

Ohio State Quarterbacks History



Ohio State quarterbacks history is a tale woven through decades of college football, filled with remarkable athletes who have donned the scarlet and gray. The Ohio State University, located in Columbus, has produced some of the most celebrated quarterbacks in NCAA history. From the early days of the program to the modern era, Ohio State quarterbacks have not only led their teams to victory but have also made significant contributions to the sport, showcasing exceptional talent, resilience, and leadership. This article delves into the rich history of Ohio State quarterbacks, highlighting their achievements, memorable moments, and impact on both college football and the NFL.

Early Years of Ohio State Quarterbacks

The history of Ohio State quarterbacks dates back to the early 1900s when the position was not as defined or celebrated as it is today. The early teams relied heavily on the ground game, and passing was often an afterthought. However, as the game evolved, so did the role of the quarterback.

Notable Early Quarterbacks

- Sid Gillman (1943-1944): One of the earliest standout quarterbacks, Gillman led the Buckeyes to a 9-0 record in 1944, showcasing a passing style that was ahead of its time.
- Don Scott (1939-1942): Scott was known for his dual-threat capabilities, contributing significantly to the team's offensive productivity during his

tenure.

As the years progressed into the 1950s and 60s, Ohio State began to see a transformation in its offensive strategies, paving the way for more dynamic quarterback play.

The Golden Age: 1970s and 80s

The late 20th century marked a significant era for Ohio State quarterbacks, characterized by the emergence of several future NFL stars. This period saw the Buckeyes compete for national championships and produce quarterbacks who would leave an indelible mark on college football.

Key Quarterbacks of the Era

1. Rex Kern (1968-1970): Leading the Buckeyes to a national championship in 1968, Kern was known for his leadership and poise under pressure. His ability to manage games and execute plays made him a pivotal figure in Ohio State's success.
2. Art Schlichter (1978-1981): Schlichter was a standout player whose passing prowess and playmaking ability earned him recognition as one of the best quarterbacks in Ohio State history. He set numerous records during his time and was a first-round pick in the 1982 NFL draft.
3. Mike Tomczak (1982-1985): Tomczak led the Buckeyes to several successful seasons, including a Rose Bowl victory. He was known for his strong arm and ability to read defenses, making him a crucial player in the Buckeyes' offensive schemes.

These quarterbacks not only excelled on the field but also laid the groundwork for future generations, contributing to the university's strong football legacy.

Modern Era: 1990s to 2000s

The 1990s and 2000s marked a new chapter in Ohio State quarterbacks' history, with the program continuing to attract top-tier talent. This era saw a mix of traditional and innovative offensive strategies, leading to exciting gameplay and further accomplishments.

Prominent Quarterbacks of This Period

- Bobby Hoying (1993-1995): Hoying set several passing records during his time, including most career touchdown passes at the time. He was instrumental in leading the Buckeyes to a successful season in 1995, which included a trip to the Rose Bowl.
- Joe Germaine (1996-1998): Germaine was known for his strong arm and ability to make clutch plays. He guided Ohio State to the 1997 national championship game and was a key player in the Buckeyes' offensive success.
- Craig Krenzel (2001-2003): Krenzel is perhaps best remembered for leading the Buckeyes to a national championship in 2002. His leadership and ability to perform in clutch situations made him a fan favorite and a respected figure in Ohio State lore.

The Rise of Dual-Threat Quarterbacks

As college football evolved, the role of the quarterback transformed significantly, with an increasing emphasis on dual-threat capabilities. Ohio State embraced this trend, leading to the emergence of several dynamic quarterbacks who could both pass and run effectively.

Noteworthy Dual-Threat Quarterbacks

1. Troy Smith (2004-2006): Smith's tenure at Ohio State marked a turning point for the program. He won the Heisman Trophy in 2006 and led the Buckeyes to an undefeated regular season, showcasing his exceptional skill set and playmaking ability.
2. Terrelle Pryor (2008-2010): Pryor was a highly touted recruit and brought a unique athleticism to the quarterback position. He broke several records during his time at Ohio State, including career rushing yards by a quarterback, and played a key role in the team's success.
3. Braxton Miller (2011-2013): Miller was another dual-threat quarterback who made a significant impact at Ohio State. He won the Big Ten Offensive Player of the Year award twice and was known for his explosive running ability and passing efficiency.

These quarterbacks not only brought excitement to the field but also redefined the expectations for the position, influencing how future quarterbacks would be evaluated and developed.

Recent Success and Future Prospects

The past decade has seen Ohio State continue its tradition of excellence at the quarterback position. With a focus on player development and a commitment to a high-powered offense, the Buckeyes have produced several standout quarterbacks.

Recent Quarterbacks of Note

- J.T. Barrett (2014-2017): Barrett is one of the most prolific quarterbacks in Ohio State history. He holds numerous records, including career passing touchdowns and total offensive yards. His leadership and versatility were instrumental in the Buckeyes' success during his tenure.

- Dwayne Haskins (2018): In just one season as a starter, Haskins set multiple school and Big Ten records, including the single-season passing touchdown record. He was a finalist for the Heisman Trophy and was selected in the first round of the 2019 NFL Draft by the Washington Football Team.

- Justin Fields (2019-2020): Fields transferred to Ohio State and quickly became a star. His combination of passing accuracy and athleticism made him a standout player, leading the Buckeyes to the national championship game in 2020.

Conclusion

The history of Ohio State quarterbacks is a testament to the evolution of the position and the university's enduring legacy in college football. From the early pioneers to the modern dual-threat stars, each quarterback has contributed to the rich tapestry of Ohio State football. As the program continues to develop top-tier talent, the future promises to be just as exciting. Ohio State quarterbacks will undoubtedly remain a crucial part of the college football landscape, inspiring future generations of players and fans alike.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is considered the greatest Ohio State quarterback of all time?

Many consider Archie Griffin, who played from 1972 to 1975, as the greatest, although he was primarily a running back. Among quarterbacks, Joe Germaine is often cited for his performance in the late 1990s.

What notable records do Ohio State quarterbacks hold?

Ohio State quarterbacks have set numerous records, including passing yards, touchdowns, and completion percentages. Dwayne Haskins set the single-season passing touchdown record in 2018 with 50 touchdowns.

Which Ohio State quarterback won the Heisman Trophy?

The only Ohio State quarterback to win the Heisman Trophy is Troy Smith, who won it in 2006 after leading the Buckeyes to a 12-0 record that season.

Who are some of the most successful Ohio State quarterbacks in the NFL?

Successful Ohio State quarterbacks in the NFL include Dwayne Haskins, who played for the Washington Football Team, and Justin Fields, who currently plays for the Chicago Bears.

What impact did Urban Meyer have on Ohio State quarterbacks?

Urban Meyer significantly impacted Ohio State quarterbacks, particularly with the development of J.T. Barrett, who became the all-time leader in total touchdowns for the Buckeyes under Meyer's coaching.

How has the style of play for Ohio State quarterbacks evolved over the years?

The style of play has evolved from traditional pocket passers like Art Schlichter to dual-threat quarterbacks like Braxton Miller and J.T. Barrett, and more recently to pass-first quarterbacks like Dwayne Haskins and Justin Fields.

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