

Staff Predictions: No. 4 Ohio State vs. No. 1 Georgia In The Peach Bowl



Andy Anders, BSB: Georgia's Defensive Line Makes The Difference

Let me start out by saying I totally believe this team has the pieces to beat Georgia. The problem is, they haven't been able to put them together the back half of this season.

That could very well change Saturday. But right now, to me, Georgia just feels like the more complete team. The Bulldogs' defensive line, particularly on the interior, is going to generate problems in the running game and put pressure on third-year quarterback C.J. Stroud.

On the offensive side, Georgia quarterback Stetson Bennett has the surrounding ground game and weapons, namely at tight end, to score enough points for his defense to get the job done on the biggest stage of the season for either team.

Anything could happen in my eyes Saturday. I wouldn't even be surprised with an Ohio State blowout — the scenario exists where Georgia's defense actually hits a freezing point against OSU's talent and its offense can't keep pace. But for now my gut says Bulldogs.

Georgia 38, Ohio State 31

Jack Emerson, BSB: Dawgs Stifle Underdogs

As the program did in 2014, Ohio State has embraced an underdog mentality entering Saturday's Chick-Fil-A Peach Bowl. Head coach Ryan Day said he expects his team to play loose and freely because "no one really gives us a chance in this game, so we're going to let it all out."

Ohio State has thrived in this role since the College Football Playoff was created, and has amassed an 8-2 record as the underdog over its last 10 games in which its not been favored. But, when you look closer at the numbers, you realize Day is 1-2 in his three games as the underdog — falling in College Football Playoff matchups to Alabama in 2020 and Clemson in 2019.

The Bulldogs are certainly vulnerable, as shown in matchups against Missouri and Kent State during the regular season. But, a key area in which Georgia has the Buckeyes beat is in the physical nature of the game. The Bulldogs punish their opponents in the trenches and have committed their entire

program to being the most physically imposing team in the country, something that the Buckeyes have talked plenty about but have yet to show.

There are several paths to victory for Ohio State, but I expect Georgia to beat up on the Buckeyes just enough to emerge victorious and advance to the CFP National Championship.

Georgia 28, Ohio State 24

Braden Moles, BSB: Buckeyes Fall Short Against Bulldogs

The path - if not several - exist for an Ohio State victory. Whether it's a big game from Marvin Harrison Jr., shuttering Georgia's offense - namely tight end Brock Bowers - or being able to neutralize Georgia defensive tackle Jalen Carter, the Buckeyes should not be counted out by any means against the Bulldogs.

That being said, there are just as many reasons - if not more - that Ohio State could lose the Peach Bowl. Georgia's offense presents no shortage of playmakers that can help move the ball and score, and the other side of the ball presents one of the most challenging defenses faced yet in head coach Ryan Day's four seasons at the helm. Carter is the one garnering the headlines, but from the trenches to linebacker to the secondary, the Bulldogs have players capable of stopping the Buckeyes everywhere on the field.

Ohio State's last outing against Michigan doesn't inspire confidence that this team will be able to overcome a much larger challenge in the No. 1-ranked, defending national champions, but the Buckeyes have claimed they learned lessons from the loss to the Wolverines, and it's now a matter of putting those in practice and playing the game of their lives.

But, after consecutive losses to Michigan, Ohio State has lost that benefit of the doubt when it comes to big games like those - let alone a semifinal in the College Football Playoff - so the Buckeyes will have to prove they can take it to Georgia. Until we see that happen, though, it's hard to pick against the Bulldogs.

Georgia 38, Ohio State 27