

## Buckeyes Put On Clinic In Hammering Of Hawkeyes

Written by {ga=furls}

Saturday, September 30 2006 7:00 PM -

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FIFTY rushes for over 200 yards. Troy Smith - 16 of 25 for 186 yards with four TD and no interceptions. Forty one minutes to nineteen in the time of possession battle. Four takeaways from the defense and no turnovers from the offense. When it was all said and done, it was a 38-17 ass whoopin that wasn't as close as the final score indicated. Furls is here with his game recap and positional grades, many of which came out pretty high.



This week the Buckeyes proved why they are every defensive coordinators worst nightmare. Go ahead, drop into nickel and try to stop the run with six or seven and get killed down the field; in either case it does not work.

This reminds me of something we talk about in the Marine Corps, combined arms. The essence of combined arms is the use of direct fire and indirect fire to pin the enemy on the horns of a dilemma, move and expose yourself to direct fire, or stay put and wait while the indirect fire (artillery or close air support) destroys you.

That is the problem facing defensive coordinators in the Big Ten today, sell out to stop the run and get beat down the field, or go to nickel and have the ball run right down your throat. Iowa chose the latter and the Buckeyes were more than willing to oblige.

Antonio Pittman and Chris "Beanie" Wells combined for 196 yards as the Buckeyes rang up 213 yards rushing on the helpless Hawkeyes. Troy Smith was efficient when needed, throwing for 187 yards on 16 for 25, but the real story was the Buckeyes ability to ram the ball right down the Hawkeyes' throats.

Now, when the Hawkeyes got ambitious and tried to key in on the run, the Buekeyes were more than happy to hit Tedd Ginn or Tony Gonzalez over the middle for ten or so yards. This is the duality of this team; they are every bit as comfortable in a five wide receiver spread as they are in a two tight end power I. As a result, Troy Smith was a very efficient 16-25 for 187 yards and 4 TDs, but most importantly he did not turn the ball over.

The defense played reasonably well, but still appeared to be vulnerable to the run. This week the Buckeyes did a lot more blitzing than they have in weeks past. It appeared as though Ohio State sent at least one on nearly every play, and there were several plays where they sent

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multiple players on the blitz. The effect was obvious on Drew Tate.

Tate completed less than 50% of his passes, 19 for 41, and was held to 241 yards even though it was apparent that the veteran quarterback would be forced to carry his team if the Hawkeyes were to have any chance to get back in the game during the second half.

The Buckeyes opportunistic defense forced 4 turnovers, including three Tate interceptions, but none were as important as Brandon Mitchell's interception in the second quarter. Not only did the interception force the Hawkeyes into defending a short field, ultimately resulting in a touchdown and an Ohio State 14-3 lead, but it completely took the crowd out of the game.

Kinnick Stadium was packed with the largest crowd ever assembled in the state of Iowa for an athletic event, an estimated 77,000. They were loud and ready to cheer on their home team, but the early composure and play of the Buckeyes took them out of the game early and made the much vaunted homefield advantage of the Hawkeyes a non-factor. Going into the game Iowa had won 25 of its last 26 in Iowa City, but tonight the "bumble bees" (as my wife likes to call them) could not rally their team.

### **Grading the Positions:**

Quarterback: B+. I cannot give Troy Smith an A for this one. He had a couple of chances to stick a fork in this game and missed open receivers in 1 on 1 coverage. Altogether, he did very well maintaining his composure in difficult circumstances in the first quarter and led his team by his steady and sure handed example.

Running Back: A. 213 yards, what else can I say? All morning I had to hear Lee Corso talk about how he wanted to see if Ohio State's tailbacks could win the game (as he was picking Iowa); I think Pitt and Beanie probably should've made a believer out of Mr. Corso.

Wide Receivers: A. The depth of this position continues to be a problem for opposing defenses. Most teams in the country are ill equipped to deal with two threats let alone five legitimate number one receivers. The opposition's best bet may be to get some pressure, but that would mean getting past a veteran...

Offensive Line: A. T.J. Downing kicked some serious butt pulling from his spot as right guard. He blew open some holes for Pittman that stuck the dagger deep into the heart of Iowa City. Troy Smith did not see much pressure from the much heralded Iowa D-line.

Special Teams: C. A.J. Trepasso was shockingly average today; that does not cut it here in Columbus, Ohio. Buckeye's fans have been spoiled by the likes of B.J. Sander and Andy Groom for so long that average does not cut it anymore. Ted Ginn seems to be trying to make too much happen, but it has been nice to see the kicking game and Aaron Pettrey become more stable.

Defensive Line: A-. The defensive line, particularly in the first half, was every bit as important to this team as the turnovers. If you recorded the game, or have a very good memory, go back

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to the first quarter. The plays that ended Iowa drives started up front with Vernon Gholsten and Quinn Pitcock. If I had one complaint, it would be that there was a bit too much penetration upfront, allowing the running back to gain a few yards because by the time he took the hand off he was past the tackles.

Linebackers: A. Two interceptions from the linebacker position? Are you kidding me? Jimmy "On the Spot" Laurinaitis now has interceptions in four consecutive games and has emerged as a potential Butkus Award player. Marcus Freeman's interception was one of the most impressive plays I have seen from a big man since Seth "sticky fingers" Joyner's interception in the early nineties. These guys just keep getting better.

Defensive Backs: C. Rotations from corners to safeties were slow and resulted in seams that were frequently exploited by Drew Tate. I have been very high on this secondary all year, but this week they looked bad. Granted Tate was baited into mistakes and did not throw a high completion %, but the secondary was aided by the apparent stonehands of the Iowa receivers.

Coaching: B-. Don't get me wrong, I am very glad the Buckeyes won decisively in Iowa City, but the conservative play calling at the end of the third quarter and the beginning of the fourth quarter was a bit ridiculous. It was way too early to fall into "Tressel Ball," and this allowed the Hawkeyes to hang around longer than they should have. My question for Coach Tressel is this, if you are going to just run into a nine man front, why not just take a knee and avoid any potential injuries?

### Grading the Grader:

I said, " Don't be surprised if Iowa is held to single digits (pre trash time)." Seventeen is pretty close to single digits. Ill give myself a B here. You get the point, the Hawkeyes were definitely having trouble scoring.

I said, " Don't be surprised if The Ohio State rush defense becomes the talk of the College Gameday wrap show." Hmmmm.... They looked like crap. Sorry, I failed myself and all of you, if Iowa could've avoided turnovers their running game may have kept them in this game. I fail....F.

I said, " Don't be surprised if The Buckeyes have a double digit lead in the first quarter." Sorry, it took the Buckeyes until 35 seconds in the second quarter to extend their lead to 14-3. Ill take a B on that, close does count.

I said, " Don't be surprised if The defensive line (Pitcock and Patterson specifically) has a monster game. (it is important to note that if defensive tackles are making any tackles, that is a monster game)." During the first half, the defensive line won the battle in the trenches and Vernon Gholsten represented about 75% of the OSU run defense. Pitcock and Patterson were like a wrecking ball, all game long. A.

I said, " Don't be surprised if Drew Tate is statistically unimpressive, he has NO ONE to throw to." Drew Tate was 19-41 for 241 and 3 ints. That is pretty damn statistically unimpressive. His

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receivers continually let him down and in my opinion his play and that of his receivers was the difference in the game. A+, Tell Mark May to clear out his crap from my desk, I deserve his job.

I predicted the final score would be 34-9, I was close. My margin was 25 points and the final margin was 21, but it really wasn't ever close. Was there ever a doubt in your mind about whether or not the Buckeyes could score if they needed to?