

## Ohio State Football Beats Marshall, 24-21, In Final Two Seconds

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**COLUMBUS, Ohio** - The No. 9/9 Ohio State football team (2-0; 0-0 Big Ten) beat Marshall (0-2, 0-0 Mid-American Conference), 24-21, in front of 104,622 Saturday at Ohio Stadium. With two seconds remaining in the game and the score tied at 21, Buckeye senior kicker Mike Nugent nailed a career-long 55-yard field goal to give Ohio State its second win of the season. On the drive, sophomore quarterback Justin Zwick completed three passes for 22 yards to move the ball to the Marshall 33-yard line. After an illegal procedure penalty on Ohio State, the ball was marked on the Marshall 37-yard line.

Marshall's Chris Royal nabbed his second interception of the game with intercepted the ball with 8:33 to play. The Thundering Herd took possession of the ball at their own 41-yard line. They were able to move the ball to the Ohio State 19-yard line to set up a 35-yard field goal that Marshall kicker Ian O'Connor missed. After the teams traded punts, Ohio State regained possession of the ball to set up the final drive. Nugent's game-winning field goal was the third 50-plus yard field goal of his career.

Neither team was able to put the ball into the end zone on its first possession, but on the first play of Ohio State's second possession from its own 20-yard line, OSU's Zwick hit Santonio Holmes for an 80-yard score to give the Buckeyes the early 7-0 lead with 9:52 to play in the first quarter. The touchdown completion tied the third longest in Ohio State history.

Senior running back Earl Charles ran 2 yards for the equalizing score with 5:31 to play in the first quarter to cap a 12-yard, 80-yard drive by Marshall. Charles had a key 19-yard rush to move the Thundering Herd inside the 5-yard line and set up the score.

The Buckeyes added a score just before the end of the first period when Zwick

again found Holmes for a 47-yard touchdown reception. The score with 18 seconds remaining gave Ohio State a 14-7 lead and capped a seven-play 85-yard drive. Holmes caught three passes for 146 yards in the first quarter.

Marshall defensive end Jonathan Goddard stripped OSU tailback Lydell Ross and returned it 27 yards to tie the game 14-all with 5:36 to play before halftime. It was the third time in Goddard's career he returned a fumble for a score.

The Buckeyes put together their third 80-plus yard scoring drive on its next possession, with Zwick finding Holmes four times for 53 yards to give the sophomore flanker 199 yards in the first half. Zwick hit Roy Hall near the hash for a 20-yard touchdown that put Ohio State back on top by a 21-14 score with 3:13 to play in the half. Holmes topped his previous career best on the drive. He had 153 yards at Indiana last season.

Zwick threw for three scores and 255 yards in the first half, the most passing yards by a Buckeye since Steve Bellisari threw for 270 yards Jan. 1, 2002 against South Carolina in the second half of the Outback Bowl. Hall had two catches for 33 yards and Ross added one grab for 23 yards. Ohio State had 279 yards of total offense in the opening half and limited Marshall to 141 total yards, including 58 on the ground.

The Ohio State defense came up with a big stop on 4th-and-3 from its own 8-yard line, stopping a rush by Marshall kicker Ian O'Connor, who tried to run up the middle, but was met by tackle David Patterson with 16 seconds to play in the third quarter. The Buckeyes took over at their own 10-yard line and drove 49 yards across midfield, but Ross fumbled at the Marshall 41-yard line. The defense again held and forced the Thundering Herd to punt, but a Zwick interception ended the drive.

Marshall free safety Royal picked off the ball at the OSU 42-yard line and returned it 16 yards to the 26 before a personal foul spotted the ball on the 13-yard line. After a holding penalty Thundering Herd quarterback Stan Hill found Brad Bates for a 23-yard scoring

strike that tied the score, 21-all, with 8:40 to play in the game.

Holmes had 10 receptions for 218 yards and two touchdowns to become the fourth Ohio State receiver and the first sophomore in the history of the program to top 200 yards in a single game. Zwick was 18-for-30 with 318 total yards and three TD's and two interceptions. Holmes' total is the third most receiving yards in a single game.

The Buckeyes travel to North Carolina State at 3:30 p.m. next Saturday in Raleigh, N.C. ABC Sports will televise the game. N.C. State, which beat Richmond, 42-0, Sept. 4, did not play today.