

W. Va. Nips Ohio In Thriller

Wilson Sparks Mountaineer Ground Game

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In a battle that featured more wists than a bag of Bavarian pretzels, the West Virginia All-Stars survived a last-gasp effort by Ohio for a 26-20 victory in Saturday night's OVAC-sponsored Charity All-Star Football Game at Wheeling Stadium. A fine crowd, estimated to be well in excess of 6,000, jammed into the stadium facility to see the Mountaineers grind the Buckeyes down with a punishing ground game featuring Kennedy Award-winner Joel Wilson from Sistersville.

Last night's drama-filled battle gave West Virginia a 7-7 tie with the Buckeyes since the OVAC took over sponsorship of the game. In the overall series, Ohio which had won the previous two years, still holds a 1-19 margin.

Trailing 12-7 going into the second half, the opportunistic Mountaineers, coached by Bishop Donahue's Rick Lake, scored following a fumbled punt, a 47-yard return of an interception by Mike "Motor" Griffin of Wheeling Park, and an errant pitch-it to take a seemingly-commanding 19-12 lead with just 9:58 to play.

But the Buckeyes of Coach Bob Eaton (Bellaire St. John's Central), who had three touchdowns called back because of penalties, took advantage of some breaks themselves to get back into the football game.

With less than six minutes to play, Ohio forced the Mountaineers into a punting situation at their own 15. Andy Schumacher, stellar defensive lineman from Woodsfield, broke through to block the punt and then, with the pigskin still rolling free in the end zone, Schumacher fell on it for the touchdown. River's Perry Raper came on to boot the extra point, cutting the deficit to 23-23 with 3:13 left.

In the very next series, the Buckeyes forced a fumble by Troy Law as John Local's Luke Gallow made the interception and Gary Della Penna, Wintersville, fell on the pigskin at the eight-yard line, setting up what appeared to be an easy scoring chance.

In first down, Steubenville's Todd Kelley broke free around right end and went in untouched but an illegal procedure penalty wiped out the apparent six-pointer.

Earlier, two Ohio would-be touchdown aeriels to Steubenville speeds-wagon John Murray, of 33 yards and 38 yards, were wiped out — one because of a holding penalty while the other was ruled an illegal forward pass as Bellaire's Scot Maffe, scrambling to get away from the defense, had slipped across the line of scrimmage before cutting loose with the pass. Then Kelley's TD was erased, Ohio

was set back to the 13. Three plays could advance the ball only four yards from there and Raper was called on to boot a potential game-winning field goal.

The ball was set down at the 15, but the 25-yard attempt sailed wide to the left and West Virginia took over with a little more than two minutes to play and the Buckeyes out of time outs.

Ohio did manage one more possession, but Jason Nixon intercepted Maffe's pass at the West Virginia 15 with only five ticks remaining to end the game.

The Mountaineers started the second half from the 10 when Weir's Dave Shall mishandled the kickoff and was swarmed over at that point as he finally got control of the football.

West Virginia moved out to the 40, but had to punt. Tennant got off a 47-yard boot that St. John's Central's Paul Johnson fumbled away and Tim Lemasters of Tyler covered for the winners at the 11.

On third and one from the two, Wilson, the 1984 high school football player of the year in West Virginia and the all-star game's leading rusher with 83 yards on 27 carries, followed blocks by Wheeling Park's Mike Lucey and Wheeling Central's George Strauss to hit paydirt.

The Mountaineers resorted to trickery on the extra point, lining up eight men to one side of the center, kicker and holder.

Nixon, the holder, took the snap and raced around right end, hurdling an Ohio defender for the two points and a 15-12 lead.

After Ohio was forced to punt on the ensuing possession, the Buckeyes suddenly flashed back ahead again when Wintersville's Don Vandeborne stepped in front of a Mike Tennant pass at the Buckeyes' 34 and took off on a 66-yard interception return to make it 18-15. Raper added the PAT for a four-point bulge with 3:02 left in the quarter.

Just before the end of the third stanza, with Ohio at its own 32, QB Kelly Burdge, of Wintersville, threw away a pitchout, and the ball was scooped up on the bounce by Wheeling Central's Tom Seamon, one of the game's defensive stalwarts.

Seamon caught up to the leather at the 16 and was finally brought down at the six by the distraught Burdge.

Just 37 seconds into the fourth quarter, Shall, the second man through, took a handoff from Tennant and followed Wilson into the end zone from the three. Chris Hutter's placement made it 22-19.

Maffe returned to quarterback the Bucks in the fourth quarter, but had little success. After going four of five in the opening half for 53 yards and one touchdown, he misfired on his

last seven attempts and two were picked off.

The first INT dealt a costly blow to Ohio's chances. Griffin made the interception at the West Virginia 48 and executed a nice cutback move to get free, racing 48 yards before finally being hauled down at the Ohio four.

Law needed just two carries to score, going off tackle on the second thrust from the two. Johnson blocked the extra point try, but WV had a nine-point bulge.

Ohio scored first and last in the opening half to take a 12-7 lead but the advantage could have been higher save for the holding call on the second possession that wiped out the apparent 33-yard TD strike from Maffe to the mercury-footed Murray.

Maffe directed the Buckeye offense with alacrity in their opening foray, a 70-yard scoring surge that required 13 plays and a crucial fourth down completion of 20 yards from Maffe to his long-time high school rival, Martins Ferry tight end Tom Kotopka.

The Buckeyes appeared stopped on the 31 after Seamon had sacked Maffe for a four-yard loss but the 6-5 Kotopka broke free along the left sideline and turned up in front of two West Virginia defenders to make a head high catch for the first down at the 11.

Strauss stopped Kelley for no gain on first down but the very next play saw Maffe, who had displayed his scrambling ability several times in the drive, avoid the rush long enough for Raper to break free in the left corner of the end zone.

The fleet wideout made the catch for the score but Vandeborne was wide on the placement attempt, leaving the Bucks six ahead with 5:19 remaining in the period.

West Virginia, which was stopped on its first series by a Tennant interception, got going after a fine defensive play by Weir's Dan McGrew and Brooke's Ron Lyle stopped Murray a yard short of a first down on an end-around play at the Mountaineer 25.

Wilson, who gained 43 of his yards on 14 first-half carries, toted the ball nine times and Weir's Dave Shall had five carries for 28 yards to lead a methodical 75-yard, 16-play drive.

Tennant made a key contribution when he teamed with Magnolia's Bruce Frye for an 18-yard gain on a third-and-nine play for a crucial first down at the WV 44.

Early in the second quarter Shall picked up 17 yards on back-to-back carries to move the ball to the 19. The bone-crushing Wilson got the call on three of the next four plays and

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# W. Virginia Shades Ohio

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struck paydirt when, on third down from the two, he drove off the left side and ducked under the hulking Della Penna to knot the score.

Hutter toed the extra point and it was 7-6 West Virginia with 8:50 remaining in the half.

With the Mountaineers on the move once more later in the half, an offensive pass interference call on Tyler's Scott Lash wiped out a Tennant completion inside the Ohio 30.

That proved to be a critical error as the ball was moved back to the West Virginia 40 and, on second and 25, Tennant hurried his pass in the face of a heavy rush only to see it picked off by Paul Johnson — the smallest man on either side — at the Ohio 42. The Irish "smurf" brought it all the way back to the Mountaineer 30.

Burdge took over the helm for the Ohioans in the second quarter and, with the excellent field position, he took just four plays to move the Buckeyes into the end zone.

Emilio Traversa, the St. John's three-year ace, took a screen pass from the Ohio QB and found some running room along the sidelines, picking up 19 yards to the 17.

Kelley got four to the 13 and Burdge then located Bellaire's Todd Kinder behind three defenders in the end zone. Kinder made a diving catch for the score with only 53 seconds remaining before halftime.

An attempted two-point conversion pass from Burdge to Kotopka fell incomplete at the back of the end zone and the first half ended with Ohio on top, 12-7.

Statistically, the Mountaineers had the edge on the ground, racking up 175 yards on 51 rushes. Behind Wilson's 83 were Shall with 56 and Law with 34. Tennant, who was plagued by the interception also, was three for nine for 36 yards. Three of his attempts wound up in Buckeye hands. Both teams ended with 12 first downs.

Ohio finished with a net of 82 yards rushing, Kelley accounting for 75 on 13 carries. Aerial-wise, Maffe and Burdge were nine for 20 for 110 yards. Murray, who had been expected to dominate the Mountaineer secondary, has just two catches that counted, good for 13 yards.

But his two TD grabs that were erased by penalty, left little doubt about the ability of the Buckeye split end. On his first-quarter catch, the invited Pitt walk-on blew by the defense and was wide open as he crossed the goal line to grab the 33-yard Maffe aerial.

In the fourth quarter, he was seemingly covered like a blanket by Nixon just inside the five, but somehow stepped in front of the stunned defender and leaped high to make the grab before turning and going in again, only to see another red flag come down to wipe out the play.

Ohio 6 6 7 7 — 26  
West Virginia 0 7 8 13 — 28  
OH—Raper 11 pass from Maffe (kick failed)  
WV—Wilson 2 run (Hutter kick)

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Ohio	6	6	7	7	26
West Virginia	0	7	8	13	28

OH--Raper 11 pass from Maffe (kick failed)  
WV--Wilson 2 run (Huffer kick)  
OH--Kinder 13 pass from Burdge (pass failed)  
WV--Wilson 2 run (Nixon run)  
OH--Vandeborne 66 int. return (Raper kick)  
WV--Shall 2 run (Huffer kick)  
WV--Law 2 run (kick blocked)  
OH--Schumacher recovered blocked punt in end zone (Raper kick)