



**Game Notes**  
USC vs. Ohio State  
Friday, December 29, 2017  
AT&T Stadium, Arlington, Texas



**Tonight's game is the 82<sup>nd</sup> Goodyear Cotton Bowl Classic, and the ninth played at AT&T Stadium in Arlington.**

**The game is the 15<sup>th</sup> Classic between conference champions/co-champions.**

**Ohio State won the coin toss, and elected to defer its choice to the second half. USC then chose to receive to start the 82<sup>nd</sup> Classic.**

**The Classic kicked off at 7:40 pm Central time.**

### **FIRST QUARTER**

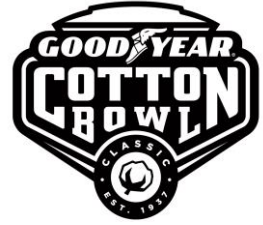
**OHIO STATE (12:25): J.T. Barrett** 1-yard TD rush (**Sean Neurnberger** kick). The Buckeyes drive was 5 plays, 19 yards and took 1:12 after a fumble return of 20 yards by **S Damon Webb** to the USC 19. Ohio State ran 3 times for 10 yards and was 1-2 passing for 9 yards. **KEY PLAY:** 9-yard pass from Barrett to TE **Marcus Baugh**, who caught a pass over the middle to convert a 3<sup>rd</sup>-and-6 play from the USC 15-yard line to the Trojans 6. **Ohio State 7, USC 0.**

Barrett's TD set the Ohio State single-season record for touchdowns responsible for with 46 (35 passing, 11 rushing).

**END OF THE FIRST QUARTER: Ohio State 7, USC 0**



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## SECOND QUARTER

**OHIO STATE (14:55):** Neurnberger 26-yard field goal. The Buckeyes drive was 13 plays, 83 yards and took 5:06 after a USC punt. Ohio State rushed 9 times for 40 yards, was 2-3 yards passing for 48 yards, and the Buckeyes were penalized once for 5 yards on the drive. **KEY PLAY:** 16-yard run over the left side by Barrett to convert a 4<sup>th</sup>-and-2 play from the USC 32 to the Trojans 16. **Ohio State 10, USC 0.**

OSU had 4 chunk plays (2 runs of 10+ yards and 2 passes of 15+ yards) during the drive. Those 4 plays accounted for 74 of the 83 yards on the scoring drive.

**OHIO STATE (14:42):** Webb 23-yard interception return for a touchdown (Neurnberger kick). **KEY PLAY:** On the first play from scrimmage at the USC 18 after the previous Ohio State FG, USC QB **Sam Darnold** threw left, and the pass was intercepted by Webb at USC 23 and returned for a TD. **Ohio State 17, USC 0.**

It was OSU's first interception return for a touchdown this season, and it was Webb's team-leading fifth interception. It was only the second time this season that Darnold was intercepted for a score (**DeShon Elliot** 38 yards vs. Texas – 9/16/17).

It was the first interception return for a score in the Classic since 2009 when Ole Miss' **Marshay Green** returned a Texas Tech pass 65 yards for a score, and it was the first interception-return TD in the Classic in AT&T Stadium.

**OHIO STATE (5:27):** Barrett 28-yard run (Neurnberger kick). The Buckeyes went 2 plays, 59 yards and took 45 seconds after a fumble return of 13 yards by LB **Jerome Baker** to the OSU 41. The Buckeyes rushed one time for 28 yards, were 1-1 passing for 16 yards, and USC was penalized once for 15 yards. **KEY PLAY:** On the first play from scrimmage after the fumble recovery, Barrett threw to RB **Mike Weber** for a gain of 16 yards to the USC 43. The Trojans were penalized an additional 15 yards at the end of the play for a face mask to the USC 28. **Ohio State 24, USC 0.**



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## SECOND QUARTER-2

OSU had 2 chunk plays (1 rush of 10+ and 1 pass of 15+ yards) during the drive.

**USC (1:59): Ronald Jones II** 1-yard run (**Chase McGrath** kick). The Trojans went 3 plays, 15 yards and took 56 seconds after an USC recovery of a muffed punt by S Marvell Tell III at the OSU 15. USC rushed 2 times for 1 yards and was 1-1 passing for 14 yards. **KEY PLAY:** On 4<sup>th</sup>-and-18 at the USC 34, P **Reid Budrovich** punted 52 yards to the OSU 14, where Buckeyes PR **K.J. Hill** muffed the punt, and Tell recovered at the OSU 15. **Ohio State 24, USC 7.**

**HALFTIME: Ohio State 24, USC 7**

## FIRST HALF NOTES

**USC averaged 4.9 yards per play in the first half (201 yards/41 plays), while Ohio State averaged 5.9 yards per play (183 yards/31 plays).**

**USC had 6 chunk plays in the first half (2 rushes of 10+ yards and 4 passes for 15+ yards), 3 of which went for 20 yards or longer. Ohio State had 7 chunk plays (4 rush of 10+ and 3 passes of 15+), 2 of which went for 20 yards or longer.**

**It is ninth time that the Ohio State defense has held their opponent to 7 points or less in the first half this season.**

**All 4 touchdowns in the first half were either a turnover for a TD or were a result of turnovers on the previous possession.**



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**THIRD QUARTER**

**Ohio State exercised its option and chose to receive the second-half kickoff.**

**NO SCORING**

**END OF THIRD QUARTER: Ohio State 24, USC 7**

**FOURTH QUARTER**

**NO SCORING**

**FINAL SCORE: Ohio State 24, USC 7**

**SECOND HALF NOTES**

**The third and fourth quarters were only the second and third scoreless quarters in the Classic since 2010 (College Football Playoff Semifinal – Michigan State vs. Alabama – December 31, 2015 - first quarter).**

**This was the first scoreless half since the 1983 Classic (Pittsburgh vs. SMU; first half).**



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**POSTGAME NOTES**

**FINAL RECORDS:** Ohio State (12-2 overall; 8-1 Big Ten), USC (11-3 overall; 8-1 Pac-12).

**82<sup>ND</sup> GOODYEAR COTTON BOWL CLASSIC AWARDS**

**SANFORD TROPHY (Outstanding Offensive Player):**

Ohio State QB **J.T. Barrett** (11-17 passing, 114 yards; 16 rushes, 66 yards, 2 TD).

**McKNIGHT TROPHY (Outstanding Defensive Player)**

Ohio State S **Damon Webb** (5 total tackles, 5 solo tackles, 1 interception and return for 23 yards and a TD, 1 fumble recovery and return for 20 yards).

**ATTENDANCE:** 67,510; **TIME OF GAME:** 3:36

Ohio State had 10 chunk plays in the game (6 rushes of 10+ yards and 4 passes of 15+ yards), 4 of which went for 20 yards or longer. USC had 13 chunk plays (4 rushes of 10+ and 9 passes of 15+), 3 of which went for 20 yards or longer.

Ohio State's victory means that nine different programs have won the Goodyear Cotton Bowl Classic in the nine games played at AT&T Stadium.

Ohio State moves to 2-0 in the Goodyear Cotton Bowl Classic all-time, while USC drops to 1-1 in the Classic.

The Big Ten is now 4-1 in the Goodyear Cotton Bowl Classic, while the Pac-12 is 3-3 in the Classic.

Since 1999, 15 of the last 16 teams to lead at halftime have gone on to win the Cotton Bowl Classic (2015 Baylor the lone exception). Ohio State is 9-0 this season when leading at halftime, while USC is 1-2 when trailing at halftime.



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## POSTGAME NOTES-2

The 82<sup>nd</sup> Classic is the first New Year Six bowl game (2014-present) to have a scoreless half.

Ohio State snaps a seven-game losing streak to USC that dated back to the 1974 Rose Bowl.

Ohio State became the third different Big Ten team to win the Goodyear Cotton Bowl in the past four classics, joining Michigan State (Jan. 1, 2015) and Wisconsin (Jan. 2, 2017). The Buckeyes are 2-0 in the Classic, having defeated Texas A&M on Jan. 1, 1987.

Ohio State is now 2-0 at AT&T Stadium. The Buckeyes won the inaugural CFP National Championship Game over Oregon, 42-20, on January 12, 2015. Ohio State will be back in the stadium on Sept. 15 when they face TCU.

Ohio State is now 2-0 in NY6 (Non-Playoff) Bowls, adding tonight's win to its victory over Notre Dame in the Fiesta Bowl on Jan. 1, 2016. The Buckeyes are 23-25 all-time in bowl games.

Ohio State head coach **Urban Meyer** earned his 11th career bowl win tonight. That ties him with Alabama's **Nick Saban** and Utah's **Kyle Whittingham** for the most by active FBS coaches. Whittingham picked up his 11th win earlier this week in the Zaxby's Heart of Dallas Bowl, and Saban will get a chance to surpass the two when Alabama plays Clemson on New Year's Day in the Allstate Sugar Bowl.

USC outgained Ohio State in total yards, 413 to 277. The 136-yard advantage is the largest by the losing team in the Cotton Bowl Classic since 1962 when Mississippi outgained Texas, 319 to 183, but lost 12-7.



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### POSTGAME NOTES-3

Ohio State senior QB **J.T. Barrett** became the Big Ten Conference's all-time leader in total offense with 12,697 yards. He broke the record of 12,692 set by Purdue QB **Drew Brees** from 1997-2000.

Tonight's Classic marked the ninth time this season that Ohio State held its opponent to seven points or less in the first half this season. It was also the fourth time that the Buckeyes held an opponent to seven or less in a game.

Ohio State's 8 sacks and 14 tackles for loss are both season highs for the Buckeyes. The 8 sacks are the most by one team in any 2017 bowl game to date.

The 23-yard interception return for a touchdown by senior **S Damon Webb** was Ohio State's first INT return for a TD this season. The Buckeyes registered seven interception returns for scores last season and their total of eight over the last two seasons is the most in the FBS.

Ohio State junior CB **Denzel Ward** did not play in tonight's game and he will not return for his senior season with the Buckeyes in 2018. Ward wrestled with the decision to play (or not) throughout the bowl prep practices, leaving open his decision until game day. He elected today to sit out. Ward was a consensus All-American for the Buckeyes in 2017, leading the team with 15 pass break-ups and 17 total passes defended (two interceptions and 15 PBUs). He also contributed 37 tackles, including 30 solo stops.

-- 82ND GOODYEAR COTTON BOWL CLASSIC --