Predictions: Ohio State Continues The Streak, Topples Wolverines

Chase Brown: Don't Bet Against The Buckeyes

On Oct. 29, 1999, I was born in The Ohio State University hospital as the fourth child of two loving parents. Since that momentous day over 22 years ago, Michigan has won The Game four times. Since 2001, the Buckeyes are 17-2 against the Wolverines.

The first Michigan victory came in 2003 when quarterback John Navarre made several big plays, throwing for 278 yards and two touchdowns to lead the fifth-ranked Wolverines to a 35-21 win that ended No. 4 Ohio State's hopes for a repeat national title.

The second win came in 2011 when now-Cincinnati lead man Luke Fickell was the interim head coach of Ohio State after university officials asked Jim Tressel to retire after "Tattoo Gate." The No. 15 Wolverines beat the middling Buckeyes 40-34 in Ann Arbor, sending quarterback Braxton Miller and company to the Gator Bowl, where they would lose to Florida and finish with a 6-7 record.

Other than those two games, Ohio State has dominated the series in the last 20 years, holding a 17-2 record under Tressel, Fickell, Meyer and Day. The Buckeyes enter this year's contest with the confidence of a team that's won eight straight games in the series, with few of those games ending in close margins. The 2021 Wolverines are different than they've been in years past — more explosive, motivated and talented — but I've heard it all before.

Until Jim Harbaugh and Michigan prove me wrong, I'll take the Buckeyes.

Ohio State 42, Michigan 21

Patrick Mayhorn: What Are We Doing Here

Folks, come on. I know that Michigan is a top-five team, and I know that these two have the same records and I know that in a rivalry game, you're supposed to throw those out the window. Michigan's rushing attack and pass rush are strong, and the Wolverines have looked impressive all season, even in a close loss to Michigan State as the lone blemish on the schedule.

But come on. Michigan isn't going to beat Ohio State. Ohio State could be 0-11 and Michigan 11-0 and I would pick the Buckeyes to win this game. I cannot believe that Michigan will pull this off until I actually see it, and in the last 20 years, I haven't seen it. History doesn't dictate the future, but it certainly seems to be impacting it in the psyche of the Wolverines.

Ohio State wins and does so convincingly once again.

Ohio State 45, Michigan 27

Braden Moles: Michigan No Match For Ohio State

The Game returns after a hiatus in 2020, but this matchup feels like more of the same, at least in recent memory. Ohio State and Michigan, both ranked in the top five of the College Football Playoff poll, will meet in Ann Arbor with a trip to the Big Ten Championship Game, and potentially the playoffs, on the line. Will Jim Harbaugh finally break through, or does Ryan Day move to 2-0 against the Wolverines? History favors the Buckeyes here.

Michigan's defense has made impressive strides after a disappointing 2020 campaign, but the Ohio State offense is unlike any other the Wolverines have seen. C.J. Stroud has three All-American caliber receivers to throw to, not to mention the explosiveness that TreVeyon Henderson can bring in the running game. There are simply too many variables for Michigan to account for, and Ohio State will be able to take advantage of those lapses.

The most interesting battle will likely be at the two tackle spots with Aidan Hutchinson and David Ojabo going up against Nicholas Petit-Frere because some consistent pressure on Stroud could force the redshirt freshman into some negative plays. Stroud has avoided costly turnovers this season, but it may be the only way Michigan can stay in the game, as the offense will need extra possessions against a stingy Ohio State defense.

If this isn't the best, it's at least one of the top teams Harbaugh has put on the field at Michigan. Despite that, this will likely be another exercise in displaying the talent gap between these two rivals. Ohio State will make it nine in a row.

Ohio State 42, Michigan 21

Mark Rea: Streak Has To End Sometime – Just Not This Year

Ohio State is working on a streak of eight straight wins against Michigan. Beginning with a win in 2004, the Buckeyes have won 15 of the last 16 games in the series. On one hand, OSU has taken over total domination in the rivalry. On the flip side, no one believes Michigan will never again beat Ohio State. It's going to happen sometime. I just don't think this is the year it does.

The Buckeyes have too many offensive weapons for the Wolverines to defend. Michigan probably has one of the best pass rushes the OSU offensive line has seen all season, but despite the fact he doesn't like to run the ball, C.J. Stroud has proven that he can move from sideline to sideline, and a moving pocket can neutralize a lot of U-M's pass rush.

Ultimately, at least in my humble opinion, this game comes down to whether Michigan can move the ball through the air. The Wolverines like to establish their running game, but so does Michigan State,

and you saw how that worked for Sparty last week.

If Michigan can move the ball and score through the air, the game becomes more of a shootout than I think either coach wants. But even if it becomes a shootout, I still don't think Michigan can outscore Ohio State.

Comparing common opponents this year, Michigan defeated Rutgers, Nebraska, Indiana, Penn State and Maryland by a combined 77 points. Ohio State beat those five teams by a combined 153 points. And the Wolverines allowed Michigan State to score 37 points.

I might be way off base, but I think this year's renewal of The Game features a team peaking at the end of the season against one that might be just slightly overrated.

Ohio State 56, Michigan 17