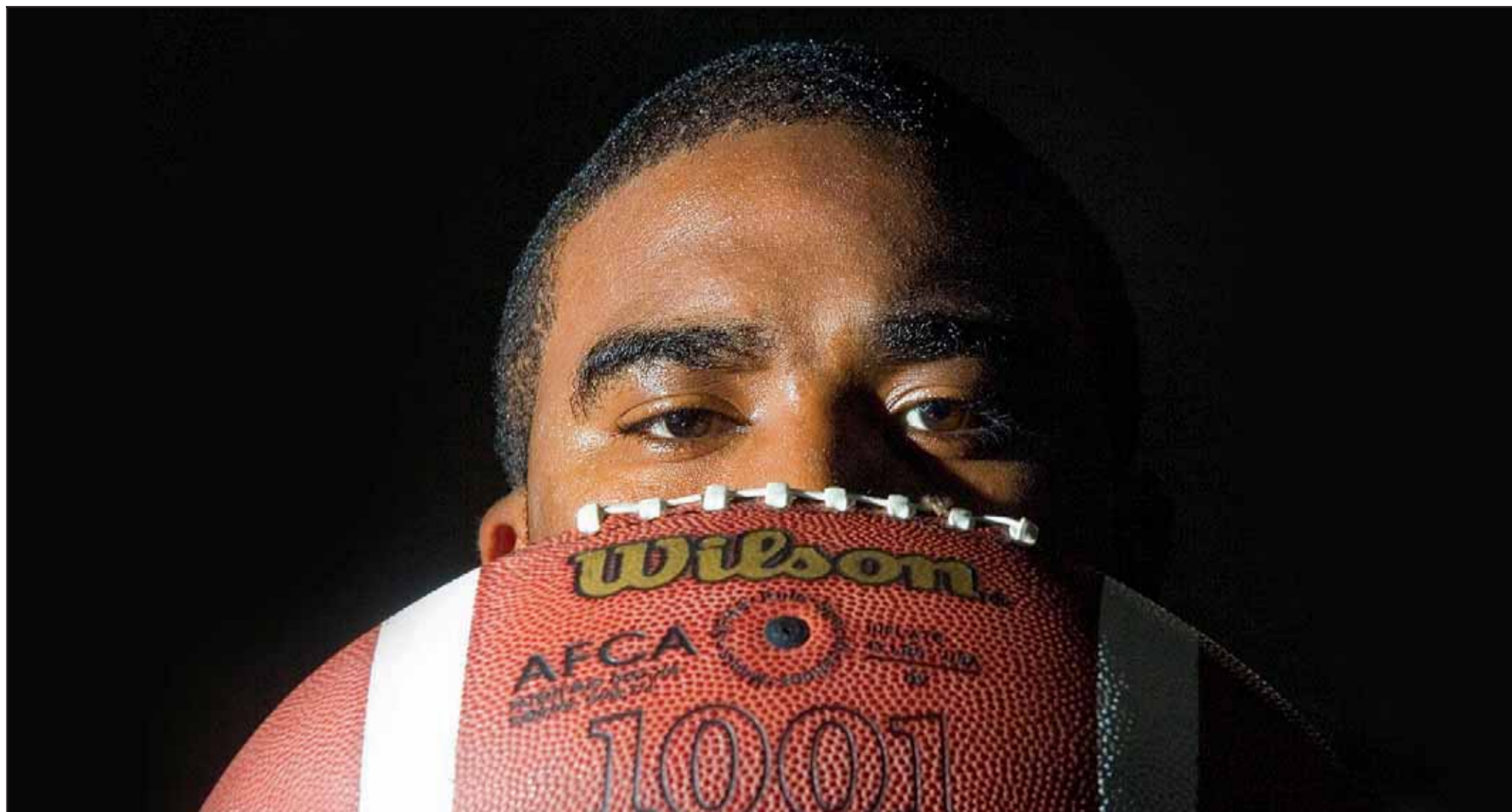




OHIO STATE AT TEXAS

8 TONIGHT | TV: ABC (CHANNEL 6) | RADIO: WBNS (1460 AM, 97.1 FM)



NEAL C. LAURON | DISPATCH

Ohio State quarterback Troy Smith is similar in a lot of ways to Vince Young, who took Texas to the national title last season.

His time has come

VINCE YOUNG'S CAREER STATISTICS

PASSING YARDS	PASSING TDS	RUSHING YARDS	RUSHING TDS
6,040	44	3,127	37

VINCE
 VS.
 TROY

TROY SMITH'S CAREER STATISTICS

PASSING YARDS	PASSING TDS	RUSHING YARDS	RUSHING TDS
3,475	27	963	13



Vince Young

Troy Smith

OSU's Smith would like to duplicate Young's run

By Ken Gordon
 THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Superficially, the comparisons between Vince Young and Troy Smith are easy:

Both are quarterbacks. Both wear No. 10. Both overcame the stereotype of being merely an "athlete" and learned to beat teams with their arms as well as their feet.

Young directed Texas to a huge win last year in Ohio Stadium, propelling the Longhorns to the national title. Smith hopes to return the favor tonight in Aus-

tin with a win that could lead top-ranked Ohio State to the crown this year.

"I think they're the same guy," Longhorns coach Mack Brown said. "One's taller, that's about it."

Not really. That's too tidy. A closer inspection reveals differences. Young's running ability is superior. Smith has developed into a more polished passer who is better at avoiding mistakes.

But those are all skin-deep comparisons. They don't reach the essence of

See **SMITH** Page **E8**

COMMENTARY

Loss to Texas could have lasting effect

The possible consequences of another Ohio State loss to Texas first struck me in a Cincinnati electronics store. I was helping my mother and my aunt shop for television sets when Mom casually mentioned to the salesman that her son was from Columbus.

He looked up and stared at me for a second, then tucked the two middle fingers of his right hand under a thumb and gave me a "Hook 'em horns" salute.

"That was some game last year, huh?" he said, suddenly wearing a wicked grin. The Houston-born sales associate didn't know me, didn't know I'm not an OSU graduate and didn't care. He probably wanted to spike my wallet and do a



BOB HUNTER

See **HUNTER** Page **E2**

Defense out to stop McCoy

Pressuring young QB priority for Ohio State

By Tim May
 THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Conventional wisdom says it should be easier to break a young Colt than it is to corral a Young veteran.

The proof might be learned tonight when No. 1 Ohio State puts its newcomer-laden defense to the test against No. 2 Texas, led by freshman quarterback Colt McCoy.

It's a sequel to the instant classic last year in Ohio Stadium. That's when Vince Young, befuddled by a veteran OSU defense until the middle of the game, rose to lead the Longhorns on the winning drive, capping it with a pinpoint touchdown pass to Limas Sweed.

It propelled the Longhorns toward the national championship. More than that, it proved that just when the Buckeyes defense thought it had Young frustrated



HARRY CABLUCK | ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jamaal Charles, Colt McCoy and the Texas offense had a big day in a win over North Texas, but Ohio State will provide a much tougher challenge.

and figured out, he found another way to win. But that's what Young, blessed with game-breaking ability with his feet and his arm, could do to a defense.

McCoy has yet to prove himself of being the same caliber. He threw three touchdown passes, ran for

one and rushed for 38 yards in the season-opening win over North Texas last week. But that was against a team that won two games the year before.

Tonight will be a tougher

See **DEFENSE** Page **E7**

NHL

Jackets try again with Zherdev

By Michael Arace
 THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

After months of sporadic negotiation between the Blue Jackets and restricted free agent Nikolai Zherdev, a recent flurry of talks is bringing the situation to a head.

Blue Jackets president and general manager Doug MacLean said the team made three recent offers: \$1.25 million for one year, \$3.9 million for two years and \$6.6 million for three years.

Zherdev's agent, Rolland Hedges, countered Thursday night. The counter, MacLean said, went as follows: \$2.75 million for one year, \$5.75 million for two years and \$9 million for three years.

Yesterday, MacLean said, the team made another offer — \$6.9 million for three years.

Zherdev had the day to think about it

See **ZHERDEV** Page **E2**