Last year against Michigan State, Braxton Miller had a miserable outing, managing just 29 yards of total offense in 10-7 loss to the Spartans in Columbus.

This time around, Miller showed just how much he has matured, piling up 315 yards of offense in a 17-16 victory over No. 20 Michigan State in East Lansing.

Ohio State offensive coordinator Tom Herman talked about the improvements of his sophomore quarterback after the game, "He was a deer in the headlights then. He really didn't know what he was doing."

He certainly knows what he's doing now.

Miller completed 16 of his 23 passes (69.6%) for 179 yards with one touchdown and one interception while adding 136 yards rushing on 23 carries. Despite Michigan State punishing Miller all afternoon -- even forcing the sophomore quarterback to the sideline on two occasions -- he always came back and made the big play for his team.

Head coach Urban Meyer admired Braxton's gutsiness, "I mean, just the toughness. He's just banged up, banged up, and just kept coming back, coming back."

Led by Miller, Ohio State carved up Michigan State's touted run defense. The Spartans came into the week allowing just 69 rushing yards per game, but the Buckeyes piled up 204 yards on the ground in East Lansing. Miller accounted for most of it, but Hall played well before a knee injury forced him to the sideline, and Hyde provided a spark as he closed the game at running back.

On the other side of the ball, Ohio State's defense looked like the unit everyone expected coming into the year.

The Buckeyes held Le'Veon Bell -- the nation's third leading rusher -- to just 45 yards on 17

carries. As a team, Michigan State couldn't get anything going on the ground, running for just 34 total yards. It was clearly something Ohio State emphasised this week, and the Buckeyes came through after some questionable performances in recent weeks.

Defensive end John Simon talked about the defense's big day, "That was the plan. We really challenged ourselves. We really wanted to stop this run, and it was big for us to shut [Le'Veon Bell] down."

This game -- start to finish -- was as close as the one-point differential would indicate.

Ohio State led from the conclusion of their first possession -- a 75 yard drive capped by a Jordan Hall touchdown run -- all the way until the late stages of the third quarter. Their four point lead was erased by a 29 yard screen pass to Keith Mumphery, who broke seven lazy tackle attempts by Ohio State and bulldozed his way into the end zone. The touchdown gave Michigan State a 13-10 lead and all the momentum.

It didn't take long for Miller and the Buckeyes to get it back.

Four plays into Ohio State's ensuing drive, Devin Smith beat All-American cornerback Johnny Adams on a streak route and Miller put the ball right on the money for a 63-yard touchdown catch.

That play gave Ohio State a lead it wouldn't relinquish.

"A great team win," Meyer said after the game . "We found out something about our team today, to go on the road in a hostile environment against a quality, quality football team and find a way to win."

The Buckeyes don't have long to celebrate with Nebraska coming to town next Saturday.

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