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Bits of Buckeye history fill new grill in Grandview

By Tracy Turner

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The daily specials are written on the same chalkboard that legendary Ohio State football coach Woody Hayes used to outline winning plays.

Some of the tables are made from redwood locker-room benches used in Ohio Stadium in the 1920s. Two of the original wrought-iron gates from the stadium grace the walls. And one of Archie Griffin's two Heisman Trophies is on display in a glass case.

These are just some of the authentic touches that Buckeye Hall of Fame Grill's owners hope will make customers feel they "can't wait to come back," said Charles Lagarce, president of Columbus Hospitality Group, which will manage the restaurant as well as the Hyatt Place hotel at Grandview Yard.

The 8,000-square-foot restaurant opens Tuesday.

Nearly a year after the closing of a nearby, similarly themed restaurant, the Buckeye Hall of Fame Cafe, the Grill calls itself more than just a sports bar. It's a sports-themed restaurant with "fresh, sophisticated food that is damn good," Lagarce said.

"We wanted to build a great restaurant that says something about who we are and about our community," he said. "Our emphasis is on great service, great food and creating a great atmosphere."

"We could have put another chain restaurant in here, but that's the easy way to do things."

The Grill is only the second restaurant for which Ohio State University has licensed its name and trademarks, said OSU licensing chief Rick Van Brimmer. A smaller licensed version of the Buckeye Hall of Fame Cafe remains open in Concourse C at Port Columbus.

He said many of the OSU artifacts are on loan from the university or are pieces from private collectors.

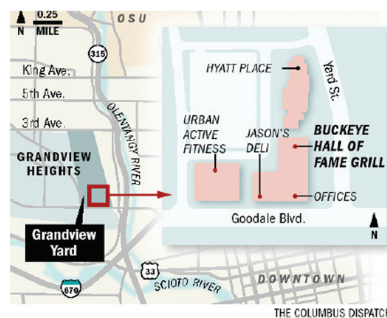
"We literally went behind locked doors in Ohio Stadium, dusted things off and found some really unique things," Van Brimmer said. "It's an

exciting location that fans and non-fans alike will find very interesting.

"You'll see little pieces of things that connect to our past and tradition and are items that people



The sign is hung at Grandview Yard's Buckeye Hall of Fame Grill, which features such mementoes as the old iron Ohio Stadium gates.



really don't get to see. And the food is excellent. We're very pleased with the restaurant."

The menu features traditional appetizers, sandwiches and salads as well as entrees such as rotisserie chicken, roasted prime rib and fresh fish.

The prices range from \$7 to \$9 for appetizers, \$10 and less for sandwiches, and \$15 to \$25 for entrees, Lagarce said.

The restaurant has 43 HDTVs, including a 140-inch projection screen. The building seats 200 people inside and 60 outside on the heated patio, Lagarce said.

The Grill is the first full-service restaurant put into the Grandview Yard project and is designed to be a "nice anchor" to the development, he said. ■