

# Ex-Buckeye Clarett posts bond

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)-While some of Maurice Clarett's ex- teammates slept off the celebration of their latest Fiesta Bowl victory, the former Ohio State running back shuffled into a courtroom Tuesday in handcuffs and jail-issue clothing to face robbery charges.

He posted bond and was released later in the day.

Clarett, who led the Buckeyes to the national championship in the same stadium almost exactly three years earlier, faced a judge for the first time since he was accused of robbing two people with a gun in an alley behind a downtown bar early Sunday.

Wearing a loose-fitting tan shirt, dark pants and sandals, Clarett did not speak and was not asked to make a plea. The 22-year-old Clarett was released from Franklin County jail early Tuesday afternoon after posting \$50,000 bond, a sheriff's deputy said.

Each of the two charges of aggravated robbery carries a possible sentence of three to 10 years, with another one to three years added to each because a gun was used.

"We are looking forward to investigating the allegations," Clarett's attorney, William Settina, said outside court. "That's all I can say."

According to a police report, Clarett flashed a gun and demanded property from a man and a woman behind the Opium Lounge in down-

town Columbus early Sunday morning. He fled with two men in a sport utility vehicle after he was identified by the bar owner, who happened to come out into the alley; no one was injured, and only a cell phone was taken from the alleged victims, police said.

Clarett's next hearing is set for Jan. 12.

Police had been looking for him for the better part of two days before he turned himself in shortly after Ohio State beat Notre Dame 34-20 in the Fiesta Bowl in Tempe, Ariz., on Monday night.

USA Today's national offensive player of the year as a senior at Warren (Ohio) G. Harding High School, Clarett rushed for 1,237 yards and scored 16 touchdowns as a freshman in 2002.

It was Clarett who, as a star freshman tailback, had scored the final touchdown on Jan. 3, 2003, in the same bowl to give the Buckeyes a 31-24 upset of top-ranked Miami in double-overtime. The victory gave Ohio State its first national championship since 1968.

Clarett's fortunes have changed dramatically in the three years since he scored on that five-yard run.

In the summer of 2003 he reported he had lost more than \$10,000 in clothing, CDs, cash and stereo equipment when a car he had borrowed from a local dealership was broken into. Police later determined that he lied about the theft. He pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor.

The investigation led to Ohio State suspending Clarett for misleading investigators, and for receiving special benefits worth thousands of dollars from a family friend.

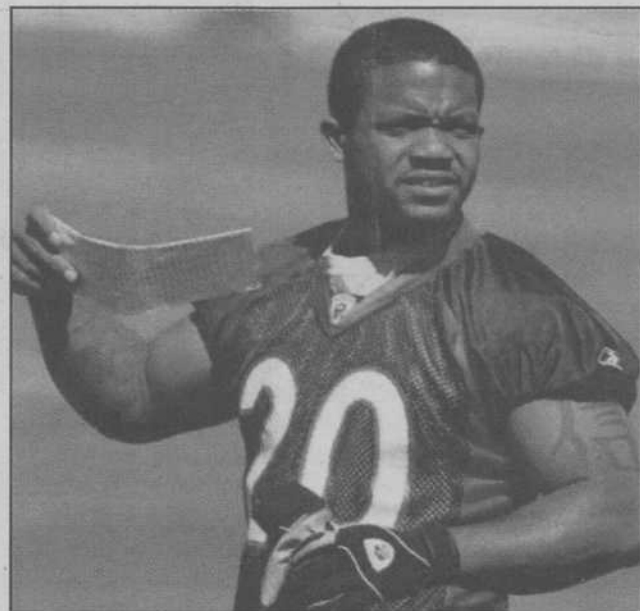
Clarett dropped out of Ohio State, then challenged the NFL's requirement that players wait three years after high school before turning pro. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court before Clarett lost.

In an interview with in November 2004, Clarett said

coaches and boosters arranged for him to get passing grades, cars and thousands of dollars while at Ohio State.

None of the allegations was verified, and Clarett never responded to NCAA requests to be interviewed as part of its investigation into Ohio State's athletic program.

After two years in limbo, he was taken in the third round by the Denver Broncos in last year's draft, but the team cut him in August.



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