BRAINS AND BRAWN
Baldwin earns a master’s degree and a starting spot on the field

By Sammi Ragsdale, Athletics Communications

Student-athletes face a unique set of challenges in college, balancing academics and training for their sport. Redshirt senior Darryl Baldwin balances his responsibility admirably, earning his starting spot on the offensive line while pursuing a master’s degree in sport management.

“It’s a lot different than last year,” the Solon, Ohio, native said. “Football is a lot more intensive and school is just different than undergrad. It’s been a challenge, but I’m handling it well right now.”

The right tackle graduated from Ohio State in May 2014, with a degree in business marketing, collecting OSU Scholar-Athlete accolades three times and Academic All-Big Ten Conference honors two times during his undergraduate academic career. Rather than taking alternative classes to maintain full-time status for football, Baldwin decided to attend graduate school.

“I thought getting a master’s would help me in the real world after football,” Baldwin said. “I still had a fifth year, so it was either get a master’s or take a bunch of classes that wouldn’t necessarily advance my degree.”

Baldwin is the fourth Buckeye in the last 10 years to play football while earning a master’s degree, following in the footsteps of Marcus Freeman, Scott Sika and Ben Buchanan. According to Dr. Brian Turner, associate professor and program coordinator of sport management at Ohio State, Baldwin has already distinguished himself as a graduate student, sitting in the front row of his class and paying strict attention.

“I have a tremendous amount of respect for Darryl and his work ethic,” Dr. Turner said. “He is extremely motivated and is a fine representative of our university both on and off the field.”

The work ethic that has made Baldwin successful in the classroom earned him a starting spot on the offensive line. As a sophomore, he transitioned from defense to offense, backing up All-American Jack Mewhort at left tackle during the 2012 and 2013 seasons.

“After five years, it feels like a weight lifted off my shoulders,” Baldwin said about earning his starting spot. “I had to switch positions and it was rough the first year, but the second year it got better and now it’s great.”

Baldwin will experience a similar sense of relief when he earns his master’s degree, which Dr. Turner is certain he will do.

“Thousands of fans see him on Saturdays as a starting offensive lineman for the football team,” Dr. Turner said. “I get to see him in the classroom every Tuesday and Thursday morning working just as hard as he does on the field, striving to achieve academic goals.”

With such a strong work ethic, Baldwin is sure to succeed in any endeavor, whether athletic or academic, and make his alma mater proud.