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"For The Buckeye Fan Who Needs To Know More"

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Magical Moment Highlights OSU's Eighth Straight Win Over U-M

By ANDREW LIND
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

For the second weekend in a row, Ohio State sophomore quarterback Justin Fields was down on the turf clutching his knee as athletic trainers rushed to his side.

The Buckeyes were ahead 35-16 in the third quarter when Michigan defensive end Aidan Hutchinson bull-rushed tight end Luke Farrell into Fields, and backup Chris Chugunov was forced to enter the game as Fields limped to the medical tent on the sideline.

Ohio State's medical team quickly got Fields – who revealed after the game that he had suffered a sprained MCL late in the Nov. 23 win over Penn State – outfitted with a bulkier brace than the fabric version he was already wearing and back in the game after just seven plays.

"That was a big topic through the week," Fields said after the 56-27 win over the Wolverines. "I told the trainers that I was just going to try the smaller brace, just to have more mobility. They told me if anything happened in the game, they were going to bring the bigger brace out just in case. That's exactly what happened."

Fields wasn't hampered by the bigger brace, which he compared to those worn by offensive linemen, as he rolled left and threw a 30-yard touchdown pass to freshman wide receiver Garrett Wilson on his first play back.

"I thought it was a magical moment," said head coach Ryan Day. "I thought it was a Heisman moment, for him to go down, take that injury, puts the brace on and then come back out and make a throw that we didn't design that way.

"For him to ad-lib, make that play, make that throw going to his left, that's about as good of a throw as I've seen in a long time. He put it right in the back of the end zone, and that just goes to show you what's inside of him. His heart, his character and his competitive toughness is as good as I've ever been around, and I can't say enough about the way he played today.

"You talk about tough? Wow. I've never been around a tougher quarterback than this guy. He's competitively tough. He's physically tough. Then to come in and make that play like that? That kind



SONNY BROCKWAY

BOUNCE BACK – Ohio State quarterback Justin Fields, who sprained his MCL against Penn State, aggravated the injury against Michigan (above). He missed seven plays before returning to action with a bulkier knee brace and throwing a 30-yard touchdown pass on his first play back (below).



ANDREW LIND

Continued On Page 8

FAN FORUM

Buckeye Leaves

Ohio State went into The Big House and earned its eighth straight victory over Michigan by a score of 56-27, and with that came plenty of players deserving of praise. Here are the players whom the Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff, as well as subscribers on the BuckeyeSports.com website, believe are deserving of Buckeye Leaves in Ohio State's 12th win of the season.

Wyatt Crosher, BSB: Man, what a year it has been for J.K. Dobbins.

After a season full of questions on whether the running back could get back to the form he displayed during his freshman campaign, the now-junior has proved to be that back and much, much more, and he put it all on display in the best game of his career against Michigan.

Dobbins ran for 211 yards, caught two passes for 49 yards and scored four touchdowns, ending with a career high in scores and total yards from scrimmage.

He was decisive, he was dominant, and he was a key difference maker on the offensive side of the ball all day long, and proved to everyone why his name should be right in the Heisman trophy race.

Joe Dempsey, BSB: In the biggest game of the season yet, Justin Fields rose to the occasion against archival Michigan in Ann Arbor.

The sophomore signal caller went down with an apparent knee injury after getting rolled into by Luke Farrell after throwing a 15-yard completion to Austin Mack. Fields missed seven snaps while the medical staff examined his leg.

Fields re-entered the game on second-and-10 from the Michigan 30-yard line. The Wolverines pressured the young quarterback,

but he escaped the pocket and rolled out to his left. Then Fields delivered a strike to Garrett Wilson in the back of the end zone for a 30-yard touchdown, giving Ohio State a 42-16 lead after the extra point.

Finishing with 302 passing yards and four touchdowns while completing 14 of 25 passes, Fields led the Buckeyes to victory with confidence and composure. He also gained 25 rushing yards on six carries in Ohio State's 56-27 victory.

Andrew Lind, BSB: One year ago, Ohio State wide receiver Chris Olave went from relatively unknown freshman to offensive hero of the rivalry game against Michigan. He then added to his legacy in this year's win over the Wolverines, hauling in two catches for 68 yards – including a 57-yard touchdown that put the Buckeyes ahead 14-6 late in the first quarter.

Olave could have added to that total but dropped what would have been a 56-yard score early in the fourth quarter with Ohio State looking to extend a 42-27 lead. But that said, it was a rare moment that doesn't diminish his impact in this great rivalry.

Patrick Mayhorn BSB: He may have only played a half, and his final stats may not be gaudy, but linebacker Baron Browning was crucial in Ohio State's 56-27 win over Michigan. After being gashed across the middle in the first half to the tune of 250 yards passing by Michigan quarterback Shea Patterson, the Buckeyes went away from the 4-4 and 4-3 fronts they had used in the first half and toward a much faster and more pass coverage friendly 4-2-5.

To do that, the Buckeyes inserted Browning in the game at middle linebacker in place of Tuf Borland, next to Malik Harrison. In just 30 minutes, Browning made a huge difference, racking up seven tackles, though he was even more important in coverage. Patterson tossed for just 55 yards in the second half, as the Wolverine passing attack was slowed down massively by the shift

to a much faster back seven.

The shift also showed up on the scoreboard. After a 16-point first half that very easily could have been 23, were it not for a fumble in the red zone, Michigan had 11 points in the second half, three of which came off a Garrett Wilson fumble inside of Buckeye territory. The addition of Browning to the defense completely changed the game and allowed the Buckeyes to pull away on the way to an undefeated regular season.

BSB Subscribers

Justin Fields and J.K. Dobbins were classy, supremely well prepared and confident, executed and dominated the rivals as well as any combination of Buckeyes from the past! We may not see another pair like this for a long time! Chris Olave and Garrett Wilson, the best young receivers in the country, Baron Browning for making tackle after tackle, DaVon Hamilton for increasing pressure and a sack on the Michigan QB and the defensive coaching adjustments after half-time!

– AnthonyBuckeye

You can't ignore Dobbins, wow. Pete Werner deserves a nod and a thanks to Chugunov for holding the fort while Fields took 10. This is a team with all pistons firing.

– PeyoteBuck

Pete Werner and Jordan Fuller. Everyone is talking about the Michigan receivers dropping the balls which killed second half drives. It only takes one big hit for the receivers to start to "feel" the defenders in the middle of the field, and these two guys delivered two bone crunching blows. They weren't dropping balls, they were fearing the coming "hits."

– Borobuckeye



From The Message Board

Following Ohio State's 56-27 win over Michigan on Nov. 30, Buckeye Sports Bulletin asked the readers on BuckeyeSports.com, as well as staff members, for their thoughts on Justin Fields' 30-yard touchdown pass in his return from injury, as well as what their favorite all-time Ohio State-Michigan play is.

Here are some of the responses:

"That throw to Wilson for a TD was a moment that will be recalled for the ages. That pass and catch belong in the Louvre."

– PeyoteBuck

"The pass to Wilson that Fields made right off his injury is something I will never forget. That is a pass and story I will tell my kids about one day."

– Tiffin Buckeye

"2016 Curtis Samuel run was insane to watch. Gonzalez catch in 2005 in Ann Arbor."

– Tiffin Buckeye

"1) Anthony Gonzalez catch up there in our comeback win. 2) Luke Fickell intercepting a pass and laying on his back with the ball kicking his legs wildly in a rare win back in those days. Witnessed both of these live."

– mrbigbux

"It's hard to remember all the great plays with 100 years now since the Buckeyes' first victory over Michigan, so I will stick with this year's win. I loved J.K. Dobbins' run on the first drive where he lost the ball, but it bounced right back up to him for a long gain. It set the tone that this was going to be Ohio State's – and Dobbins' – day."

– Poster That Harley Built

"There are so many, but the Will Allen interception in 2002 has to be

up there. That was such a massive moment for the program, not just to clinch a national title berth but to finally beat Michigan with title hopes on the line after falling short every time under John Cooper. That play has always felt like the biggest breath of relief and the end of Ohio State putting so much pressure on itself entering The Game. Carlos Snow opening the second half in 1987 with a 70-yard score to take the lead in Earle Bruce's final game is worth mentioning too, as is Curtis Samuel's game winner in 2016, which still stands as the loudest I've ever heard Ohio Stadium in person."

– Patrick Mayhorn, BSB

"Until this question was asked, I hadn't even considered how that moment and that play by Fields could be remembered as one of the great plays in the history of the rivalry. Time will certainly remember it in the same light that I view Gonzalez's catch, especially if he goes on to win the Heisman and/or Ohio State wins the national championship."

– Andrew Lind, BSB

"There have been so many. Two from my early days on the beat stand out to me, however. My friend Jim Laughlin blocking the punt in the 1979 victory and Vaughn Broadnax's multi-person block to free Art Schlichter for the game-winning TD in 1981. My mind was not cluttered with so many great plays back then, which is why I remember those so well. Oh, and how can I forget Carlos Snow's 70-yard scoring jaunt with a short Tom Tupa pass in 1987, Earle's last game, featuring one of the all-time great jukes? So many."

– Frank Moskowitz, BSB

COVER STORY

Championships Priority For Quarterback Fields

Continued From Page 1

of throw? That was one of the best throws I've seen in a long time. In that spot, after taking that hit, after just putting a brace on? I don't even know what to say."

Fields admitted after the game that he underwent treatment during the week on

his knee in order to be healthy enough to play against the Wolverines, and he showed his resiliency by completing 14 of 25 passes for 302 yards and four touchdowns in the win.

That included a 16-yard strike to senior Austin Mack in the fourth quarter, which put him over the 300-yard mark for the

second time this season. Fields also added 25 yards on six carries, though he did not have a rushing attempt after the injury scare.

"That was awesome," fifth-year senior Jonah Jackson said of Fields' second-half effort, "just to see his toughness and perseverance in the game and his ability to

come back in and do what he did."

Junior defensive end Chase Young, who also finds himself in the thick of the Heisman Trophy race, echoed those sentiments.

"I feel like he's the best quarterback in the country, and I think he just put on that show today," Young said. "I love Justin,



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COVER STORY

and he's definitely leading us right now."

With his performance, Fields may have cemented his status as Ohio State's best chance to win the Heisman Trophy – though former Buckeye and current LSU quarterback Joe Burrow remains the heavy favorite entering championship weekend on Dec. 7. And while he said he's honored to be in the conversation, it's clear Fields is simply focused on winning a national championship rather than the individual accolades that may come with playing for the No. 1 team in the country.

"I give all the credit to God," Fields said. "Without him, I'd be nothing. The hard work the whole team puts in during the week, and I think it just pays off in the weight room, in the training room, off the field, just all that combined just goes into the game."

Dobbins' Career Day

Ohio State junior running back J.K. Dobbins finished the game with a career-high 211 yards and four touchdowns, surpassing his previous highs of 203 yards in the 2018 win over Maryland.

"I know he was sick to his stomach about the fumble (against Penn State) and he wore that on his sleeve all week," Day said after the game, referring to Dobbins' third-quarter fumble that led to a touchdown for the Nittany Lions. "He just had a look in his eye today. He was not going to be denied."

Dobbins – a native of La Grange, Texas – actually fumbled his first carry of this game, too, but the ball bounced back into his arms and he picked up 34 yards on the run play. He accounted for 79 yards on the drive, including a 5-yard plunge for Ohio State's first points of the game.

When Michigan closed the gap to 14-13, Dobbins added a pair of second-quarter scores to give the Buckeyes a comfortable lead heading into the half.

"It was great," Dobbins said after the game. "Big rivalry game. Without my offensive line, I couldn't do it. I just want to keep going, keep getting better."

Dobbins – who also added two receptions for 49 yards – capped things off with a 33-yard touchdown scamper in the fourth quarter, the final scoring play for either team.

In the win, Dobbins became only the second running back in program history (Archie Griffin, 1972-75) to amass 4,000 rushing yards in his career, having rushed for 1,403 yards as a freshman, 1,053 as a sophomore and 1,657 yards – and counting – during his junior year. That's why he, in addition to Fields and Young, has garnered Heisman consideration this fall.

"All three of them played great today," Day said. "All three of them deserve to be in New York, and I'll let everybody make the decision on who they think (should win). But Justin Fields, the way he played today was unbelievable, the way that J.K. ran, and how talented and dominant Chase is, all three of them deserve a trip to New York, in my opinion."

Dobbins – who on Nov. 25 was named a finalist for the Doak Walker Award alongside Oklahoma State's Chuba Hubbard and Wisconsin's Jonathan Taylor – feels he still has room to improve, though.

"I'm not satisfied," he said. "I'm not even close to being satisfied."



ANDREW LIND

UP A RUNG – With his career-high 211 yards against Michigan, junior running back J.K. Dobbins is now second on Ohio State's all-time rush list.

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OSU Offense Scorches Stout Michigan Defense

Michigan entered The Game boasting the nation's No. 4 pass defense, surrendering just 161.1 yards per game, and the No. 13 rush defense at 105.9 yards per contest. Ohio State's high-octane offense obliterated those marks on the way to a convincing 56-27 victory in the Big House on Nov. 30.

Junior running back J.K. Dobbins set the tone for the Buckeyes in the running game behind a dominant performance from the Ohio State offensive line. The co-captain from La Grange, Texas, gained 211 yards and four touchdowns on 31 carries for an impressive 6.8 yards-per-carry average. Master Teague added 29 yards on 12 attempts, and quarterback Justin Fields gained 25 more on six tries, giving Ohio State 264 rushing yards on the day.

The Scarlet and Gray dominated the Wolverines up front, controlling the line of scrimmage and opening up holes for Dobbins. Fifth-year senior left guard Jonah Jackson helped lead the Ohio State offensive line to a dominant performance, crediting the tenacity of the big men up front in a pivotal matchup with archrival Michigan.

"Every game we come in with a look in our eyes to just dominate, be fierce, be nasty," Jackson said. "But this game is extra special because you prepared so long for it."

While the Wolverines had been sound against the run through 11 games, they were even better against the pass, shutting down nearly every offense they had faced.

Fields and Co. had their way with the Maize and Blue secondary, averaging a sparkling 20.9 yards per catch. It wasn't always pretty for Fields, but the sophomore transfer from Georgia overcame a few early misses in a big way. Fields finished with 302 passing yards and four touchdowns on 14-of-25 passing, giving him a 210.3 passer rating.

In addition to the outstanding passing stats of Fields, the first-year starter showed supreme toughness when needed. Day was very proud

of his playmakers' abilities, which were on full display in Ann Arbor.

"They are a very talented defense, and a lot of people have a hard time moving the ball against them," Day said of the Wolverines defense. "But at the end of the day, a game like this comes down to players, not plays. And these guys, they willed themselves to make plays."

Cooper Comes Back For TTUN

Columbus-area native Jonathon Cooper knew he had one more game to play this season before hitting the four-game maximum for maintaining redshirt eligibility.

It was theorized Ohio State might save Cooper for the Big Ten Championship Game or the College Football Playoff, but the senior defensive end felt a special connection to playing in The Game with his teammates.

"I feel like this game would mean more to me and my brothers, to end the regular season undefeated. I wanted to make sure that I gave everything that I've got," Cooper said. "Not only is this the rivalry game, I feel like it's the last time I really get to play emotionally with my brothers when it means something. And I was feeling really good this week. I had a pretty good practice, and I asked the coaches if I could do this one."

The decision to play against the Wolverines was not easy for the Gahanna Lincoln product, but it was one he was glad he made.

"It was tough because obviously I was debating if I wanted to come back against Penn State, Team Up North or Big Ten championship, one of those," Cooper said. "I felt something inside of me that said this should be the one, and I'm

very happy that I made that decision."

Cooper played well in The Game, recording three solo tackles, including one sack.

With Ohio State leading 35-16 in the third quarter, the Wolverines faced second-and-10 from their own 48-yard line. Michigan quarterback Shea Patterson dropped back to pass with U-M still holding onto hope, but Cooper engulfed Patterson for a 6-yard loss. Patterson threw an incomplete pass on third-and-16, and Michigan punted both the ball and its hope for a comeback away.

"This season has been very tough, very hard," Cooper said. "But I honestly wasn't going into this game thinking, 'Oh, I want to make this big-time play or big-time sack.' Every single week, whether I'm playing or not, I want to make sure that I give everything to this team, everything that I have, whether that's on the field or off the field."

"And I'm happy that I made that play. It means the world to me that my teammates were here and I stepped up for them."

Defense Struggles In Wade's Void

Ohio State sophomore cornerback Shaun Wade warmed up in full pads with his teammates but was held out of the showdown with archrival Michigan.

Wade, who lines up at slot corner, safety, outside corner and sometimes even linebacker for the Buckeyes, is one of the most valuable players on the team.

His immense impact was felt in his absence against the Wolverines, as they were able to pick apart the Ohio State secondary in the first half.

GAME NOTEBOOK

Joe Dempsey

Ohio State head coach Ryan Day has a lot of respect for the Maize and Blue, but he knew that his team couldn't shy away from what it does best against a tough opponent.

"Their defensive staff does an excellent job, but you have to be aggressive against them," Day said. "You have to set the tone. And when it's the other way around, then you're battling uphill. They have really good players and a really good scheme, but you just have to stay aggressive and you've got to keep your foot on the pedal."

"The only way that works is if the kids make plays. It sounds good until you're not making plays, but these guys made plays."

The Ryan Day-led Buckeyes nearly exceeded Michigan's season average of 16.3 points allowed per game by 40 while amassing 577 yards against a defense that entered The Game giving up only 267.0 per contest.



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OHIO STATE VS. MICHIGAN

Game Analysis

What Worked Well

The Ohio State offensive line controlled the line of scrimmage against a formidable Michigan defensive front, and in turn, the Buckeyes controlled the game. Head coach and play caller Ryan Day made it clear that Ohio State wanted to set the tone in the ground game, and the offense did just that.

The Buckeyes gained 118 rushing yards in the first half alone, with junior running back J.K. Dobbins running for 103 yards and three first-half scores. Dobbins finished with 211 of the team's 264 rushing yards, hitting holes with authority and wearing down the Wolverines with his physical running style.

The Ohio State offensive line also excelled in pass protection, giving sophomore quarterback Justin Fields enough time to throw for 302 yards and four touchdowns, with many deep completions requiring extensive blocking.

Fields was sacked only once, and the offensive line did not give the Wolverines any reason to think they could hang with the likes of Ohio State. The Buckeye offense scored 56 points and totaled 577 yards while doing whatever it wanted against a tough Michigan defense.

What Didn't Work

The Ohio State defense has defended well against the pass all season, but the Buckeyes struggled in the absence of sophomore cornerback Shaun Wade. Michigan quarterback Shea Patterson threw for 305 yards with one touchdown and one interception, gaining the most aerial yards against Ohio State all season.

The Ole Miss transfer was able to get into a rhythm against the shorthanded Scarlet and Gray early, completing 14 of 19 passes for 250

yards and his lone touchdown in the first half. The most passing yards allowed by the Buckeyes before facing Michigan was 218 against Michigan State on Oct. 5.

In addition to Wade's absence, fifth-year senior cornerback Damon Arnette suffered an undisclosed injury during the game. Junior cornerback Amir Riep and sophomore corners Sevyn Banks and Cameron Brown were forced into expanded roles, struggling at times with communication.

The breakdowns in the Buckeye secondary allowed for a few easy first downs for Patterson and Michigan's passing attack, which finished with 305 yards and one touchdown through the air.

Play Of The Game

After missing seven snaps due to a knee injury, Fields returned to the field with a bulky brace on his left knee. The Buckeyes faced second-and-10 from the Michigan 30-yard line with a 35-16 lead and just under four minutes left in the third quarter.

Michigan brought pressure against the hobbled sophomore signal caller, but he avoided the rush and rolled out to his left. Fields saw freshman wide receiver Garrett Wilson racing toward the end zone, but the dual-threat quarterback had to make sure he threw the ball hard enough to beat Michigan safety Josh Metellus.

Fields flipped his hips and heaved a beautiful pass to the back of the end zone, where Wilson had beaten Metellus. The freshman receiver snagged the ball and kept his feet in bounds for an Ohio State touchdown, giving the visitors a 42-16 lead and helping propel them to a victory in their rival's house.

— Joe Dempsey

Fifth-year defensive tackle Robert "B.B." Landers attributed the slip-ups to the fact that Michigan saved some new wrinkles in its offense for The Game.

"I think the biggest thing was we had to settle down," Landers said. "There were a few things that they did that we just hadn't seen on film, which has kind of been the trend all season."

Junior cornerback Amir Riep and sophomore corners Sevyn Banks and Cameron Brown struggled at times in relief, particularly in the first half. The trio of reserves had to play even more snaps once fifth-year corner Damon Arnette went down with an undisclosed injury.

Not only is Wade sound in coverage, but he is one of the Buckeyes' biggest playmakers on either side of the ball. With a knack for forcing turnovers, Wade has four interceptions and two forced fumbles in his career.

Although they allowed the most passing yards they had all year, the Ohio State defensive backs did come away with one turnover. Riep picked off a Patterson pass in impressive fashion, snagging the ball out of the air with one hand and running it back 16 yards in the fourth quarter.

Part of the problem with Wade's absence from the Ohio State defense came in the form of miscommunication. Wade has an exceptional football IQ, and the Buckeye secondary has communicated coverages and audibles well all season. Without Wade, however, several miscues in the secondary led to easy yardage and even points for the Wolverines.

Despite several errors, Day was pleased with how some of the less-experienced players rose to the occasion.

"They've got some really good receivers, Patterson's really talented, their offensive line did a good job protecting, I thought," Day said. "But I thought at halftime our defensive staff made some really good adjustments."

"(Patterson) was 4 of 24 in the second half — we held him to that. That's a really good passing offense and some of the best receivers in the country, so hats off to our defensive staff."

"But the guys on defense played — Jeff Okudah played. Amir Riep stepped up in a big spot. Marcus Hooker was out there, Sevyn Banks was playing, Cam (Brown) — those guys were involved with it and those guys did a great job."

Landers agreed with his first-year head coach that the team's ability to recognize what was going wrong and then correct any weaknesses was the biggest reason for its eighth

straight victory against Michigan.

"It just came down to us making the proper in-game adjustments and halftime adjustments," Landers said. "Once we made those adjustments and got to settle, and got a little more comfortable with the reads and what we were seeing, it then allowed us to play a lot faster. It's one of those things where we knew we were going to be tested physically, but the biggest thing was going to be mentally."

Wilson's First Rivalry Game

Freshman wide receiver Garrett Wilson got his first taste of The Game and carved his name in the storied history of the rivalry.

The five-star freshman who grew up near Columbus led both teams in receiving yards with 118 on three catches, with one serving as the play of the game.

Wilson hauled in a 30-yard touchdown from a hobbled Fields on a second-and-10 in the third quarter, pushing the Ohio State lead to

42-16 with the ensuing extra point. The talented wideout from Austin (Texas) Lake Travis beat Michigan safety Josh Metellus and reeled in the score in the back of the end zone.

Sophomore wideout Chris Olave, who caught two touchdowns as a true freshman against Michigan in 2018, gave high praise to Wilson

following his best performance of the season.

"That was a definitely a big touchdown," Olave said of Wilson's score. "I keep saying these past couple weeks, Garrett is the most talented receiver we've got, with his limited role this year. He had a big game today, and I'm proud of him."



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OHIO STATE VS. MICHIGAN

Buckeyes Win Eighth Straight Vs. Wolverines

By CRAIG MERZ
Buckeye Sports Bulletin Staff Writer

Sophomore quarterback Justin Fields had his Heisman Trophy moment and junior back J.K. Dobbins his Heisman game when they combined for all eight touchdowns as top-ranked Ohio State pounded No. 13 Michigan 56-27 at Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor on Nov. 30.

Fields overcame a knee injury to throw for 302 yards and four touchdowns, and Dobbins rushed for 211 yards and four TDs (both career highs) as the Buckeyes continued their dominance in the series to the delight of the OSU fans among the 112,071 in attendance.

The Buckeyes (12-0, 9-0) led 28-16 at the half and pulled away for their eighth straight win in the series and 15th in 16 games, dropping U-M coach Jim Harbaugh to 0-5 while Ryan Day won his first game in the storied rivalry.

Fields was 14 of 25 and ran six times for 25 yards. Dobbins carried the ball 31 times and added two receptions for 49 yards.

Freshman Garrett Wilson had three catches for 118 yards and a TD but fumbled a punt in the third quarter that set up a field goal for the Wolverines (9-3, 6-3).

Senior Austin Mack had 39 yards and a score on three catches, sophomore Chris Olave had 68 receiving yards and a score via two grabs, and senior K.J. Hill had two receptions for 17 yards and a TD.

U-M's Shea Patterson was 18 of 43 for 305 yards, a TD, an interception and a fumble. However, he was 4 of 24 for 55 yards and the

interception in the second half.

First-Half Blitz

Michigan wasted little time, 3:17 to be exact, to assert itself on the game's opening drive by going 75 yards on seven plays for a 6-0 lead at 11:43 after Quinn Nordin missed the extra point.

Facing third-and-5 from the Michigan 48, Patterson scrambled to toss a 7-yard pass to Ronnie Bell, and a personal foul on OSU junior cornerback Jeff Okudah for a late hit moved the ball to the Ohio State 30. Nick Eubanks took a pass for 8 yards, and Giles Jackson raced in from 22 yards on a reverse.

The Buckeyes countered with a 75-yard drive of their own with the made PAT by junior Blake Haubeil at the 8:50 mark for a 7-6 lead. The nine-play, 2:53 series featured a fortuitous bounce and a big third-down conversion.

After Fields threw incomplete to Olave on the first play from scrimmage, Dobbins broke through the line. He fumbled the ball, but it popped back to him in stride for a 34-yard gain to the U-M 41.

He had two runs for 12 to the 29 before Fields was sacked at the 33. On second down, Fields was off target again. Needing 14 yards on third down, Fields found Dobbins across the middle for a 28-yard advance to the 5, and Dobbins ran in from there on the ensuing play, the last of his 51 yards rushing for the drive.

Olave, who had two TD catches and a blocked punt in the 62-39 win last season over U-M, made it 14-6 with 1:27 to go in the first when he caught a perfectly thrown 57-yard pass from Fields for his 11th touchdown reception.

During the six-play, 81-yard, 2:27 drive,



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FRESHMAN FEAST – Wide receiver Garrett Wilson hauled in three catches for 118 yards and a touchdown in his first game against Michigan.

Olave had an 11-yard reception before Dobbins carried twice for 11 yards to the OSU 43 to set up the scoring strike.

U-M responded in rapid fashion, needing three plays to go 75 yards in 1:08 to make it

14-13 with 19 seconds left in the first quarter. Hassan Haskins had a catch for 9, Sean McKeon beat blown coverage for 41 to the 25, and on the next play Donovan People-Jones was free for the scoring pass.

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OHIO STATE VS. MICHIGAN

The Buckeyes started their next possession after the touchback at their 25. Fields converted a third-and-1 with a sneak to the 37. Dobbins picked up 4 yards, and 15 more were tacked on when Carlo Kemp was flagged for unsportsmanlike conduct when he untied Dobbins' shoe and took it off.

Three plays later with the ball on the OSU 47, Fields had a simple crossing pass at the line to Wilson, who sped 41 yards to the 12. Dobbins gained 2, tight end Jeremy Ruckert made a 4-yard catch at the left sideline, and Dobbins rushed for a 6-yard TD to extend the lead to 21-13 at the 10:12 mark. The drive used 5:07 and nine plays.

The Wolverines surged from their 22 thanks to a pair of long pass plays - 34 yards to Eubanks and 16 to Bell - to set up a third-and-9 from the 12. Patterson fumbled the snap, and senior defensive end Robert Landers recovered it at the 16.

From there, Michigan made another egregious mistake that led to the Buckeyes going up 28-13 with 3:15 remaining before the half. The Buckeyes were 4 yards shy of a first down at their 43. OSU went to punt, but the Wolverines jumped offside to give OSU new life at its 48.

Wilson made the Wolverines pay with a 47-yard catch to the 5, and Dobbins took the handoff on the next play to complete the 84-yard, nine-play, 3:17 drive.

The Wolverines continued to exploit the pass coverage but had to settle for a 23-yard field goal by Nordin with 19 seconds left before the half to make it 28-16.

Patterson on the 70-yard, nine-play, 2:56 drive had completions of 24 to Peoples-Jones, 17 to Bell and 21 to Nico Collins, the latter giving U-M a first at the 5. After an incomplete,

Jackson gained nothing, and on third down senior safety Jordan Fuller had a pass breakup in the end zone on a pass Peoples-Jones let slip away from him.

Dobbins had 103 yards on 17 carries by halftime, and Fields was 8 of 16 for 200 yards with Wilson accounting for 88 on two catches. Patterson was 14 of 19 for 250 yards.

Second Half To Remember

The Buckeyes got the ball to start the third quarter, and they continued their onslaught. Dobbins on the first play ran 41 yards from the 25 to the U-M 34. He had a 21-yard catch to the 13 and a run for three more.

Fields then took off for the right sideline on the next play. He was hit well out of bounds by Cam McGrone for a personal foul. Added with a holding call, the ball was placed on the 2. Dobbins had consecutive runs for minus-4 yards to the 6.

After a U-M timeout, Fields found Hill for a TD, the 46th straight game in which Hill had a catch, and the score was 35-16 at 11:18. OSU traveled 75 yards in 3:42 on six plays.

After a Michigan punt, the Buckeyes started at their 20. Fields ran 9 to the 29. He then passed 15 yards to Mack to the OSU 44.

That's when Fields got hurt with 7:39 left in the quarter when junior tight end Luke Farrell was pushed back and rolled on Fields' knee.

Chris Chugunov replaced Fields and had two handoffs to second-year freshman Master Teague for gains of a combined 5 yards to the 49. On third-and-5, Chugunov threw a rope to Hill for 11 yards to the U-M 40 to keep the drive alive.

Teague went for 10 yards and a first on three carries. After a Chugunov incomplete pass to

Wilson, Fields re-entered and on his first play was forced out of the pocket.

That's when his legendary moment was born. Hobbled a bit by a knee brace, he rolled left and threw a pinpoint pass to Wilson for a 30-yard TD with 3:46 left in the third to extend the lead to 42-16. The series was 10 plays, 80 yards and 4:42.

The Wolverines made it 42-19 after Wilson's second muffed punt of the season at the OSU 26. The Wolverines lost a yard on three plays (including two incomplete passes) and Nordin made a 45-yard field goal at 2:33 of the third.

Michigan then got a three-and-out and started from its 40 after a 31-yard punt by junior Drue Chrisman. U-M made quick work to pull to within a pair of scores 42-27 at 14:23 of the fourth quarter. Haskins was the workhorse. He opened the series with a 33-yard run and added another for 9 to the OSU 18. Patterson moved the chains with a 1-yard gain to the 17 to end the third quarter.

After an incomplete, McKeon had a catch of 15 to the 2, before Haskins rushed for the score. Michigan's first attempt at two points was an incomplete pass, but sophomore corner Cam Brown was called for holding and Haskins converted at the end of the end of the seven-play, 60-yard drive in 1:39.

On the next possession, the Buckeyes faced a third-and-1 at their own 44, but a false start and an incomplete to junior Demario McCall gave the ball back to Michigan at its 20 after Chrisman's 61-yard punt went for a touchback.

The Buckeyes' defense came up with a big play to stop Michigan on downs in its own territory. On fourth-and-1 from the 29, Haskins was dropped for a 1-yard loss by Landers and a host of others with 12:17 left in the game.

Four plays later, OSU got an insurance score to increase the lead to 49-27 with 10:11 left. Dobbins lost 2, and Farrell had a 14-yard catch for a first down at the 16. Dobbins was stopped for no gain, but Fields connected with Mack in the middle of the field and he did the rest.

Michigan failed on another fourth-down try with 8:48 to go, giving the Buckeyes the ball at the U-M 47 after Patterson's incompletion. Three plays earlier, Fuller had been penalized for targeting, but after a review, the call was reversed.

From there it was all Dobbins, all the time to make it 56-27 with 6:30 left. He ran all four plays for 47 yards, capped by a 33-yard run to the right pylon.

On U-M's next drive, junior corner Amir Riep intercepted Patterson at the OSU 34 and returned it 16 yards to the 50 with 5:18 left.

Fields and Dobbins gave way to Chugunov and Teague at that point. OSU and U-M exchanged punts, and the Buckeyes got the ball one final time with 2:20 left before Teague ran four times with the game ending at the Buckeye 46.

Numbers

Dobbins passed Ezekiel Elliott (3,961 yards) for second on the all-time OSU rushing list. He has 4,113 yards to trail only Archie Griffin, (5,589 in four seasons). ... OSU had 577 total yards (313 passing, 264 rushing). Michigan had 396 (305 passing, 91 rushing). ... The Buckeyes were 9 of 15 on third down; the Wolverines 2 of 13. ... Junior linebacker Baron Browning led the Buckeyes with seven tackles (six solo). ... Junior defensive end and Heisman hopeful Chase Young had no tackles for the Buckeyes. He was credited with two quarterback hurries.

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OHIO STATE VS. MICHIGAN

BSB Quotebook: Ohio State 56, Michigan 27

Ohio State head coach Ryan Day on how the pressure of winning his first game against Michigan as a head coach lasted all season long: "Ever since I took the job, it's been on my mind. I know what this game means to the people of Ohio, to Buckeye Nation, and coming off the heels of one of the greatest coaches in the history of college football who went 7-0 here, those are big shoes to fill. And I tried not to worry about that, our staff tried not to worry about that. All you worry about is just right now. And anytime I started to think about, 'What if? What if?' I just got right back into my work and just focused on trying to put a good game plan together."

Day on the emotions that go into his first head coaching victory against the rival Wolverines: "This is all a blur right now. To say that there's not stress coming into a game like this would be a lie. There's so much riding on a game like this, and you understand, and you feel the weight of everybody involved with it. To win like this, it's a relief."

Day on the relief and the feelings he has about Ohio State's performance, and what all that means to both him and his loved ones: "I am just overcome with emotion right now. There's just so much that goes into this game. We live it year-round. For our guys to play the way that they did, it means everything to our program, to my family - Nina and the kids. You have no idea. It just feels good."

Ohio State sophomore quarterback Justin Fields on why the Buckeyes currently have an edge over Michigan in the rivalry: "I just think we take it more seriously than they do. We prepare for it all year. Like (football sport performance) Coach Mick (Marotti) said, we're preparing for the next year right now. So, I think it just means more at Ohio State."

Ohio State junior defensive end Chase Young on what he was thinking when Fields was hurt because of the toughness of the sophomore quarterback: "After he said he was cool, I knew he was going to go back in the game. You wouldn't have thought that he wasn't, just because I know the type of player that he is."

Young on his underwhelming performance against Michigan, after finishing without a sack in a game for the first time all season due to multiple double teams: "I played as hard as I could. I put my best on the field, and at the game, (if) you put your best on the field, you can't really be mad."

Ohio State fifth-year senior defensive tackle Robert Landers on what adjustments the defense needed to do to at halftime to slow down Michigan's strong start to the game: "Sometimes you have to be a student and a player as you play at the same time. You have to know what's going on in the game to be able to communicate what you're getting, what you're seeing to the coaches so that we all as a collection can make the proper adjustments for everybody from top to bottom. So I give kudos to the defense as a whole for mentally being locked in, also physically, and being able to make those adjustments for us to excel toward the second half."

Landers on the key to making an Ohio State victory happen in such a pivotal rivalry game: "In a game like this, you have to step up. In a game like this, you have to come together. When adversity strikes, you have to grab each other's hand and you have to go to work."

Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh when asked to compare the talent gap, or coaching gap, between Michigan and Ohio State following the previous two losses by 23-plus points: "I'll answer your questions, not your insults. (Ohio State) played really good. They played better today."

Harbaugh on how the game slipped away in the head coach's fifth defeat to Ohio State: "I thought our team was well prepared. I thought they were playing good football. I thought it was a good football fight. It got away from us today. Give them credit for playing well."

Michigan senior tight end Sean McKeon on what made the difference in the Ohio State-Michigan game that resulted in the Buckeyes' victory: "They definitely made deep shots when we didn't, took more deep shots, coverage on those, it was kind of deflating to our defense. They converted on all of their red-zone drives, converted touchdowns. We didn't."

McKeon on his emotions following Michigan's 15th defeat to the Buckeyes in the past 16 efforts: "No one's happy. It's definitely really frustrating, especially for the seniors. It's just kind of the same thing every year. We have to execute better, and yeah it gets old, but we just have to play better against them."

Michigan sophomore defensive lineman Aidan Hutchinson on the performance by Ohio State junior running back J.K. Dobbins: "He's a really good running back, probably the best we've played all year. You have to give the props to him. He's a hard runner, and congrats to him."

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The Numbers Game

Ohio State 56, Michigan 27

Nov. 30, 2019 – Michigan Stadium, Ann Arbor, MI.

Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	F
OHIO STATE (12-0, 9-0)	14	14	14	14	56
MICHIGAN (9-3, 6-3)	13	3	3	8	27

First Quarter

UM – Jackson, 22 yard run (Nordin kick missed), 11:43; 7 plays, 75 yards, 3:17 TOP.
OSU – Dobbins, 5 yard run (Haubeil kick), 8:50; 9 plays, 75 yards, 2:53 TOP.
OSU – Olave, 57 yard pass from Fields (Haubeil kick), 1:27; 6 plays, 81 yards, 2:27 TOP.
UM – Peoples-Jones, 25 yard pass from Patterson (Nordin kick), 0:19; 3 plays, 75 yards, 1:08 TOP.

Second Quarter

OSU – Dobbins, 6 yard run (Haubeil kick), 10:12; 9 plays, 75 yards, 5:07 TOP.
OSU – Dobbins, 5 yard run (Haubeil kick), 3:15; 9 plays, 84 yards, 3:17 TOP.
UM – Nordin, 23 yard field goal, 0:19; 9 plays, 70 yards, 2:56 TOP.

Third Quarter

OSU – Hill, 6 yard pass from Fields (Haubeil kick), 11:18; 6 plays, 75 yards, 3:42 TOP.
OSU – Wilson, 30 yard pass from Fields (Haubeil kick), 3:46; 10 plays, 80 yards, 4:42 TOP.
UM – Nordin, 45 yard field goal, 2:33; 4 plays, -1 yards, 0:49 TOP.

Fourth Quarter

UM – Haskins, 2 yard run (2-pt. conversion good), 14:23; 7 plays, 60 yards, 1:39 TOP.
OSU – Mack, 16 yard pass from Fields (Haubeil kick), 10:11; 4 plays, 28 yards, 2:06 TOP.
OSU – Dobbins, 33 yard run (Haubeil kick), 6:30; 4 plays, 47 yards, 2:18 TOP.

Att. – 112,071

Weather – 35 degrees, cloudy; wind E 10 mph.

Team Statistics

	UM	OSU
First Downs	21	28
Rushing	5	12
Passing	14	12
Penalty	2	4
Rushes-Yards	26-91	50-264
Passing Yards	305	313
Passes (Comp.-Att.-Int.)	18-43-1	15-27-0
Offensive Plays	69	77
Total Net Yards	396	577
Third Down Efficiency	2-13	9-15
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-2	0-1
Punts-Avg.	5-45.8	4-45.5
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	2-1
Penalties	5-38	7-66
Time of Possession	23:35	36:25

Individual Statistics

RUSHING (Att.-Net Yds.) – **UM**: Haskins 12-78; Jackson 3-26; Charbonnet 4-7; Patterson 7-(-20). **OSU**: Dobbins 31-211; Teague 12-29; Fields 6-25; Team 1-(-1).

PASSING (Comp.-Att.-Int.-Yds.-TD) – **UM**: Patterson 18-43-1-305-1. **OSU**: Fields 14-25-0-302-4; Chugunov 1-2-0-11-0.

RECEIVING (Rec.-Yds.) – **UM**: Bell 6-78; Peoples-Jones 3-69; McKeon 3-66; Eubanks 2-42; Collins 2-32; Black 1-9; Haskins 1-9. **OSU**: Wilson 3-118; Mack 3-39; Olave 2-68; Dobbins 2-49; Hill 2-17; Farrell 1-14; Berry 1-4; Ruckert 1-4.

PUNTING (No.-Avg.-Long) – **UM**: Robbins 4-42.8-48; Hart 1-58.0-58. **OSU**: Chrisman 4-45.5-61.

PUNT RETURNS (No.-Yds.) – **UM**: Peoples-Jones 1-2. **OSU**: Wilson 1-0.

KICKOFF RETURNS (No.-Yds.) – **UM**: Jackson 4-80. **OSU**: None.

MISSED FIELD GOALS (Yds.) – **UM**: None. **OSU**: None.

FORCED FUMBLES – **UM**: None. **OSU**: None.

FUMBLE RECOVERIES (No.-Yds.) – **UM**: McCurry 1-0. **OSU**: Landers 1-0.

INTERCEPTIONS (No.-Yds.) – **UM**: None. **OSU**: Riep 1-16.

SACKS (No.-Yds.) – **UM**: Dwumfour 0.5-2; Glasgow 0.5-2. **OSU**: Hamilton 1.0-10; Cooper 1.0-6.

TACKLES FOR LOSS (No.-Yds.) – **UM**: McGrone 1.5-3; Paye 1.5-2; Glasgow 1.0-3; Dwumfour 0.5-3; Hinton 0.5-1. **OSU**: Hamilton 2.0-11; Landers 2.0-2; Harrison 1.5-3; Browning 1.5-1; Cooper 1.0-6; Werner 1.0-3.

TACKLES (Solo-Asst.-Tot.) – **UM**: Hutchinson 4-6-10; Hudson 2-6-8; Metellus 1-7-8; McGrone 6-2-8; Glasgow 3-4-7; Hinton 1-5-6; Paye 2-4-6; Kemp 1-3-4; Dwumfour 1-2-3; Hill 2-1-3; Thomas 1-1-2; Hill 2-0-2; Gray 2-0-2; Danna 1-0-1; Haskins 1-0-1; Uche 0-1-1. **OSU**: Browning 6-1-7; Fuller 3-2-5; Hamilton 4-1-5; Werner 3-1-4; Borland 2-2-4; Arnette 1-2-3; Riep 1-2-3; Cooper 3-0-3; Harrison 1-1-2; Hilliard 0-2-2; Landers 2-0-2; Okudah 1-0-1; Williams 1-0-1; Banks 1-0-1; Gant 1-0-1; Brown 1-0-1; Pope 1-0-1; Togiav 1-0-1; Johnson 0-1-1; Hooker 0-1-1.

PLAYERS IN THE GAME – **UM**: Faustin, Hinton, Solomon, Moody, Hill, Nordin, Robbins, Danna, Brown, Johnson, Uche, Black, Gil, Bell, Wilson, Jackson, Hart, Sainristil, Green, Barrett, Reynolds, Coachran, Gray, Grodman, Cheeseman, Fakh, Mason, McCurry, Bush, Shibley, Filiaga, Speight, Spanellis, Hayes, Jeter. **OSU**: Olave, Mack, Berry, Johnson, McCall, Teague, McCullough, Chugunov, Wilson, Williams, Browning, Mitchell, Jean-Baptiste, Smith, Banks, Johnson, Gant, Wint, Brown, Hooker, Harrison, Rossi, Pope, Young, Kacherski, Friday, Woidke, Landers, Togiav, Jones, Ruckert, Chrisman, Haubeil.

Season Statistics

2019-20 Game-By-Game				Scoring						
Date	Opponent	Result/Time	Crowd	J.K. Dobbins	TD	EPK	EPR	EPRC	FG	PTS
Aug. 31	(5)FLORIDA ATLANTIC	45-21	103,228	21	-	-	-	-	-	126
Sept. 7	(5)CINCINNATI	42-0	104,089	-	79-79	-	-	-	8-10	103
Sept. 14	(6)at Indiana	51-10	47,945	11	-	-	-	-	-	68
Sept. 21	(6)MIAMI (OHIO)	76-5	103,190	10	-	-	-	-	-	60
Sept. 28	(5)at Nebraska	48-7	89,379	8	-	-	-	-	-	48
Oct. 5	(4)MICHIGAN STATE (25)	34-10	104,797	6	-	-	-	-	-	36
Oct. 18	(4)at Northwestern	52-3	47,330	5	-	-	-	-	-	30
Oct. 26	(3)WISCONSIN (13)	38-7	102,998	4	-	-	-	-	-	24
Nov. 9	(3)MARYLAND	73-14	101,022	3	-	-	-	-	-	18
Nov. 16	(2) at Rutgers	56-21	33,528	3	-	-	-	-	-	18
Nov. 23	(2) PENN STATE (8)	28-17	104,355	2	-	-	-	-	-	12
Nov. 30	(2) at Michigan (10)	56-27	112,071	2	-	-	-	-	-	12

OSU's gameday AP ranking is in parentheses before the opponent, while the opponent's ranking is after the name.

Team Statistics		
	OSU	Opp
First Downs	341	173
Rushing	173	82
Passing	140	69
Penalty	28	22
Average Per Game/Rush	280.6	91.2
Average Per Game/Pass	253.7	141.1
Total Offense	6411	2787
Total Plays	906	748
Average Per Game	534.2	232.3
Average Per Play	7.1	3.7
Penalties-Yards	69-653	66-577
Fumbles-Lost	20-12	19-10
Third Down Efficiency	88-151	48-177
Percentage	58%	27%
Fourth Down Efficiency	5-9	6-17
Percentage	56%	35%
Sacks-Yards	49-318	26-161
Time Of Possession Avg.	31:38	27:55

Score	By Quarters	1	2	3	4	OT	Tot.	Avg.
Ohio State	136	224	125	114	0	599	49.9	
Opponents	31	23	51	37	0	142	11.8	

Individual Statistics					
Rushing	Att.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
J.K. Dobbins	250	1657	6.6	19	68
Master Teague	128	780	6.1	4	73
Justin Fields	111	470	4.2	10	51
Marcus Crowley	25	237	9.5	1	53
Steele Chambers	19	135	7.1	1	15
Demario McCall	18	122	6.8	2	32
Amani McMahon	1	10	10.0	0	10
Chris Olave	2	5	2.5	0	4
K.J. Hill	1	1	1.0	0	1
Gunnar Hoak	4	-6	-1.5	0	3
Chris Chugunov	4	-10	-2.5	0	0
TEAM	15	-34	-2.3	0	0
OSU Totals	578	3367	5.8	37	73
OPP Totals	422	1094	2.6	9	56

Passing	Comp.	Att.	Pct.	Yds.	TD-INT	Effic.
Justin Fields	189	277	68.2	2654	37-1	192.1
Chris Chugunov	26	43	60.5	286	6-0	162.4
Gunnar Hoak	6	6	100.0	104	1-0	300.2
TEAM	0	2	0	0	0-0	0
OSU Totals	221	328	67.4	3044	44-1	188.9
OPP Totals	165	326	50.6	1693	7-15	92.1

Receiving	Rec.	Net	Avg.	TD	Long
K.J. Hill	44	486	11.0	8	53
Chris Olave	41	705	17.2	11	58
Binjimen Victor	29	480	16.6	6	60
Garrett Wilson	24	368	15.3	5	47
Austin Mack	20	273	13.6	3	38
J.K. Dobbins	17	200	11.8	2	28
Jeremy Ruckert	12	120	10.0	3	25
Jameson Williams	6	112	18.7	1	61
Jaelen Gill	6	51	8.5	1	32
Luke Farrell	5	87	17.4	2	21
Master Teague	4	60	15.0	0	28
Demario McCall	4	28	7.0	0	11
Rashod Berry	2	20	10.0	0	16
Jake Hausmann	2	13	6.5	1	9
Sam Wiglus	1	11	11.0	0	11
Elijah Gardiner	1	10	10.0	0	10
Mitch Rossi	1	8	8.0	0	8
Marcus Crowley	1	7	7.0	1	7
Jaylen Harris	1	5	5.0	0	5
OSU Totals	221	3044	13.8	44	61
OPP Totals	165	1693	10.3	7	49

Scoring	TD	EPK	EPR	EPRC	FG	PTS
J.K. Dobbins	21	-	-	-	-	126
Blake Haubeil	-	79-79	-	-	8-10	103
Chris Olave	11	-	-	-	-	68
Justin Fields	10	-	-	-	-	60
K.J. Hill	8	-	-	-	-	48
Binjimen Victor	6	-	-	-	-	36
Garrett Wilson	5	-	-	-	-	30
Master Teague	4	-	-	-	-	24
Jeremy Ruckert	3	-	-	-	-	18
Austin Mack	3	-	-	-	-	18
Demario McCall	2	-	-	-	-	12
Luke Farrell	2	-	-	-	-	12
Marcus Crowley	2	-	-	-	-	12
Damon Arnette	1	-	-	-	-	6
Jameson Williams	1	-	-	-	-	6
Steele Chambers	1	-	-	-	-	6
Jake Hausmann	1	-	-	-	-	6
Jaelen Gill	1	-	-	-	-	6
D. DiMaccio	0	2-3	-	-	-	2
OSU Totals	82	81-82	-	-	8-10	599
OPP Totals	16	13-14	1-1	1-1	9-11	142

FG Distance	0-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Blake Haubeil	2-2	2-4	3-3	1-1	8-10
OSU Totals	2-2	2-4	3-3	1-1	8-10
OPP Totals	5-6	2-3	2-2	0-0	9-11

Punting	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Bk	Long
Drue Chrisman	38	1679	44.2	0	61
TEAM	1	13	13.0	1	13
OSU Totals	39	1692	43.4	1	61
OPP Totals	91	3685	40.5	2	70

Interceptions	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Jeff Okudah	3	0	0.0	0	0
Jordan Fuller	2	26	13.0	0	26
K'Vaughan Pope	2	4	2.0	0	3
Amir Riep	2	11	5.5	0	11
Damon Arnette	1	96	96.0	1	96
Tuf Borland	1	42	42.0	0	42
Josh Proctor	1	0	0.0	0	0
Sevyn Banks	1	0	0.0	0	0
Shaun Wade	1	0	0.0	0	0
Justin Hilliard	1	0	0.0	0	0
OSU Totals	15	184	12.3	1	96
OPP Totals	1	34	34.0	0	34

Punt Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Garrett Wilson	11	82	7.5	0	52
Demario McCall	8	65	8.1	0	35
K.J. Hill	5	38	7.6	0	16
Chris Olave	1	18	18.0	0	18
Sevyn Banks	1	5	5.0	0	5
OSU Totals	26	208	8.0	0	52
OPP Totals	9	32	3.6	0	7

Kickoff Returns	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
Demario McCall	10	232	23.2	0	38
Xavier Johnson	1	19	19.0	0	19
Marcus Crowley	1	17	17.0	0	17
Chris Olave	1	15	15.0	0	15
OSU Totals	13	283	21.8	0	38
OPP Totals	40	726	18.2	0	70

Def. Leaders	Solo
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Michigan Shows It's Still A Work In Progress

THE VIEW FROM 15TH & HIGH
Frank Moskowitz, Publisher

Several times throughout this season I've recapped in this space what my feelings were heading into particular games, sometimes expressing concern about particular opponents (mostly early in the season). Heading into The Game, I must say I seemed a lot less concerned than many Buckeye fans and certainly the pundits, who were making Michigan out to be vastly improved and now a juggernaut to be feared.

Those who think I am patting myself on the back with the benefit of having seen the Buckeyes' 56-27 victory should note that I made my beliefs known on our BuckeyeSports.com Forum before the game. To make any prediction, let alone a bold prediction for The Game, is really unlike me, so I must have been supremely confident. Oh, I acknowledged that funny things happen in the Ohio State-Michigan game. And speaking about funny things happening in The Game, I referenced that it was the 50th anniversary of Michigan's upset of one of the greatest Buckeye teams ever in 1969, Be Schembechler's first year on the U-M sidelines, a cautionary tale for the Buckeyes and their fans.

But I looked at both sides of the coin. First, Michigan. I've got to make a confession. I probably had seen only a handful of Michigan plays all season, and now that I look back on it, those plays were against Army and Penn State, not the team's finest moments. But this team that was so vastly improved down the stretch – according to others, not me – was the same team that barely beat Army and lost to quality opponents Wisconsin and the Nittany Lions.

While I will give them their signature win of the season against Notre Dame, most of the street cred they gained in the last few weeks was against the likes of Michigan State, Maryland and Indiana. When the toughest team you beat in that stretch is the Hoosiers, you are going to have to show me a little more to sway me.

And as far as pulling off a 1969-esque upset, with all due respect, Jim Harbaugh is hardly Bo Schembechler.

More importantly than looking at Michigan's side of the coin, I looked at Ohio State's side, and the Buckeyes are a team that I am obviously very familiar with. No watching a few plays here or there with the Buckeyes.

I have said this over and over again since Ohio State started emerging in the early part of the season. This team is talented, deep, well-coached and focused, and it has a chemistry that I have always seen in the championship teams I have watched or been associated with.

I also was far less concerned than most following Ohio State's 28-17 win over Penn State. The Lions challenged briefly in the third period of that game, but the Buckeyes quickly righted the ship and scored an 11-point victory over a legitimate top-10 opponent in a game that was only that close because of several Buckeye turnovers. I was not minimizing the turnovers, but you knew that was going to be addressed in practice leading up to The Game.

There was going to come a point for Michigan in the game with Ohio State when the Wolverines realized they weren't playing Maryland or IU and the Buckeyes were going to respond to U-M scores or big plays, not will like a Terrapin or Hoosier.

Speaking of turnovers, you had to take it as a good sign when, in the early going, J.K. Dobbins lost the ball but it bounced right back up to him without Dobbins missing stride in the middle of a 34-yard run.

I just did not believe Michigan to be a match for this Ohio State team.

However, even with what I saw as a competitive gap between the two teams, an Ohio State-Michigan game is still always going to come down to turnovers and mistakes, and this was illustrated in a key sequence in the game.

The Wolverines trailed just 21-13 (that missed extra point on the first drive would have been a critical mistake if the game ended up closer) midway through the second quarter and were driving when quarterback Shea Patterson lost the handle on a snap and Robert Landers recovered on the OSU 16, thwarting the U-M drive. But Michigan responded to that adversity, forcing a fourth-and-4 at the Buckeye 43.

Then came one of the most critical plays of the game. With Drue Chrisman back to punt, Khaleke Hudson jumped offside, giving Ohio State a first down and new life. Buckeye quarterback Justin Fields did not look that gift wolverine in the mouth, immediately connecting with Garrett Wilson for 47 yards, setting up Dobbins' 5-yard touchdown run on the next play to make it 28-13 with 3:15 left before the half.

Michigan still fought back, marching 70 yards to the Buckeye 5. On third down from there, Patterson appeared to connect with Donovan Peoples-Jones for a touchdown, but Jordan Fuller was somehow able to jar the ball loose, forcing Harbaugh to settle for a field goal.

A key fumble, critical penalty and inopportune drop and a feisty Michigan team was forced to head to the locker room trailing 28-16.

Even the most casual observer knows that to make up a two-score deficit against the Buckeyes, especially when they are set to receive the second-half kick, is a difficult task.

Ohio State would take that kick, Dobbins would run for 41 yards on the very first play from scrimmage, and the Buckeyes would march 75 yards for a score and a 35-16 lead. Michigan would never again get closer than 15 points, 42-27 at the 14:23 mark of the fourth period. That drive was aided by a 31-yard punt from Chrisman, giving the hosts the ball at their 40. On the first play of that drive, Hassan Haskins set the Wolverines up in business with a 33-yard run, and he ultimately scored from 2 yards out and added the two-point conversion.

Shortly thereafter, Michigan was forced to go for it on fourth-and-1 in its own territory, and Landers came up big again, stopping Haskins for a 1-yard loss and turning the ball over at the U-M 28. It took Fields and Co. four plays to score on a 16-yard pass to Austin Mack, and it was game, set, match.

About the only real drama in the second half came when Fields was knocked out of the game in the third quarter. Chris Chugunov did his job, leading the Buckeyes to a pair of first downs before Fields was able to return and, on his first play back, scramble and complete a 30-yard scoring strike to freshman sensation Wilson to make it 42-16 with 3:46 on the third-period clock.

Wilson had three catches for 118 yards and the score and set up another score, prompting comparisons with Chris Olave (who was also big with two catches for 68 yards and a 57-yard touchdown) and his breakout game against Michigan last season. There was one major difference between the

two performances, however. Olave caught two passes for a pair of touchdowns against the Wolverines in last year's 62-39 rout. But he also added a key special teams play, blocking a punt that Sevn Banks returned for a touchdown.

Wilson's key special teams play went the other way. He muffed a punt, giving Michigan new life at the OSU 26. The Buckeye defense stiffened, Michigan lost a yard on three plays and was forced to settle for a 45-yard field goal to make it 42-19 with 2:33 left in the third period.

Harbaugh was lambasted on the BuckeyeSports.com Forum for much of the game for going for field goals instead of being aggressive and going for touchdowns. As BSB staff writer Joe Dempsey eloquently posted, "Harbaugh should be fired for these field goals – or at least fined significantly."

This was the second muffed punt for Wilson this season. It continues to amaze me that for all the success the Buckeyes have had under Urban Meyer and now Ryan Day, they continue to struggle on the punt return unit. Maybe when they are out recruiting, they need to look for someone who has specifically shown to be fearless and excel on punt returns. It takes a special player to be looking up at a punt while speedy opponents are bearing down on them at high speed.

And speaking of punts, if you are looking for a possible chink in the Buckeye armor – and there aren't many, if any at all – keep an eye on Chrisman. Starting with a punt that he had blocked against Wisconsin to set up an easy score, the junior from Cincinnati has not been his usual dynamic self.

His other three punts against the Badgers averaged a respectable 42.3 yards, but he had none inside the 20. Against Maryland he had two boots for a 37.0 average and none inside the 20. Against Rutgers he averaged 35.0 on four punts with one inside the 20 at just the 17. And against Penn State he averaged 41.3 with two inside the 20, but he also had a touchback from the Lion 41, where he usually would have buried it deep.

He had a solid 45.5 yard average against Michigan with a long of 61, which was one of two touchbacks, no punts inside the 20 and that previously mentioned 31-yard shorty that set up a Michigan score. Chrisman should be a major weapon for the Buckeyes, not a pedestrian punter.

Dandy Dobbins

As the Michigan game unfolded, I felt like this was the game Dobbins had been building to all season. It had been kind of hard to figure out exactly how he was progressing early in the season because he sat so much during blowouts, leaving him with stellar but hardly eye-popping numbers. In hindsight, the time off during Ohio State's easy wins probably kept him fresher for the stretch drive, and if you look at the big games before The Game, he excelled.

In the first go-around with Wisconsin, he outdueled the ballyhooed Jonathan Taylor, gaining 163 yards and scoring twice on 20 carries and adding three catches for 58 yards for good measure. Taylor, meanwhile, gained just 52 yards on 20 carries. In the big battle with Penn State, Dobbins pounded the Lions with 36 carries, grinding out 157 yards and

scoring two more times.

Ohio State and Michigan players are defined, however, by how they play in The Game, and Dobbins saved his best for last. He had a career-high 211 yards rushing and scored four times on his 31 carries and averaged 24.5 yards on his two receptions. In a game filled with Buckeye stars, Dobbins' star may have shone the brightest.

On WTVN radio after the game, the station's football crew had a spirited discussion as to who was the team's most valuable player, which Buckeye was most worthy of the Heisman Trophy, etc. Former Ohio State quarterback Stan Jackson was adamant that it should be Dobbins on all counts, drawing surprise from his mates including former Buckeyes Bill Conley and Jeff Logan and host Matt McCoy, that the former QB was not in the Fields camp.

Jackson claimed that if it weren't for the presence of Dobbins, Fields would not be able to do what he does. He gave an X's and O's explanation to support that contention, but it was too sophisticated for me. Still, I may be on Jackson's side on this one.

Look at it this way. If you take Dobbins' average rushing numbers in the three big games against the Badgers, Lions and Wolverines, three of the best defensive teams in the country, and average them out over a 14-game season, he would gain 2,478 yards and score 37 touchdowns.

I know those are fantasy numbers, but still pretty impressive when you consider the competition.

Dobbins certainly deserves to be up there in the pantheon of Ohio State's great running backs and earned his stripes in what will probably be his last game against Michigan.

There was one point on which I have to disagree with Jackson, however.

In making his case of Dobbins over Fields, the former Buckeye quarterback insisted that the drop-off from Dobbins to his top reserve, Master Teague, was greater than the drop-off from Fields to his understudy, Chugunov. Thus, Dobbins was more valuable.

Let me ask any of you, including Stan: Which would you rather go into postseason battle with: Fields at quarterback and Teague at tailback or Chugunov at QB and Dobbins at tailback?

I'll take my chances with Fields and Teague, though Teague had very modest numbers in The Game, rushing 12 times for 29 yards and a 2.4-yard average.

One final note concerning Dobbins and the Wolverines. I've always heard that strange things go on in a pile on the football field, but I don't know that I have ever seen a more bizarre play than the one where the Michigan defenders attempted to remove Dobbins' shoe after he was downed in the second quarter.

Coverage From Indy Online

Just a reminder that, due to Buckeye Sports Bulletin's print publishing schedule, our primary coverage of the Big Ten Championship Game will be online at the electronic BuckeyeSports.com. This will include coverage leading up to the game, as well as coverage of the game itself.

If you are not already taking advantage of BuckeyeSports.com, a free service to all Buckeye Sports Bulletin subscribers, see the simple sign-up instructions on page 6 of this issue or give us a call at (614) 486-2202 and we will be glad to walk you through the process. We also look forward to hearing from you on the BuckeyeSports.com Forum.