

Buckeye Leaves: Will Howard, Quinshon Judkins and Jack Sawyer Dominate In Week 2



Ohio State put together a masterful performance Saturday night against Western Michigan, dismantling the Broncos 56-0 to improve to 2-0 on the season. While there were several Buckeyes who excelled under the lights, BSB chose three players who were worthy of receiving Buckeye Leaves for their respective performances:

Patrick Engels:

There are several players who are worthy of earning Buckeye Leaves after tonight's blowout win, but perhaps no player is as deserving as running back Quinshon Judkins.

With star freshman wideout Jeremiah Smith bursting onto the scene in Ohio State's season opener against Akron, Judkins has been often overlooked in the week leading up to the game against Western Michigan, but he made sure his presence would be felt early and often against the Broncos. The former Ole Miss rusher took two of his first four carries to the end zone, first a 23-yard sprint at the end of the first quarter and then another 23-yard rush in the middle of the second.

In between those carries was also an 80-yard scamper that he took to the house, only to be called back by a holding call on tight end Gee Scott Jr. If not for that holding penalty, Judkins would've had a potentially historic outing under the Ohio Stadium lights, but his nine attempts for 108 yards — an impressive 12-yard average — and two touchdowns is certainly nothing to scoff at.

Bobby Gorbett:

From the very first offensive drive, Will Howard flushed his poor start against Akron down the drain. Completing 10 of his first 11 passes for 177 yards against Western Michigan, Howard was extremely efficient in leading the Buckeyes' offense, finishing the game 18-of-26 for 292 yards and a touchdown.

Howard wasn't without some poor individual plays, underthrowing a ball that likely would've been a touchdown to Jeremiah Smith in the first half and nearly throwing an interception on a ball intended for Jelani Thurman on the same drive. Still, Howard's positives far outweigh his negatives.

Although not his longest play of the game, Howard's 6-yard touchdown run on a read option keeper had to be a welcome sight for Buckeye fans, who hadn't seen a starting Ohio State quarterback run for a touchdown since 2020.

Greg Wilson:

It seemed that all game against Akron in Week 1 when the starters were still playing that defensive end Jack Sawyer was finding his way into the Zips backfield, but that ever elusive first sack of the season never came in the 52-6 win. His fellow defensemen had no issues getting their names onto the stat sheet in that category, but despite Sawyer applying all kinds of pressure, he didn't finish with one.

He seemed determined in Week 2 to finish with a different result, and he was successful, brushing straight by a blocker in the second quarter to get his first sack of the season.

Sawyer finished the game with three total tackles, a sack and a quarterback hurry, making his presence felt by the Broncos offense every time he was in the game yet again.