



The Florida Gators scored two special teams touchdowns to lift them to a 24-17 Gator Bowl win over Ohio State, as the Buckeyes fell to 6-7 for the season, their first seven-loss campaign since 1897. The best thing that can be said about the 2011 Ohio State football season is that it's over.

OSU players said it was an emotional locker room after the game, with careers coming to a close, and the ill-fated 2011 season serving up one last disappointment. Buckeye players anxious to put the negative behind them won't have long to wait. New head coach Urban Meyer called a team meeting for 7:00 a.m. Tuesday morning after the team flew home right after Monday's game. Meyer has his coaching staff in place, and the players will be glad to be looking forward rather than back at a tumultuous twelve months.

The early game action featured fumbles by both sides, with both defenses getting the better of it. Florida grabbed a 7-0 lead as the first quarter wound down, but Braxton Miller brought the Buckeyes back to tie it on a slant route to DeVier Posey from five yards out in the second. The Bucks were even for about 12 seconds though, because the Gators' Andre Dubose promptly untied the game with a 99-yard kickoff return for a score, and the Buckeyes would never catch up.

The special teams troubles for Ohio State continued after halftime when the Gators' speed back Chris Rainey (71 yards rushing) stormed through to block a Ben Buchanan punt, and Florida's Graham Stewart returned it 14 yards for a TD and a 21-10 lead. Meanwhile the Buckeyes'

offense was doing a good imitation of the scarlet and gray unit that struggled all season to score points, and their last-minute touchdown on an 11-yard pass to Jordan Hall served only to make the final score more respectable.



### Goodbye Tresselball

Miller was 18 of 23 passing for 162 yards, but 82 of those yards came in the last scoring drive when he was 6 for 6, including a 10-yard strike to freshman Devin Smith for the late score. He was sacked six times by the Gators' defense, several of those coming more as a result of his own indecisiveness rather than a breakdown of his protection.

Suffice to say that in his last game as OSU's offensive coordinator, Jim Bollman did not cover himself in glory. After 10 years in Columbus and with a month to prepare, Bollman appears to have finally discovered pre-snap motion, but his play-calling and schematic simplicity will not be missed in Columbus.

The Buckeyes had some success running the ball between the tackles, but Bollman's attempts to go wide on the speedy Gator defenders were repeatedly stuffed, and his numerous flanker screen calls were blown up before they started. Dan Herron had a good game running the ball in his final appearance as a Buckeye, with 82 yards on 12 carries, but whatever the results of the 2012 OSU offense turn out to be, it is guaranteed to be vastly more interesting to watch than this.

### Meyer Completes Coaching Staff

Yes, take heart Buckeye fans...our long national nightmare is over. There's a new sheriff in town running the OSU offense, and he has reportedly finished putting his staff together, with the additions of [Ed Warinner](#) as offensive line coach and [Tim Hinton](#) as tight ends coach. Both new additions were members of the Notre Dame coaching staff in 2011. They'll join new

offensive assistants

[Zach](#)

[Smith](#)

the new receivers coach, and

[Tom Herman](#)

, the offensive coordinator and QB coach. The one offensive holdover from Fickell's staff is

[Stan Drayton](#)

, who worked for Meyer at Florida and will switch over from receivers to coach the OSU running backs in 2012.

On defense, [Everett Withers](#) joins the Buckeyes from his position as interim head coach at North Carolina. Withers will carry the title of Assistant Head Coach and co-coordinator (with

[Luke Fickell](#)

) of the defense. Fickell's linebacker coach

[Mike Vrabel](#)

, who joined the staff for the 2011 season, has been retained by Meyer, as has

[Taver Johnson](#)

, who has coached defensive backs at OSU since 2007.



C-Ya

The 2011 season at Ohio State will not be remembered for its games, save perhaps Braxton Miller's miracle heave to beat Wisconsin. It will be remembered for the rule-breaking by OSU players and their coach....for the interminable NCAA investigation...for the three head coaches in a little over seven months...for the media orgy of coverage of the scandals...and for the dismissal of Jim Tressel after a decade of leadership off the field, and domination of the Big Ten Conference on it.

A lackluster performance in defeat in a second-rate bowl game almost seems a fitting end to it. Fitting or not, it's the end...and it's welcome.

Links:

[OSU game story](#)

[ESPN Recap](#)

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