

# OVAC urged to declare 1992 game 'no contest'

By RICH GIBSON  
Times-Leader Sports Writer

Put an asterisk next to the 1992 OVAC All-Star Football Game.

That's what game director Rudy Mumley told a post-game reception following Sunday night's washout on

Wheeling Island.

"No one feels as badly about this as I do," Mumley remarked at the "Fifth Quarter," the traditional social for coaches and game officials at the Osiris Temple in Elm Grove.

"We made a decision we felt necessary to ensure the safety of everyone concerned," Mumley continued. "I just wish the score could have been 7-7."

Ohio coach Chuck Bizzari of Cadiz, whose team was a 7-6 leader when a thunderstorm halted play, offered a suggestion.

"I would urge the OVAC to label this a suspended game and not declare a winner," he commented. "The game just wasn't finished."

Linsly's Terry Depew, the West Virginia coach, expressed similar disappointment.

"It was an empty feeling for all of us," he remarked. "Going back into our lockerroom and informing my players of the decision was the hardest thing I've ever had to do in coaching."

Lightning and unrelenting rain halted play midway through the second period. After a 30-minute wait, officials deemed conditions unworthy to continue.

The start of Sunday's 21st annual OVAC contest had earlier been delayed one hour because of a pre-game cloudburst.

"(It) was out of the control of anyone," Depew related. "It was especially tough for the kids to handle when we had to cancel, particularly the ones who hadn't yet played."

Following cheerleader routines, an impressive pre-game performance by the OVAC McDonald's Band, and the introduction of queens, play began shortly after 8:00.

Ohio struck first with an efficient, four-play 32-yard scoring drive, but West Virginia answered, going 62 yards in seven snaps to pull within one.

The Buckeyes' one-point margin was provided by Martins Ferry's John McFarland, who converted the placement after Cadiz tailback Ed Christian bolted over from two yards out.

McFarland has enjoyed a memorable summer, having kicked a field goal and PAT in a South 10-0 victory over the North at Massillon in June.

The Mountaineers came within an eyelash of knotting the score, but

Brooke's Marc Micucci was just wide with his extra point attempt, following a 39-yard scoring strike from Linsly's Tate Moore to Wheeling Central tight end Matt McCreary.

The West Virginia points came with 7:21 remaining before halftime.

Shortly after Ohio received the kickoff, weather again intervened. Bucks' quarterback Mike Snively (River) lost connections on a first down snap.

On the ensuing play, Snively was chased down by Gold and Blue defenders Darren Hicks (Weir) and Chad Ackerman (Wheeling Central) for a 17-yard loss.

Moments later, officials intervened and halted play.

"It would have been third and 29. I think you had us in a pretty big hole," Bizzari told Depew at the reception.

Though statistics were relatively insignificant, Christian paced Ohio runners with 11 yards on three carries. Snively set up the Buckeye score, hooking up with Cadiz tight end David Nameth on a 21-yard play.

Brooke's James Spriggs also logged 11 stripes on five attempts.

The game had featured exceptional defense with no less than nine plays resulting in negative yardage.

Meadowbrook's giant tackle Jason May had been credited with a pass deflection and QB sack.

Toronto's Jason Congrove punted twice for 79 yards. West Virginia's David Neff (Tyler) got off three punts, totaling 100 yards. Scoring:

Ohio	7	0	x	x	-7
West Virginia	0	6	x	x	-6
Ohio — Ed Christian,	2-yard run. John McFarland kick.				
W. Va. — Matt McCreary,	39-yard pass from Tate Moore. Kick failed.				

# All-Star Game Declared 'No Contest'

By DON CLEGG

News-Register Sports Writer  
After being swamped by Ohio each of the past two years, West Virginia was hoping to rain on the favored Buckeyes' parade in Sunday night's 21st annual Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Football Classic at Wheeling Island Stadium but the weatherman beat the Mountain Staters to the punch.

The start of the game was delayed by rain for 55 minutes and the game itself was called off midway through the second quarter when another line of heavy thunderstorms rolled across the island facility.

Ohio was clinging to a 7-6 lead when the game was stopped at the 5:46 mark of the second quarter but the game committee this morning announced that the game had been declared "no contest."

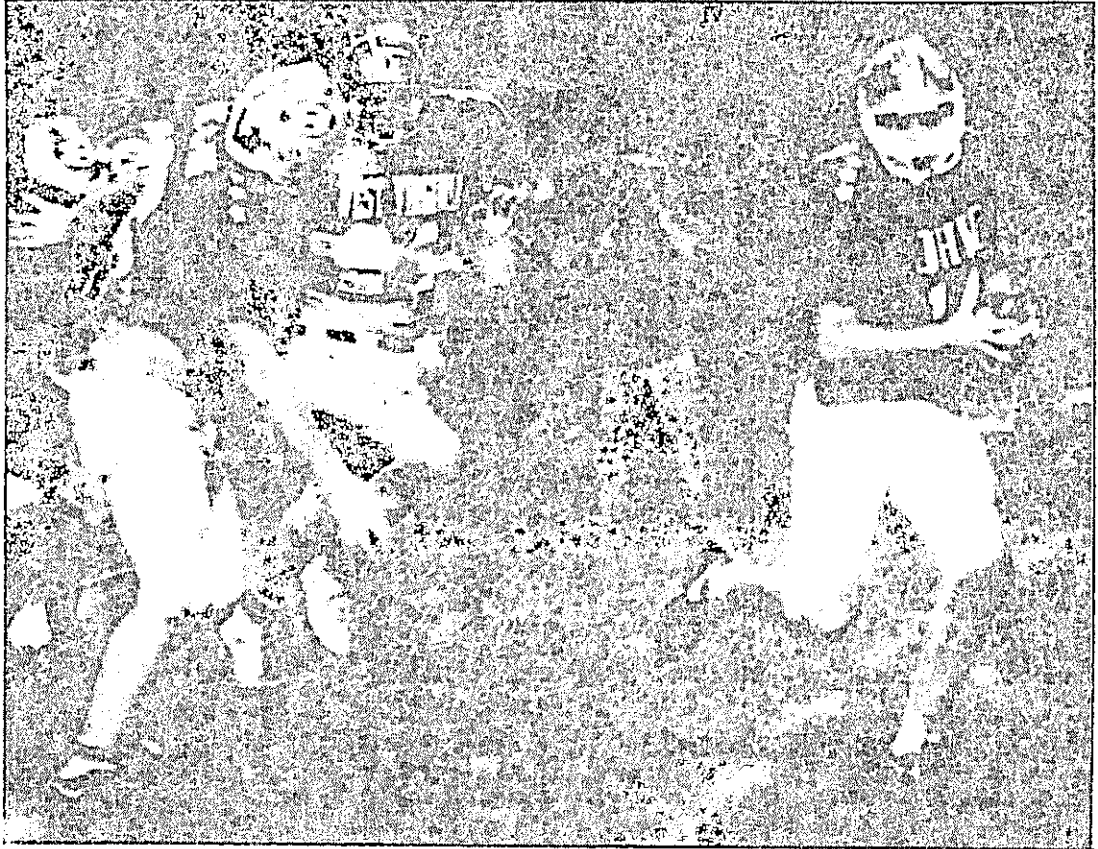
"We just couldn't see having a winner and a loser out of this game," said game director Rudy Mumley. "Both teams had played well considering the conditions and, after meeting with both head coaches and their staffs, they agreed with us."

The game was stopped at 8:42 p.m. and officially declared "over" at 9:07 p.m. As it turned out, the rain (and lightning) didn't stop — or even slow down appreciably — until well after 10 p.m. By that time, the field had several areas of standing water and the bench areas were virtual lakes.

"It (calling off the game) was a hard decision to make," said assistant game director Ron Mauck, "but the safety of the players and the fans has to be our first priority. I think we made the right call."

"We got in contact with the meteorologist up at Channel 9 (in Steubenville) and he said his radar showed heavy rains stretching back through Belmont County. Although he said he couldn't tell if there was lightning associated with them, he couldn't assure us there wasn't and he couldn't tell us for sure when it was going to stop."

"We have a number of young men playing in this game who are going to college on football scholar-



N-R Photo/John Wickline

With heavy rain pelting down midway through the second quarter of Sunday night's 21st annual Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic, Ohio quarterback Mike Snively (14) is herded back toward his own goal line by West Virginia's Greg Wise (65) and Chad Ackermann (24). Wise and Ackermann hauled Snively down for

a 17-yard loss at the Ohio 10-yard-line but it proved to be the game's final play. Officials halted the game due to lightning before the next snap and the game was called off approximately 30 minutes later. Ohio was leading, 7-6, at the time of the stoppage but it will go into the books as a "no-contest."

ships. You don't want to take a chance on jeopardizing an opportunity like that."

There was some sentiment for postponing the completion of the game until tonight, when anticipated weather conditions would be more suitable.

Logistical problems involving the players, band members and

Queen of Queens candidates — many of whom had delayed their summer vacation trips until this

morning in order to participate in the festivities — along with the prospect of sending the gridders back out onto a field that had absorbed over two inches of rain less than 24 hours earlier made that a non-option.

It was a tough break for the 60-some players who had given up the better part of the last two weeks to prepare for the contest. It was also a tough break for the surprising number of fans that braved the weather and flocked to the stadium for what was developing into an

excellent game before the deluge.

Ohio, which had hammered West Virginia by a combined 72-6 score in the last two games, was also the consensus favorite Sunday night.

West Virginia returned the opening kickoff to its own 29 and Coach Terry Depew's squad then set out on a quick march...back toward their own end zone.

Two aborted pass plays and a futile running call were thrown for losses and pushed West Virginia all the way back to its own 10. A wobbly punt by Tyler's David Neff then squished to earth at the 32.

## Statistics

First downs	Ohio 7	WV 3
Yards	101-61	12-5
Passing	21	48
Comp./Att./Int.	1-2/0	3-4/0
Sacked/yds lost	2-18	2-9
Punts	2-40	3-33
Fumbles-Lost	1-0	2-0
Penalties-Yards	2-10	2-20
Time of Poss.	7:05	11:07

### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

**RUSHING**—Ohio: Christian 3-17, Allen 1-3, Hays 1-4, Fletcher 2-15, Snively 3-151, West Virginia: Spriggs 5-11, Neff 1-7, Moore 1-4, Hancock 1-3, Israel 2-15, Moore 2-11, Moore P/SSING—Ohio: Snively 1-36, West Virginia: Herold 2-8-10, Moore 1-7-10, McCLIVING—WV: Martin 1-21, West Virginia: McSessary 2-47, Martin 1-1.

Ohio was quick to take advantage of the excellent field position as River QB Mike Snively hooked up with Cadiz tight end David Nunn on a 21-yard completion to the West Virginia 11.

Three plays later, Cadiz fullback Eddie Christian bucked across the left side of the Ohio line for the touchdown. Martins Ferrer's John McFarland added the for a 7-0 Buckeye lead with 7:31 still to play in the first quarter.

Neither team picked up a first down for the rest of the stanza, which quickly degenerated into a punting duel as the first few drops of the storm which would eventually end the game began to wet the grass.

West Virginia's scoring drive covered 62 yards in seven plays and began with 10:37 remaining in the first half after a short punt return brought the ball back to the Mountain State 38.

With Linsly's Tate Moore now under center, West Virginia still failed to move the sticks and went into punt formation on fourth-and-five from its own 43. A slightly-erant snap was fielded nimbly by Neff, who dodged the first Ohio rusher and then sprinted straight up the middle — a gamble that paid off in a first down at midfield.

Suddenly rejuvenated, West Virginia moved the sticks again when two running plays carried the ball down to the Buckeye 39.

The Mountain Staters hit paydirt on the next play when Moore nailed Wheeling Central tight end Matt McGeary, who was splitting coverage on a slant, and the Marton Knight raced untouched to paydirt at the 7:21 mark of the quarter.

The rain pelted down even harder and a flash of lightning lit up the sky as the ball was being snapped for the extra-point try by Brooke's Marc Micucci. The PAT kick sailed wide left.

# OVAC Executive Board Officially Declares All-Star Game 'No Contest'

By DON CLEGG

News-Register Sports Writer

The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference's Executive Board officially declared the 21st annual Rudy Mumley All-Star Charity Football Classic a "no contest" at a meeting last week, confirming the decision made by the all-star game committee on game night.

Torrential rain and dangerous lightning filled the skies over Wheeling Island Stadium July 26 and forced game officials to halt the annual all-star game midway through the second quarter with Ohio clinging to a 7-6 lead.

The National Weather Service reported that over four inches of rain fell on the Wheeling area on

July 26 — a record rainfall for that date. Numerous reports of flash flooding and street flooding were received from all areas of the Ohio Valley.

The start of the game had been delayed for 50 minutes by an earlier cloudburst and when meteorologists informed game officials that the second rain showed little sign of movement, the decision was made to cancel the remainder of the game for the safety of players and fans alike.

Water was already beginning to pool on the field, especially in the sideline areas, when the announcement was made at the stadium and the field was completely waterlogged when the storm finally abated nearly an hour later.

"Both of our team physicians told

us that the risk of injury becomes much greater with deteriorating playing conditions," said OVAC executive secretary Sam Mumley, "and we were concerned over the condition of the playing surface, as well.

"The Ohio County Board of Education has been very good to us and the damage that would have been done to the field when it had that much water on it would have been extensive."

Although a public-address announcement was made at the game stating that the game would go into the record books as a 7-6 Ohio victory, the general consensus among members of both coaching staffs and the game committee was that no winner or

loser should be declared.

"It was an unfortunate situation beyond our control," said Mumley, "but we're very appreciative of the understanding and input we received from (West Virginia head coach) Terry Depew and (Ohio head man) Chuck Bizzari. They put a lot of time into getting their teams ready and their views made a lot of sense."

"It's the decision of the OVAC Executive Board that the game will go into the books without a score according to Rule 3 of the National Federation guidelines. All of the individual player statistics, however will be counted and there will be an asterisk on the list of scores noting that Ohio led 7-6 when the game was stopped by lightning in the second quarter."

Several fans were hoping that the game could be resumed or restarted at a later time but the Board agreed with the game committee and the coaches that this would not be a feasible course of action.

"Both states do have procedure providing for the completion of suspended games," said Mumley

"but in the case of an all-star game where you have 200-plus ban members, 60-plus football players, 24 Queen of Queens candidates and 20 cheerleaders pulled in from every corner of the valley on one night, it would be pretty much impossible for everyone to return at a later date and pick up where they had left off."

The OVAC has already begun turning its attention toward the 22nd annual Rudy Mumley OVAC All-Star Charity Football Classic tentatively set for Aug. 1, 1993 at Wheeling Island Stadium, but Sam Mumley says the fans who sat through the downpour at this year's all-star game won't be forgotten.

"This conference will not forget the thousands of our loyal fans who came out for this year's ballgame in such adverse conditions. We want them to come back and we plan to do something regarding admission for next year's game to see that the do."

# OVAC Board officially declares 'no contest'

It's official. The 21st annual Rudy Mumley OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic was a washout.

The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference's Executive Board, after lengthy discussion and at the urging of most of those involved in the annual mid-summer extravaganza, officially decided to terminate the game and declare it a "no contest", according to OVAC Executive Secretary Sam Mumley.

Terrestrial rain and accompanying lightning forced the conference's all-star game to be stopped midway through the second quarter back on Sunday, July 26 at Wheeling Island Stadium.

"It is the decision of the OVAC Executive Board that the game be terminated," Mumley stated. "The game will stand as 0-0 officially within Rule 3 of the National Federation guidelines, but we'll have an asterisk of sorts with all of the statistics, including the unofficial score of 7-6, accompanying the 1992 game.

"It was an unfortunate situation beyond our control and we're very appreciative of the understanding of both quality coaches involved in their feelings of what to do about the situation.

"Our team physicians also pointed out that the percentage of injury becomes greater and it's not worth that," he said.

Mumley said the board also felt that trying to resume the game at a later date was not feasible.

"Even though both states do have plans for games that are suspended, postponed or whatever, in the case of an all-star game where you have 200-plus bandsmen, 20 cheerleaders, 24 queens and 60-plus football players, it would be impossible for them to return and pick up where we ended," he related.

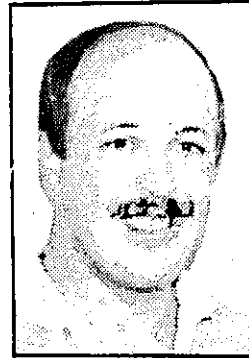
"In addition, we were concerned over the condition of the playing surface," added Mumley. "After all, the Ohio County Board of Education has been very good to us and the damage to the field would have been extensive."

The OVAC, already turning its attention to next year's 22nd annual OVAC Charity All-Star Football Classic which is tentatively set for Sunday night, Aug. 1 at Wheeling Island Stadium and Mumley says the fans' loyalty won't be forgotten.

"To our loyal fans," said Mumley, "this conference will not forget those who came out for this ballgame in adverse conditions and next year we will do something regarding admission because we want them to come back."

# The Bottom Line

By Don Clegg



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THE RUDY MUMLEY OVAC All-Star Football Classic's game committee did the right thing in calling off Sunday's 21st annual game midway through the second quarter due to dangerous weather conditions. It was also a class act by Ohio head coach Chuck Bizzari to decline the victory when it was offered to him, saying that he didn't feel it was fair to name a winner and a loser after just a quarter-and-a-half of football.

Ohio was winning, 7-6, at the time of the stoppage but the issue had hardly been settled. An aroused Mountain State squad had just driven 62 yards for a touchdown and the Buckeyes were facing third-and-forever inside their own 10-yard-line when play was halted.

On a sour note, shame on the fans who booed the officials for sending the players to their lockerrooms with lightning sizzling overhead. Perhaps the fans sitting down underneath the lights couldn't see all that well but from our vantage point in the glass pressbox, there was an awful lot of unchained electricity hopping around out there.

This is the same field where a Wheeling Central assistant coach was struck by lightning not that many years ago. If you don't think lightning can strike twice in the same place, why do people buy lightning rods? If my son had been down there playing, I'd have been a nervous wreck until the officials stopped the game.

Given the information they had to work with, the game committee did the responsible thing by calling off the game just half-an-hour after stopping it. Over two inches of rain had fallen in the Wheeling area *prior* to the storm that delayed the start of the game by some 50 minutes and reports from local radar indicated that there was little movement in the rain centering around eastern Belmont County.

Even if they had decided to wait out the rain in order to play the game to its completion, there's a very good chance the officials would have declared the field unplayable by the time the rain finally slacked off after 10 p.m. After nearly four inches of rain in a 24-hour period, water was standing as much as six inches deep along the sidelines and there were pools of standing water scattered all about the playing surface.

It's unfortunate we couldn't have a winner but cooler heads prevailed when they were most needed. There are few better sporting spectacles on the local scene than the All-Star Football Classic but we should never value a game more than a life.

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