

## Live Game Blog: Ohio State 42 Michigan 7

Written by {ga=hermanfontenot}

Friday, November 21 2008 7:00 PM -

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Five in a row baby. And seven of the last eight. The Buckeyes whooped the Wolverines this afternoon by a 42-7 count, securing a share of their fifth straight Big Ten title in a row. Jesse Lamovsky ran a live game blog diary of The Game for us this afternoon.



**11:53-** The only way Michigan wins this game is with turnovers in multiple numbers. The Wolverines shouldn't be able to drive the field against Ohio State with any kind of consistency. They're thin at running back. And they don't have a quarterback who can get it done with his legs- Nick Sheridan doesn't have a gain longer than 12 yards on the ground this season. Take care of the ball, and we'll be talking about five straight wins in a few hours.

Never mind that Rich Rodriguez &quot;doesn't get it.&quot; The Michigan players do. They will come out and play tough.

**11:59-** Got my beer, got my smokes, and I got pizza on call when I need it. I'm ready to go. O-H!

**12:01-** I turn to ABC, and the first two things I see are Desmond's Heisman pose and Charles Woodson with a rose between his teeth. Eff me very much.

**12:04-** Morgan Trent told Stacey Dales that the reason he came to Michigan was to play in this game. Did he emit a puff of acrid black smoke when he said it?

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**12:09-** Here we go...

**12:11-** TP's first pass, on third down, is complete for a chain-mover to Dane Sanzenbacher, who has taken more hospital shots this season than any Ohio State receiver I can recall.

**12:12-** And TP's second pass is picked off and returned to the Ohio State 13 by Stevie Brown. Threw it right to him. Well, that's exactly what we didn't need.

**12:15-** Michigan loses five yards in three plays and has to settle for a field-goal attempt. And the kick is... no good, from the same spot and angle from which the game-tying kick against Toledo went awry. Ohio State (and young Mr. Pryor) is off the hook.

**12:17-** Just so you know, the redhead from the Bud Light "Drinkability" ad is named Christina Murphy, and she's from Austin, Texas. Don't ask me why I sought out this tidbit.

**12:19-** Beanie Wells has now been dropped for losses on his first two carries. Can we get some blocking, please?

**12:19-** Interesting. Michigan has to take a timeout on second down, and some of their players are yelling angrily at the coaches. Huh.

**12:21-** Three-and-out for Ohio State. This offense...

**12:22-** Michigan's Martavious Odoms fumbles the punt and Marcus Freeman recovers at midfield. Big break.

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**12:24-** Pryor is sacked on third down and the big break goes for naught. Pryor has now attempted six passes, counting the sack, which is too many. Beanie Wells had zero carries on that last series, which is of course too few.

**12:29-** After a Michigan three-and-out, the Buckeyes get the ball back at their own 46. Now Ohio State is winning the field-position battle. Can the Bucks take advantage?

**12:33-** Well, they give it to Beanie, twice in fact. He gets a grand total of five yards, Pryor is sacked, and Ohio State punts. Hate to say it, but the Buckeyes are getting whipped up front offensively.

**12:36-** Speaking of getting whipped up front, Dexter Larimore just sacked Nick Sheridan on third down, with Ohio State rushing three. Thad Gibson put the Wolverines into a bad down-and-distance by hawking down Brandon Minor on a read-option hand-off. Just pound the ball and play field position, JT.

**12:37-** On the first play after the punt, Beanie takes it behind right guard and goes 59 yards for a touchdown. **7-0 Buckeyes, 3:57 left in the first quarter.**  
Okay, that'll help.

**12:40-** Austin Spitler just delivered a beautiful hit to Sam McGuffie on the kickoff. If I'm Michigan, I just run right at Ohio State. You won't beat them to the edges.

**12:43-** They don't. On third-and-seven, Nick Sheridan rolls out and throws the ball out of bounds.

**12:46-** Three carries for Beanie and a first down. Six of the last seven plays have featured #28 right between the cheeks of his lineman. I can start drinking now:

Ohio State is down to business.

## End of the First Quarter- Ohio State 7, Michigan 0

**12 :50-** God, false starts at home... why? Why, damn it, why?

**12:53-** Pryor, who had missed Hartline deep in the first half, hits Brian down the middle in stride for a 53-yard touchdown. **14-0 Buckeyes, 13:10 left in the half.**

It isn't just that Ohio State has beaten Michigan four straight times, and are now in a good position to make it five. It's been the abundance of big, explosive plays by the Buckeye offense. It started with Gonzo's 68-yard touchdown reception on Ohio State's first series in 2004, and it has continued right through the first two minutes of this second quarter.

**12:59-** A quarter-and-change of football and Michigan doesn't have a first down yet. Now I'm greedy. I want one of those scores like what Dr. Tom's Nebraska juggernauts would put on the John Blake-era Oklahoma teams- 69-7, 73-21, somewhere in that neighborhood. Or, like, 35-0. That would work too.

I've never seen a true Ohio State blowout in this game. I've seen true Michigan blowouts, but never a true Ohio State blowout. This might be the only chance to really lay a whipping on these guys before they get formidable again, although with RichRod I wonder. Do it.

**1:03-** Beanie hurdles a tackler, comes up limping, and waves off his replacement, to cheers from the crowd. Like Steve McNair, Beanie has the innate ability to turn his fragility into a strength- the wounded warrior, not the porcelain vase that

characterizes some oft-injured athletes. I know, I know, like Larry Hughes.

**1:06-** A kid from Ravenna Dotted the I this year. WAR the old Metropolitan Conference and the great little rivalry between the Ravenna Ravens and my Kent Roosevelt Rough Riders.

**1:09-** Ohio State goes for it on 4<sup>th</sup>-and-three from the Michigan 35, Pryor puts up one of his patented high-arcing deep passes- the kid has a Gateway Arch-type hump in his deep balls, that has to be worked out- and Robiskie can't make an acrobatic catch.

**1:11-** At 8:21 of the second quarter, Michigan has its initial first down of the game.

**1:13-** Words not heard often in the same sentence: &quot;Nick Sheridan&quot;; and &quot;pocket presence.&quot;;

**1:14-** Famous last words- Sheridan delivers a nice strike for 14 on 3<sup>rd</sup>-and-15 and sneaks for the first. Brandon Minor plows for ten yards, and Michigan is officially on the move.

**1:16-** Minor rips off 32 yards to the one. Michigan is now getting healthy on this long read-option handoffs I scoffed at earlier.

**1:19-** Minor loses a yard on first down, loses five more on second down, gets the five back to the two-yard line on third down, and finally scores on fourth down. 14 -7 **Buckeyes, 2:51 left in the half.**

%&@#.

Now Ohio State is in a bit of an awkward position. Michigan has been dominated on both sides yet is only down by a score, the crowd is out of it, and the Wolverines get the ball to start the second half. There was a chance to end this game before halftime, and it looks like that chance is gone, which, of course, puts the second half in play. Not like I was going anywhere anyway.

**1:26-** On third down Pryor has an hour to throw the ball, uses it all, and is sacked by Tim Jamison. See, here is where he should just tuck it and run, get to the corner, and get the first down. There isn't a defense in the nation that can keep Terrelle from the corner, so why have him sit in the pocket like he's Kurt Freaking Warner?

**1:32-** A Michigan drive peters out in Ohio State territory as the half winds down. Pryor sneaks from his own one and the half is over.

## Halftime- Ohio State 14, Michigan 7

Tressel admits to Stacey Dales that he probably should have punted on fourth down from the 35. Maybe. Maybe the deep-pass call was the wrong one, and Terrelle should have rolled out on a run-pass option. Or maybe Ohio State's defense could have prevented Nick Sheridan from hitting the 14-yard pass on 3<sup>rd</sup>-and-15, because right now, that one play is the biggest reason this is still a game at halftime.

Ohio State's defense has been outstanding, but for that one drive in which they played without intensity and paid for it. It's the Buckeye offense that has left points on the field, on the fumbled punt that they couldn't capitalize on as well as the drive that died on the Wolverine 35. True, Michigan has left points on the field as well, on the interception to the OSU 13 that resulted in zilch, but they're on the road and they suck, so that's to be expected. All Michigan really has to do is hang around and get some breaks. The onus of execution is on Ohio State, because they're at home, they *don't* suck, and all they have to do to win... is execute.

I have boys down in Columbus who right now, scarlet-and-gray clad, and probably not very pleased, at least amongst the ledgers. But it's Ohio State-Michigan. Like it's ever *that* easy. I wanted 69-7 and I'm probably not going to get that either. We move on.

Keep the beer, save the pizza for the moveable feast that is the evening games.

Time for kickoff. Need a stop, need field position, need to make it a two-score game. Stat!

**1:57-** Michigan picks up a first down on their first possession of the half. Minor slices for eight on a read-option handoff and this crowd is opera-silent. They'll start to grumble if Michigan keeps moving the ball here.

**2:00-** The Wolverines punt on fourth down from the Ohio State 38 and pin the Buckeyes at their nine.

**2:01-** Beanie takes a quick toss and goes 42 yards into Michigan territory. And then Dan Herron goes 49 yards, right up the middle, untouched, for the score. **21-7 Buckeyes, 11:04 left in the third quarter.**

Two plays, 91 yards. In Tressel's World of Michigan Games, big plays abound like cartoon birds and singing trees.

**2:08-** The well has at least temporarily run dry on Michigan's read-option game. Nick Sheridan took a couple of whacks, and the Wolverines will kick.

**2:09-** Nathan Williams just roughed the punter. Automatic first down, Michigan. Oh, my.

**2:11-** Nick Sheridan just under-threw what should have been a touchdown bomb to Greg Matthews, and Malcolm Jenkins got back to knock it down. Michigan will have to punt, the bullet dodged.

**2:16-** Beanie limps off on his own. No need for heroism

now. A.J. Trappasso punts Michigan back to their own 19.

**2:21-** The read-option well floweth. A 33-yard completion for Sheridan, a 14-yard run for Shaw, and Michigan is in Ohio State territory as we get into the latter half of the third quarter.

**2:23-** So much for that flurry. Sheridan just took two more big shots, and it's fourth down and a punt situation. Sheridan has to be basically dragged off the field in pain on fourth down. Nick Sheridan isn't the most proficient quarterback in college football, but he has shown physical toughness today, in bunches.

**2:24-** Ray Small. Suspended for two games, his dad is sniping at the coach, and the kid just returned a punt 81 yards to the Michigan 8. Great effort and a great play for a Northeast Ohio kid who has had his little issues.

**2:25-** On first down, Pryor rolls right and hits a diving

Brian Robiskie for the senior's first catch of the afternoon, and a touchdown. **28-7 Buckeyes, 3:54 left in the third quarter.**

Now we've got a rout in progress, and once again it's big plays, and repeating a theme of the Tressel years, big plays made by Northeast Ohio kids. JT has the pipeline in our area and the scarlet-and-gray gold has flowed brilliantly.

**2:30-** Michigan gets snuffed out in three plays and punts again.

**2:31-** So much for the hump. Pryor overthrows a wide-open Robiskie on what would have been a touchdown.

**2:32-** Pryor takes a shotgun snap, breaks two sack-attempts, rolls left, and hits Sanzenbacher at the Michigan 21. Herron roars right up the middle to the two.

**2:33-** Stacey Dales' brother is kicking for the Calgary Stampeders in the Grey Cup tomorrow. Everyone talks

about Erin Andrews. How about some love for the willowy Dales, who would shut me out with ease in H-O-R-S-E?

## End of the Third Quarter- Ohio State 28, Michigan 7

**2:38-** On first down, Michigan linebacker Donovan Warren makes a remarkable interception on a pass Pryor overthrew to a wide-open Rory Nichol, a play called incomplete. After a review, officials uphold the original call, even though video evidence clearly has the interception for the Michigan man, and on the next play, Dan Herron takes it in for his second touchdown. That's payback for 1991, when Ohio State got a fumble in UM territory down 31-3 and officials blew the whistle prematurely. **35-7 Buckeyes, 14:52 left in the fourth quarter.**

You know, 69-7 isn't *entirely* out of the equation...

**2:42-** "Lost"; is still on?

**2:44-** After sustaining about the sixth crushing hit on kick-coverage today, Michigan's Boubacar Cissoko coughs up the football on the return, and the Buckeyes have it at the Michigan 22.

**2:46-** Todd Boeckman, into the game, guns an 18-yard touchdown pass to Hartline. **42-7, Buckeyes, 13:16 left in the fourth quarter**

and the Shoe throbs with affection for the sixth-year senior who went from appointed villain to tragic martyr of an off-key season in the span of a benching.

**2:52-** Ohio State snuffs a running play and Jim Laurinatus butts heads with a frustrated Michigan player. Son of the Animal has been all over the field today, part of a defense that has, really, done everything asked of it all season long.

Do the Bucks go for two on the next one? I'm going to

say no. But I'd like to see it.

You know, you can't put Todd Boeckman out there and ask him to just hand off.

**2:56-** As Boeckman starts the drive, Greise is heralding his cause as a man who could help Ohio State and Terrelle Pryor on the field, and I understand that. And just there, Boeckman hits a beautiful bomb right on Brian Robiskie's hands at the Michigan 34. The seniors are now going off.

**2:59-** Boeckman in read-option sets = Joan Cusack in romantic leads.

**3:00-** On 4<sup>th</sup>-and-9 from the Michigan 33, the Buckeyes punt. The punt is a beauty, downed on the Michigan 2. I'll gamely second-guess one of America's premier coaches, yet again, and opine that I'd have gone for it and put the ball in Todd's hands again. Todd doesn't seem to like the call- he's kind of shaking his head sardonically as he

walks to the sideline, and I understand that as well.

How about a safety?

**3:04-** 4<sup>th</sup>-and-8 for Michigan on its own three. Get after the punter! Rush ten! The Wolverines punt safely and Small gets it to the Michigan 37.

Boeckman, the only man on the roster to play on a Buckeye team that lost to UM, exits to warm applause. I was in favor of the move to Pryor, and also in favor of the move being full-time. Boeckman is a solid quarterback who, really, was undercut by the injury to Beanie Wells and the USC game. Good enough to win with the supporting cast. But Terrelle is a once-in-a-generation talent, and you need to wring that orange till the pips squeak.

**3:11-** The benches are cleared. Ohio State is playing out the string. Did you want a rout? I

wanted one. We got it. Five in a row in the Game. The seniors finish their regular season 10-2 with a guaranteed share of the Big Ten title all four seasons. Jim Tressel is now 7-1 against Michigan. And this program has yet to get true satisfaction for the Cooper years. I'm off, to watch Holly Rowe and Michigan State, and let the rest of it spool out. Next year in Ann Arbor.

I-O.

**Game over- Ohio State 42, Michigan 7**