



Ohio State scored touchdowns on their first three possessions of the 3rd quarter to overcome a 7-point halftime deficit, and hold off the Iowa Hawkeyes 34-24. The win was the 19th straight for the Buckeyes under Urban Meyer, and kept them unbeaten in 2013 at 7-0. Braxton Miller threw 2 touchdown passes and Carlos Hyde rushed for two more scores, as the Buckeye offense was in high gear all afternoon. Now...about that defense.

The Iowa offense had their way with the Buckeye defenders in the early going, scoring the first three times they had the ball to take first half leads of 10-3 and 17-10. Iowa mixed their play-action passing game with an effective rushing attack, and had a young OSU defensive line back on their heels. Hawkeye quarterback Jake Rudock threw his first seven completions to three different tight ends, and Iowa moved the chains and scored as if they didn't know they were playing the nation's No. 4 team in front of 105,264 hostile fans.

Too Much Braxton



In the end though, Miller was too much for the Hawkeyes. Looking like the Braxton Miller of 2012 on the ground, the junior QB scrambled, jukeed and dashed for 102 rushing yards, and the new, improved passer of 2013 completed 22 of his 27 passes for 222 yards and the two TD's. Miller found a wide open Corey Brown on a play action pass for a 58-yard touchdown completion to tie the game at 10-10, and his 14-yard connection to Devin Smith in the 3rd quarter gave Ohio State its first lead of the day at 24-17.

Miller got plenty of help from Hyde, who bulled for 149 rushing yards of his own, including the first two rushing touchdowns surrendered by Iowa this season. Hyde's first score tied the game at 17, as he finished off the first drive of the second half by powering in from a yard out. Then he put OSU ahead to stay on a spectacular 19-yard score early in the 4th quarter, diving the last four yards to finish with a flourish. Hyde came up big for the Buckeyes in the 4th quarter with nine carries and 70 of his 149 rushing yards.

Roby Targeted

The OSU defense has struggled all year in pass defense, especially after losing starting safety and captain Christian Bryant for the season with a broken ankle. Those problems were compounded in the first quarter Saturday when all-conference cornerback Bradley Roby was ejected from the game for a "targeting" foul, for a hit he put on Iowa tight end C.J. Fiedorowicz.

The rule is intended to punish hits above the shoulders, and Roby's hit appeared to be in a safe area, striking Fiedorowicz at the shoulder pads, but the official's call was upheld on review.

Roby's replacement, sophomore Armani Reeves, struggled in backup duty on two big Iowa scoring plays. He lost track of Kevonte Martin-Manley on a 6-yard TD pass in the 2nd quarter, and then failed to pick up tight end Jake Dusey as he streaked downfield on what turned into an 85-yard TD reception. That play tied the game 24-24 moments after Ohio State had grabbed its first lead of the afternoon.

Coming From Behind, Again

For the second straight game, the Buckeyes were forced to play from behind after trailing by a touchdown at halftime. The time of possession numbers tell the story of this game. Iowa controlled the ball for over 18 minutes in the first half, but OSU completely turned the tables in the second half. The Buckeyes put together long touchdown drives on three straight possessions, holding the ball for 23 of the game's final 30 minutes, and finished the game with a time of possession advantage of 35 minutes to 25 for Iowa.

Of the nine OSU possessions in the game, they scored on six (4 TD's, 2 FG's), turned the ball over on downs once, and ended halves on the other two. For the first time in five years, Ohio State played a game without having to punt once. Third downs plays were essentially the Braxton Miller Show, as he repeatedly burned the Hawkeyes, either with crisp first-down completions or with clutch, often improvised runs from shotgun formation. On the day Ohio State was 10 of 14 on 3rd down conversions.

Waiting for the D



The consistency of the offense was the key to victory for the Buckeyes on this day, because it took a while for the defense to adjust to what Iowa was doing when they had the ball. The Hawkeyes had success on 3rd downs as well, converting 8 of 13 on the day, but in the first half,

they clicked on 7 of their first 8 tries.

Iowa scored just seven points after halftime, that touchdown coming on one 85-yard play, as the OSU offense monopolized the clock, and the pass defense finally made a play or two to thwart Iowa possessions. The Hawkeyes failed to cross midfield in the 4th quarter, and an interception by Buckeye safety Tyvis Powell ended their last threat with four minutes to play in the game.

The Penn State Nittany Lions come to town next, with the probable Big Ten Freshman of the Year, Christian Hackenberg at quarterback, and a tight end-focused passing game ready to make a run at ending the nation's longest winning streak. The Buckeyes have reason to be concerned about their defense, but they can take comfort in one unmistakably positive development.

Braxton is all the way back.

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