He only played half the game, but Terrelle Pryor made his point. Determined to prove to the world that he's a quarterback who can also run, rather than a runner who happens to play QB, the Buckeyes' sophomore showed off both his live arm and his improving passing mechanics in his Gray team's convincing 23-3 win over the Scarlet squad in OSU's annual Spring Game on Saturday. The only thing more impressive than Pryor's performance was the record-shattering crowd at the Horseshoe. 95,722. Seriously. Buckeye Dan tells us about it.

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The Spring Game is never really about which team wins. With the starters split up between the two teams, the fan is better off evaluating individual performances rather than trying to draw any conclusions about team cohesion or effectiveness. That said, Saturday's game result came down to: the Gray team had Pryor, and the Scarlet team didn't.

As if to drive his 'point' home, Pryor and the Gray coaching staff didn't call his

number on a single rushing play, instead putting the ball in the air 18 times in the first half....more attempts than he averaged per complete game in his 10 starts in 2008. Pryor had been scheduled to play the first, second and fourth quarters on Saturday, but the coaches chose not to send him back out there at all in the second half. Like I said....point made.

Pryor wore the black, 'no contact' jersey in the first quarter, and he struggled to evade the pass rush a couple of times early, taking a sack, and on one play scrambling around right end for a short gain. But in the second quarter he started to get some rhythm, connecting with Ray Small, Grant Schwartz and Taurian Washington on some short and intermediate routes, some on rollouts...some on straight dropbacks.

Then with under two minutes left in the half, and the ball on the Scarlet 45-yard line, Pryor dropped back and launched a ball 55 yards in the air to Washington, who had beaten starting cornerback Chimdi Chekwa badly down the left sideline. Washington gathered it in for the 45 yard touchdown, and the Gray had a 10-0 lead.

The Gray recovered an onside kick following the TD, and Pryor would strike again in the final seconds of the half, on what had to be the throw of the day. This time at the Scarlet 42-yard line, Pryor dropped back to midfield and threaded a laser throw between defenders to Ray Small streaking down the right side. Small caught the ball at about the 15, and made two or three pretty moves to evade defenders and take it into the end zone with just a couple of ticks left on the clock.

Not only did Pryor show good form on both touchdown throws...driving off the back foot...following through on the throw, the second scoring toss was equally impressive for what it showed about his recognition of the defense he was facing, and then his execution of the play to perfection. Pryor completed 13 of his 18 attempts, for 191 yards and the two touchdowns, with most of that yardage coming in the second quarter.

During the winter, Buckeye fans have been hearing about the work put in by Pryor and the coaches on the mechanics, the footwork, the release point, and the coordination with receivers that he needed to improve on in order to take his game up a notch for 2009. No doubt many of the 95,722 strong came out primarily to see how that project is coming along.

Nicely, I would say. Very nicely.

Elsewhere on offense, both of the Buckeyes top two running backs had good days. Boom Herron racked up 45 yards in the first quarter rushing for the Scarlet, showing good patience in setting up his blocks and then accelerating through the holes. Brandon Saine ripped off several good runs for the Gray team, gaining much of his yardage over the left side behind left guard Justin Boren and freshman Jack Mewhort, who played some at left tackle. Boren also played a few series at left tackle, as many of the offensive linemen worked at more than one position. (Bryant Browning at both guard and tackle, Mike Brewster at center and guard)

The biggest gain of the day on the ground came when senior walk-on tailback Marcus Williams bolted through the line and rambled about 50 yards or more before he was caught from behind by Tyler Moeller down inside the Scarlet 15-yard line.

Taurian Washington, who after last year *has* to be in the OSU Spring Game Hall of Fame, had another impressive April performance, with 4 catches for about 90 yards and the long TD. Washington largely disappeared after spring ball in 2008, playing sparingly and failing to register even one reception during the 2008 season. That will not happen again. This kid is primed to break out.

DeVier Posey had a couple of nice receptions for the Scarlet, although his quarterback Joe Bauserman had a rough day dealing with Solomon Thomas and the rest of the Gray team pass rushers, including Brian Rolle, Etienne Sabino, Cam Heyward and Rob Rose. Thomas followed up his seven-sack performance in last week's jersey scrimmage with another strong outing, showing great burst and quickness off the snap, and closing speed to the quarterback.

Small had one drop to go along with his impressive touchdown catch-and-run, but along with Posey and Washington, he should give the Bucks an extremely fast and athletic trio of receivers. Freshman James Jackson, who enrolled early (and had reportedly been switched to defense) came out as a wide receiver for the Scarlet, and had two or three nice receptions late in the game. Another young receiver being counted on to contribute on offense and in the return games,

Lamaar "Flash" Thomas, had a forgettable day, failing to cleanly catch two kickoffs and looking tentative on plays from scrimmage.

In general, the defensive ends made good penetration on the outside, as the offensive tackles for both teams struggled to keep Thad Gibson (Scarlet) and Solomon Thomas (Gray) especially out of the quarterback's face. On the inside, it was a different story, as the guards and centers held their own against the defensive tackles. And again, generally speaking, the receivers had a better day than the DB's.

Tyler Moeller and Brian Rolle were both very active, in run support and also in the pass rush. Etienne Sabino is another speedy linebacker who made a lot of noise in and out of the offensive backfield on this afternoon. Freshman early enrollee Storm Klein didn't play like a guy who was attending high school classes four months ago. He pursued very well to the sidelines on a couple of notable plays, and also filled nicely on inside running plays.

My MVP's for the game -

Offense - Terrelle Pryor, Brandon Saine, Taurian Washington, Justin Boren

Defense - Solomon Thomas, Tyler Moeller, Brian Rolle, Thad Gibson

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The crowd wasn't the only thing in the 90's on Saturday afternoon. The temperature was damn close too. In fact, a stiff wind that gusted to probably 30 mph all afternoon might have been the only thing preventing all 95,000 from roasting to an extra-crispy crust. The announced attendance (did I mention 95,722?) may have been a little higher than the actual number of fans in the stands...but not by much. My compatriots and I were there early watching the place fill up, and as C-Deck filled in right up to the top row, and the entire South stands filled with OSU students admitted for free, we were estimating 85-90,000.

The announced attendance was probably the total of tickets sold, since there

were no turnstiles counting people, and thousands of us just had to show a ticket to get in, as opposed to having them scanned or collected. So the overcount, if any, may have consisted of nothing more than the ticketed no-shows.

Capacity at Ohio Stadium is approximately 105,000, but as anyone who has ever attended a regular season game in the Horseshoe knows, they cram people in there butt-cheek to butt-cheek to get to that number, and the general admission crowd for a game like this is packed far more loosely. Still I'm not sure how they could have shoehorned more than another 10,000 people into that place, based on how full it looked from our vantage point.

By any measure, it was a remarkable turnout for a glorified football practice.