

Top 10 Plays Of The Ohio State Football Season: No. 4 - Justin Hilliard Shifts Momentum



This story is the seventh of 10 that comes from the print edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin, where the staff selected the 10 best plays from the 2020 football season.

The Big Ten Championship Game was the sloppiest victory of Ohio State's season, outside of running back Trey Sermon's historic performance, but it was a win that propelled the Buckeyes into the College Football Playoff for the second year in a row.

Ohio State had to come back from a halftime deficit, and that 10-6 Wildcats lead threatened to get larger on Northwestern's first drive of the third quarter.

Quarterback Peyton Ramsey led the Wildcats down to the Ohio State 9 and faced a third-and-8 before an unlikely hero stopped the drive.

First big play of the day for the Buckeyes, and it's an absolutely crucial one. Justin Hilliard snags an interception pic.twitter.com/GQj1BPBngs

— Buckeye Sports Bulletin (@Buckeye_Sports) December 19, 2020

Sixth-year senior linebacker Justin Hilliard, filling in for Baron Browning, picked off a Ramsey fade in the end zone, getting Ohio State the ball back and stopping the lead from expanding to seven, or potentially 11 points.

"How about the interception he had in the one-on-one?" head coach Ryan Day said. "I mean, he played his tail off."

It was the highlight play for Hilliard, a former five-star prospect who returned to the Buckeyes for a

sixth season because of multiple injuries he had suffered in his earlier years with the team.

“This whole journey, man, it’s been tough, but it’s been such a blessing at the same time,” Hilliard said. “The journey I’ve been on and the guys that have been here with me, to stick with me, and push me through some of those tougher times, I knew I had to step up in a bigger role.”

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