

TRADITIONS



BUCKEYE LEAVES

A round white decal, about the size of a quarter, with a green depiction of a buckeye leaf is applied to Ohio State football helmets for big plays and consistency on the field. This tradition started in 1968 when football coach Woody Hayes and longtime trainer Ernie Biggs changed the look of the Ohio State uniforms. Many of the sports at Ohio State incorporate Buckeye Leaves into their equipment and uniforms.

SCRIPT OHIO

The signature formation of the Ohio State University Marching Band performed before, during halftime or after home football games is Script Ohio.

Each time the formation drill is performed, a different fourth- or fifth-year sousaphone player has the privilege of standing as the dot in the “i” of “Ohio.”

At exactly 16 measures from the end of “Le Regiment,” the drum major struts out toward the top of the “i,” with a senior sousaphone player high-stepping a couple of paces behind. As the crowd’s cheering crescendos, the drum major stops and dramatically points to the spot where the sousaphone player then assumes the post of honor, doffs his or her hat and bows deeply to both sides of the stadium.

Bob Hope (1978), Woody Hayes (1983), Jack Nicklaus, Sen. John & Annie Glenn (2009), Marching Band director emeritus Jon R. Woods (2011) and Earle Bruce (2016) are the select few non-band members who have had the honor of dotting the “i.”

First performed at the OSU-Pittsburgh football game Oct. 10, 1936, Script Ohio was named one of Athlon Sports’ 10 Greatest Football Traditions in 1999.



BRUTUS BUCKEYE

One of the more visible symbols of Ohio State athletics is Brutus Buckeye, the school’s mascot. In 1965, an art student designed and introduced the first Brutus, while the name was chosen in a contest. The mascot began as a hardened paper mache affair that looked like a bowling ball with legs. In 1975, a radical new Brutus was designed with a prune-like head and a man’s body. That attempt was booed off the field and was re-worked, giving way to a mascot comparable to the beloved present-day Brutus.

The original choices for Ohio State’s mascot included a ram, an elk, a moose and the leading candidate, a male deer. Due to the skittish nature of deer, the idea of a mascot was tabled until January 1941 when “Chris,” a German police dog owned by an assistant cheerleader, made an appearance at a basketball game. The dog’s career was short-lived and OSU remained without an official mascot until the 1960s.

HOMECOMING

First recognized in 1912, Homecoming began as “Ohio State Day.” It was initiated by Professor (and later OSU President) George W. Rightmire. Homecoming was designed to bring the alumni back to the university and celebrate.

The parade is another tradition Buckeyes’ hold high. The parade did not become a time-honored tradition until it joined the schedule permanently in 1965.

In 1926, student supporters wishing to pull a practical joke on the university, convinced the community that Maudine Ormsby was to be honored as queen. She was so popular on campus, she won the vote. Maudine actually turned out to be a cow, the only cow ever elected as homecoming queen.



TBDBITL

“The Best Damn Band in the Land” is the 225-member, all-brass Ohio State University Marching Band that formed in 1879 as a military band. Also known as “The Pride of the Buckeyes,” the band perhaps is best known for the incomparable Script Ohio. Another band tradition of note is the “skull session,” a warmup concert/pep rally in St. John Arena, open to the public before every home football game that allows the band to play and “think through” the show one last time. More than 10,000 fans regularly attend each skull session.

CHEERLEADERS

Buckeye cheerleaders are a constant source of support at all athletics events. The squad wpm the College Cheerleading National Championship in 1993 title. The cheerleaders make appearances all over the state of Ohio throughout the year.

TUNNEL OF PRIDE

The brainchild of ex-OSU quarterback Rex Kern and former Director of Athletics Andy Geiger, the Tunnel of Pride actually started in 1995, when Notre Dame visited Ohio Stadium for the first meeting between the two teams in nearly 50 years. In an effort to generate even more emotion, excitement and enthusiasm than already existed, Kern and Geiger reached out to former Buckeye football players who were attending the game and asked them to form a tunnel for the team to run through as it came onto the field. Thus a tradition was born, which is now continued every other year when Michigan visits Ohio Stadium.

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BUCKEYE GROVE

Since 1934, a Buckeye tree has been planted in honor of each Ohio State All-American. With the renovation of Ohio Stadium in 2001, the Buckeye Grove is now located at the southwest corner of the stadium.

VICTORY BELL

Located in the southeast tower of Ohio Stadium, the Victory Bell is rung after every Ohio State victory. It was a gift of the classes of 1943, 1944 and 1945. Resting 150-feet up in the southeast tower, members of Alpha Phi Omega ring the bell after victories, a tradition that began after OSU beat California Oct. 2, 1954. On a calm day, it is said the bell can be heard five miles away. The bell weighs 2,420 pounds and cost \$2,535 to install.

SCARLET AND GRAY

Ohio State's official school colors since 1878, scarlet and gray were chosen by a group of three students in a lecture room in University Hall because "it was a pleasing combination ... and had not been adopted by any other college," noted selection committee member Alice Townshend Wing.

BLOCK O

An Ohio State University and Ohio Stadium tradition, Block "O" celebrated its 70th anniversary in 2015. Known for spreading spirit, starting cheers and performing card stunts, Block "O" was founded in 1938 by Clancy Isaac. After seeing a cheering section at the University of Southern California, Isaac decided that it was something Ohio State needed. Seventy-one years later, Block "O" is Ohio State's largest student organization on campus and has gained local and national recognition.



GOLD PANTS

A gold charm replica of a pair of football pants is given to players and coaches following wins over Michigan. The tradition started in 1934 when first-year coach Francis Schmidt told those wondering how OSU would fare with its nemesis from Ann Arbor: "They put their pants on one leg at a time just like everybody else." Schmidt's Buckeyes then went and defeated Michigan four-consecutive times, all by shutout.

CAPTAINS' BREAKFAST

Started in 1934, all past captains are invited back for a breakfast and to welcome in the new captains.

OHIO STATE VERSUS MICHIGAN

The annual Ohio State-Michigan football game was No. 1 on a list of the 10 Greatest Rivalries In Sports compiled by the editorial staff at ESPN.com in 1999. There simply is no greater rivalry in college athletics.

THE ILLIBUCK TROPHY

The winner of the Ohio State – Illinois game has received the Illibuck trophy since the tradition began in 1925. Illibuck was a live turtle, but has been a wooden replica since 1927. Also representative of the rivalry is the peace pipe. Members of two junior honorary societies, Bucket and Dipper of Ohio State and Sachim of Illinois, annually meet at halftime of the Fighting Illini-Buckeye game to smoke the peace pipe and present the "Illibuck" trophy to the winning school from the previous year.

SENIOR TACKLE

A last practice of the year tradition since 1913 where the seniors hit the blocking sled one final time, for many years it was held following the last practice prior to the season finale with Michigan. But depending upon the Buckeyes' bowl obligation, it has sometimes been moved to the last home practice before the team departs for its postseason game.



SCHOOL SONGS

Ohio State proudly boasts an alma mater (Carmen Ohio), two fight songs (Across the Field and Buckeye Battle Cry) and a state rock song (Hang on Sloopy).

BUCKEYE BATTLE CRY

In old Ohio there's a team
that's known thru-out the land;
Eleven warriors, brave and bold,
whose fame will ever stand.
And when the ball goes over,
our cheers will reach the sky,
Ohio field will hear again
The Buckeye Battle Cry –

Drive! Drive on down the field,
Men of the scarlet and gray;
Don't let them thru that line,
We have to win this game today,
Come on, Ohio!
Smash through to victory.
We cheer you as you go:
Our honor defend
We will fight to the end for O-hi-o.

ACROSS THE FIELD

Fight the team across the field,
show them Ohio's here
Set the earth reverberating
with a mighty cheer Rah! Rah! Rah!
Hit them hard and see how they fall;
Never let that team get the ball,
Hail! Hail! the gang's all here,
So let's win that old conference now.