

Welcome To Week 10: Rutgers



After a pair of stressful wins against Penn State and Wisconsin, Ohio State will be looking for a calmer get-right game against Rutgers, who the Buckeyes will visit on Saturday for a noon kickoff on CBS.

But these are not the Scarlet Knights of old. Rutgers – under head coach Greg Schiano – is off to the program’s best start since 2012, posting a 6-2 record and already bowl eligible – at least the old-fashioned way – since 2014, boasting one of the nation’s best defenses through nine weeks.

Check back every Monday at BuckeyeSports.com for a brief preview of the Buckeyes’ upcoming opponent, with stories and features throughout the week.

OPPONENT: Rutgers (6-2)

Rutgers’ last bowl appearance was in 2021, but it only happened because Texas A&M was forced to drop out due to a COVID-19 outbreak. This time around, the Scarlet Knights have earned their bid to the postseason.

The Scarlet Knights have worked their way to bowl eligibility by one of the nation’s strongest defenses, at least statistically speaking, through the first eight games of the season. Rutgers is 13th in scoring defense (15.8 points), ninth in total defense (276.8 yards) and second in passing yards allowed per game (156.2), generally imposing their will on the competition this season.

The flip side is the Scarlet Knights have not exactly played a murderer’s row of opponents, with wins over Northwestern, Temple, Virginia Tech, Wagner, Michigan State and Indiana mixed in with a blowout 31-7 loss at Michigan and a comfortable 24-13 loss at Wisconsin. In those losses, Rutgers has been held back by an anemic passing offense that averages just 148.4 yards per game (123rd nationally), though they do hold the nation’s 39th-ranked rushing offense at 178.8 yards per game.

But a win for Rutgers against Ohio State was never going to be because of an outstanding offensive performance. The Scarlet Knights will need to take advantage of what have become common slow starts for Ohio State’s offense and make the Buckeyes uncomfortable early. That said, the Buckeyes are generally viewed as around a three touchdown favorite, making the talent gap hard to overcome for Schiano and Co.

PLAYERS TO WATCH:

- **QB Gavin Wimsatt:** This is the rare situation where Ohio State needs to watch out not because of Wimsatt's passing ability, but because of how he can run. In eight games, he has carried the ball 73 times for 362 yards (5.0 per attempt) and seven touchdowns, tied for the team lead.
- **RB Kyle Monangai:** The other leader in rushing touchdowns is Monangai, who has seven to go along with 744 yards on 144 carries, good for 5.2 yards per attempt. His rushing total is just 10 yards behind Wisconsin's Braelon Allen, who leads the Big Ten in rushing yards.
- **LB Mohamed Toure:** Toure has done it all for Tigers this season, third on the team with 50 tackles and adding four tackles for loss, 1.5 sacks, two pass breakups and a forced fumble.
- **DEs Aaron Lewis and Wesley Bailey:** Lewis and Bailey are tied for the team lead with three sacks each, with Lewis adding four tackles for loss and a pass breakup, with Bailey adding 3.5 tackles for loss and three pass breakups.

GAME INFO: SHI Stadium, 12 p.m., CBS

This will be Ohio State's second game on CBS this season, the first being the season opener at Indiana. It will be the first time that a game between Ohio State and Rutgers will not air on the Big Ten Network.

This will be the fifth trip for Ohio State to SHI Stadium and the first since 2021, a 52-13 win for the Buckeyes. But they had better enjoy the trip to Piscataway, as they will not travel there again until 2027.

SERIES HISTORY: This will be the 10th all-time meeting between Ohio State and Rutgers, and it has not been a pretty series for the Scarlet Knights.

The Buckeyes have won all nine previous contests by an average margin of 53.0-10.9 points. The closest game between these teams was Ohio State's 49-27 win on Nov. 7, 2020, but Rutgers has otherwise been dominated in every contest, including back-to-back shutouts in 2016 and 2017.

Date	Opponent	Location	Time/Result	TV/Streaming
Sept. 2	at Indiana	Bloomington, Ind.	W, 23-3	CBS
Sept. 9	Youngstown State	Columbus	W, 35-7	BTN
Sept. 16	Western Kentucky	Columbus	W, 63-10	FOX
Sept. 23	at Notre Dame	South Bend, Ind.	W, 17-14	NBC/Peacock
Oct. 7	Maryland	Columbus	W, 37-17	FOX
Oct. 14	at Purdue	West Lafayette, Ind.	W, 41-7	Peacock
Oct. 21	Penn State	Columbus	W, 20-12	FOX
Oct. 28	at Wisconsin	Madison, Wisc.	W, 24-10	NBC
Nov. 4	at Rutgers	Piscataway, N.J.	W, 35-16	CBS
Nov. 11	Michigan State	Columbus	W, 38-3	NBC/Peacock
Nov. 18	Minnesota	Columbus	W, 37-3	BTN
Nov. 25	at Michigan	Ann Arbor, Mich.	L, 30-24	FOX
Dec. 29	Cotton Bowl vs. Missouri	Arlington, Texas	L, 14-3	ESPN

