

STAINED GLASS

By Tom Schott

With two games remaining, the 1967 Boilermakers were standing tall with a 7-1 overall record and a 5-0 Big Ten Conference mark. They had won their last three games by an average of 27 points and ascended to No. 3 in the Associated Press national poll.

Two-time defending Big Ten champion Michigan State was up next Nov. 18 at Ross-Ade Stadium. It was Senior Day, and the Boilermakers produced a workmanlike 21-7 victory to clinch a share of the conference crown, their first since 1952. Purdue ran up and down the field to the tune of 315 rushing yards on 58 carries, a robust average of 5.4 yards per attempt. Junior flankerback Leroy Keyes continued his pursuit of the Heisman Trophy with 193 rushing yards; three receptions for 51 yards, including a 20-yard touchdown catch; and a 13-yard touchdown pass to senior end Jim Beirne. Junior fullback Perry Williams added 94 ground yards and a touchdown.

Defensively, Purdue limited Michigan State, which had won just two games all season, to 233 yards of total offense (125 rushing and 108 passing). Five Boilermakers recorded double-figure tackle totals, led by junior linebacker Dick Marvel and senior end George Olion with 15 and 13, respectively. Senior defensive back Dennis Cirbes had an interception and senior defensive back Bob Corby recovered a fumble.

The win snapped a four-game Purdue losing streak to Michigan State, and the Boilermaker seniors finished with a three-year home record of 13-2.

All that stood between the Boilermakers and the second outright conference championship in school history was Indiana in the Old Oaken Bucket Game on Nov. 25. Purdue was 9-1-1 against its intrastate rivals under head coach Jack Mollenkopf, but Indiana was having its best season in two decades with an 8-1 record. The Hoosiers' lone loss was to Minnesota the previous week. Purdue trailed 19-7 at halftime at I.U. Stadium before closing the deficit to 19-14. The Boilermakers had the ball



at Indiana's 1-yard line with six and a half minutes remaining but fumbled, and the Hoosiers' Mike Baughman recovered. Indiana held on for the victory, making the Boilermakers, Hoosiers and Minnesota Big Ten tri-champions. Since Purdue had gone to the Rose Bowl the previous year, Minnesota in 1961 and Indiana never, the Hoosiers were rewarded with the trip to Pasadena.

So ended a remarkable two seasons for Purdue football – first a Rose Bowl victory and then a Big Ten championship – with 17 wins in 21 games. The achievements were memorialized with a stained-glass display, which has been displayed proudly in the years since. The 1967 Boilermakers, who wound up with an 8-2 record (the two losses by a combined 13 points), received Big Ten championship rings.

"Those were the glory days of Purdue football," said Keyes, who was honored as the Big Ten Most Valuable Player and finished third in the Heisman balloting. "We were a juggernaut with a great bunch of talented guys who bought into coach Mollenkopf's philosophy of working hard. I will never forget all that we accomplished."

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