Urban Meyer described the Ohio State offense in the first quarter as “a trainwreck”, but for the last three quarters, it looked more like a high-speed bullet train to the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Braxton Miller broke his own team record for rushing yards by a quarterback, and Carlos Hyde bulldozed his way to 140 yards and four touchdowns as the Buckeyes demolished Nebraska 63-38 in front of a record crowd of 106,102 at Ohio Stadium.

The victory leaves Meyer’s Buckeyes (6-0, 2-0) the only remaining unbeaten team in the Big Ten, as Northwestern (5-1, 1-1) suffered their first loss of the year to Penn State in State College.

OSU fell behind 17-7 in the first quarter, their only score a 41-yard interception return by Bradley Roby. The offense generated just 17 yards in the period, and failed to register a first down. But once again they were sparked by a big play...this one a 72-yard dash by Miller to set up Hyde’s first TD, and the train was back on the track early in the second quarter.

The Buckeyes proceeded to score touchdowns on six straight possessions, interrupted only by halftime. After one 4th quarter OSU drive it was 56-31, and it was all over but the postgame revelry on High Street. Ohio State amassed 498 yards of total offense, averaging 8.0 yards per play, and they did it while completing just seven passes. The Buckeyes ran the ball...and they ran the ball some more...and Nebraska had no answer, least of all for the electrifying Braxton Miller.

In the much anticipated matchup between Miller and his Husker counterpart Taylor Martinez, the OSU sophomore won by unanimous decision. Martinez competed hard, showing his toughness by breaking several tackles on a 9-yard TD run to give the Huskers a brief 24-21 lead in the 2nd quarter. But Miller took care of the football for his team and Martinez didn’t. The

Nebraska junior turned the ball over four times, with three interceptions and a 4th quarter fumble that added an exclamation point to the OSU triumph.

Miller rushed for 186 yards, including a 31-yard touchdown run on a 4th-and-1 play just before halftime. He completed 7-14 passing, for 127 yards and an 18-yard touchdown toss to tight end Jeff Heuerman.

Stumbling Out of the Gate

The slow start has been a trademark of Meyer's Buckeyes so far, and things were looking grim early once again, despite Roby's pick-six. With the Bucks already down 14-7 and facing their fourth straight punting situation, Meyer tried to spark the team by calling for a fake punt by Ben Buchanan from his own 25-yard line. A well-conceived play went awry though, when one Buckeye missed his block, and Buchanan came up one yard short, giving the Huskers the ball at the OSU 31.

The Buckeye defense stiffened, holding Nebraska to a field goal, and Miller woke up the dormant OSU offensive machine on the first play following the kickoff with his 72-yard scamper, and a wild second quarter was underway. The Buckeyes rolled up 242 yards in the period and scored four TD's to take a 35-24 halftime lead, but Big Red had one more burst left in them coming out of the locker room.

Pulling Away

Martinez came out throwing after the second half kickoff, with completions of 28 and 20 yards on the first two Husker plays, and Rex Burkhead, who was knocked out of the game with an injury on the play, ran for 24 more down to the OSU 5-yard line. Martinez hit tight end Ben

Cotton for a 3-yard TD pass, and Nebraska was back within four at 35-31. But the Ohio State offense wasn't slowing down.

Miller and Hyde rushed the Buckeyes out to midfield on the ensuing possession, and then MIller connected on a 35-yard strike down the middle to tight end Jeff Heuerman (2 rec, 53 yds, 1 TD) to the Nebraska 1-yard line. Hyde converted, the lead was back to 11, and the Cornhuskers were about to get shucked.

Nebraska failed to get a first down after the kickoff, and Corey Brown and the Buckeye special teams then administered the backbreaker. Brown leads the team in receptions as a wide receiver, but elusiveness after the catch has not been his strong suit. But he took in the Husker punt at the OSU 24 and made everybody miss on his way to a 76-yard touchdown that seemed to sap the will of the opponent to continue.

The next Nebraska possession ended with Martinez' third interception, this one by Orhian Johnson, and Ohio State would not feel the need to pass the ball for the remainder of the game. Their rushing onslaught was stalled only once from that point on, by Carlos Hyde's fumble deep in Nebraska territory. OSU did not attempt a pass in the 4th quarter, as Rod Smith tacked on a 33-yard TD run to make it 56-31, and Carlos Hyde added insult to injury with his fourth TD, a 16-yard run in the final few seconds.

Two Defenders Step Up

The Ohio State defense gave up 38 points in this one, and the back seven once again gave a clinic on how not to tackle, but it must be said that the OSU defensive line had the Nebraska offensive line for lunch. Jonathan Hankins was his usual dominant force, serving notice again that if you want to see the junior play next year you'll have to tune in on Sundays to do it.

The two guys widely considered to be the best players on the Buckeye defense along with

Hankins had not put up the numbers so far in 2012 that many had predicted for them. But Bradley Roby and John Simon set about to remedy that situation on this Saturday night.

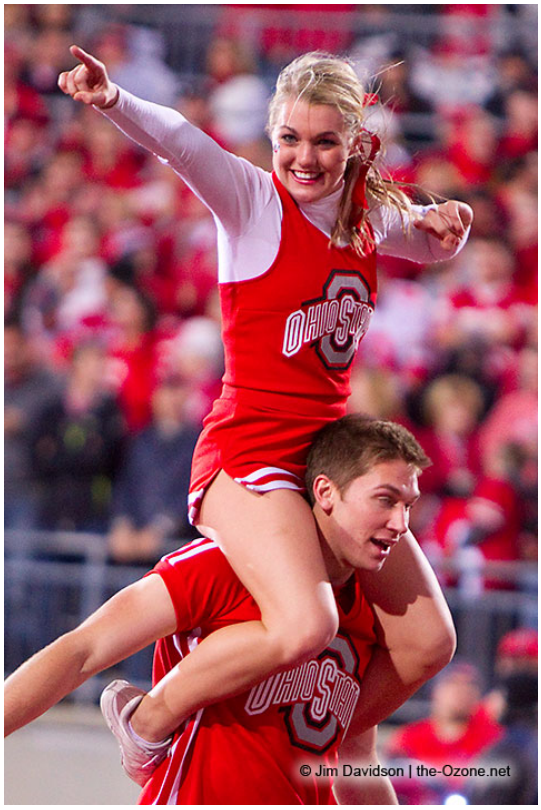
Simon had just one sack coming into the Nebraska game, but he spent almost as much time in the Husker backfield in this game (and did almost as much damage there) as Taylor Martinez. Simon had 5 tackles-for-loss, for a total of -24 yards, including two sacks and a forced fumble on Martinez that snuffed all Husker hope. Simon has been playing with two painful injuries in recent weeks (shoulder, groin), but he was in fine form Saturday, spinning Nebraska's offensive tackles like revolving doors.

Roby had promised beforehand that he would get an interception in this game, and he doubled up on his prediction with two of them, one for a 41-yard TD. He broke up another pass, and chipped in with four tackles.

Offensive Line Developing

Meyer reserved most of his postgame praise for the Buckeyes offensive line, a group that he admitted he had doubts about early on, but that he now sees as coming around. "They're the ones that have developed...I mean, really developed," said Meyer afterwards. "And even early in the season I didn't feel it. I didn't feel us change the line of scrimmage against those early teams. I'm starting to feel us change the line of scrimmage."

Atop the Conference



With postseason play forbidden this year, Meyer's Buckeyes have as their goal the Leaders Division title, which they are technically allowed to claim if they finish with the best record.

Having now beaten two of the three best teams in the Legends Division on consecutive Saturdays, OSU turns to play in the Leaders with games against divisional opponents the next five weeks before the finale against Michigan.

OSU Official Box Score and Stats

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