

BSB Predicts Ohio State To Pass Nebraska Road Test With Flying Colors



Ohio State hits the road for its first true test of the 2019 season at Nebraska on Saturday evening (7:30 p.m. on ABC).

The Cornhuskers enter the game as a 17-point underdogs, but feel confident they can extend the Buckeyes' road losing streak to Big Ten West opponents to three.

With that said, the staff of Buckeye Sports Bulletin — which includes Wyatt Crosher, Joe Dempsey, Andrew Lind and Patrick Mayhorn — expects a much different result this time around. Check out their in-depth predictions below:

WC: “Nebraska will certainly be Ohio State’s biggest test to this point in the season, and that almost solely is because of Adrian Martinez. The sophomore quarterback torched the Buckeyes in his first year and proved to be everything Ryan Day thought he might be when Day nearly sent Martinez an offer to Ohio State.

“Martinez will need to carry the Cornhuskers on his shoulders to pull off an upset in Lincoln, and while I expect a good performance from him, I don’t expect a transcendental one, and Ohio State’s defense seems greatly improved to slow him down. Aside from Martinez, Ohio State is simply the better team, and the offense should continue to flow well, even with the added trouble of a rough road atmosphere.

“The Buckeyes seem ready to not have another 29-plus-point Big Ten West loss this season, and I don’t see anything Nebraska has, aside from Martinez, to really make this game go down to the wire.”

Ohio State 45, Nebraska 24

JD: “Road games against Big Ten West opponents have not always been favorable for the Scarlet and Gray and for many reasons their showdown with Nebraska in Lincoln should be a close contest.

“If asked before the season, I would have predicted a narrow victory for Ohio State. This is no longer the case.

“Through four weeks, Ohio State has proven to be a superior team to Nebraska.

“The Cornhuskers allow 25.3 points per game while Ohio State boasts the nation’s third-highest powered offense in the nation, scoring 53.5 points per contest.

“The Buckeyes surrendered the second-fewest points per game in the FBS at 9.0 points in the same span, while their counterpart ranks No. 28 at 38.0.

“Two of the primary reasons Huskers will not upset the Scarlet and Gray are their struggles defending the pass and the challenge the Ohio State defensive front presents.

“In Nebraska’s 34-31 overtime loss to Colorado, Steven Montez sliced up the Huskers for 375 yards and two touchdowns with one pick on 28 of 41 passing (68.3 percent).

“As far as protecting talented dual-threat quarterback Adrian Martinez from the imposing Buckeye defensive front, Ohio State is tied for first in the country with 5.0 sacks per game with the second-most sacks yards (125). Meanwhile, Nebraska has allowed 10 sacks, which is tied for fifth-most nationally.

“True freshman H-back/returner Wan’Dale Robinson is someone the visitors certainly want to be wary of, as well as junior receiver JD Spielman, but the improved Buckeye secondary should be able to limit said speedy playmakers and come away victorious.

“Offensively, Fields and Co. will continue the hot start in the passing game against a Husker defense that was scorched by Montez and the Buffaloes, with J.K. Dobbins and Master Teague complementing in the run game.

“Ohio State passes this Big Ten West test with surprising ease.”

Ohio State 52, Nebraska 14

AL: “Sure, there are a number of similarities between Ohio State’s last two losses and tonight’s game at Nebraska — the Buckeyes are a double-digit favorite for road game at night against a Big Ten West opponent. But this situation also feels considerably different that Iowa in 2017 and Purdue in 2019.

“Ohio State won’t be surprised by its opponent this time around, as the team had this game circled on its calendar since before spring practice. The Buckeyes know the stakes and have to win this game in order to reach their goals, which is win the Big Ten and make it back to the College Football Playoff.

“Losses to the Hawkeyes and Boilermakers kept them on the outside looking in, and the Cornhuskers would love nothing more than to do the same and prove they’re back among college football’s elite. But that won’t happen this evening.

“Ohio State’s offense is more potent than it has been at any other time under Ryan Day’s guidance as head coach or offensive coordinator/quarterbacks coach — and that encompasses a 56-14 win in Lincoln two years ago and last fall’s record setting aerial attack — thanks to quarterback Justin Fields’ dual-threat abilities. I expect him to have a big game, as will running back J.K. Dobbins, who will set a career-high in rushing yards this evening.

The defense is also much improved, which is why they’ll contain Nebraska quarterback Adrian Martinez for much of the evening. He’ll make a few plays with his legs, and a long run or two will give the Cornhuskers some early hope. But the defense, led by Chase Young, will clamp down and prove just how much has changed from last year.

Ohio State will get its first statement win of the season in blowout, but it'll also feel somewhat close throughout the first three quarters.

Ohio State 48, Nebraska 27

PM: "A large chunk of the college football world appears to have its eyes on Ohio State's matchup with Nebraska this weekend, though not for the traditional reasons. No, this is not high powered battle before two elite teams, nor is it a rivalry packed with storylines. Ohio State is the obviously better team against a still building Nebraska program.

"Instead, the eyes are on Lincoln because of what happened in West Lafayette last year, and Iowa City in 2017. Unfortunately for those watching with bated breath in hopes of another upset, the orchestrating staff of those losses has departed, and Ryan Day isn't making the same mistakes. Ohio State is going to look to make a statement, and show Nebraska just how far it has to go before it is ready for the big time."

Ohio State 56, Nebraska 10