This will go somewhere. I promise.

In 1994, I was a scrawny third grader with a simple life. I was a typical kid that liked to play with my friends, watch WWF wrestling and drink as much *Surge* as humanly possible. I didn't have a whole lot to complain about.

But like most kids in today's society, I had a bully. For the purpose of this article -- we'll call my bully Jack.

Jack was a freaking lunatic. His home life was a disaster and with no outlet for his anger, Jack spent a majority of his time finding ways to inflict as much physical and mental pain on me as possible. He was bigger than me and absolutely fearless. One time he threw a speaker box (which held an incredibly heavy 12 inch speaker) on my foot.

Who throws a speaker box, honestly?

One day -- Jack went too far and gave me the worst beating of my very young life. My two older brothers noticed my scrapes and bruises and decided enough was enough. Later that day I rode my bike to the neighborhood park where I found Jack being confronted by my two older brothers. I rode over to see what was going on and my brothers pinned Jack to the ground.

"Hit him," my oldest brother told me. "Hit him right in the face."
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A decade of dominance in the Big Ten isn't easy. Legendary coaches like Bo and Woody battled for a decade, but never achieved dominance over the conference for a stretch that long.

Jim Tressel did. Under his guidance the Buckeyes evolved from an era that produced talented teams that couldn't finish into a team that made losing the conference title a rarity.

From 2001 to 2010, Ohio State won or shared the Big Ten championship seven times in 10 years (vacated, shmacated). Tressel and the Buckeyes went to three National Championship games, winning one, and handled four of the other five teams they met in various BCS bowls

over that stretch. It was an amazing and unprecedented run.

What a lot of Buckeye fans don't think about is the other side of things -- the victims of Ohio State's bullying that stretched 10 years with relentless consistency.

Michigan was on the receiving end of the worst beatings. Their role went from being the bully to the bullied so fast that before we could really stop and realize what had happened, the Buckeyes had beaten the Wolverines nine times in 10 tries.

Seriously think about that -- *nine times in 10 tries*.

The rest of the conference wasn't immune. Whether it was on the recruiting front or on the gridiron, the Buckeyes felt no sympathy while taking the spotlight. Penn State and Wisconsin occasionally fought back, but in the long run the aughts belonged to Ohio State.

That came to a screeching halt late in December, 2010. The rumblings of potential rules violations at Ohio State shook college football. Just two weeks before the Buckeyes traveled to New Orleans for the Sugar Bowl, it was revealed that five Ohio State players traded memorabilia for tattoos.

The fallout that took place in the following five months was staggering. The man responsible for Ohio State's rise to dominance was forced out. Five key members of a team expected to make a title run were suspended for a healthy portion of the 2011 campaign. The media took aim and all eyes were on Columbus, Ohio.

The bully was pinned to the ground, defenseless as its victims were given free reign to take their best shot.

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"Hit him," my oldest brother told me. "Hit him right in the face."

I was stunned. How was I supposed to just hit someone else in the face? Especially someone who couldn't do anything to stop it. I thought to myself, *this is wrong*.

But then my thoughts turned to how much pain this kid had caused me. I though about all the verbal and physical assaults he had launched my way -- in front of my friends and peers -- that had embarrassed me so much.

An anger I had never felt swelled in my chest and I moved toward Jack. There was an internal battle, one side was warning me that this was wrong, that this wasn't the way to confront a bully and the other was thinking about how I couldn't pass up such easy revenge. I was getting closer and closer to Jack, pinned to the ground with no chance of escape, trying to decide what to do.

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It wasn't long before the scandal changed things. Recruits that were long thought to be guaranteed Buckeyes were targeted by Michigan, Michigan State, Penn State and Wisconsin. Kyle Kalis committed to the Wolverines, Se'von Pittman pledged to the Spartans, Adolphus Washington was rumored to be a Nittany lean and Kyle Dodson went with the Badgers.

All were supposed to be Buckeyes.

Then the 2011 season started. Spirits were high after a 42-0 romp of Akron and things seemed to be getting back to normal. But a dark cloud started making its way over Columbus when the Buckeyes barely survived Toledo, and all hell broke loose when Ohio State got waxed by Miami.

It was open season. Michigan State showed no fear and blitzed Ohio State in Columbus. The Buckeyes got the bearings a little bit, even upsetting a heavily favored Wisconsin team, but the looming NCAA penalties and media scrutiny were too much to overcome. The situation had weighed Ohio State down and the rest of the conference went to work.

When it was all said and done, the Buckeyes received their punishment from the NCAA and stood on the receiving end of a beating it hadn't taken in decades. A 6-7 record and a one-year post season ban showed like deep, purple bruises and angry gashes on the face of the program.

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I was feet away from Jack and I knew I could hit him until my knuckles swelled over. I wanted to. There was nothing he could do because my brothers were much older and much bigger than him, and there hold on Jack wasn't going to loosen.

But I couldn't do it.

I don't know why such rational and logical thinking struck the eight year old version of me, but for some reason, I knew this wasn't the way to handle a bully. For starters, there was no honor in it. If I really wanted to stand up to Jack, I had to do it with no restraints on either of us. Also, I knew that hitting him this way would accomplish nothing. If anything, it would make the beating I usually received even worse because nothing about the situation would've made me faster, stronger or bigger than him the next day on the playground.

So I walked away.

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The rest of the Big Ten did not walk away. It's not like they could have if they wanted to, but it doesn't change the fact that Ohio State got punched in the mouth, over and over again, in 2011.

Now -- the restraints are off and nothing is holding Ohio State back. For the first time in over a year, the Buckeyes have the ability to not only defend themselves, but to attack. It started on

the recruiting front as head coach Urban Meyer reclaimed what would have and should have been Ohio State's from the beginning. Pittman and Dodson, recruits that were poached from the Buckeyes by Michigan State and Wisconsin amidst the scandal, have rejoined the ranks in Columbus.

The head coaches from those schools are upset . It's as if they expected Ohio State's vulnerability this past year to last a little longer. They expected no repercussions for punching a dominant force when that figure couldn't retaliate.

Those schools, and the rest of the Big Ten, are about to realize what dawned on me when I was eight years old. Ohio State is angry and ready to fight back. Nothing that happened this past year -- when the conference was beating up on the Buckeyes -- made them faster, stronger, or bigger than Ohio State.

You don't punch a bully when he's tied down. The Big Ten conference is about to realize why.

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