

Buckeyes' offense having bad day(s)

By **RUSTY MILLER**
Associated Press Writer

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio State's offense is playing as if it's wading through three feet of mud on every play.

The line is barely slowing down onrushing defenders, the running game has vanished, there's no time to get a pass to the receivers and quarterback Steve Bellisari has spent more time laying on the ground than standing on his feet. On top of that, many fans are critical of the coaches' play-calling.

Why is the Ohio State offense so offensive?

"Everyone is a little frustrated right now, knowing that we're a better team than the way we're playing," fullback Matt Keller said. "We truly believe that."

Having lost two of their last three games heading into Saturday's showdown at No. 24 Minnesota, the No. 22 Buckeyes have to find some answers and find them fast.

Head coach John Cooper, offensive coordinator Mike Jacobs and quarterbacks coach Tim Salem all said the same phrase about what is holding the Buckeyes back: "It's a combination of things."

The line gave up eight sacks at Penn State as the offense mustered just three points in last week's 23-10 loss. The unit never drove inside the Penn State 29 the entire game. The only touchdown came on Gary Berry's fumble recovery in the end zone.

"Sometimes we didn't block the right guy," Cooper said. "Sometimes we blocked the right guy and got whipped."

Minnesota, by the way, leads the Big Ten in sacks.

"I'm sure after looking at our films they'll blitz even more," Cooper said. "They'll bring the kitchen sink against us."

Jacobs said there isn't much wrong with the line. He said the linemen aren't missing many assignments and they aren't making a lot of mistakes. He said the problems can be traced directly to Penn State's defense.

"Let me get something straight: we were OK with our protection

and pretty much on line up until last weekend," he said. "That doesn't mean we've had a problem through the first five ballgames or six ballgames. We had a problem last weekend."

Is it the running backs?

In the Buckeyes' two most recent losses, tailback Michael Wiley has totaled 54 yards on 19 carries, an average of 2.8 yards per try. Backups Jonathan Wells and Jerry Westbrook have combined for a net of two yards on eight attempts in those same two defeats.

There haven't been many big holes, but the backs haven't shown a knack for making any big plays either.

"Right now, we're just making a lot of mistakes," said Jamar Martin, who has taken over for Keller at fullback while an ankle injury mends. "Some of the things we go over in practice we miscue in the game. There are a few things that we don't see that we mess up on. Sometimes it might be the pressure some guys are feeling."

Is Bellisari running scared instead of running the offense?

The sophomore has excited a lot of Ohio State fans with his tough demeanor and fiery personality. But he is also making a lot of mistakes.

"Quarterbacks don't have the luxury of being good one play and bad the next," Salem said. "They have to be good every play. That's one thing that's slowing us down some on offense. ... I want to see more consistency than one great, great play and then five bad ones."

Ohio State has suffered 22 sacks so far, which would make any quarterback gunshy.

But Bellisari has shown little patience in the pocket, not throwing to secondary receivers to make wild jaunts up the field. Sometimes he's successful, sometimes he's not.

He has become the first quarterback to ever lead Ohio State in rushing in three consecutive games.

It remains to be seen whether that's a tribute to his running ability or if it just says something larger about the Buckeyes' offense.

Is it the play-calling?



Collegian Photo/J. Boyer

Ohio State quarterback Steve Bellisari is sacked in the Buckeyes' 23-10 loss Saturday to Penn State. The offense, which used to dominate the conference, is now described as dismal, but no one seems to know how the breakdown happened.

"We execute plays during the course of the week and we expect them to work on game day," Jacobs said.

But they haven't. Opponents have had more first downs than the Buckeyes in the last four games and in five of the seven games so far.

Asked who was to blame for any

miscommunications on the field, Cooper said, "Sometimes Steve might call the wrong play. Sometimes our offensive line may make the wrong call. I don't know."

"The coaches aren't out there on the field making those calls. I wouldn't get involved in it. Obviously, the ultimate responsibility comes back to us."

Ratliff out with injury in Sixers' preseason

By **KEN BERGER**
Associated Press Writer

PHILADELPHIA — Philadelphia 76ers power forward Theo Ratliff is out at least three weeks with a stress fracture in his left leg after taking a nasty tumble in a preseason game last week. The announcement came Monday night.

Ratliff, who got tangled up with Charlie Ward of the Knicks as both fell out of bounds last Tuesday, had the foot immobilized in a boot Monday after an MRI revealed the stress fracture in his tibia. Ratliff said the injury "definitely" happened on that play.

The Sixers, who entertained a half-filled First Union Center with a scrimmage Monday night, brought in newly-signed free-agent center Stanley Roberts for a workout, general manager Billy King said.

"I know this is something you have to deal with at times," said Ratliff, who was hobbled by a thigh bruise in the playoffs last season and sat out the fourth and final game of the second-round series against Indiana.

"I've been injured before," he

said, "but never to this extent."

The Sixers already are hindered by a rash of injuries. Matt Geiger sat out Monday night with a sore left knee, and Tyrone Hill was out with a fractured left thumb. Allen Iverson played with a sore knee, scoring 15 points including 10 of his team's 16 in the first half of the 20-minute scrimmage.

Iverson's team beat a squad featuring only two regulars, Larry Hughes and Aaron McKie, 37-36. Iverson's team included starters Eric Snow and George Lynch, Rowan Barrett and rookies Jumaine Jones and Todd MacCulloch.

MacCulloch, a 7-footer and second-round draft choice, was impressive again with six points and three blocks. But coach Larry Brown wants to add a veteran center, especially with Ratliff out.

Brown watched the scrimmage with King and team president Pat Croce while assistants John Calipari and Randy Ayers handled the coaching.

The Sixers had a moment of silence before the practice in honor of Wilt Chamberlain, who died last week.

Philly signs center Roberts

By **KEN BERGER**
AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA — Often-injured center Stanley Roberts signed a \$725,000, one-year contract with the Philadelphia 76ers on Tuesday.

Roberts worked out with the team Monday and passed two physicals. The 29-year-old is expected to provide help inside, where the Sixers are hindered by injuries to Matt Geiger, Theo Ratliff and Tyrone Hill.

Roberts, who played for Houston last season, canceled visits to Miami and Milwaukee, who also were looking for another big man.

The Sixers did not use their \$1 million exception on Roberts, a 7-footer who got the eight-year veteran's minimum. It is not all guaranteed.

General manager Billy King said Roberts would provide "added vet-

eran leadership to our young core of big men."

Roberts, who says he weighs 315 pounds, had the best year of his career with the Clippers in 1992-93 under the tutelage of current Sixers coach Larry Brown. He averaged a career-high 11.3 points and started 76 games.

But his lengthy list of ailments includes two ruptured Achilles' tendons, bone spurs in his ankles, back surgery and recent shoulder surgery.

"Playing for Larry was the high point of my career," Roberts said. "I know what he expects from me. He knows what I can do."

Brown said, "I like the kid. I want him in our league. If this is a good situation for him, good. But that's up to him."

The Sixers made an attempt to sign Roberts last year, but he chose to play for the Houston Rockets instead.

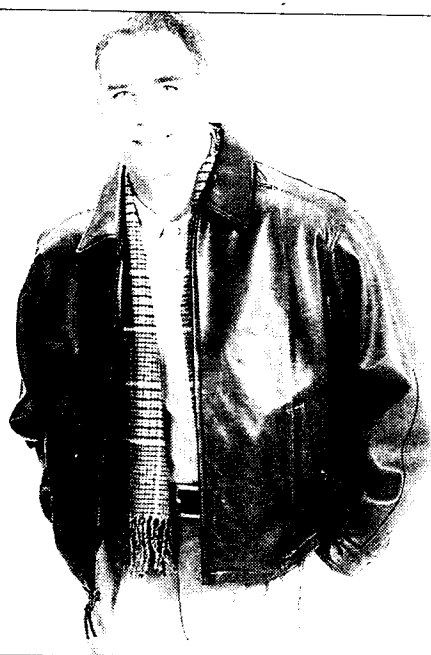
BRING IN YOUR EXTRA 20% OFF BONUS COUPONS!

GREAT FALL SALE STARTS TODAY

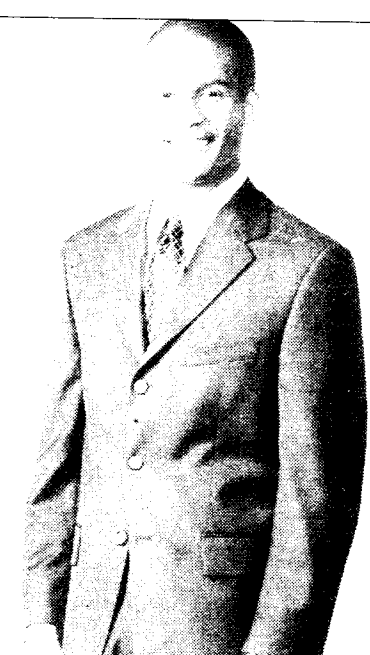
EXTRA HOURS TODAY AND THURSDAY 9 AM - 11 PM, FRIDAY 9 AM - MIDNIGHT



25-40% OFF ALL KNIT SHIRTS
INCLUDES ENTIRE STOCK MEN'S SPORTSHIRTS
SALE 14.99-32.99, orig. \$22-\$48.
From Brandini, Chereskin, Van Heusen, Izod, Arrow, John Ashford, Naturalife.



30-50% OFF ALL MEN'S OUTERWEAR
LEATHERS, WOOLS, RAINWEAR, TOPCOATS
SALE 44.99-349.99, orig. \$72-\$500.
From Brandini, John Ashford, Couture, Weatherproof, Andrew Fezza, London Fog.



33-40% OFF ALL FALL SUITS
ALSO: ALL LUXURY BLAZERS, SPORTCOATS, DRESS SLACKS
SALE 59.99-296.99, orig. \$80-\$495.
From Jones New York, Oscar de la Renta, Evan-Picone, Brandini, Andrew Fezza.



30% OFF VELVET DRESSES
AMANDA SMITH, BETSY & ADAM
SALE 49.99-125.99, orig. \$68-\$180.
The latest velvet drama. MISSES', PETITES', WOMEN'S.



25-30% OFF ALL KIDS' HOLIDAY DRESS-UP
BY BONNIE JEAN, RARE EDITIONS, BABY TOGS, GOODLAD
SALE 21.99-76.50, orig. \$32-\$102.
Also: Speechless, Christie Brooks. Infants', toddlers', boys' 4-7, girls' 4-16.

25% OFF ALL MEN'S SOFT TOUCH FLEECE FROM WINNERS TECH
SALE 27.99-39.99, orig. \$36-\$58.
Cozy, lightweight tops with zip, hoods, V-necks, crews and coordinated pants. Solids, patterns.

30% OFF ALL MEN'S SWEATERS FROM BRANDINI, LIBERTY JOHN ASHFORD, EMBASSY ROW
SALE 29.99-99.99, orig. \$43-\$150.

SALE 21.99 MEN'S DRESS SHIRTS ENTIRE STOCK ARROW WRINKLE-FREE
Orig. \$34-\$38. Plus save on entire stock Arrow Dover, orig. \$30-\$34, SALE 19.99.

SALE 29.99 ALL LEVI'S® silverTab® KHAKIS AND JEANS FOR YOUNG MEN
Orig. \$53-\$55. Cargos, carpenters, destructed and dark denim.

30-50% OFF ALL KIDS' PLAYWEAR FROM OSHKOSH, HEALTHTEX, 100 ACRE POOL, MICKEY & CO.
SALE 5.99-32.90, orig. \$12-\$47.
Also Barbie and Pokémon. Infants', toddlers', boys' 4-7, girls' 4-16.

SALE 29.99 DOCKERS® PREMIUM STONEWASH CANVAS PANTS FOR MEN
Orig. \$45. Plus entire stock men's Dockers khakis, orig. \$48-\$54, SALE 34.99-39.99.

SALE 24.99 HAGGAR PANTS WRINKLE-FREE TWILLS FOR MEN: PLEATED OR PLAIN FRONT
Orig. \$40. Plus entire stock pants from Hagggar, Savane and Original Khaki Co., orig. \$40-\$54, SALE 29.99-39.99.

SALE 79.99-99.99 MEN'S BOSTONIAN SHOES GREAT SAVINGS ON FAVORITE STYLES
Reg. 89.99-\$115. Oxford, tassel moccasin and buckle styles.

SALE 39.99-89.99 LADIES' BOOTS SKECHERS, SPORTO, CANDIE'S, MAINE WOODS
Orig. 49.99-\$110. Sporto Turner, Maine Woods Bounty, Candie's Sonoma and more.

30% OFF ALL COLD WEATHER GLOVES, HATS, SCARVES AND HEADBANDS FOR HER
SALE 7.99-44.99, orig. \$12-\$65. From Fownes, Ben Berger, V. Fraas, Everitt.
†Excludes Isotoner.

Not all names and styles in all sizes. USA Import. Regular and Original prices are offering prices only and may or may not have resulted in sales. Advertised merchandise may be available at sale prices in upcoming sale events. Intermediate markdowns may have been taken. Selection varies by store. Some sales in progress. **Deferred Billing available on your Kaufmann's charge for purchases of \$50 or more (S299 Fine Jewelry) with no finance charge during deferred period. See sales associate for details. Certain items excluded. Offer may end at any time. A.P.R. will be the same rate as you are currently billed. 21.6% 50 cent minimum.

CHARGE IT WITH KAUFMANN'S. WE ALSO WELCOME VISA, MASTERCARD AND DISCOVER.

KAUFMANN'S

THIS IS WHERE IT GETS GOOD

ORDER ANYTIME
CALL TOLL-FREE
1-800-927-3986