- Saturday, November 3, 2012

- Ohio Stadium - Columbus, Ohio

- Illinois at Ohio State

- 3:30 PM ET

- TV: ESPN -

The undefeated Buckeyes host Illinois Saturday, and Urban Meyer will make sure his players have heard all about 2007, the last time Ohio State carried a perfect record into the first week of November. The Fighting Illini are still looking for their first Big Ten victory of 2012...but then, they were a serious underdog five years ago as well.

The 2007 Buckeyes were 10-0 and the No. 1 team in the country. They had won a record 20 Big Ten games in a row when Ron Zook's Illini came to town with Juice Williams and Rashard Mendenhall and knocked them off their perch atop the rankings 28-21 . Ohio State would go on to their second consecutive BCS title game, but the Illini spoiled their chance for a perfect regular season.

As the saying goes, Williams and Mendenhall aren't walking through that door for Saturday's game, and this Illinois team bears little resemblance to Zook's 7-3 Illini of five Novembers ago. To put it bluntly, they have been plain awful in Tim Beckman's first year at the helm in Champaign. As uneven as the Buckeyes' performance has been this season, an upset by the Illini (2-6, 0-4) would be more shocking, if less consequential, than the one they pulled off in '07.

The Buckeyes moved up to No. 6 in this week's AP poll, their highest ranking since they finished the 2010 season at No. 5. Ohio State is the nation's only 9-0 team, and will be trying to roll into their open date next Saturday with their record still unblemished. A date in Madison with the Badgers follows on Nov. 17, before they finish the season by hosting The Game on Nov. 24.

This will be the 99th time OSU and Illinois have met on the gridiron, with the Buckeyes holding a 64-30-4 advantage in the series. The Illini have won 7 of the last 11 games played in Columbus, although just one since Jim Tressel's first year in 2001. OSU has won the last four meetings, including a 30-0 win the last time they played in Columbus. In last year's 17-7 Ohio State victory in Champaign, Braxton Miller completed just one pass as the Buckeyes kept it simple for their freshman QB.

State of the Bucks

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