

coach Mack Brown told reporters before the team's opener. "I don't want to think about that Teddy Ginn; I'll start losing sleep two weeks early."

The story of how Ginn made it to Ohio State and became a solid B student and an All-America candidate starts with a nightmare, but may end in a dream season for the Buckeyes.

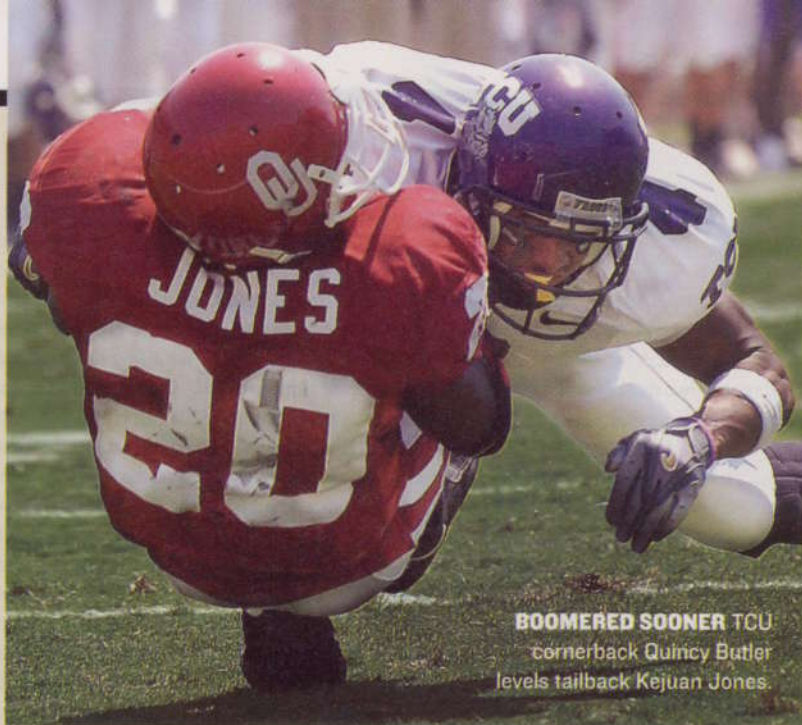
THE TRAUMA occurred 10 years ago, but to hear the hurt in Ginn's voice as he tells the story, it might as well have happened yesterday. On his first day of fifth grade at St. Aloysius in the Cleveland suburb of Glenville, Ginn was pulled out of class. There had been a misunderstanding. Yes, he had attended St. Aloysius since first grade, but unbeknownst to him, school officials had informed his parents the previous June that the school no longer had the resources to deal with his learning disability.

So the boy was soon standing on a curb waiting for his father to pick him up, tie knotted, white shirt gleaming in the sun, tears running down his face. He was confused and ashamed.

The road would dip again before it began to rise for Ginn. There was the sixth-grade teacher who called him out in front of a class at Forest Hill Parkway, insisting that he spell a word. "But I couldn't," recalls Ginn. "So he told me, in front of the whole class, that I was going to flip hamburgers my whole life." Finally, in eighth grade, Ginn was placed in a special program that gave him the tools he needed to learn. "Once he was comfortable in the classroom," says his father, Ted Sr., "the real Ted could come out."

The real Ted was determined to make up for lost time. When Glenville High teacher Margaret Robinson had trouble starting a ninth-grade English class because of rowdy students, one child stood up. "We're in here for a reason," said Ginn, looking around. "And I want to learn." By 10th grade he was on such solid footing that he returned to regular classes. Ginn went on to graduate in the top 10% of his class.

The real Ted, it turned out, was also a once-in-a-generation athlete. He had run the 110-meter hurdles in 14.9 seconds and the 400 meters in 52.9—in eighth grade. As a sophomore, Ginn ran the last leg on Glenville's 4×400-relay team at the Adidas national championship meet in 45.2 seconds. A year later he took three firsts at that meet, winning the hurdles in 13.4 seconds and running on two victorious relays.



**BOOMERED SOONER** TCU cornerback Quincey Butler levels tailback Kejuan Jones.

## DOWN GOES OKLAHOMA

TCU's defense is much-improved. Just ask Adrian Peterson

THERE WAS the classic late-summer mismatch. TCU coach Gary Patterson took his Horned Frogs north to play Oklahoma last Saturday, loading 104 scholarship and walk-on players onto three buses, as if numbers could prevent the inevitable. The Sooners, 26½-point favorites, awaited with a full stadium and sophomore running back Adrian Peterson, the Heisman runner-up in 2004. After six straight bowl appearances, TCU had slipped to 5-6 a year ago. Oklahoma had gone 12-1 and played in the national championship game for the third time in five years.

Before darkness fell on Norman, however, the Sooners were 0-1 for the first time since 1997 and Patterson was riding a bus

back to Fort Worth, receiving congratulatory messages on his cellphone from Texas A&M coach Dennis Franchione, his predecessor at TCU, and from Southern Mississippi coach Jeff Bower, both of whom have experience as college football Davids. "There are people who understand how tough it is to win when you don't have the same tools as your opponent," Patterson said on Sunday, still relishing the 17-10 victory. "When you're an aspiring program,

you work hard for [moments like this]."

The Horned Frogs' defense, which finished last in the nation against the pass a year ago, is vastly improved. Against inexperienced Oklahoma quarterbacks, TCU modified its 4-2-5 scheme, putting nine men in the box and using lockdown coverage from senior corner Drew Coleman, who missed much of 2004 rehabbing a surgically repaired ACL. "We wanted to make them beat us with the pass," said Patterson.

The plan worked. Oklahoma was held to 225 yards of total offense, including just 128 passing. Peterson gained 63 yards on 22 carries and no doubt missed playing behind departed All-America offensive linemen Jamaal Brown and

Vince Carter and with 2003 Heisman-winning quarterback Jason White.

After springing the upset, Patterson punched up SMU schemes on his laptop—TCU makes the short drive east on I-30 to Dallas on Saturday—during the bus ride home. "I've always enjoyed being the underdog," he said. "It's easier when you've got nothing to lose." His team, of course, no longer fits that description.

—Tim Layden



**LONG WAIT** Mike Salvage enjoys TCU's first win over a Top 10 foe since 1965.