Welcome to the “I was badmouthing the Big Ten before badmouthing the Big Ten was cool” edition of the Recap. Now that the entire country is getting in on the act, it’s not nearly as righteous. I hereby resolve to stop it, having moved on to acceptance, and will resort instead to tired cliches like “it is what it is”...*(at the end of the day)*.

Besides, the Big Ten went 10-2 last weekend, although its returning division winners had two of the most underwhelming performances of the day. Michigan State was humbled at home by Notre Dame, and Wisconsin struggled mightily in Madison, benched their starting quarterback, but ultimately survived when Utah State’s kicker missed a field goal in the final seconds. Did I mention Utah State?

Three conference teams remain unbeaten at 3-0...Minnesota, Ohio State and Northwestern, and the Wildcats own three of the Big Ten’s four victories over schools from BCS automatic qualifying conferences, with wins over Syracuse, Vanderbilt, and Boston College. Ohio State’s win over Cal on Saturday is the fourth.

To the week’s games...

Minnesota 28 - Western Michigan 23

The Gophers lost their best offensive player, quarterback Marqueis Gray, to an injury in the 2nd quarter, but his replacement Max Shortell came on to throw three touchdown passes, and

Minnesota (3-0) equaled their win total for each of the last two seasons. The Gophers trailed when Gray was hurt, but Shortell connected with A.J. Barker twice for TD's in the last two minutes of the half, and they were never headed after that. Donnell Kirkwood had a 110-yard game for Minnesota, on 23 carries. Recap *(Minnesota 3-0, Next game: 9/22 vs Syracuse).*

Nebraska 42 - Arkansas St. 13

The Huskers administered a methodical beating to the Red Wolves, as Taylor Martinez threw two TD passes and Ameer Abdullah emerged as a capable backup to Rex Burkhead with 167 yards rushing and two touchdowns. But the big story out of Lincoln on this day was the mid-game hospitalization of Nebraska coach Bo Pelini, who was taken by ambulance from the stadium after taking ill during the game. No details were released, but Pelini is not expected to have any lingering health problems from the incident. Kenny Bell caught both of Martinez' TD throws, and Abdullah averaged 5.6 yards on 30 carries.
Recap

(Nebraska 2-1, Next game: 9/22 vs Idaho St.)

Ohio State 35 - California 28

The Buckeyes had their hands full with the Cal Bears all afternoon, but Braxton Miller and Devin Smith improvised on a 72-yard TD strike with less than four minutes to play in the game to break a 28-28 tie and send OSU to their third straight win under Urban Meyer. Cal got 40% of their total yards on just six plays, including touchdown runs of 59 and 81 yards by Brendan Bigelow, as the OSU defense had a forgettable day tackling and Cal racked up 512 yards. Tailback Jordan Hall returned to the lineup and chipped in 87 yards on 17 carries. Smith had a big day with 145 yards receiving, with two TD's and another 35-yard reception. Recap *(Ohio State 3-0, Next game: 9/22 vs UAB)*

Illinois 44 - Charleston Southern 0

The Illini played Charleston Southern on Saturday, but don't ask me why. Illinois took advantage

of the day off to rehab several starters, including quarterback Nathan Scheelhaase, and their backup Reilly O'Toole responded with 333 yards through the air, with five TD passes. CSU picked up a grand total of 125 yards for the game, and presumably also a nice paycheck for their athletic department as compensation for absorbing a big loss in their first ever game against a Big Ten team. Recap *(Illinois 2-1, Next game: 9/22 vs Louisiana Tech)*

Purdue 54 - E. Michigan 16

The Big Ten never seems to run out of MIchigan schools with a direction in their names to schedule for September non-conference games. Purdue beat up on 0-3 EMU this week as Caleb TerBush threw for two TD's and ran for a third. The Boilermakers are aiming to be the sleeper team in the Leaders, and with running back Akeem Hunt (106 yds, 4 carries) and receiver Antavian Edison (18 catches, 4 TD in 3 games), they may have found some skill position talent to help get them there. Brandon Cottom added an 87-yard run for the Boilers. Recap *(Purdue 2-1, Next game: 9/29 vs Marshall)*

Northwestern 22 - Boston College 13

The Wildcats won their third straight against AQ conference teams, downing the Eagles of BC in a game that featured seven field goals. Northwestern didn't score a touchdown until there was 1:37 remaining in the game, but a school record five field goals by Jeff Budzien kept them on top throughout the second half. Mike Trumpy rushed for 106 yards for the 'Cats on 16 carries, and Venric Mark chipped in with 77 more. The Northwestern defense held BC to just 25 yards on the ground while gaining 293 rushing on offense. Recap *(Northwestern 3-0, Next game: 9/22 vs South Dakota)*

Michigan 63 - Massachusetts 13

The Wolverines had no trouble with the Minutemen, scoring six first-half touchdowns before putting it on cruise control in the second. Denard Robinson rushed for 106 yards and a TD, and threw for 291 yds with three TD passes, and he did it in less than three quarters of playing time. Running back Fitzgerald Toussaint returned from an injury for UM, and rushed for 85 yards on 15 tries. Michigan outgained UMass in total yards 585-259. In what was a tuneup for their trip to South Bend this weekend, the Wolves looked to have the offense where they want it. Recap *(Michigan 2-1, Next game: 9/22 at Notre Dame)*

Penn State 34 - Navy 7
The Nittany Lions finally got into the win column under new coach Bill O'Brien with a convincing win over the Midshipmen in State College. Matt McGloin connected with receiver Allen Robinson for three touchdown passes, and found freshman tight end Jesse James for another score. Navy actually had more first downs than Penn State 22-16, and out-rushed the Lions 255-110, but the Middies turned the ball over four times and fell behind by three scores before halftime. Gee Gee Greene led Navy with 70 yards on the ground. *(Just had to get that name in there.)* Recap *(Penn State 1-2, Next game: 9/22 vs Temple)*

Iowa 27 - Northern Iowa 16
Iowa's bad luck with running backs continued as Greg Garmon and Damon Bullock went down with injuries, but walk-on fullback Mark Weisman came to the rescue with 113 yards rushing and three TD's for the Hawkeyes, and they were able to knock off a stubborn group of Panthers from UNI. Northern Iowa dropped close contests to Wisconsin and now Iowa, and they'll be happy to get back to MVC competition. James Vandenberg was 18 of 28 passing for 228 yards for Iowa, and was matched by Sawyer Kollmorgen (20/33, 245 yds) for the Panthers. UNI Led 10-7 after a quarter, and trailed just 17-13 at the half, but the Hawkeyes took charge in the second half Recap *(Iowa 2-1, Next game: 9/22 vs Central Michigan)*

Ball State 41 - Indiana 39
It was a crazy back-and-forth affair in Bloomington that saw the Hoosiers fall behind 14-3, but battle back to lead 25-24 at the half. Ball St. rallied to lead by 13 after three quarters, but Indiana had one more push, and they scored what appeared to be the winning TD with 49 seconds remaining. But Cardinal QB Keith Wenning drove his team 49 yards for the winning field goal on the game's final play. It was the third straight win over the Hoosiers for Ball St., and it means that Indiana will not go undefeated in 2012, in case you were wondering. Recap *(Indiana 2-1, Next game: 9/29 at Northwestern)*

Wisconsin 16 - Utah State 14
The Badgers were thoroughly outplayed by the Aggies in the first half of this one, and trailed 14-3 at halftime. Kenzel Doe sparked their comeback with a 79-yard punt return TD, and Montee Ball gave them a 16-14 lead with a TD run in the 3rd quarter. Bret Bielema changed quarterbacks at the halfway point, bringing in Joel Stave to replace Danny O'Brien, but the offense continued to struggle. The Aggies got the ball with 1:32 to play and hit on a 3rd and 10 pass down to the Badgers' 15-yard line, but their field goal attempt with six seconds left went wide right and Wisky managed to avoid a 1-2 start to the season. If nothing else, their shaky performance gave Purdue and Illinois hope that it won't be a Badger cakewalk to the Leaders title. Recap *(Wisconsin 2-1, Next game: 9/22 vs UTEP)*

Notre Dame 20 - Michigan State 3
The 10th-ranked Spartans struggled on offense from the start against what appears to be the best Irish defense we've seen for several years. Meanwhile Notre Dame's own #5, QB Everett Golson, was doing his best Braxton Miller imitation, running for one TD and throwing for another to stake the Irish to a 14-3 halftime lead. Spartan QB Andrew Maxwell was 23 of 45 for 187 yards, and LeVeon Bell rushed for 77 more, but Maxwell was sacked four times and the Irish defense was led by Manti Te'o's 13 tackles, keeping MSU's offense stymied most of the night. Bell's longest run was 15 yards, and Maxwell's longest completion was for 23, so the Irish succeeded in preventing the big play. Recap *(Michigan State 2-1, Next game: 9/22 vs Eastern Michigan)*

Big Ten Statistics

Big Ten Standings - Results

(Photo courtesy of Ohio State Athletics. Dispatch)

Dave OSU | @daveOSUresources