

Buckeye Leaves: Kyle McCord, Cade Stover And Tyleik Williams Earn Leaves In 41-7 Win Over Purdue



Ohio State put together perhaps the team's most complete performance of the season on Saturday at Purdue, headed back to Columbus with a 41-7 win behind a dominant performance on both sides of the ball.

Here are players Buckeye Sports Bulletin selected as worthy of receiving Buckeye Leaves after the win:

Patrick Engels: Ohio State had arguably its most dominant defensive performance of the season against Purdue, and at the forefront of that was defensive tackle Tyleik Williams. The third-year Williams was active early and often for Larry Johnson's unit, recording a tackle for loss and a pass deflection in the very first quarter. Williams' tackle of running back Dylan Downing at the end of the first period was a loss of 1 yard, providing him with his fifth consecutive game with a TFL.

The Manassas, Va., native also showed off his athleticism and ball awareness by batting down two passes from Purdue quarterback Hudson Card — one in the first quarter and another in the second — that both occurred on key third down plays, all but ending the Boilermakers' chances of stringing together any form of production on offense.

Williams finished with a strong three tackles, two tackles for loss and two pass deflections, a performance that has only allowed him to keep impressing on an improving Buckeyes front four. The junior already has 27 tackles, six tackles for loss, two sacks and four pass breakups on the season, a year that may be his most impressive yet.

Braden Moles: Kyle McCord had maybe his best outing so far as the starter for Ohio State, so he gets my Buckeye Leaf.

Despite a lack of help from receivers - including a handful of drops - and challenging weather conditions with consistent rain coming down in West Lafayette, McCord turned in a strong performance, finishing 16 of 28 passing for 276 yards and three touchdowns, though he was called for his third intentional grounding of the season.

While Marvin Harrison Jr. was again his favorite target, McCord was able to connect with six different receivers on the afternoon and had several impressive instances of evading pressure in the pocket. It gives him plenty to build on heading into next week's matchup with Penn State.

Greg Wilson: My Buckeye Leaf goes to Cade Stover, who yet again was McCord's safety net. He finished the game with only four catches, but with that he was able to pick up 53 yards and two touchdowns. It was his second time as a Buckeye he put together a multi-score game, the last one coming last year against Indiana on Nov. 12. He is up to 359 yards and three touchdowns this season.

His first catch was a highly contested 23-yard reception McCord threw to his back shoulder, which brought the Buckeyes inside the 30-yard line, a drive that would have ended with a touchdown had Devin Brown not fumbled at the goal line.

His first touchdown came at the end of the next offensive drive for the Buckeyes with McCord finding him in the middle of the endzone. The throw was off target, but Stover was able to reach to his left to secure the catch and the score. With 4:36 left in the third quarter, he came off the line of scrimmage and made a hard cut left at the 10-yard line, and McCord found him for his second touchdown.

Stover has been the second target for McCord many times this season, but with Emeka Egbuka out it was more important that he was able to give the quarterback another place to look than Marvin Harrison Jr., because that didn't come from anywhere else for most of the game despite McCord putting together one of his best games.