

“THE KICK”

Heard 'Round the World . . .



In an epic “Sooner Magic” moment that would decide who would finally win the titanic first-ever struggle between two of college football’s bluest “Blue Bloods,” Oklahoma’s Uwe von Schamann coolly launches his deadly 41-yard field goal to end the Sooners’ 29-28 dramatic come-from-behind win in Columbus, Ohio, seconds after leading 88,119 Buckeye fans in a “Block that Kick!” cheer.

(Photo The Tulsa World/AP/Mark Duncan)

by Earl Perkins

With :06 seconds left, Sooner fans back in Oklahoma huddled in front of their TV sets with the ABC network sound turned down, and the Voice of the Oklahoma Sooners, Gary Johnson, describing the action over the airwaves of KTOK AM-1000 in his husky, emotional delivery . . .

*“**Bud Hebert** moves back now, he’ll drop to one knee and hold at the 31, a 41-yard attempt by von Schamann, the wind at his back . . . There’s the ball, it’s down, the kick is up . . . it’s away . . . it’s long enough . . . it’s long enough! It’s GOOD! Oklahoma wins it!”*

“It’s all over! The Sooners, von Schamann with :03 seconds to go, a 41-yard field goal, they are storming the field, Oklahoma, the fans are out on the field, there are :03 seconds to go . . . the Buckeyes are down on the ground, they cannot move, they’re in shock, I’m in shock, the whole world is in shock right now as the Sooners have pulled it out, on von Schamann field goal from 41 yards . . .”

“Let’s go home happy . . .”

The Sooners' dramatic come-back victory shook the college football world to its very foundation. Why? In 1977, Ohio State was one of the elite "Blue Bloods" that can be counted among that small group that syndicated sports writers and talking heads in the electronic media praise as the "best of the best."

Some made the argument that "Oklahoma had never played the true powers of the Big 10 Conference," meaning, of course, Michigan or Ohio State.

But wait a minute . . . that would mean that Michigan or Ohio State had never played the Sooners, either.

That door swings both ways, *Pod-nah*, and it seemed that some of the talking heads like Beano Cook and Are Parseghian had forgotten that there could be other really good football teams from other parts of the country like Norman, Oklahoma, or Austin, Texas, or Lincoln, Nebraska. After all, in the 1960s and 70s, those three teams had won six national titles.

By the time Sept. 24, 1977 rolled around, the Sooners and Buckeyes had still never met on the gridiron. The Sooners had finally cornered Michigan in the 1976 Orange Bowl, and it was for all the marbles as the Sooners dominated the Wolverines in a defensive struggle, 14-6. It was the second straight national championship for Oklahoma, and their fifth overall.

But many eastern sportswriters and talking heads still implied that Oklahoma was a step below the Notre Dames, Michigans, Ohio States, and Alabamas of the collegiate football world.

In 1977, in the 108th year of college football, these two football Titans had never met, not even in an intersectional contest or a bowl contest. Since the Rose Bowl, played every January 1 in Pasadena, Cal., had a *decades long* contract to host Conference Champions of the PAC-8/10/12 and the Big 10 conferences, the only chance to meet would normally be in an early season non conference match-up. But *that* required both schools to agree on when, where, and "how much would it hurt my ranking if I played you and lost?"

Of all the records Oklahoma may have held over the years, maybe being the "most dodged team in America" would be another category in which the Sooners might lead.

In Bud Wilkinson's early years and through the 1950s, Oklahoma played the toughest non-conference foes. Notre Dame, Army, Pitt, Maryland, and Syracuse, to name a few.

Oklahoma played all those same teams in the 1960s, *plus* the Texas Longhorns every year, when the Steers were in their heyday under the great Darrell Royal.

So when "Columbus Day," as Sooner fans were calling it back then, finally rolled around on September 24, 1977, the Sooners had played exactly "0" games against Ohio State, *and just one game against Michigan*, that one being the 1975 national championship game that pitted OU against the Wolverines in the Orange Bowl in Miami, Fla., on Jan. 1, 1976. The Sooners won, 14-6, to claim their *second national championship in a row*, and their *fifth* overall.

In fact, *as of Sept. 24, 1977*, Oklahoma was a tepid 10-7 vs the Big 10 line up, dating all the way back to 1917 when they lost a 44-0 *squeaker* to Illinois in their first-ever skirmish with a Big 10 foe. Bennie Owen was still refining the forward pass at OU, I am told.

Their second came 10 years later, when Indiana topped the Sooners in 1927. To further the point, OU could only wrangle *eight* (8) ball games from one of the premier conferences of its time from 1917 to 1977! OU, in fact, still, has never played Michigan State or Purdue in either a regular season game or a bowl game.

"Let's go home happy . . ."

What a great game this was, the first-ever meeting of the Sooners and Buckeyes! Throughout the long history of college football, Oklahoma and Ohio State had never lined up to see just who may have the better football team. And, yes, the Sooners went home happy . . .

Once upon a time, if you browse through the pages of Sooner history, just ten years before the Sooners journeyed to Columbus to face Woody Hayes' ground-gobbling Big 10 juggernaut, Oklahoma battled another legendary foe in a far away football palace with dramatic results. This time, it was Oklahoma that called upon a young German-born soccer-style kicker to settle a crazy, hard-fought war in front of the whole nation, and it was indeed a moment that would live in the historic pages of Oklahoma football.

That first game in Columbus was everything the ABC network had hoped it would be, and was a game of contrasting styles between schools, football teams, head coaches, and even the players themselves. This game was made for prime time.

Both the Sooners and the Buckeyes were highly ranked nationally, OU at #2 in the polls and Ohio State just a step behind ranked at #3 in the nation.

Ohio State boasted a fine defense, led by All-American linebacker Tom Cousineau, a 6'3" 235 pound destroyer with an impressive supporting cast to boot. Ohio State feared no rushing team in college football since they understood the various ground attacks college football offered in the 1970s.

The Buckeyes were coached by the legendary Woody Hayes, who had guided the Buckeyes to national championships in 1954 and 1968 during his 28-year stint as the Buckeye head coach, and in the process created their own fearsome running game predicated on "three yards and a cloud of dust," a motto that showed an undying commitment to running the football . . .

It just so happened that in 1977, Oklahoma had a running game of their own called the Wishbone, and it was far and away the most devastating, lethal, fast-striking running game college football, let alone Woody Hayes and his Buckeyes, had ever seen.

From 1947 to 1959, Bud Wilkinson had ravaged the college football world with the Oklahoma Split-T offense, having won 121 games, 29 more than runner-up Georgia Tech's 92 over the same time frame.

The Sooners, under Wilkinson's eye for detail, won 14 Conference titles, 3 National Championships. In their 10-0 national championship season in 1956 the Sooners smashed all known rushing records as they *averaged 391.0 yards rushing per game*.

But under Chuck Fairbanks, in 1970, the Sooners jumped in mid-season to the Wishbone, and by 1971, the Oklahoma Wishbone erased that incredible mark by averaging *472.4 yards per game*, a mark that still stands today, 53 years later!

But Oklahoma's Wishbone had become revolutionary in the decade of the 70s, and in 1970 when Oklahoma made that sudden in-season transition to the Wishbone to try to salvage the 1970 season, a total of two teams were running the 'Bone; Oklahoma and Texas.

But after Bear Bryant watched OU smoke his defense in the 1970 Bluebonnet Bowl with just seven games under their belts, the Bear told his staff after the game they would be going to the Wishbone in the spring of '71.

Now, in 1977, with seven years to master the Wishbone's intricacies, the Sooner still had a surprise or two waiting when they kicked off in front of 88,119 rabid Ohio State fans.

Halfbacks Billy Sims, Elvis Peacock, and fullback Kenny King, along with Wishbone magician Thomas Lott at quarterback, constituted a lightning fast backfield, and Sims was the highest ranked running back in the country out of Hooks, Tex., in 1975.

But in 1975, Kenny King, from Clarendon, Tex., was every bit the great back Sims was. In 1976, when Switzer convinced King that moving him to fullback would take the Sooner Wishbone to a higher level, that created another home run threat in the Sooner attack. Switzer wanted to get King on the field with Sims. King's speed at fullback terrorized opposing defenses that had to defend King first, then Sims and *then* 9.4 sprinter Peacock on the corners. Peacock was a highly-coveted halfback out of Miami, Fla., in 1974. *And these guys were all over 200pounds!*

But Thomas Lott at quarterback made it impossible for defenses to defend the triple option effectively. Lott was a wizard running the Wishbone, and when he turned up inside to keep the ball, at 205 pounds could get the tough yard and he often had lots of running room, either turning up inside the crease, or motoring into enemy secondaries with speed and power.

Oklahoma's talented, athletic offensive line would also be problematic for the Buckeyes, and their proficiency at cutting off pursuit by linebackers was especially troublesome to Ohio State's defense.

"We knew that under Woody Hayes, Ohio State's defense would be ready for the option," Barry Switzer said, adding, "but they had never seen *our* Wishbone and they have never seen *our* speed . . . There was no damn way Ohio State was going to stop our wishbone," Switzer echoed again before the game. "They had never played against it, and they have *never* seen speed like ours, so we know we were going to move the ball."

Did they ever!



Oklahoma's offensive line was talented, athletic, and experienced, which posed big problems for Ohio State when the Sooners met the Buckeyes for the first time ever. From left, Left tackle Karl Baldischweiler, 6'-5", 276 lbs. from Okmulgee, Okla.; left guard Jaime Melendez 6'-1", 250 lbs., from Lawton, Ok.; center Paul Tabor, 6'-4", 260 lbs., from Houston, Tex.; right guard Greg Roberts, 6'-5", 250 lbs. from Nacogdoches, Tex.; right tackle Sammy Jack Claphan, 6'-7", 265 from Stilwell, Oklahoma, and tight end Victor Hicks, 6'-4", 255 lbs., from Lubbock, Texas. Except for Melendez, all the Sooners pictured above were drafted by NFL teams and fine NFL careers.

(©Associated Press/Oklahoman)

The Sooner defense, at times probably overlooked and taken for granted, was ready to show their mettle against a really good nationally-acclaimed offense like Ohio State's. Four of Oklahoma's eleven starters that day in Columbus would earn All-American honors in their Sooner careers.

Noseguard Reggie Kinlaw, a 6'-2" 245 pounder from Miami, Fla., linebackers Daryl Hunt, 6'-4" 221 pounds from Odessa, Tex., and George Cumby, a super-fast 6'-0" 210 pounder from Gorman, Tex., and safety Zac Henderson, a 6'-191-pounder from Burkburnett, Texas, were the heart and soul of a fine Sooner defense in 1977.

Lining up next to Kinlaw across the Oklahoma defensive front were tackles Richard

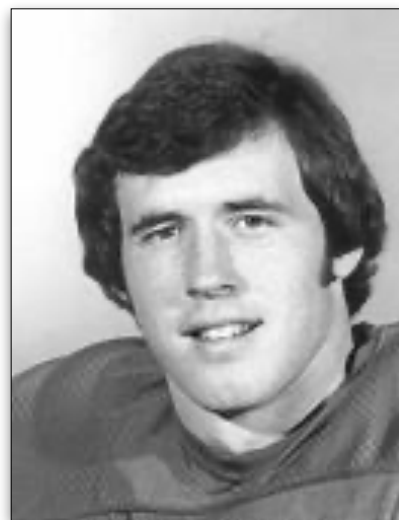
Murray (6'-3" 255 lbs.) from Greenville, Texas, and Phil Tabor, (6'-4" 265 lbs.) twin brother of OU's starting center Paul Tabor of Houston, Tex. Phil Tabor was a standout tackle for the Sooners and was drafted by the NFL's New York Giants.

David Hudgens, a 6'-5" 235 pound tackle from Tulsa, Ok., also saw a great number of snaps across the Sooner defensive front. Hudgens played tenaciously and rushed the passer effectively.

Oklahoma's defensive ends were smart and effective players. Bruce Taton, a 6'-3" 215 pounder from Tulsa, Ok., was the Sooners' weak side defensive starter. Taton played with great leverage at the weak side spot and made few mistakes. On the strong side, Taton's running mate was Stroud, Okla., native Barry Burget, a 6'-3" 220 pounder who played physical and tough, and frequently came up with big plays at critical times. Burget's brother is Grant Burget, who played on the 1974 national champion Sooner squad in 1974 and was a two year starter.

The Sooner secondary was led by Zac Henderson, the previously mentioned free safety who started on the 1974 and '75 national champions, and was a freshman All-American in 1974.

A four-year starter at Oklahoma, Henderson earned recognition as a unanimous All-American in 1977 would earn honors as the New York Athletic Club Defensive Back of the Year. He had also earned All-America status in 1976 and was a three-time All-Big Eight selection from 1975-77.



Zac Henderson

However, the Sooners' Achilles heel might prove to be the fact they were prone to turnovers, already fumbling the ball 17 times, in the first two games, losing 12 of them to go with a pair of interceptions in their first two games against Vanderbilt and Utah State. OU was a young team, as the Sooners only started three seniors on offense, and four on defense.

The Buckeyes entered the game with a strong running game, keyed by quarterback Rod Gerald, junior fullback Ron Springs and senior halfback Ray Griffin, a defensive back

pressed into duty because of injuries. Behind a two tight end formation anchored by consensus All-American tackle Chris Ward, Ohio State had gained an average of 336 yards per game rushing, second-best in the nation.

The Buckeye defense was just as strong, yielding just seven points in the first two games. A pair of All-Big Ten players, senior middle guard Aaron Brown and junior linebacker Tom Cousineau, both strong candidates for All-American honors, anchored it.

Oklahoma won the coin toss and elected to take the wind (S-SW at 10-15 mph) and kick to Buckeyes to start the game. At 78° F and overcast skies with the threat of rain, it was a great day for football in Columbus, Ohio.

Oklahoma's Uwe von Schamann kicked off, and the ball carried three yards out of the end zone, so Ohio State would snap the ball first at their own twenty yard line. The first ever Oklahoma-Ohio State encounter was under way.

Both sides were amped up, and it showed right from the first snap from scrimmage.

Ohio State started at the 20-yard line, and could not move against Oklahoma's fast, bristling defense. Three runs netted only nine yards. Punting into the wind, the ball was shanked and traveled only 33 yards, and Oklahoma took over on their own 38.

Lott was seeing his first action of the year at quarterback for the Sooners. King crashed over guard for three yards, Lott kept on a pair of 4-yard keepers, the second on a broken play that gave the Sooners a first down at the Sooner 49.

Sims, who rushed for 165 yards on only 11 carries (an average of 11 yards per carry) in the first two games, burst up the middle, leaping over a Buckeye for a six-yard gain. Lott optioned right end, pitching to Peacock, who ran down the sideline for a gain of 12 to the Ohio State 33. Five plays into the game and each Oklahoma back had already carried the ball.

With a fresh set of downs, Lott extended the ball to King as they appeared to be running the base play over right guard. The exchange, which is a true triple option read as the play developed, was fumbled. Ohio State's Paul Ross, behind the play, accidentally kicked the ball forward, right into the chest of Elvis Peacock. The ball bounced straight down to the ground, and then caromed right back up into his hands at the 27-yard line.



Early in the first quarter, Elvis Peacock took a perfect option pitch from Thomas Lott and raced 12 yards for a Sooner first down at the Ohio State 33 yard line. OU's Karl Baldischweiler (#67) leads interference for the Sooners.

(©1977The Oklahoman)

Peacock broke an attempted tackle by defensive back Mike Guess at the 23, and ran into the open, angling towards the left end zone. He barely outran two Buckeyes, and was tackled by Lenny Mills as he crossed the goal line. Barely three minutes into the game, the Ohio State crowd was shocked as the Sooners had taken an early 6-0 lead. von Schamann kicked the extra point, capping the six play, 62 yard scoring drive. Oklahoma was up, 7-0.

After von Schamann hammered the ensuing kickoff deep into the end zone, Ohio State again took over at the 20. On their first play, Gerald ran an option to the left, but OU's All-Big 8 linebacker Daryl Hunt flashed in and delivered a wicked hit, causing Gerald to spit the ball up at the Buckeye 20 yard line. Fellow 'backer George Cumby recovered for

Oklahoma at the 17. Gerald laid on the field a few moments, before trainers and medical personnel helped the junior signal caller off the field.

Going right to work, Lott started the offensive with just a three-yard gain, but it was bad news for the Buckeyes. On the play, Ohio State's stud linebacker Tom Cousineau had his left shoulder separated when OU's massive Sammy Jack Claphan collided with the Ohio State All-American, who then missed the remaining fifty six minutes of the game.

On the next snap after Cousineau's exit, Sims hit over left tackle on the inside belly play, exploded through a huge hole up the middle, where he leapt over Guess at the three, diving into the Ohio State end zone. His 14-yard run stunned Buckeye crowd, and the Sooners were ahead 14-0 with not even four minutes elapsed in the game.



(Photos Courtesy Sports Illustrated/Rich Clarkson)



(Photos Courtesy Sports Illustrated/Rich Clarkson)

"I promise you, if Billy Sims hadn't injured his ankle, and if Thomas Lott had not pulled his hamstring," warned Barry Switzer years later after his Sooners came from behind in the last 1:29 to defeat Ohio State, "we woulda hung a half-hundred on their asses and we wouldn't have needed von Schamann's field goal . . ." The above photo of Sims appeared on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* and shows Sims on his 14-yard touchdown dash through the heart of the Buckeye defense. Lott, shown at right, kept the Ohio State defense off balance with his speed outside and power inside on Oklahoma's lethal options.

Once again, Ohio State started at their 20-yard line after another kickoff sailed out of the end zone. Going to the air, Gerald dropped back to pass, but he threw incomplete down the right sideline. On second-and-ten, he again searched for an open man, but was unable to find one.

Tucking the ball, Gerald bolted up the middle for a gain of eight, leaving a third down and two. Looking to pass a third straight time, Gerald scrambled right, and lost three when OU's George Cumby, flashing his incredible speed, cut Gerald's legs out from under him at the Ohio State 25. On the punt, OU's Freddie Nixon fair caught the punt at the Sooner 40.

On OU's first play, Sims explored the middle and again, gaining seven. Lott then optioned left to Sims, who was knocked out of bounds, but only after a fine gain of nine yards to the Ohio State 44.

On first down, King went over right guard, but the Buckeyes' defense smothered the play after only a yard. Then Lott pitched to Sims on second down, but Ohio State defended the option well this time, forcing the Sooner out of bounds after a gain of only one. However, Buckeye defensive end Paul Ross hit Sims way late and way, way out of bounds, and the penalty flag moved the ball down the field 15 yards to the Ohio State 27 yard line.

The Buckeyes stacked up King on first and second downs, leaving a third-and-seven problem for the Oklahoma offense. Then Lott gained seven on an option keeper, the Sooners were still faced with a fourth-and-a-foot at the Ohio State 18-yard line.

Despite opting to go for an easy von Schamann field goal, Switzer wanted to go for the 21-0 lead which might be a knockout blow coming in the first quarter.

Running off left tackle, Sims was the second man through on the inside belly play on a slashing, careening five yard run, picking up another Sooner first down at the Buckeye 13.

The Oklahoma offensive line was winning the battle with Ohio State defensive front, and the crisp execution of Lott and the stable of Sooner backs running tough, Sooner fans began to think Switzer's observation of possibly hanging "half a hundred" on the Buckeyes might indeed come to pass. But not so fast . . .

On first down, OU was guilty of illegal motion, moving the ball back five yards. Lott then tried his hand, but was stopped after a gain of three. Running the option to the right,



Oklahoma Flyer Billy Sims

Oklahoma flyer Billy Sims goes airborne in these two photos as he leaves the Buckeyes grabbing for thin air. First, at left, he hurdles an attempted tackle by OSU's Leonard Mills (#20) on the Buckeye sideline, putting a grimace on the face of Ohio State coach Woody Hayes (white shirt, red tie). Then, in photo at right, Sims cuts inside the block of OU tight end Victor Hicks as he leaps across the line for a Sooner first down. (Photos Courtesy *Sports Illustrated*/Rich Clarkson)

Sims was nailed hard by the defense for no gain, and came up hobbling after having twisted his ankle. On third down, the Sooners ran a reverse to end Steve Rhodes and gained nine yards to the Ohio State six.

Faced with a fourth and three at Ohio State six yard line, Switzer opted for the field goal. In came von Schamann, the German-born kicker OU signed from Ft. Worth, Tex. His 23-yarder extended the lead to 17-0 with 3:29 left in the opening quarter.

von Schamann's kick off sailed into the end zone for the fourth straight time, so Ohio State started — again — from the 20 for the fourth straight series.

Springs, on consecutive attempts, slammed for four and then two yards. Gerald pitched to Griffin on an option left, but Zac Henderson came up and made a great open-field tackle, stopping the Buckeyes again and forcing another punt.

This time, Ohio State's coverage team interfered with Freddie Nixon's attempt to fair catch the ball at the OU 40, and the penalty moved the ball to the Buckeyes' 45-yard line.

With 1:30 still left in the quarter, the Oklahoma offense went to work. Lott gained five yards on an option keeper, and Sims continued his dazzling running display when he

slashed up the middle, slipped a tackle and then broke a defensive back's ankles with a great cut back for a gain of ten.

Lott kept on an option right, gaining three. Freshman halfback David

Out of Bud Hebert's perfect hold, Oklahoma's Uwe von Schamann booms a 23-yard field goal. (Photo©The Tulsa World)►

Overstreet was dropped for a loss of one yard, as the first quarter ended.

The Sooners had dominated Ohio State in the first quarter on both sides of the ball. Offensively, the Sooners gained 135 yards rushing while Ohio State logged only 19, and did not move past their own 29-yard line at any time in the quarter.

The Oklahoma defense had been a pleasant surprise. In the team's first two games, they had allowed 23 points to Vanderbilt and 24 to Utah, neither team being very comparable to Ohio State. So Sooner fans had good reason to be encouraged.

Starting the second quarter, Ohio State now had the wind, but Oklahoma had the ball at the Buckeye 27-yard line. With a third down and eight, Lott optioned right, cut up into the crease sharply, showed some real quickness and dove, stretching for the first down.

Lott gained two yards on first down, then optioned left, cutting sharply upfield for four yards. Lott laid on the ground after the hit, suffering a pulled hamstring. He was helped to his feet by the OU trainers and left the field.

True Freshman quarterback Jay Jimmerson, who in the first two games replacing Lott at quarterback had gained 131 yards on 16 carries, was in the lineup. But things were about to change, sports fans . . .





*Classic
 Photo
 1977*

While Ohio state showed early they would not allow Oklahoma to exploit the option pitch, the Sooners went to an inside attack with Billy Sims as the main weapon. Despite the Buckeyes loading up the box with an extra safety, Sims showed his slashing, high-flying running ability, gaining 60 yards on just 11 carries before suffering a foot injury late in the first half. (Photos ©1977 *The Oklahoman*)

Overstreet gained eight yards for an apparent first down, but an illegal motion penalty put OU behind the chains with a third and nine from the Ohio State 19. Jimmerson gained just three yards, and von Schamann came on to knock home another field goal from 33 yards out. The Buckeye home crowd was now squirming in their seats since their team now trailed 20-0.

ABC, sensing a blowout, switched its national TV coverage away from the game to regional telecasts. But a football has two sharp points on it, one on each end, so it's bound to start taking different bounces, sometimes in the craziest directions.

After the kick off, Ohio State now had the wind at their backs for the first time.

Springs returned the kick from the six, out to the 19, the Buckeyes' same starting position of their other four possessions. Ohio State looked to go to the airwaves as Gerald dropped back. His throw down the middle of the field was incomplete on first down. Back to pass again on second down, the Sooner pressure forced Gerald out of the pocket and he scrambled, finally sliding near a first down at the Ohio State 29 yard line. At the point of the tackle, a late hit was called against the Sooner defense. Now at the Ohio State 44 yard line, the Buckeyes had their initial first-and-ten of the game.

Gerald again scrambled for a nine yard gain on first down, and freshman fullback James Payton hammered inside for four yards and another first down in Oklahoma territory at the Sooner 43 yard line. Looking to pass again on first down, Gerald was forced to scramble again for eight yards to the OU 35, where Payton banged between the tackles



Oklahoma linebacker Daryl Hunt (#85) tracks down Ohio State quarterback Roderick Gerald. (©1977 The Oklahoma Journal)

for for five more yards to the Oklahoma 30-yard line. From there, Gerald ran optioned left pitching to Springs trailing, who took the pitch and ran 30 yards down the sideline, crossing the Oklahoma goal line for Ohio State's first score.

Ohio State was on the board with an 81-yard seven-play drive. Vlade Janakievski tacked on the extra point, and the OU lead was now 20-7 with 10:32 left in the half.

Ohio State's Tom Orosz booted the ball out of the end zone on the kickoff, Oklahoma was now faced with starting at the 20-yard line, their worst field position of the game.

Lott returned re-entered the game, but was stopped after a gain of only one. On second down, Lott stuffed the ball into Peacock's belly on the inside belly play, but the exchange was muffed and Ohio State pounced on the loose ball at the Oklahoma 19.

It took the Buckeyes only one play, as Gerald called his own number. Optioning right, he kept the ball, cut up into crease. Looking as if he might go down about the ten yard line, he managed to stay on his feet, finally staggering across the goal line. The Buckeye faithful had just witnessed their second touchdown in less than a minute. After the extra point, the Oklahoma lead was down to six points at 20-14 with 9:46 still to go before halftime.

See how quickly things can change when a football takes one of those "crazy bounces?"

Ohio State, with the strong wind at their back, sent another kickoff out of the end zone. Jimmerson came back into the game to replace the injured Lott at quarterback. Optioning left with Sims trailing, Jimmerson pitched the ball as he was hit and laid the ball on the ground — *again!* The Buckeyes defense, now swarming like an angry Beehive, claimed the loose ball again, this time on the Oklahoma 20-yard line. The Sooners were self-destructing offensively, and the defense needed to come through.

Gerald wanted to pass on first down, but instead scrambled for a gain of six. Springs pounded inside twice, first for two yards, then none. Looking at a fourth down and short two, Hayes wanted to go for "the kill." Payton ran into a hard "inside" Sooner stunt, and lunged in an effort to pick up the first down. Fortunately, for the Sooners, Payton came up inches short and Oklahoma took over at their own ten-yard line. *"Sooner Magic?"*

The Sooners offense was stone-walled for no gain on first and second down, but Sims jumped up inside, good for five. Forced to punt into the wind from their own 15, Ohio



Freshman quarterback Jay Jimmerson (#15) runs the Sooner offense as he prepares to hand the ball to another freshman, David Overstreet (#22). *(©1977 Sports Illustrated)*

State took over in OU territory with 5:53 showing on the game clock before halftime.

Oklahoma's defense responded to the challenge, thwarting any Ohio State march forward. On first down, Gerald optioned right, curled back on his own fumble, but for a loss of two. After an incomplection on second down, Gerald was back to pass but was unable to find a friendly man downfield, so he scrambled left where he was rudely spun around and thrown to the turf by Sooner defensive end Barry Budget for a loss of five. On fourth down and 17, Ohio State's punt sailed easily into the end zone for a touch back, and once again Oklahoma started at their own 20 yard line.

Jimerson ran an option to the right, but was hammered hard at the 23. Peacock went up inside for three, then Jimmerson earned a first downs when he kept the ball and jumped inside the defensive end for a first down.

Another Oklahoma fumble stymied the Sooner offense again. Jimmerson and reserve

fullback Jimmy Rogers were not able to exchange the ball cleanly, and the opportunistic Buckeyes were once again on the scene as Kenny Beacon recovered.

With great field position at the Oklahoma 33 yard line, Ohio State went to work. Gerald kept for two, then Springs went straight ahead for four, and Griffin took a pitch for two. Looking at a fourth-and-two at the Sooner25, Hayes again went for the first down.

At the snap, Gerald went the wrong way, and was forced to improvise. He headed back to the left, but Budget was there again, and made another great play to drag him down for *another* loss of five, turning the ball over on downs to Oklahoma. Ohio State once again was unable to capitalize on an Oklahoma fumble.

Now the clock showed only 40 seconds left before halftime. Oklahoma, with Lott, Sims, and King out with injuries, was trying to hold on with a patchwork backfield.

Content to run out the clock, Jimmerson kept for two yards, then Rogers rambled up the middle for 15. Overstreet swept left for a gain of four yards, and Rogers pounded into the middle for no gain as the first half expired. The Sooners led 20-14, but they were wounded and the Buckeyes had all the momentum heading to the half.

Lott (hamstring) and Sims (foot) were hobbling with bad wheels, and King was nursing a bruised arm. Yet, Oklahoma led the halftime statistics, rushing for 197 yards and 10 first downs compared to 118 yards and five first downs for Ohio State. Oklahoma had turned the ball over three times to just once for the Buckeyes.

For the second half, Ohio State would choose to have the wind advantage at their backs. Oklahoma received the kickoff, and started at the OU 22. Jimmerson ran an option keeper left. Hit hard, by Kelton Danzler, he fumbled the ball on the carpet once again and Ohio State recovered, as Buckeye cornerback Len Mills came up with the ball.

The Buckeyes took over at the Sooner 23 yard line. The OU defense was doing their part, stuffing Ron Springs for no gain. Rod Gerald ran a play action pass, and Sooner defensive tackle Dave Hudgens came up big, smothering the Buckeye triggerman at the Oklahoma 38 yard line for a loss of 15. Hudgens' big play took Ohio State out of field goal range.

Trying to overcome a third and 25, Gerald's pass was too far for end Jim Harrell in the

Oklahoma end zone. Coach Hayes sent the Ohio State field goal team on to try a long 55 yarder, but the ball fell short into the end zone. The Buckeyes had failed on their third straight opportunity to cash in after a lost Sooner fumble.

Oklahoma started from their own 20 yard line. Overstreet gained three, but there was a mix up on second down, as the entire OU backfield went right and Jimmerson went left. He was dropped for a loss of seven back at the 16. Switzer, facing a stiff wind, went into his bag of tricks next. Jimmerson pitched back to Peacock, who quick-kicked the ball 32 yards out to the Oklahoma 48. Switzer was playing for field position and counting on his defense.

On the first down play, Sooner linebacker Daryl Hunt hit Ohio State's Ron Springs behind the line of scrimmage, but the Buckeye tailback was able to still able to get two yards. On the next play, and Gerald threw towards his tight end, Bill Jaco. OU defensive back Darrol Ray was flagged for pass interference, giving Ohio State the ball at the Oklahoma 16-yard line.

On first down at the Sooner 16, Springs pushed up inside for a 3 yard gain. On second down, Oklahoma jumped off sides. In an obvious error, the officials only marched off four yards, instead of a five-yard penalty, clearly spotting the ball on the Sooner nine-yard line. On second-and-three at the OU nine yard line, Payton bulled inside but came up a yard short. Gerald option keeper to the right, plunging into the pile for the necessary yard, first and goal at the Oklahoma five yard line.

Ohio State then went their full house T-Formation, their "no nonsense, here we come right at ya" short yardage backfield. Payton smashed the middle, moving the ball just short of the goal line. Coach Hayes sent Jeff Logan into the line, but the Sooners stacked him up for no gain. Payton ran back into the huddle, and everyone in the stadium knew who was going to carry the ball.

Payton blasted off left tackle and into the end zone for the tying touchdown at 20-20. Janakievski's extra point put Ohio State out front at 21-20, at the 8:04 mark of the third quarter, all was happy in Buckeye heaven.

As a heavy rain began to fall, Orosz's kickoff carried into the end zone. As the Sooners took the field, senior reserve quarterback Dean Blevins was in the huddle. Switzer had seen

enough of freshman Jay Jimmerson, who had been ineffective while losing two fumbles and a third on an exchange.

Overstreet got "zero" on first down, and Blevins followed with a gain of only three on second down. On third-and-seven at the OU 23, Blevins went play action pass, and dropped back to pass looking for Sooner split end Steve Rhodes down the right sideline.

Throwing into a very stiff wind, Blevins' pass was held up and fluttered as the Rhodes slipped and fell on the wet turf. Ohio State's Kelton Dansler, a Buckeye defensive end who had dropped back into coverage, intercepted at the Oklahoma 39, returning it to the Sooner 33 before he also slipped and fell on the wet turf. It was the *fifth* Sooner turnover.

First, it was Springs up the middle for six, then Gerald kept it for five and a first down. He again kept the ball on an option to the left, but was slammed into by both Budget and Henderson for no gain. Gerald injured his wrist, and had to leave the game. Sophomore Greg Castignola replaced him in the huddle.

Jeff Logan went up the middle for six, carrying the ball to the 16. With three backs in their full house backfield again, Castignola faked up the middle and went back to pass. He threw over the middle for tight end Jimmy Moore in the end zone.

Luckily for the Buckeyes, the ball bounced off Oklahoma safety Bud Hebert at the two, and into Moore's hands for a touchdown. The Buckeyes' lead was now eight at 28-20, with 4:40 to go in the third quarter. But, then, they only had 4:40 left with the wind behind them, as well . . .



Elvis Peacock played well for the Sooners at Ohio State, gaining 58 yards on 11 carries and scoring the first and last touchdowns of the game.

(©1977 The Oklahoman)

Oklahoma started at the 20 after the Ohio State kickoff sailed into the end zone. Sims, hobbling on a bad ankle, re-entered the game. Peacock gained three on first down, Sims made a one-yard plunge into the line, then Peacock grabbed Blevins' perfect pitch wide on the corner for eight more and the first down. On first down, Blevins threw a strike to Rhodes for a gain of 15 yards. The Sooners were trying to fight back after Ohio State's 28 unanswered points appeared to have left them for dead. They weren't.

Blevins optioned right, pitching late to Peacock. The pitch was not handled cleanly, and luckily for Oklahoma, the ball rolled over the sidelines, but still gained two yards. Blevins, passing down the sidelines for Sims, who had ran a wheel pattern out of the OU backfield. Blevins, trying to make a big play, had thrown into double-coverage. The Buckeyes' Michael Guess went high to intercept the ball at the Ohio State 28-yard line. Guess slipped on the turf a few yards back. Oklahoma had now committed six turnovers after they had taken a 20-point lead.

The Ohio State took over with 2:39 left in the third quarter. Springs carried the ball twice, gaining four on first and second down. The Sooners figured Payton would haul the mail for the Buckeyes on third-and-two.

Guessing correctly, Oklahoma jumped into a gap defense, with nine men on the defensive line. It was close, but the freshman fullback plunged into the middle, picking up a close first down at the Ohio State 39 yard line.

Ohio State's Greg Castignola hit Ray Griffin with a swing pass out of the backfield good for ten yards to the Buckeye 49 yard line. After Ohio State was guilty of lining up off sides, Castignola's first down scramble from the Buckeye 44 across midfield for ten yards to the Oklahoma 46 yard line brought an end to the third period. The Buckeyes would have to solve a third-and-five situation. However . . .

The Sooners would now have the wind for the entire fourth quarter. Trailing by eight points, the Sooners would be heading to the north end zone, the closed end of the stadium, with the wind at their backs.

So far, 45 of the 48 points on the scoreboard, all but von Schamann's early 23-yard field goal in the second quarter, had been scored in the closed end of the stadium.

Starting the fourth quarter, Griffin carried for three, before being stopped on third down for a loss of two by Sooner defensive end Bruce Taton and safety Zac Henderson. Ohio State's high punt, after hitting one of their own coverage men, bounced ten yards back upfield and out of bounds. Oklahoma would once again start at the 20.

Jimmerson was re-inserted in at quarterback. Switzer still could not find the right replacement for Lott. The offense had sputtered ever since Lott went down early in the second quarter.

Kenny King, who had been nursing an arm injury, found six tough yards up the middle. Overstreet pitched in with a pair of yards on second down, and Jimmerson came up inches short on his third down carry outside left end.

With 12:15 to go, and the ball resting squarely of their own 30-yard line, Switzer gambled. On fourth down, Jimmerson kept the ball over right guard, and gained the important yard, and a new set of downs at the Sooner 31 yard line. Trailing by more than a touchdown, the Sooners needed to put a drive together and make some "Magic" happen.

On first down, a gang of tacklers stopped King up the middle for no gain. Peacock carried a pitchout for a gain of six, but when he was gang-tackled, and fumbled. OU tight end Victor Hicks, trailing the play, recovered. On third down, Peacock swept right, and looked as if he wanted to throw the ball back to Jimmerson, but was in trouble.

Peacock faked a pass, and then was dropped back at the 31 for a loss of five. Looking at a fourth-and-ten, Switzer's only option was to punt the ball back to Ohio State. von Schamann did the honors, punting it 38 yards to the Ohio State 31 yard line.

Time was quickly becoming the Sooners' enemy, as the Buckeyes took control at their own 31 with 9:45 remaining. Hayes would go to his ground game to burn time off the clock, would not throw the ball. True to form, Castignola kept for nine yards over left guard. Payton picked up the first down when he blasted over right tackle for three yards.

Griffin ran for three yards on first down to the Buckeye 45 and then crossed into Sooner territory on a six yarder just short of the first down marker. At the Oklahoma 49, Payton gain three more and a first down at the OU 46 yard line.

Springs picked up one inside on a draw play on second down. Bruce Taton dropped



Crunch time in Columbus: With the game at a critical juncture and not much time left, Dean Blevins re-enters the game and guides the Sooner offense to a touchdown and field goal in the last 1:29 to bring the Sooners back to win, 29-28 in one of the great "Sooner Magic" moments in Oklahoma history.

(©1977 The Oklahoman)

Castignola for a loss of two at the Sooner 46 yard line. Ohio State, with Castignola optioning right on third down and 11, was swarmed by Oklahoma's Dave Hudgens and then clocked by OU tackle Phil Tabor, causing a fumble. The ball bounced back eleven yards, and Oklahoma middle guard Reggie Kinlaw dove on it for an Oklahoma recovery at the Ohio State 43. Oklahoma still had some life with 6:23 left in the game, but they had to go *now . . .*

With no time for mistakes, Blevins re-entered the game for Oklahoma. A well-executed pitch back to Overstreet gained four to the Ohio State thirty nine yard line, and then King shot through a hole provided by center Paul Tabor and his right guard Greg Roberts for ten yards, moving the ball to the Buckeye 29-yard line.

On first down, Ohio State's defense swarmed Peacock, cutting off the outside and allowing him nowhere to run. Peacock lost two yards. Oklahoma end Rhodes ran a quick stop route, and Blevins stuck it on his numbers at the Ohio State 20 yard line. *Third-and-1.*

On the inside belly play, a scheme that had worked for OU all day, Overstreet took the

Book 3

ball over left tackle Karl Baldischwieler to the 18, and Oklahoma had a fresh set of downs.

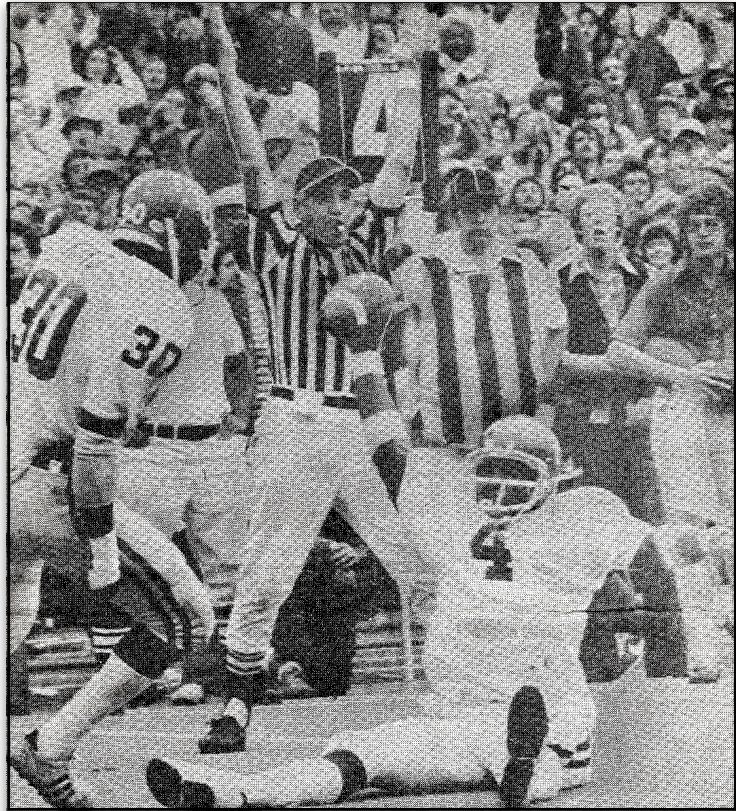
OU liked the inside belly so much they called it again for Overstreet over the left side for five, and Oklahoma had a second down and five with 4:00 remaining. On second down, Overstreet took a pitch from Blevins in the backfield, broke a tackle, and was just able to fight through the trash and get back to the line of scrimmage. *Now it was third-and-five . . .*

Ohio State stopped Peacock for a gain of one on third down, so Oklahoma now had a critical fourth-and-four from the 12. King was stopped at the Buckeye 10 yard line, but Ohio State middle guard Aaron Brown jumped off sides, and the penalty moved the ball five yards to the Buckeye seven yard line. Oklahoma had new life and a fresh set of downs with first and goal to go at the Ohio State seven yard line.

David Adkins stopped Peacock for two yards on first-and-goal. Overstreet took a great pitch from Blevins running left, but could not get the corner, and running through two Buckeye defenders to get out of bounds after gaining two.

Finding it difficult to gain real estate, Blevins kept over left tackle, and in heavy traffic gained a yard, pushing just inside the Ohio State two yard line.

This was it. Oklahoma knew it, Ohio State knew it. If Oklahoma had any visions of winning this game, the ball had to go into the end zone *now*. If Ohio State had any willful determination to stop the Sooner threat, they would have to stop Oklahoma now.



Elvis Peacock sits in the Ohio State end zone as the official signals "touchdown" with 1:29 left to set up the dramatic 29-28 finish in Columbus, Ohio.
(The Oklahoman)



Sooner split end Steve Rhodes has a big catch for an Oklahoma first down in the winning drive. *AP Photo*

Oklahoma now faced a critical fourth down, just inside the two-yard line and the game on the line. This time, from the left hash mark, Blevins started right on the option, but pitched quickly to Peacock, who ran over Ohio State's Todd Bell and Michael Guess at the goal line, driving into the end zone. Oklahoma was now down 28-26, and a two-point conversion would tie the game.

The ball was placed at the three in the middle of the field. Blevins ran option right, and pitched to Peacock. This was the exact same play as the touchdown. Ohio State's Paul Ross and Michael Guess hit Peacock at the four yard line, this time stopping him for no gain at the three yard line. The 2-point try had failed, and with only 1:29 left, Buckeye players and coaches, along with 88,119 fans celebrated wildly, thinking the game was over.

Big mistake. BIG, HUGE mistake . . .

As Oklahoma lined up for the kickoff, every one of the 88,119 fans in the stadium, all the coaches, everyone on the ABC-TV broadcast crew, and the millions of fans watching knew they were about to see an Oklahoma an onside kick.

von Schamann had Bud Hebert holding the ball on the right hash mark on the 40 yard line. To his right, only two Sooners stood between the hash mark and the sidelines. To von Schamann's left, however, was seven defensive backs and receivers, ready to steal

possession of the ball away to give the Sooners one last chance at pulling this wild and crazy game out.

von Schamann's kick went to the left and skittered across the surface to the 50 yard line, where Ohio State reserve quarterback Michael Straheen attempted to make a low, diving catch of the ball on the opposite hash mark. The ball caromed off Straheen's right shoulder pad, and that's when the fun started.

A huge pileup ensued, with Bud Hebert (#33), Darrol Ray (#3), Sherwood Taylor (#31), Mike Babb (#14), Basil Banks (#17) and Lee Hover (#9) converging on the free kick that was now anybody's to claim. After the referees sorted through the pile that saw Hebert, Ray, Taylor, and Babb fighting for the ball, it was Babb who emerged with the ball for OU, holding it high in the air on the 50-yard line. Wow . . . *this was getting good!*

All Oklahoma needed a field goal, so with a 1:21 and two timeouts left, scoring a touchdown was not a priority.

On first down from the 50 yard line, Blevins coolly showed option play action and straightened up to hit Rhodes with a quick pass at the Ohio State 41. Rhodes calmly side-stepped the Buckeye safety and took it down to the Ohio State 33 for a 17-yard gain.

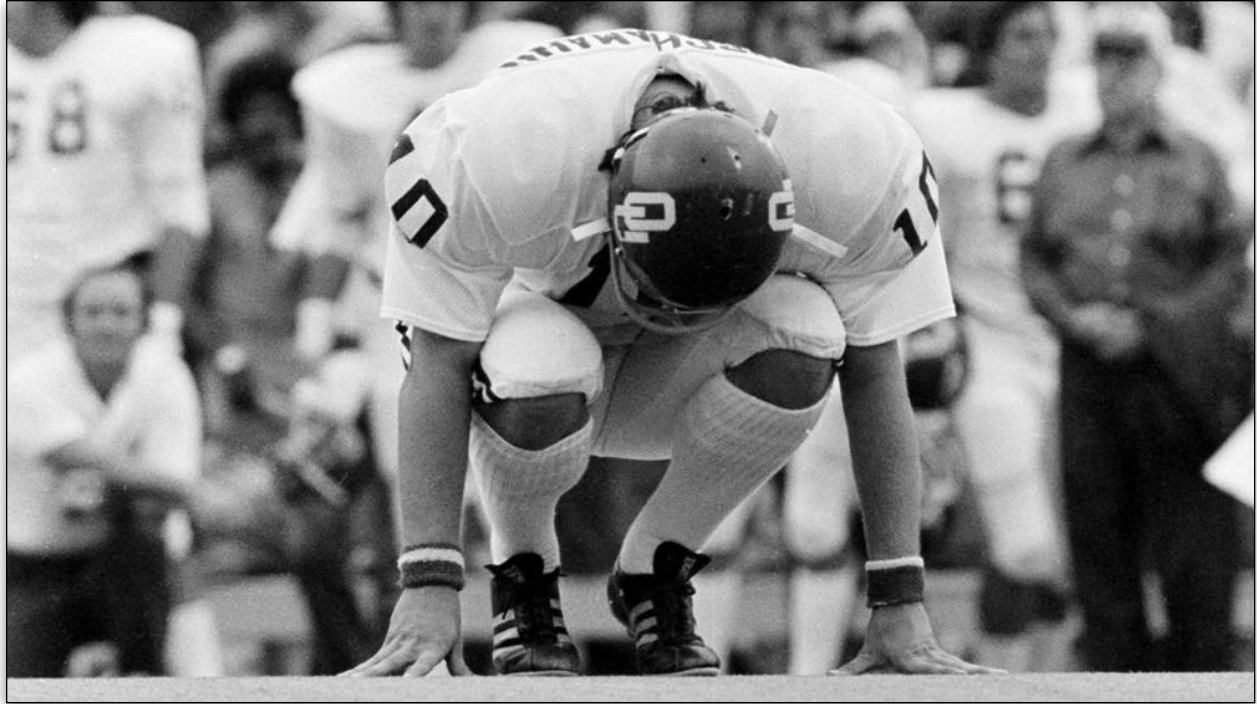
With 1:00 to play, King rolled up the middle, picking up six important yards on first down to the Ohio St. 26 yard line where he was tackled by Ohio State's Dave Adkins.

With 0:44 left, Overstreet was stopped for just a yard on second down, and there were only 0:18 seconds left. Oklahoma used one of its two time outs and talked about what they wanted to run on third down.

After the ball was marked ready for play, King slanted three tough yards to the Ohio State 23, obviously getting the ball to where the Sooner braintrust wanted it for the field goal attempt. With 0:06 left, Oklahoma called its last time out.

von Schamann, calmly walked to the 31 yard line and placed his kicking tee about two feet inside the right upright 41 yards away. David Overstreet came over and shook his hand, wishing him good luck, and walked back to rejoin the field goal team in their huddle.

von Schamann was now alone, so he squatted at the 33 yard line, feet together, head bowed and the fingertips on both hands touching the turf in a brief moment of meditation



With 0:06 seconds left in the game, Uwe von Schamann clears his mind before the winning kick.
(The Oklahoman)

to clear his mind . . .

von Schamann was a perfect 5-5 in field goal attempts thus far in the 1977 season, but perhaps the reason for his perfection up to that point had been overlooked because of a problem in the Oklahoma kicking game that went all the way back to 1975, the last year the Sooners won the national championship. Let Barry Switzer tell it . . .

"A couple of years before, we had issues with deep snapping. We had Tinker Owens punting in '75 because we didn't have a damn center. I knew Tinker could catch anything that was snapped back to him because he had great hands. But he was the third-best punter on our team. We had a bad snap the year before in the (1976) Texas game, and it ended up in a 6-6 tie.

"We didn't have a center for deep snaps in 1975. So it turns out in 1976, we had an equipment manager, a senior named Kevin Craig, 6'-5" 235 pound kid from Ardmore, Oklahoma, that snapped the ball pretty good, a helluva lot better than what we had. So we made him our deep snapper in 1976. He did fine until the Texas game came down to the extra point a minute and a half left to break a 6-6 tie with Texas in front of 75,000 people.

We were playing Nebraska (in 1975) for the Big Eight championship and had a real high snap that Tinker barely got off. We battled that problem all year and even had to resort to using the quick kick a few times (10, to be exact) with Little Joe (Washington)."

That's when Switzer ran to Jerry Pettibone and screamed, "Jerry I want you to find us the best deep snapper in America." Oh, yeah . . . mistakes in the kicking game . . .

Pettibone, OU's recruiting co-ordinator, called dozens of high school coaches. He heard from someone that the son of Bill Lucky, the coach at Lamar Consolidated right outside Houston, was a great deep snapper. And he was. Pettibone called Switzer and said, 'I found our guy. He's from Rosenberg, Texas.'" Switzer simply told Pettibone: "Go get him."

"Mark Lucky was a great snapper," Switzer said some years later, "probably the best I ever saw, and the best we ever had at Oklahoma. We didn't have any problems after that."

Lucky was now over the ball, and the 6'-1" 240 pound freshman was calm and ready to do *exactly* what they brought him to Oklahoma to do: snap the ball, and snap it perfectly, in moments like this . . .

Bud Hebert came to Oklahoma as a receiver/defensive back out of Beaumont, Texas, as a part of that legendary 1975 recruiting class. But with OU being a Wishbone team, Hebert wouldn't be catching many passes, and when he found OU secondary coach Bobby Proctor loved the 4.3 speed he could bring as a safety in Proctor's defensive backfield, Hebert saw his last days as a receiver — except for the fact he was von Schamann's favorite holder because of his sure hands. Now, Bud Hebert was kneeling at the spot, waiting on von Schamann to tell him he was ready . . .

With just 0:06 left in this titanic intersectional struggle, it had come down to this: the Sooners needed one perfect snap, one perfect hold, and one perfect kick.

As the Sooners moved into position to get their splits and alignment exact, Woody Hayes, on the Ohio State sideline, called a time out, his version of the "Chinese Torture Test" for place kickers like von Schamann. More time to think about the kick, which, in this situation, is just as much mental as it is physical.

von Schamann, perhaps feeling the pressure of the moment, turned and walked away and took his helmet off. He brushed his hair aside with his hand. The Ohio State crowd,

doing their part, began chanting, *"Block that kick! Block that kick!"*, all 88,119 of them, minus the Sooner fans scattered

"Maestro" von Schamann leads 88,119 Ohio State fans in famous "Block that kick!" cheer. ➤

Photo ©Sports Illustrated



somewhere in that mass of humanity. Uwe

put his helmet on, and then something strange happened, even for a kicker . . .

Suddenly, there stood Uwe von Schamann in the middle of Ohio State stadium, index fingers raised like he was a Maestro in an orchestra pit, leading 88,119 fans in the *"Block that kick!"* cheer. Truly amazing!

Thomas Lott, the injured Sooner quarterback, stood on the Oklahoma sidelines behind Barry Switzer, who was on both knees. Lott recalled, "Uwe had ice-water veins. When I saw him leading that chant, I remember coach Switzer was down on his knees. I tapped him on the shoulder and said, 'You can get up. He's going to make this.'"

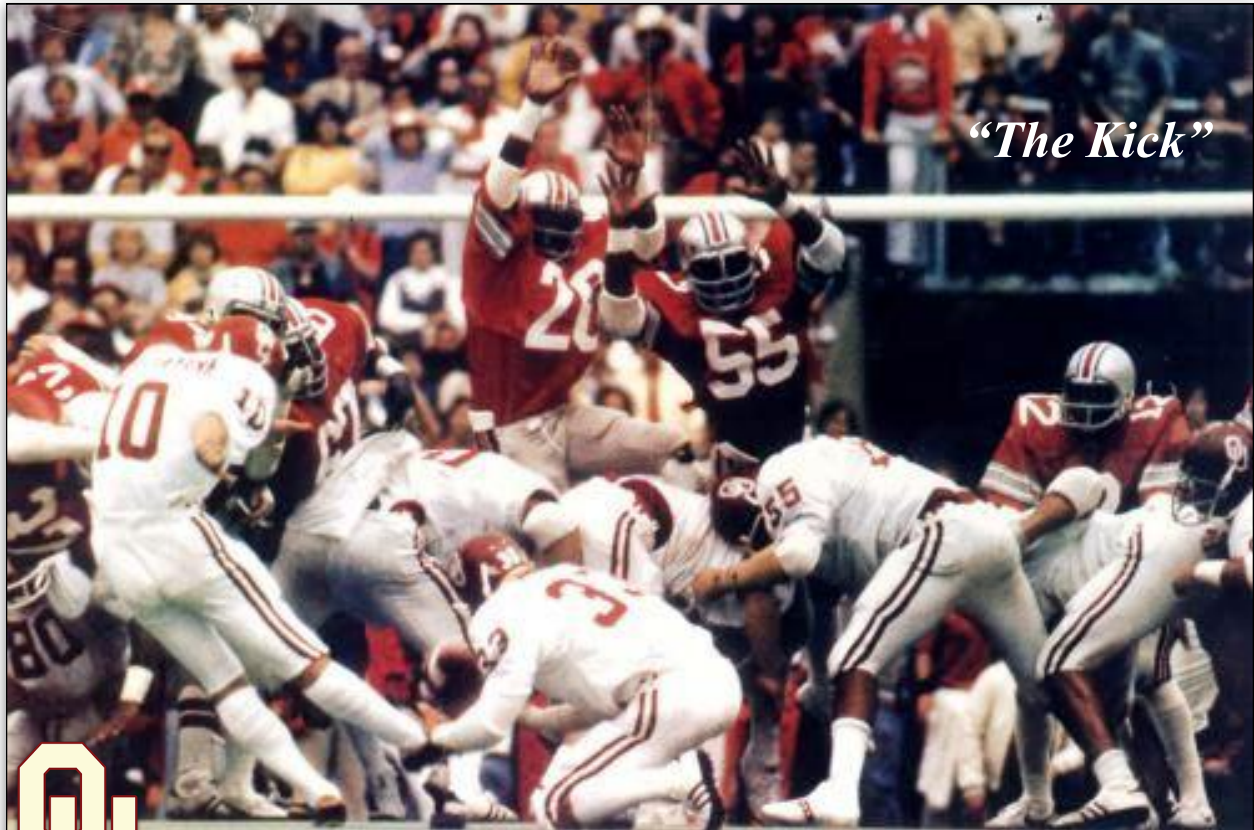
Funny, you don't have to retreat too many years into Oklahoma's glorious football history to a time when another game, a huge intersectional contest occurred involving Oklahoma and another German-born kicker new to the game of football.

That young man, Tennessee kicker Karl Kremser, was one of the most feared kickers in college football when he lined up for a dead, straight away 43 yarder to win the 1968 Orange Bowl against Oklahoma. He had already beaten LSU at the gun that year, and would win the 1968 Alabama game with a late field goal as well.

Kremser stood over his kick, with his Volunteers having a golden opportunity to defeat the Oklahoma Sooners after OU had roared out to a 19-0 halftime lead. But Tennessee had battled back, and at 26-24, the Vols could nip Oklahoma 27-26 if Kremser's kick could find its way home between the uprights with 0:07 seconds to play.

Kremser had a great snap, a great hold, and his booming kick rose deep and high into the Miami night . . .

Enough of that for now, back to 1977 in Columbus, Ohio, and the game at hand.



Classic
Photo
1977

Columbus Day 1977: Ohio State defenders leap in vain attempting to block Uwe von Schamann's 41 yard field goal with three seconds remaining as Oklahoma defeats the Buckeyes 29-28 in Columbus, Ohio, September 24, 1977. The Sooners jumped to an early 20-0 first half lead only to trail 28-20 before scoring nine points in the last 1:41 to win this first-ever meeting in a thrilling game where "Sooner Magic" prevailed as von Schamann's epic kick sailed deep and true. (©1977 Sports Illustrated)

Oklahoma lined up, with Hebert kneeling down to hold the snap from Mark Lucky.

All the running, tackling, and all the defensive coverages and strategies had been played out, all the time outs called, and the winner of the first-ever Oklahoma versus Ohio State football game boiled down to this moment.

Extending his hands forward, Hebert called for the ball, and Lucky's bullet-like snap was on his palms in a nano-second. Hebert fielded the snap cleanly and put it on the tee, rotating the laces away to ensure a good strike on the ball.

von Schamann buried his foot in the ball, and it left the launching point quickly. A split-second went by, and Hebert and von Schamann watched as the kick arced high and true. Twenty other bodies lay mangled and twisted in the pile of legs and arms that occurs when all-out effort to block a field goal is expended. Only the speed of the camera lenses could

catch the drama of the play known as "The Kick." And that play, destined to become the next chapter in the history of *"Sooner Magic,"* would live on forever.

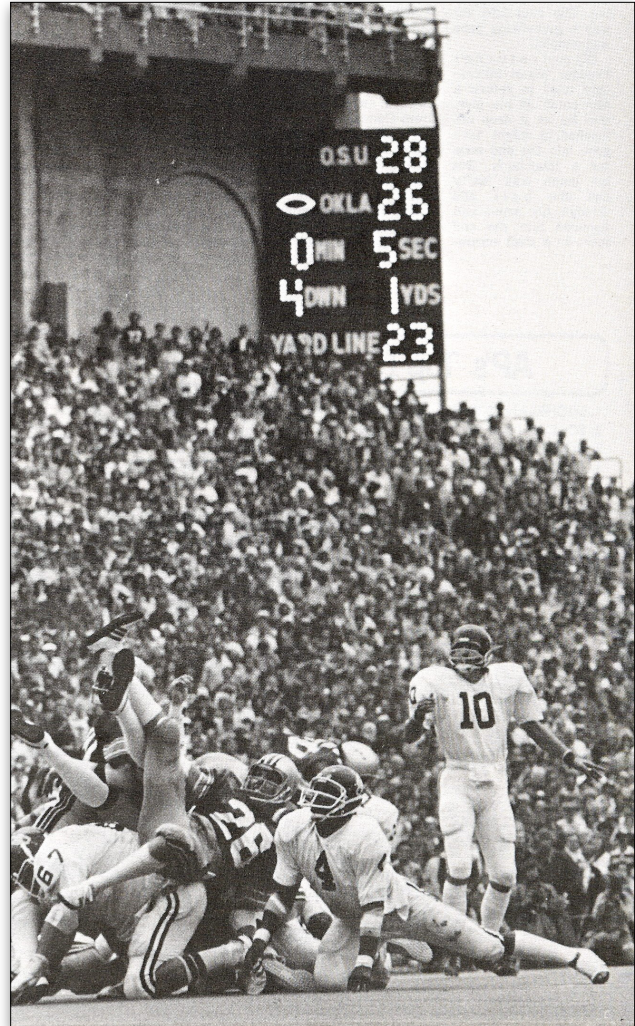
The play is now simply called, "The Kick," and von Schamann booted the ball

The photo at right tells the story with 0:05 left, all eyes watch the ball as von Schumann's kick sails home. ©1977The Oklahoman ►

over a desperate, straining Ohio State defense, to split the uprights with a kick that would have been good from 60 yards. Game over, Sooners win, 29-28.

Maybe it is only fitting to end this story the way it began, re-telling it once more . . .

With :06 seconds left, Sooner fans back in Oklahoma huddled in front of their TV sets with the ABC network sound turned down, and the Voice of the Oklahoma Sooners, Gary Johnson, describing the action over the airwaves of KTOK AM-1000 in his husky, emotional delivery . . .



"Bud Hebert moves back now, he'll drop to one knee and hold at the 31, a 41-yard attempt by von Schamann, the wind at his back . . . There's the ball, it's down, the kick is up . . . it's away . . . it's long enough . . . *it's long enough! It's GOOD! Oklahoma wins it!*"

"It's all over! The Sooners, von Schamann with :03 seconds to go, a 41-yard field goal, they are storming the field, Oklahoma, the fans are out on the field, there are :03 seconds to go . . . the Buckeyes are down on the ground, they cannot move, they're in shock, *I'm in shock*, the whole *world* is in shock right now as the Sooners have pulled it out, on von Schamann field goal from 41 yards . . ."

"Let's go home happy . . ."



In a joyous moment of elation, OU's Uwe von Schamann and Bud Hebert celebrate the wing kick. (AP Photo)

The Oklahoma's players and fans on the OU sideline stormed the field, in a wild celebration, as Sooner players dog-piled von Schamann. Just a few yards away, Ohio State players, as ABC's Keith Jackson described it, "are laying prostate one the field, pounding the turf in frustration, walking dismally away."

Meanwhile, the game clock still showed 0:03 left in the game. A penalty flag for delay of game was thrown against Oklahoma, and would be assessed on the kickoff. On the Ohio State bench, with his players gathered around him, Woody Hayes slammed his wrist watch to the ground in anger, a tantrum-like display his players had seen many times before . . .

The Sooners kicked off from the 35, and von Schamann booted it short down the left side, where three Sooners jumped up to try to catch the ball before it fell out of bounds.

Ohio State snapped the ball on their 33-yard line with 0:02 left, time for one last play. Castignola looking to throw, scrambled instead for 14 yards before being tackled by Dave Hudgens at mid-field, and that was it. Oklahoma won a thriller, 29-28.

Statistics

Oklahoma

Rushing		C	Yds.
Sims	.....	11	60
Peacock	.....	11	58
Lott	.....	12	43
King	.....	9	29
Overstreet	.....	12	25
Rogers	.....	2	15
Rhodes	.....	2	15
Blevins	.....	3	7
Jimmerson	.....	10	4

Passing		A	C	Yds.
Blevins	.....	5	3	44

Receiving		C	Yds.
Rhodes	.....	3	44

Punting		K	Avg.
von Schamann	.....	3	36.2

Ohio State

Rushing		C	Yds.
Springs	.....	14	64
Gerald	.....	16	37
Payton	.....	9	35
Castignola	.....	5	18
R. Griffin	.....	7	16
Harrell	.....	1	7
Loren	.....	1	6
Volley	.....	1	0

Passing		A	C	Yds.
Castignola	.....	2	2	29
Gerald	.....	4	0	0

Receiving		C	Yds.
Moore	.....	1	16
R. Griffin	.....	1	13

Punting		K	Avg.
McKee	.....	5	35.4

Game in Figures

	OU	Ohio St.
First Downs	.....18	14
Rushing Yardage	.. 71-259	54-173
Passing Yardage	..... 44	29
Total Offense	.....303	202
Passes	..... 3-5	2-6
Interceptions	..... 0	2
Fumbles-Lost	..... 7-4	3-2
Punts	..... 3-36	5-36
Penalties and Yards	..... 7-70	4-40

Attendance: 88,119



Oklahoma's Uwe von Schamann jumps for joy just after his 41-yard field goal with 0:03 left on the clock wins it for the Sooners. Ohio State's players lay in dejection on the turf of Ohio State's stadium after failing to block the kick.

(Sports Illustrated)

It was the most points scored against Ohio State in the last 49 games, covering more than four seasons. von Schamann was named Chevrolet's offensive player of the game.

Woody Hayes was not a good sport leaving the field, having viciously slapped away the hands of one OU staff member as he extended for a good-willed handshake. Hayes did not even mention the OU game in his post-game comments.



Taken from an old ABC-TV video tape, Bud Hebert sets the ball on the tee as Uwe von Schamann steps into his epic 41-yard game-winner at Ohio State in 1977. That's Oklahoma coach Barry Switzer is on his hands and knees (white shirt) in the background as von Schamann strides into the kick. A classic moment in OU history.

Point Parade

Sooners 29, Ohio St. 28

Ohio State	0	14	14	0	—	28
Oklahoma	17	3	0	9	—	29

— 1st Qtr. —

Time	OU	Ohio St.	Who and How
11:59	7	0	Peacock 33 yd run w/fumble (von Schamann kick)
11:05	14	0	Sims 15 yd run (von Schamann kick)
3:29	17	0	von Schamann 23 yd FG

— 2nd Qtr. —

12:58	20	0	von Schamann 33 yd FG
10:32	20	7	Ron Springs 30 yd run (Janakievski kick)
9:46	20	14	Rod Gerald 19 yd run (Janakievski kick)

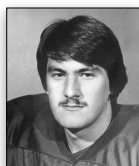
— 3rd Qtr. —

8:04	20	21	Joel Payton 1 yd run (Janakievski kick)
4:04	20	28	Jimmy Moore 16 yd pass from Greg Castignola (Janakievski kick)

— 4th Qtr. —

1:29	26	28	Peacock 33 yd run (2-point try failed)
0:03	29	28	von Schamann 41 yd FG

Attendance — 88,119



von Foot



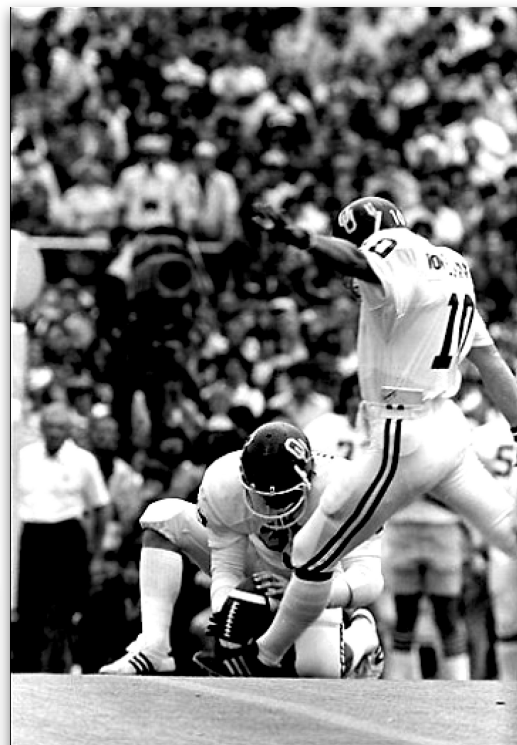
Elvis Peacock



Billy Sims



Barry Switzer



OU's Bud Hebert sets the ball perfectly on the tee as Uwe von Schamann steps into his 41-yard field goal that gave Oklahoma a 29-28 win over Ohio State in Columbus. (AP/WideWorld Photo)

Switzer, who saw the hand-slapping incident as he looked for coach Hayes himself to shake his hand, decided it would be better to just head on in to the Sooner locker room.

His Sooner squad had not played particularly well against the Buckeyes, having lost 4 of 7 fumbles while throwing two interceptions. *Six turnovers* against the # 2-ranked team in the country and the Sooners still win?

Barry Switzer told reporters in the OU dressing room, "I knew he'd make the field goal. Forty-one yards was nothing for Uwe. Only thing I was worried about was it being blocked. I wasn't worried about Mark Lucky or the snap. I wasn't worried about the holder (Bud Hebert). But you've always got to worry about protection."

Oklahoma quarterback Dean Blevins echoed that same confidence in the Sooner locker room after the game. "We were down (28-20) late in the fourth quarter, and folks were counting us out. We hadn't done anything offensively. But this was a team loaded with confidence.

"After the onside, we still had to get in range for the field goal. But we threw another stop route. Kenny King got a few yards. Then it was about positioning for Uwe. I just tried to calm everyone down in the huddle and reminded them to all to do their jobs. We knew if we did that, we could win this, and we did."

Uwe von Schamann talked about his successful on-side kick with the press, saying, "I didn't want to kick it to the end guy, because if he lets it go, it goes out of bounds. Whatever happened, I wanted it to be on the field of play. So I told Bobby Proctor, that guy second from the end, that's the guy. I drilled the ball, and sure enough it ricocheted off him. I don't think I'd ever tried an onside before in a game. I've kicked a lot of extra points, because we are a scoring machine. Not an onside, though."

Bud Hebert, von Schumann's holder on the kick said, "If the snap had been high or low at all, it would've offset the timing and they would've blocked it. Mark's snap was *perfect*."

About his 41-yard game winner, von Schamann said, "I got a great snap, a great hold, and as soon as I kicked it, I knew it was good. Right down the middle. Next thing I know, I'm underneath a pile of players. If it hadn't been for (offensive lineman) Karl Baldischwiler bracing everybody, I would've been crushed right here in Columbus."



For Sooner fans, here is a collage of the last 1:29 of Oklahoma's epic win over Ohio State 47 years ago in Columbus.

Switzer, proud of his kicker, said, "He could've made it from 60! The ball cleared the uprights over the top."

In the 47 years since that awesome contest in Columbus, Ohio, memories abound . . .

In a moment of reflection (2016), 39 years after his epic 3-pointer at Ohio State, von Schamann said, "Every player has one of those games where something - I don't know if it's divine intervention - but everybody has one of those games where everything just goes right. That game for me was Ohio State."

Hebert, who roomed with von Schamann on the Ohio State road trip in 1977, told Uwe the morning of the game in Columbus that he had dreamed von Schamann would win the game for the Sooners by kicking a decisive field goal.

"People in Oklahoma call it '*The Kick*,'" Hebert said with a laugh, "Mark Lucky always referred to it as '*The Snap*,' but I like to refer to it as '*The Hold*.'"

Whatever one chooses to call it, Sooner fans will always say it was "*Sooner Magic* . . ."

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