to call the campus police. They asked me to calm down and discuss the situation. They had obviously thought about this. Well, they said, they thought that they could get some good articles for the paper out of them holding Brutus for a ransom of a large quantity of student signatures wanting to get Brutus back. I hesitantly agreed. At the ceremony for the football players held in St. John's arena, we got Brutus back. The Lantern article below the picture of us getting Brutus back (I am actually on the left in the picture, not the right) stated that we had squirt guns with us to punish Brutus' kidnappers after we got him back. No crime should go unpunished! What they failed to mention was we also had Block officers, committee chairmen, and committee members covering all of the exits as they ran from us towards the exits. The kidnappers were duly soaked!

Computerized block. I hope I get this right, and have the right people and year. I believe it was the Stunt Design group lead by Rick Boggs (I believe Computer Science) and included Dave Harris and Richard Sell, who said that they could computerize the Block stunt designs to eliminate having to hand stamp the colors onto the seat flash instruction cards. Wow, no more stamping parties - go for it! They did as promised, however, the stamping parties morphed into cutting and stapling parties where we had to cut their computer printout sheets apart and staple the different stunts for each seat together. It was a big improvement and a time saver!

Band director. One Fall quarter evening while I was quietly studying, I got a phone call from the Ohio State Band Director. He explained who he was and then proceeded to tell me, in no uncertain terms, that Block “O” was not to flash any stunts again while the band was on the field! As I recall, we had flashed Script Ohio as the band performed it on the field. The band director indicated if we did flash again when the band was on the field, that I would not be graduating from Ohio State. Needless to say, I did not challenge his authority and the Block did not flash again when the band was on the field, at least not during my tenure as President.

Football tickets for Mom and Dad. I bought football tickets for my Mom and Dad hoping that they would get to see the Block flash and the organization that I was part of. Dad had attended Ohio State before WWII and had been to numerous games, but I wanted this game to be special for him because of my involvement with Block “O”. The only tickets that I could get were low in the South bleachers. Not really great seats for watching the football game, let alone seeing the Block flash. I did something that I never thought that I would do. I called Mr. Stanton and explained the situation to him. He listened patiently and told me to return to the ticket office with the tickets and additional cash to exchange my tickets for two others that would be waiting for me. I thanked him profusely. I did not look at the tickets to see where they were located and just handed them to my Dad knowing that the seats had to be better than what they had been. Dad said that the seats, near the 50 yard line on the home side, were the best seats he had ever had! Mom said the Block was also nice. I thanked Mr. Staton again. Wow, I thought, I might have a great connection with Mr. Staton for good tickets after I graduated. Both Mr. Staton and
Mr. Larkins retired within a year after I graduated.

Football players. I don't recall meeting any football players while in school except one, Rufus Mayes. His girl friend (and I believe later to be his wife) was a Block committee member and I met him one evening in the Block's office. He was an Ohio State offensive tight end and tackle, and stood 6'-6” tall. I was glad that I was in Block “O” and not a football player!

1970 and beyond.

After 15 years of requesting football tickets after graduation, I was eligible for and became a season ticket holder. The best game memories I have are those that I have spent there with our son (now also an Ohio State Alumni). His first game was against Penn State and Joe Paterno's worst whopping ever! He was only 9 years old at the time and fell asleep during part of the fourth quarter. At various games, we would go to the Block, introduce ourselves, and enjoy watching the game with the Block. We even sat in the flash part of the Block at least once. Flashing cards at a game was something that I never got to do while in school at OSU.

I used Lantern articles to get various dates and events correct. For any errors, slights, wrong person, incorrect memories, or omissions, I sincerely apologize. Please contact me to discuss any memories you might have and/or to correct any of mine.