

Ohio Holds Off W. Va. In Defensive Battle

By JOE MYERS
The Intelligencer Staff

Wouldn't you know it?
Two teams carrying enough offensive firepower to make Ollie North snap to attention battled to a hard-hitting, 13-11 final at Steubenville's sweat-drenched Harding Stadium, where the Ohio stars outlasted West Virginia Friday night in the 15th annual Rudy Mumley-OVAC Charity Football Classic.

The game was well-played and draining—both physically and emotionally—but it did not live up to the high-scoring hijinx that the crowd of an estimated 8,000 had come to witness.

Oh sure, the St. Clairsville tandem of fullback John Spencer and quarterback Shawn Vincent rambled for 100 yards apiece and took turns on dazzling forays into West Virginia's secondary. And, yes, Winterville's Kevin Wesley squeezed 52 yards out of just eight carries, with Ohio linemen Bill Longenecker of Martins Ferry and Bryan Ramsay of Bellaire acting extremely offensive to the gentlemen across the line.

But when all was said and done, it was Ohio's defensive unit that had last laugh in a game which had had football fanatics giggling in anticipation of Arenaball-like scoring.

The Mountaineer squad managed just 60 rushing yards on 31 attempts, and quarterback Jeff Switzer from Brooke accounted for just 97 total yards, a mere puddle next to his sea of past glories.

Ohio Coach George Strager

couldn't believe his force unit fared so well against West Virginia's haul-S (Switzer, Swisher, Shook) backfield. "No, I really didn't expect it," said the veteran St. C. "They've got so many weapons."

Coach Terry Depew's squad had the first possession and immediately started probing the right side behind Weir tackle Rick Stead, a West

Virginia U. recruit. Ohio stacked each and every attempt, however, as end Keith Gunn of Cambridge held his ground while tackle Bryam Ramsay of Bellaire handled the finishing touches.

Steubenville linebacker Perry Jeter and Steubenville Central DE David Walkosky, each treading on familiar turf, made their presence

felt early on, as well.

The Mountaineers created the game's first break when John Marshall safety Mark Wilson caused a fumble after Wesley's nine-yard run, and watched as teammate Scott Holmes of Tyler pounced on it at the Buckeye 31.

Switzer's pass to Weir TE Rob Konnovitch was dropped, thanks to

some heavy-handed encouragement by St. John's safety Al Donahue, and John Marshall fullback Alex Shook managed just three yards on a dive play. Sisterville tailback Jeff Swisher, harried all evening by Ohio's intimidators, was dropped for a one-yard loss on third down.

After an exchange of possessions, Ohio embarked on the first scoring

drive of the game. Vincent, perhaps the only breeze to stir Harding Stadium's tropical 90-degree air, dashed 45 yards on first down to put the ball inside the W. Va. 30. He had created an opening with a slick fake to Wesley, who was drilled by DE Shook, then sidestepped an "oh-excuse-me" tackle at the 40 before finally selling at the 28.

After two runs netted 12 yards, Wesley followed right guard for a nine-yarder to the six. Spencer got the call on the next play and hesitated just long enough to bowl over Wilson before hurdling the goal line. Ramsay's kick at 4:14 made it a 7-0 game.

West Virginia answered with a drive of its own. Switzer picked up 20 yards on a nifty scramble, and later hit Konnovitch over the middle for 11 more, making it 1st-and-10 at the 16. But Walkosky blew in for a 12-yard sack on the next play and West Virginia could not overcome.

The Mountaineers' next series got off to a sizzling start when Swisher, on West Virginia's maiden voyage to the left side, streaked the sideline for 33 yards. It was vintage Swisher, but the only time he could expose it to fans at Harding. After a couple more big blows from Ohio's defenders, Swisher's steps grew more tentative.

Swisher's run put his crew on the Ohio 28, and when Switzer hit Konnovitch on a 10-yard out pattern—Switzer's sixth straight completion—the visitors had a 1st-and-10 on the 17. Mike Coss got three yards on a reverse, then Coach Depew opted for a pass.

Switzer, after a lengthy survey of the secondary, lobbed one into the left corner of the end zone toward Brooke's acrobatic Jack Shaffer. It appeared Shaffer had hauled in the pass, but the official, standing right over the receiver, didn't see it that way.

"Hell yes I had it," Shaffer said later. "It was this far up (holding his hands a foot off the ground). I looked up and saw him doing this (signaling incomplete) and said, 'Oh my God.' I started crying when he did that."

The third-down pass fell incomplete, but West Virginia didn't come away empty. Switzer split the crossbars on a 31-yard field goal attempt, slicing the margin to four points at 5:27. It was the last scoring threat in the half.

Ohio had the first shot at goal after intermission, and Spencer got into gear with a first-down carry of 20 yards which halted by the TD-saving hit from Magnolia star Jeff Frye. West Virginia stiffened, though, and Ohio went for it on 4th-and-2.

Vincent went right on an option play and, with all the effort he could muster, dove for the flag in unison with three defenders. (He actually wiped out a cheerleader, then paused to lift her to her feet.) A measurement at the W. Va. 22—with referee Paul Vargo using a piece of paper for accuracy—halted the Buckeye drive.

West Virginia couldn't move the ball, though, and the hosts, the furies

West Virginia attempted an on-side kick and, after a scramble, unpiled as St. C.'s Brad Swan and Buckeye North's Rich Hazlett danced to the sideline, football in hand. It was all over.

Ohio now leads the overall series 23-19 and, since Ohio Valley Athletic Conference sponsorship, 9-7. The Buckeyes have captured four of the last five games and eight of the past 10.

Defensive standouts for Ohio included Gunn, Ramsay, Jeter, Walkosky, Thompson and linebacker Spike Johnson of St. Clairsville.

West Virginia received high-grade defensive efforts from Frye, Shook, Brooke tackle Don Koscevic, and Brooke linebacker Mike Gindling. And Holmes, the smallest player on the field at 140 pounds, was sent to his back several times, but his speed was vital to holding Ohio to just two scores.

The Buckeyes gained 294 yards on 50 rushing plays and totally disdained the pass (Vincent, who had an injured right shoulder, was 0-for-1).

On the flip side, West Virginia had 182 total yards and managed just three first downs in the second half.

The jury is no longer out — this case was too persuasive for the defense.

West Virginia 13
Ohio 11
O—Spencer 20 run (Ramsay kick)
W—Switzer 21 field goal
O—Spencer 1 run (run failed)
W—Swisher 1 run (Coss run)

After three short rushes, Strager called on the open-field talents of Wesley. The Winterville ace, who missed most of his senior season because of injuries inflicted in an auto accident, went straight ahead for nine yards and bounced off Wilson, then looked for daylight. He found it, but was hauled down from behind by the fleet Holmes. The 41-yard gainer put Ohio in business at the W. Va. 25.

Vincent and Spencer alternated carries. Vincent, who is quick as a wish, makes linebackers look bad. Spencer, who delivers more hits than he receives, makes linebackers feel bad. West Virginia felt their worse after Spencer's one-yard plunge behind tackle Ray Harbert made it a 13-3 game at 5:46 in the fourth. Vincent attempted a naked bootleg for two, but Linsly's Jay Davis wasn't fooled.

West Virginia couldn't get a first down on its next possession, and things looked pretty bleak when Toronto's Phillip Thompson tracked down Switzer for a 31-yard sack.

"I'm tired, very tired," was all Thompson could choke out when he returned to the sideline.

Ohio, after a punt, turned the ball over on a poor exchange in the backfield, and Weir's Stead recovered.

Depew reached into his playbook and came up with a fake-reverse flea-flicker, which went 45 yards from Switzer to Shaffer. Swisher's second stab into the line was successful—barely—to pull W. Va. to within four points once more.

Depew opted for more razzle-dazzle on the two-point attempt, and instructed Mike Coss of Linsly to throw the ball. The determined Coss had other plans, and dove head-first into the right corner for the conversion at 1:44.

Fans invited to spend 'Evening With Stars'

"An Evening With the Stars" involving Ohio Valley residents, has been initiated this year as a community show of appreciation to the players and coaches for the Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Game.

Through this event, coaches and athletes will be guests of area residents, wishing to be sponsors, at dinner Wednesday, July 22, at the Esquire Supper Club. This is just two nights before the game itself.

Total cost of being a host is \$50 for each sponsor, and this includes get-acquainted beverages as well as two dinners, one for the sponsor and the other for the All-Star, at the Esquire.

"We feel 'An Evening With the Stars' will be very beneficial to both athletes and sponsors, in that new friendships will be made and experiences shared," said Pete Cuffaro, dinner chairman. Cuffaro, Bob Burke and James Raies are coordinating the new event.

All funds earned from the All-Star Classic are 100 percent contributed to local charities.

Explaining the arrangements, Cuffaro said, "As a sponsor, you will meet your All-Star for the evening at the Esquire Supper Club at a 6:30 p.m. reception, with dinner being served promptly at 7:30 p.m., so that the coaches and their athletes can be back on their buses no later than 10 p.m.

Those interested in signing up for "An Evening With the Stars" are to send a \$50 check to Pete Cuffaro, OVAC All-Star Charity Football Game, 502 Richland Ave., Wheeling, W. Va. 26003.

Prior to July 22, each sponsor will be told the name of his dinner guest.

Anyone wishing further information may call Cuffaro, 242-2959, or James Raies, dinner co-chairman, of the Osiris Shrine Temple at 695-1156.

Sparkling Defensive Plays Frustrate All-Star Offenses

By DON CLEGG
News-Register Sports Writer

Although Friday night's Rudy Munkley Ohio Valley Athletic Center once Charley All-Star Football Game fell short of reaching the promoter's goals, there was no shortage of excitement in what many observers felt was perhaps the best of the 18 OVAAC mid-summer soccer games.

The final score was only 13-11 in favor of the ultra-talented Buckeye but each team could easily have approached the 30-point mark on the stony Harding Stadium turf had it not been for several sparkling individual defensive efforts.

Following Ohio's first score on a awe-inspiring 71-yard, free-play drive, West Virginia appeared ready to answer as Brooks quarterback Jeff Brubaker lined up on first downs at the Buckeye 18 but Stumbeville Catholic defensive back Doug Walkesky sacked Brubaker at the 28 on the next play, breaking the momentum.

Sistersville's Jeff Swisher, searching in vain for running room most of the night, popped outside and appeared bound for glory but was tripped out of bounds 20 yards later by St. Clairsville's John Al Domanian and St. Clairsville's Sparty Johnson. West Virginia's Phil Thompson, who picked up over 80 yards before

the seemingly-irreparable interim time, saw two promising drives cut short by Buckeye fumbles thanks to some thunderous stunts from the gun.

King West Virginia star Vance Gendling was the usual number of three yards on third-and-two with 31 seconds left.

"I never thought we'd be able to keep their backfield in check as well as we did," said Stricker afterward. "We had some problems getting our offense together because the kids I was sending in with the plays weren't real familiar with our terminology but we really did a job defensively. Walkesky enjoyed an incredible first half on defense with six tackles to go along with his crucial sack while Stumbeville's Perry Jeter led Ohio with eight tackles on the night.

Thompson's Phil Thompson was especially impressive at defensive end with five tackles and a 31-yard sack of Swisher.

"What we were worried about," admitted Buckeye assistant Russ Gregas and Mike Young, "was having our kids get too concerned with their (West Virginia's) deep passes and outside running and getting stuck in the back of the field."

"We decided to stick the middle in take that away from them and take a chance on reaching well enough to the other staff and it worked out well."

West Virginia coach Terry Dewey was equally proud of his defensive group but was frustrated that his offense didn't get many second-half opportunities.

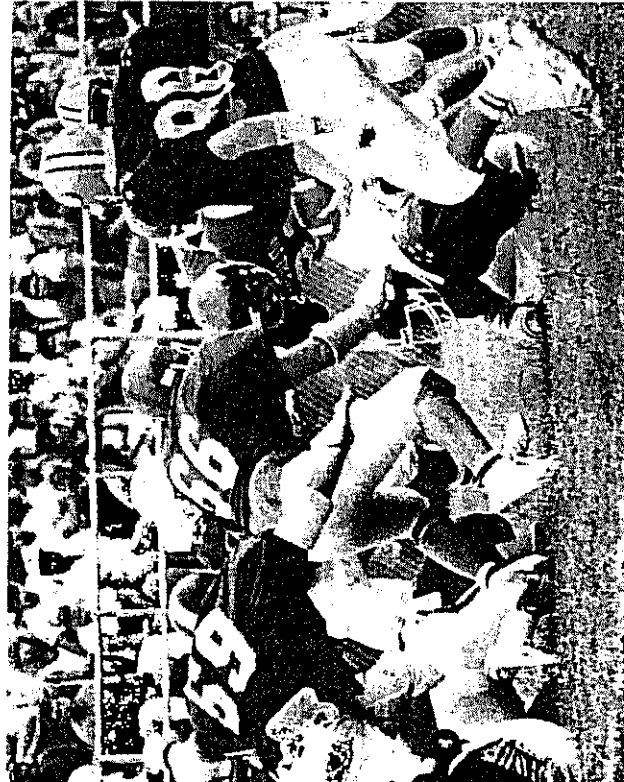
"We opened the game with our defense trying to 'read,'" said Dewey, "but that gave their line too much of an advantage so we started shoddy people which enabled us to force some mistakes."

"We came in at halftime feeling that our offense would be able to move against them and then only had the ball once in the third quarter."

"That flea flicker was there the whole game," Dewey continued, "and we were looking for a chance to use it. We just didn't get a shot until late in the game."

Gendling was a key man in the Buckeye defense as he picked up a game-high 18 tackles while fellow Brains Don Kocerovic and Lashley's Robb Cook each were charmed with some steps. Frye was impressive with several open-field hits and finished with seven tackles as well as first

with the field-level temperatures still in the 80's at kickoff time, the game developed into a testimonial to the players' conditioning.



observed by Brookline receiver Jack Stauffer (88) — as Wheeling Central lineman Chris Kulevitch (89) peels back too late to aid his ball-carrier while Padon City's Mike Kirley is on the turf at Swisher's feet trying to get back in the action. The Mountaineer stop troops also turned in a yeoman-like effort but Ohio fought off a late West Virginia surge to claim a 13-11 triumph.

(Photo by Mike McNeil)

The defense never rested for Ohio Friday night at Harding Stadium as scores like this were the order of the day for Sistersville's Jeff Swisher (with ball) and his West Virginia mates in the 19th Rudy Munkley OVAAC Charley All-Star Football Game. Here Swisher is hemmed in for a loss by three Buckeye defenders — Stumbeville's Paul Pyle (89), St. Clairsville's Sparty Johnson (white helmet on Pyle's left), and Thompson's Phil Thompson (behind Swisher but

Vincosa was out for one play early in the game after taking a hard shot to his right shoulder but quickly returned to the Ohio trenches reported only the usual number of bumps and bruises.

West Virginia had Wheeling Central back John Waterhouse, who re-injured the shoulder that had forced him to miss much of his senior season, but the rest of the squad emerged largely unscathed.

The victory was the second straight for the Buckeye All-Stars and their fourth in the past five years as they increased their margin to 4-7 since the OVAAC took over sponsorship of the bi-state war in 1972.

Spencer, Vincent, Wesley key Buckeye offense

Thompson's 'hit' called turning point in Ohio win

BY RICH GIBSON
Times-Leader Sports Writer

Phillip Thompson took out his frustrations on Jeff Sweitzer and in the process, produced what Ohio coach George Strager called the turning point of Friday night's Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Game as Ohio defeated West Virginia, 13-11, at Steubenville's Harding Stadium.

Thompson, the three-sport athlete at Toronto High, had hoped to play a bigger offensive role for the Buckeyes.

But with the likes of Shawn Vincent, John Spencer and Kevin Wesley in the backfield, Thompson was forced to seek out the spotlight elsewhere.

Spencer had just provided the Ohioans with a 10-point cushion in the game's final six minutes and Sweitzer was under the gun to rally the Mountaineers.

From the W. Va. 39-yard line, consecutive pass attempts missed the mark setting up a third and 10 situation.

Sweitzer retreated, looking for Bruin teammate

Jack Shaffer or giant Weir target Bob Konnovitch.

Suddenly, Thompson shot through the line with an all-out assault on the Bruins' all-state signal-caller.

A determined Thompson chased down the scrambling QB like a starving coyote pursuing a helpless rabbit.

Some 30 yards later, Thompson's RoboCop exploits had resulted in a 30-yard sack forcing a Mountaineer punt.

Although the Bucks would turn it over three plays later on a fumble, Strager felt Thompson's heroics were crucial.

"You have to look at that play as the turning point," Strager noted. "Did you see the way the kid was sprinting after him? That was impressive."

Thompson, headed for Kent State this fall, was excited about his contributions.

"Yeah, I was disappointed about not getting an opportunity to carry the ball a little more, so I guess it made me more determined on the defensive side," Thompson said. "At halftime, the coaches told us to concentrate on getting to the quarterback. I thought we responded well in the second half."

Thompson was credited with two sacks, totalling 33

yards.

Strager admitted surprise with the outcome in terms of offensive production, but noted, "I've said it before, offense puts people in the stands, but defense wins ball games."

The Bucks were able to break off four of five big gainers, but for the most part, an underrated West Virginia defense rose to the occasion.

"Overall, I thought we held our own pretty well," said W. Va. coach Terry Depew of Linsly. "They (Ohio) were quicker than us up front, but we certainly didn't back down from anyone."

When Weir's Rick Stead pounced on a loose ball with 3:06 remaining, Depew immediately called for a triple handoff and "Hall Mary" pass play that his club executed flawlessly.

The play went from Sweitzer to Sistersville's Jeff Swisher, to Linsly's Mike Coss, who in turn handed back to Sweitzer for a 45-yard connection to Shaffer at the Ohio 1-yard line.

Two plays later Swisher was in for the score at the 1:44 lighting. Coss' option run made it a two-point deficit.

"We put that play in Tuesday and worked on it

twice a day," Depew related of the Mountaineer razzle-dazzle tactics. "At that point, we had to go with the clock running down."

West Virginia then nearly executed a perfect side kick, but St. Clairsville's Brad Swan made critical recovery.

"It (kick) was up for grabs," Depew said thought we had a legitimate shot at it."

"We knew it was coming," Swan noted. "It to wicket hop. I was just thrilled to be part of it."

Needing but one first down to wrap it up, called on hard-running John Spencer, who stole for the clincher in the final ticks.

The Ohio-State bound ex-Red Devil ended as game's leading rusher with 103 yards on 19 carries. He blasted in for both Buckeye scores.

Vincent accounted for 95 yards in 21 carries and Wesley made excellent use of his eight totes in stripes, including a 41-yard scamper.

Sweitzer hit on 9-of-18 passes for 115 yards. Konnovitch combined for six receptions totaling 100 yards.

Ohio showed a 14-10 edge in first downs.