Dan Wismar has been a great addition to this website, and he's going to be cranking out quality coverage of THE Ohio State Buckeyes all summer and fall for us here on the site. Dan's got all kind of good nuggets in this installment of Buckeye Leaves. Updates on the Buckeyes '09 recruiting class, some notes on the overall success of Buckeye athletics, the actual height and weight of Terrelle Pryor, and much much more.

Like Father...

Ohio State has a football camp for high school senior and junior prospects this weekend, and Coach Tressel is taking advantage of the occasion to welcome some of the Buckeyes top remaining 2009 recruiting targets to campus. One of those recruits arrived on campus Friday with his rather famous father, and before the day was out, he informed the OSU staff that he wanted to be a Buckeye. In doing so, he causes OSU fans to reflect on the career of one of the greatest Buckeyes ever.

Duron Carter , son of former Buckeye and NFL great Cris Carter , became the 18th member of the Ohio State 2009 recruiting class on Friday, and his dad admitted to being a bit overwhelmed by the emotion of the moment. The elder Carter was quoted as saying "This is a great moment for me and I'm kind of speechless right now...This is kind of surreal. This morning I went for a walk and thought to myself that I can't believe how great this is. I feel like I died and went to heaven because I get to go through the Buckeye experience twice."

You may recall that Cris Carter's first Buckeye experience didn't end as he might have liked, as he was ruled ineligible for his senior year for having signed with an agent. That mistake cost him dearly, not only in terms of his image with NFL people and in draft position, but also in missing out on any college player's career

highlight, his senior season...let alone the chance to put the career mark for receptions by a Buckeye receiver pretty much out of reach. As it was, Carter held the career record when he left after his junior season, with 168 receptions. He was the Buckeyes' first ever consensus All-American wide receiver that year, the 1986 season.

The man with the greatest hands I have ever seen went on to a career in the NFL that will eventually result in his bust being cast in Canton, OH. He finished his NFL career with 1,101 receptions and 130 TD's, at the time second only to Jerry Rice in NFL history, in both categories. He was voted to eight consecutive Pro Bowls, and the now famous quote from Buddy Ryan, when the coach cut him from the Eagles early in his career, became his NFL legacy: "All he does is catch touchdowns." Amen, brother.

Even if he weren't related, Duron Carter might well remind Buckeye fans of his father. He plays wide receiver, and at 6' 3" and 185 lbs., he resembles Cris in size. He has terrific hands, and his strengths are said to be precise route-running, separation from the defender, great leaping ability and ball skills in traffic. Sound familiar?

His 40 yard dash time is in the 4.6 range, not fast by wide receiver standards, a rap that was familiar to his father as well. But this is by no means a "legacy" offer by the OSU staff. Duron is rated a 4-star prospect, among the top receivers in the country, and a standout in Florida, a state which turns out Division 1 receivers by the dozens. He held offers from the likes of LSU, Auburn and West Virginia before committing to the Bucks.

The OSU coaches may take as many as 10 more commitments in the 2009 class, and many of the likely candidates are in Columbus for the weekend camp. Glenville offensive tackle Marcus Hall was in attendance Friday, and 5-star Illinois offensive lineman Chris Watt, Florida running back Carlos Hyde, and Pennsylvania cornerback Corey Brown were all expected on Saturday. Look for commitments from Brown and Hyde within a couple of days. It appears that the Buckeyes want Watt to be the fourth

offensive lineman in the class, and are holding off making offers to some outstanding Ohio linemen like Portsmouth's
John Prior
or Bellbrook's
Sam Longo
while they wait for Watt's decision. Camp observers said Friday that Prior had such an impressive camp that they wouldn't be surprised if he got an offer regardless of what Watt does.

My best guesses on the remaining ten members of the class would be: Hall, Glenville DE/OLB Jonathan Newsome , Hyde, Corey Brown, Watt, Florida safety
Vlad Emilien
, 5-star Florida tailback
Jaamal Berry
, Dublin Scioto safety
Bradley McDougald
, Louisville athlete
Justin Green
, and one more DB, possibly Middletown's D.J. Hunter or Florida 5-star Brandon McGee, though McGee is looking like more of a long shot these days.

Seconds Anyone?

It probably escaped the notice of most Ohio State sports fans when the Buckeyes long streak of "almost champion" athletic teams was broken not long ago.

The recent streak of second place finishes began early in 2007 with the notorious blowout of the 12-0, top-ranked Buckeye football team by Florida in the BCS Championship Game. Insult was added to injury later that year when basketball season rolled around and the Buckeyes of Oden and Conley were handled by the powerful repeat champions from Florida in
the NCAA Finals
. In December of 2007, the men's soccer team went all the way to the NCAA finals too, but
dropped a heartbreaker to Wake Forest
in the Big One.
(Wake Forest?)

Few of us need a reminder that Tressel's Bucks were back in the championship game in January, 2008, only to come up short again. Not as many of you were aware though, that the resurgent OSU wrestling program made a run for all the marbles in the NCAA's this past winter, and produced two individual national champion wrestlers, while the team came in...wait for it...
second
.

Die-hard Buckeye fans have dared to hope that the promising 2008 football team would end the frustration by finally breaking through the barrier. But they got beat to the punch. There's an OSU team visiting the White House this month to receive the congratulations from the President traditionally due the NCAA Champions.... i
n Fencing
.

Hey, I didn't claim this thing was building to a thrilling climax, did I?

Congratulations anyway to the 2008 NCAA Champion OSU Fencing Team.

Loose Leaves

*** Freshman-to-be Terrelle Pryor arrived in Columbus this week, and it turns out he's not really 6' 6" after all. Pryor was measured at 6 feet 3 1/2 inches, and 225 lbs. as he was put through a series of tests and evaluations by OSU trainers and coaches. The good news is that he's "ripped", having added 15 pounds of muscle since basketball season ended. They say he has been an eager student of the offensive scheme, and seems to be absorbing everything they're throwing at him.

*** OSU trainers are at the leading edge of some new technology for injury prevention. The O-Zone has an article on the program that includes a photo of Pryor showing off the newly honed physique.

*** One quarterback was arriving in Columbus, while another was checking out. Sophomore quarterback Antonio Henton confirmed that he will be transferring out of OSU, and attending Georgia Southern University in the Fall. The die was cast for Henton with the commitment of Pryor this Spring, and then his 2008 status probably dropped from third-string to fourth-string when freshman Joe Bauserman had an excellent showing in the Spring Game, while Henton failed to impress

anyone that he was capable of stepping into the starting job in the event of an injury to Todd Boeckman. So the guy lots of people had projected as "the next Troy Smith" will try his luck in his native Georgia, a victim of the glut of talent accumulating in Columbus. Here's wishing him well.

*** Former Buckeye running back Antonio Pittman is trying to make it with the St. Louis Rams this year, and word is he has looked pretty good in camp this Spring. Pittman was drafted by the Saints, but cut before the season, landing in St. Louis, but not contributing much in 2007. I thought he could become a pretty good NFL back when he came out, and was surprised he dropped out of sight last year. He may end up backing up Stephen Jackson in 2008.

Quotable

"He's a better young man than he is a football player, and he's the best football player I've ever seen." - Woody Hayes on Archie Griffin in 1975.