

Mayo's Return Keys Ohio Win

By PAT HANNA
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Mike Mayo of Steubenville returned an interception 23 yards for a touchdown midway through the fourth quarter and Ohio's defense moments later set up another score as the Buckeyes pulled away for a 22-6 victory over West Virginia Saturday night in the annual OVAC All-Star Charity Football Game at Wheeling Stadium.

Behind a solid defensive effort, Ohio won for the second straight year and extended its lead in the overall inter-state series to 21-18. The victory also snapped a 6-6 tie in the series since the OVAC assumed sponsorship of the game in 1972.

Ohio held West Virginia to 158 total yards and shut out the Mountaineers over the last 45 minutes of the game, although the Mountaineers did manage to make some offensive noise.

The Buckeye defensive effort was led by Winterville's Cecil Fletcher, St. Clairsville's C.J. Gross and Barnesville's Jeff Sawvel.

Mayo's interception return broke open a tight game and enabled Ohio to extend its lead to 14-6 with 5:22 left in the contest.

Faced with a third-and-17 from his own 18, West Virginia quarterback Matt Archer of Sistersville tried to hit Wheeling Park's Tom O'Connell on an out pattern to the right. But Mayo, bound for VMI to play football, timed it perfectly, stepping in front of O'Connell for the interception and racing untouched into the end zone.

Moments later, Archer was intercepted again, this time by Buckeye Trail's Dan Starr, and Ohio took over at midfield.

Led by the running of Jefferson Union's Bob Robinson, Cadiz's L.B. Brooks and Buckeye South's Jay Koprak, Ohio drove to paydirt again, but it took the Buckeyes three cracks from the 1 before Koprak went over to ice the game with 1:21 remaining.

Ohio had reached the West Virginia 35 in the third quarter and the Mountaineers got to the Buckeye 42 for their deepest second-half penetrations prior to Mayo's interception.

West Virginia had taken a 6-0 lead early in the first quarter on an 18-yard pass from Linsly's Brad Wilson to Sistersville's Jeff Evans after Joe Vincent of St. Clairsville, the starting Buckeye quarterback, fumbled the opening kickoff.

But Ohio drove 82 yards to take a 7-6 lead with 1:42 showing in the half on a 6-yard run by Robinson. Mingo quarterback Doug Karas, who directed the drive, kicked the go-ahead extra point.

Ohio finished with 167 yards rushing and 50 passing for a total of 217. The Buckeyes had 13 first downs, lost one of three fumbles and were penalized twice for 30 yards.

Koprak was the game's top rusher with 53 yards on 12 carries, while

Brooks added 46 yards on six carries. Karas completed 2 of 4 passes for 50 yards, while Vincent was 0 for 1.

West Virginia finished with 71 yards rushing and 87 passing. The Mountaineers had 10 first downs, did not lose a fumble and were flagged twice for a mere 10 yards.

Linsly's Jeff Crowell picked up 28 yards on 10 carries, while Wheeling Central's Keith Yoho added 25 yards on seven carries. Wilson was the top passer in the game, completing 8 of 11 for 57 yards.

West Virginia's fine defensive effort was led by Crowell and Brooke's Kevin Copenhaver.

The fans, an estimated 6,500 of them, had just settled into their seats when the first fireworks brought them to their feet.

Vincent, the deep return man, took Monte Summers' kick at his own 7 and headed up the right side. But Copenhaver, with a perfect pursuit angle, slammed into Vincent from the side, forcing a fumble which was recovered by Linsly's Pat Burke at the Ohio 29.

West Virginia didn't waste the opportunity. A four-yard pass from Wilson to O'Connell and runs of 2 and 5 yards by Crowell and Yoho moved the ball to the Buckeye 18.

Then, after an incomplete pass, Wilson hit Evans with a quick looking pass over the middle and the big tight end from Sistersville had an easy path to the end zone for the touchdown at the 9:57 mark of the first quarter.

The extra-point attempt by Weir's Summers, however, was wide right.

Ohio managed one first down on the ensuing possession, and West Virginia began another march, albeit longer than the first one. Behind the running of Yoho and Crowell and with Wilson completing two passes, the Mountaineers drove from their own 22 to the Ohio 33 before the march ended when Fletcher stopped a Wilson-to-Yoho pass for no gain.

Ohio then moved into West Virginia territory for the first time, at the outset of the second quarter, but Vincent was crunched while pitching the ball to Mayo on a third-down play and the ensuing fumble bounced back into Mountaineer territory before Vincent recovered the ball and was tackled at the 40 for a 16-yard loss.

West Virginia then moved to the Ohio 46 before punting to the Buckeye 18.

Karas then assumed control of the Ohio wishbone offense and directed it 82 yards to paydirt.

On first down from the West Virginia 29, Karas threw the ball deep to Buckeye North's Gary Tipton. The pass was underthrown, but the 6-3, 185-pound Tipton wrestled the ball from Sistersville's Scott Swisher for a 36-yard gain and a first down at the Mountaineer 35.

A 13-yard run by Brooks advanced

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the ball to the 20, and a back screen from Karas to Robinson was good for 14 yards and first-and-goal at the 6.

On the next play, Robinson took a pitchout left, picked up a key block from Barnesville's Bob Shepherd and found the front corner of the end zone for the touchdown.

Karas' conversion kick gave Ohio a 7-6 lead with just 1:42 left in the half.

Wilson completed 7 of 10 passes in

the first half for 47 yards. Yoho was West Virginia's top rusher in the opening 24 minutes with 20 yards on four carries.

Mayo picked up 20 yards on three carries in the first half to lead Ohio.

There were no penalties in the first half.

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|--|---|---|---|----|---|----|
| Ohio | 0 | 7 | 0 | 15 | — | 22 |
| West Virginia | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | — | 6 |
| WV—Evans, 18, pass from Wilson (kick failed) | | | | | | |
| O—Robinson, 6, run (Karas kick) | | | | | | |
| O—Mayo, 20, interception return (Karas kick) | | | | | | |
| O—Kopral, 1, run (Brooks run) | | | | | | |