

## Ohio State Topples No. 14 Northwestern

*ohiostatebuckeyes.com*

*October 6, 2001*

**COLUMBUS, Ohio** - Jonathan Wells rushed for three touchdowns and 179 yards on 22 carries to lead the Buckeyes (3-1, 2-0) to a 38-20 win over No. 14 Northwestern (3-1, 1-1) Saturday before an Ohio Stadium record crowd of 104,042.

Wells, a senior tailback from River Ridge, La., wasted little time setting the tone in the contest.

The 6-1, 230-pounder scored on the second play of the game on a 71-yard run, giving the Buckeyes a 7-0 lead with less than a minute played. It was the longest scoring run of Wells' career.

Both the Ohio State and Northwestern offenses started strong but defense decided the contest in just the fifth night game in Ohio Stadium history.

The Buckeyes and Wildcats each scored on their first possession. The Ohio State offense continued to find the endzone while the Buckeye defense found ways to stop the potent Northwestern attack.

Northwestern responded less than five minutes later with an 8-yard touchdown run by tailback Damien Anderson with 9:19 remaining in the first quarter. The run capped a 13-play, 80-yard drive for the Wildcats.

The Ohio State defense then took control.

Buckeye strong safety Mike Doss returned an Anderson fumble 30 yards for a touchdown with 54 seconds remaining in the first quarter to give the Buckeyes a 14-7 lead. It was the third fumble returned for a touchdown in Doss' career and the first Buckeye defensive score of the season. Ohio State's Will Smith, a sophomore defensive end, forced the Wildcat fumble.

Northwestern quarterback Zak Kustok turned the ball over on the next Wildcat possession, throwing an interception to Ohio State's Derek Ross with 12:32 to

play in the first half. Ross returned the pick 43 yards.

Wells scored his second touchdown of the game with just 26 seconds left in the first half on a 1-yard run, giving the Buckeyes a 21-7 lead at intermission.

Wells, who finished the first half with 109 yards on 10 carries, aided the seven-play, 72-yard scoring drive with a 23-yard pass reception from quarterback Steve Bellisari.

Wells and the Ohio State defense did not miss a beat once the second half started.

The Wildcat offense, on its first second-half possession, was pinned deep in its own zone forcing a punt.

Wells then led the Buckeyes back to the endzone for a 28-7 lead with 33 rushing yards during a five-play 42-yard scoring drive that culminated with a 9-yard touchdown run by freshman tailback Lydell Ross.

It did not take long for Wells to find the endzone again himself, for a career-high three-touchdown game.

After Ross' score, the Wildcat offense again was stifled by the Buckeye defense and was forced to punt.

Bellisari then drove the Buckeyes 65 yards, aided by a 42-yard pass completion to sophomore split end Michael Jenkins to the Northwestern 6-yard line. Wells got the call on the next play and carried the ball 6-yards over the right side for a 35-7 lead with 7:58 to play in the third quarter.

Buckeye freshman kicker Mike Nugent added a 44-yard field goal with 1:31 to play in the third quarter to push the Ohio State lead to 38-7.

Kustok then led the Wildcats on a 10-play, 77-yard drive and scored on a 2-yard run with 13:22 to play to cut the Ohio State lead to 38-13. Kustok's attempt at a rush for the two-point conversion failed.

The Wildcats added a late touchdown on a 4-yard pass by Kustok to Jon Schweighardt with 5:12 to play. Ohio State led 38-20.

Northwestern then attempted an onside

kick that was recovered by the Buckeyes on the OSU 49. Northwestern forced OSU to punt. Ohio State punter Andy Groom then pinned the Wildcats inside their own 5-yard line with just over three minutes to play and Northwestern was unable to score again.

The contest was the first Big Ten night game in Ohio Stadium history. Ohio State is 5-0 all time in home night games.

The Buckeyes extended their winning streak over Northwestern to 22 games. The Buckeyes lead the all-time series 53-13-1 and hold a mark of 29-8-0 in games played in Columbus. OSU has defeated the Wildcats in the last 11 meetings in Ohio Stadium.