

Predictions: Ohio State Dominates Youngstown State In Home Opener



After opening the season with a 23-3 win at Indiana on Sept. 2, Ohio State will return home for the first game of the season at Ohio Stadium, set to host FCS opponent Youngstown State for just the third time in school history.

Here are our staff predictions for Youngstown State at Ohio State, set to kick off at noon on the Big Ten Network. Check BuckeyeSports.com every Friday for the latest staff predictions.

Braden Moles: Buckeyes Find Groove Against Penguins

I can think of about 800,000 reasons this game is being played - at least from Youngstown State's perspective - but one good reason for Ohio State is that it will allow the team a chance to rebound after an up-and-down opener.

The Buckeye' defense should dominate against the Penguins as it did the Hoosiers in Week 1, but all eyes will be on Ohio State's offense, which got off to a slow start in the opener and, despite earning the win, never seemed all that in sorts. Youngstown State is a solid team as far as the FCS goes, but it won't be any match for what the Buckeyes are putting on the field, so the offense should have a chance to work some kinks out.

It should also afford an opportunity for Devin Brown to play after only appearing for six snaps against Indiana, and for my part, this is the part of the game that I'm most intrigued by. There should also be plenty of younger Buckeyes that also get to see the field, which is always a good reason to check out these contests.

Should the offense get things figured out - at least to some degree - it's a question of how much it scores before the second and third teasers get their chance to shine. My guess is the first-team offense gets a good three quarters of work before relinquishing the reins, leading to a comfortably dominant win for the Buckeyes. **Ohio State 52, Youngstown State 7**

Patrick Engels: Buckeyes Dominate On All Fronts

I don't expect much "clunky" play out of Ohio State on Saturday, mainly because of the inferiority of its FCS opponent. The Penguins are coming off an impressive 52-10 win against Valparaiso where they outgained their opponent 471-195, but they will be outmatched at essentially every position group when they enter Ohio Stadium tomorrow morning.

I expect a much more crisp game out of the Buckeyes in their home opener, mainly on the offensive end. Wide receivers Marvin Harrison Jr. and Emeka Egbuka — who combined for just five catches for 34 yards against Indiana — will create all kinds of separation against the smaller, less athletic Penguins' defensive backs, so expect a major bounce back game out of those two. Ryan Day and his staff will also use this game as an opportunity to better establish the run, which they struggled to accomplish last week in Bloomington.

The major question on Saturday is when Devin Brown will enter the game at quarterback. Judging off of Ryan Day's comments this week, I'm expecting the sophomore signal caller to be under center for at least four or five possessions, starting in the second quarter. Look for him to make an impact with his legs throughout the day.

Behind a balanced offensive attack and another dominant display from the defense, the Buckeyes will roll in this one, putting the game out of reach before halftime. **Ohio State 59, Youngstown State 6**

Greg Wilson: Offense Explodes Against FCS Opponent

In many ways, Week 1 was a tune up game for the Buckeyes. Indiana is a conference opponent, but the season was always going to start with a 1-0 record. One of the biggest stories of the week was that the normally dominant Ohio State offense was more-or-less carried along by the defense that only allowed three points.

That changes this week against Youngstown State in a big way. The defense is still going to be great, but now that the offensive line has seen game action together, it will be a much better game for everyone. I'm looking for over 600 yards of total offense in this game, with Kyle McCord and Devin Brown showing the college football world why Ryan Day still wants to play both of them.

Marvin Harrison Jr. and Emeka Egbuka will combine for at least 200 yards and three touchdowns, and the run game will show up in a big way as well. Ohio State will fire on all cylinders on both sides of the ball.

The rust is gone for the team and this is a game where they show up and prove there shouldn't be any concerns. **Ohio State 63, Youngstown State 3**