

Staff Predictions: Ohio State To Roll Over Indiana To Begin Season



Ohio State has won 27 consecutive contests against Indiana, and when the Buckeyes travel to Bloomington on Saturday to begin the season, there's no expectation from Buckeye Sports Bulletin that the streak is going to come to an end anytime soon.

Here are our staff predictions for Ohio State at Indiana, set to kick off at 3:30 p.m. on CBS. Check BuckeyeSports.com every Friday for the latest staff predictions.

Patrick Engels: OSU Finishes On Top After Slow Start

Road season-openers against Big Ten opponents have challenged Ohio State in recent years, and head coach Ryan Day and his staff have made it clear that they are well aware of that trend. Given their relative inexperience at quarterback and offensive line, it wouldn't surprise me to see the Buckeyes get off to another slow start in Bloomington. But this time around, I can't see the Hoosiers hanging with Ohio State past the first quarter.

Indiana has an almost completely different roster this year, which could pose a small challenge for the Buckeyes. But the talent gap between the two programs is just too severe for Indiana to keep up. I expect the game to be out of reach by halftime, mostly due to the brilliance of offensive weapons Marivin Harrison Jr., Emeka Egbuka, TreVeyon Henderson and many others.

Ohio State is also coming into the season with a chip on its shoulder, especially on defense, which may contribute to the blowout victory. **Ohio State 41, Indiana 10**

Craig Merz: Quarterback Battle Offers Intrigue

Playing the Hoosiers on the road will present Buckeyes with their first challenge of the 2023 season, excluding their intrasquad scrimmages. Going head-to-head in the fall camp will have Ohio State ably ready to handle what the new-look Hoosiers offer.

It shouldn't be much of a matchup, but the curiosity factor is off the charts to see how quarterbacks Kyle McCord and Devin Brown fare behind a reconfigured offensive line.

Ohio State has too much talent for IU at every position excepting kick return and after a slow start will roll to an easy win. **Ohio State 48, Indiana 14**

Braden Moles: New Starters Broken In With Ease

Ohio State will have a new quarterback under center with McCord (and likely a fair bit of Brown), and the center himself will be new, with Carson Hinzman one of three new starters on the offensive line along with left tackle Josh Simmons and right tackle Josh Fryar.

It could be a scary situation heading into a season opener on the road against a Big Ten team with so many new moving parts on offense, but fortunately for Ohio State, this is Indiana. The Hoosiers struggled last season, and despite turning over a good chunk of the roster, there isn't a ton of reason to believe that a turnaround is in order for Tom Allen's seventh season at the helm.

I think Ohio State's offense will mostly dominate without missing a beat, but I'm much more interested in seeing how the defense fares after talking all offseason about playing with a chip on their shoulder. Problems last year such as explosive plays and an inability to generate pass rush became immediately evident against Notre Dame, and though Indiana does not present quite the same challenge, it can still serve as one data point for if the defense has taken a step.

As for my score prediction, Ohio State has scored at least 42 points in each of the team's last six games against Indiana, and even some new starters on offense, I'd expect that production to keep up. Most places have the Buckeyes as around a 30-point favorite, but I see the margin potentially being wider than that. Ohio State rolls before kicking off the non-conference next week. **Ohio State 52, Indiana 17**