

Big Ten Teams Face Struggles During Ohio State's Off Week



With only one Big Ten matchup during week three, it was a bit of an up-and-down week for Big Ten teams in non-conference matchups in week three. Wisconsin, Purdue and Washington all lost in non-conference bouts during week 3, but it was the Boilermakers and Badgers who were obliterated by Notre Dame and Alabama, respectively.

Neither Purdue nor Wisconsin were picked to win their respective matchups, but few likely predicted them to lose by as much as they did.

Purdue fell behind 42-0 at halftime in a wire-to-wire blowout against Notre Dame. Notre Dame, who was bouncing back from a stunning 16-14 loss against Mid-American Conference program Northern Illinois, accumulated 580 yards in the win to Purdue's 162.

Wisconsin kept things a little closer with defending SEC champion, Alabama, in the first half, trailing 21-3 at halftime but ultimately fell 42-10. Equally concerning for the Badgers was a knee injury sustained by starting quarterback Tyler Van Dyke, which required the former Miami (Fla) quarterback to be carted off from the sidelines to the locker room.

Washington, meanwhile, was a favorite going into its Apple Cup matchup with rival Washington State. Washington outgained its counterparts by 71 yards, but the 16 penalties the team committed for 135 yards played a big part in its 24-19 loss.

It was more of the same offensive inconsistencies from Ohio State's biggest rival, Michigan. The Wolverines' signal-caller Davis Warren went 11/14 for 122 yards while throwing three interceptions in the team's 28-18 win over Arkansas State.

Following Warren's third interception, backup quarterback Alex Orji took over as the team's quarterback for the remaining three drives.

Orji led the team to a touchdown drive after being inserted in the game, but the team's progression down the field was mainly from running back Kalel Mullings. Orji did finish the drive with a 9-yard passing touchdown.

Orji and the Wolverines didn't score points in the last two drives and instead settled for back-to-back

punts. Orji finished the game with just four pass attempts, completing two passes for 12 yards and a touchdown, but unlike Warren, Orji didn't turn the ball over. Orji also provided the Wolverines with some production on the ground going for 27 yards on three carries. When asked about Warren's interceptions, Michigan head coach Sherrone Moore didn't give a definitive answer on the future of the position after the game.

On Monday though, Moore made it official that Orji would start over Warren in Michigan's bout with USC.

Elsewhere in the Big Ten, Nebraska remained undefeated with a 34-3 defeat of Northern Iowa. Nebraska quarterback Dylan Raiola continued his stellar true freshman campaign, completing 17 of 23 passes for 247 yards, two touchdowns and one interception.

Iowa got a bit of a scare from Sun Belt contender Troy when it trailed 14-10 at halftime. The Hawkeyes had a second-half offensive explosion to get a 38-21 bounce-back win after a loss to Iowa State.

Maryland had a similar second-half surge against rival Virginia on Saturday. Facing a 13-7 deficit at halftime, the Terrapins scored 20 unanswered second-half points to win 27-13, improving their record to 2-1.

Having suffered an out-of-conference loss to North Carolina in week 1, Minnesota has bounced back with back-to-back wins, including its latest 27-0 win over Nevada on Saturday.

Northwestern had a similarly efficient defensive outing against Eastern Illinois in a 31-7 win following a heartbreaking double overtime loss to Duke the week prior. Northwestern quarterback Jack Lausch went for 289 total yards, including rushing for 62 yards on seven carries.

Illinois wrapped up a very successful non-conference slate with a comfortable 30-9 win over MAC foe Central Michigan. Having previously defeated then No. 19-ranked Kansas, Illinois finds itself ranked No. 24 going into Big Ten play. Illinois will be put to the test immediately, facing undefeated Nebraska in a ranked matchup.

Future Ohio State opponent, Oregon, seemed to find its footing against in-state rival Oregon State after a bit of a rocky start to its season. The Ducks dismantled the Beavers in the second half, scoring 27 unanswered points to win 49-14. The Ducks gained 546 total yards in an explosive offensive effort.

Michigan State appeared to rebound from a sluggish 16-10 week 1 win over Florida Atlantic, defeating Maryland in week 2 before dominating Prairie View A+M, 40-0. The Spartans face a brutal stretch of upcoming games, traveling to Massachusetts against previously-ranked Boston College in week 4 before taking on Ohio State and Oregon in back-to-back games.

UCLA received a rude awakening in its Big Ten debut, going against Indiana in the only Big Ten matchup of the week. The Hoosiers cruised to a dominant 42-13 win, led by transfer quarterback Kurtis Rourke, who threw for 307 yards and four touchdowns while completing 25/33 passes.

The defeat at the hands of the Hoosiers could be a sign of things to come for first-year coach DeShaun Foster and the Bruins. Narrowly escaping a loss against Hawaii in week one before its ugly loss to Indiana, UCLA has not gotten out to the start it hoped for.