

Buckeyes Edged Out By Nittany Lions, 29-27

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STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (AP) - Joe Paterno passed Bear Bryant to become major college football's career victory leader Saturday, with freshman Zack Mills passing for two touchdowns in Penn State's 29-27 victory over Ohio State.

The win was No. 324 for Paterno, who became Penn State's head coach in 1966 after 15 years as an assistant.

Paterno came into the season just one win behind Bryant, but was questioned and criticized - even by some of the Penn State faithful - after his team started 0-4. He tied Bryant last week with a 38-35 win at Northwestern.

After the game, in the understated style Penn State fans have come to expect, Paterno praised his team, hugged his wife and held his grandchildren at a ceremony at midfield.

Mills, who came in on the Nittany Lions' second possession after Matt Senneca started, broke his own freshman passing record with 280 yards. He completed 17 of 32 passes and also ran for 138 yards and a touchdown.

Down by as many as 18 points in the second half, Penn State (2-4, 2-3 Big Ten) took its first lead two plays into the fourth quarter. On the first play, Mills missed the snap from the shotgun formation, ran back several yards to recover the ball and still completed a 31-yard pass to R.J. Luke. Mills' 14-yard touchdown pass to Eric McCoo gave the Nittany Lions a 29-27 lead with 14:47 left.

Ohio State (4-3, 2-2) got to the Penn State 17 with 2:55 left, but Bryan Scott blocked the field goal try.

Mills' first touchdown pass came in the third quarter when he found Tony Johnson from 26 yards out.

But the freshman's biggest play might have come earlier in the third, when he

took a quarterback keeper, leaped over a blocker, bounced off a defender and ran 69 yards for a touchdown. It was the longest Penn State run in more than two years and the longest by a quarterback since 1991. The 2-point conversion failed, leaving Ohio State with a 27-15 lead.

The Buckeyes took their biggest lead, 27-9, on Derek Ross' interception return. The pass skipped high off Drummond's hands and right to Ross, who caught it in stride and ran untouched into the end zone.

Ohio State went up 20-9 two plays into the second half when Jonathan Wells found a huge hole in the line, slipped one tackle and outran the Penn State secondary for a 65-yard play.

Steve Bellisari threw a 68-yard pass to Michael Jenkins, giving Ohio State first-and-goal on the 1 and setting up the final score of the first half. But Penn State's defense held, forcing the Buckeyes to kick a field goal. Mike Nugent's kick gave Ohio State a 13-9 lead going into halftime.

Freshman Robbie Gould kicked a 46-yard field goal - tying a first-quarter kick as the longest of his career - to bring Penn State to 10-9 with 6:59 left in the first half.

Cie Grant's interception and 21-yard return early in the second quarter set up Nugent' field goal, giving the Buckeyes a 10-6 lead.

The Nittany Lions closed to 7-6 by the end of the first quarter on Robbie Gould's field goals from 23 and 46 yards.

Ohio State needed just 9 seconds to score on its first possession, with Bellisari throwing a 66-yard touchdown pass to Jenkins.