With the majority of the Mid-American Conference football non-conference games out of the way it is time to look at how the conference's teams and individuals stack up against the rest of the nation.

Overall the MAC went 13-27 against foes from out of conference and across the nation. There were some amazing highlights as well as some embarrassing losses. There was individual excellence and team-wide ineptness. Here it will all be sorted out.

First, the good. Temple opened the season with a pair of impressive victories. First the Owls knocked off defending FCS National Champion Villanova, 31-24, in the battle for the Mayor's Trophy in the City of Brotherly Love. The Owls followed next week with a 30-16 win over a team that was highly-touted heading into this season, UConn. Bowling Green was able to knock off Marshall, 44-28.

The biggest surprise and most impressive victory of the season for the MAC came last weekend when Toledo built up a big lead and held on to knock off Purdue out of the Big Ten, 30-21. Northern Illinois also defeated a Big Ten school Saturday, defeating Minnesota, 34-23, in Minneapolis.

Now, the not-so-good. Liberty rolled into Muncie to take on Ball State and rolled out with a 27-21 win. Garner-Webb, a FCS school of little merit, knocked off Akron at InfoCision Stadium, 38-37. These were the inexplicable low-points.

As for the expected, no one thought Eastern Michigan could hang with Ohio State or that Bowling Green could stick with Michigan. However, even though Ohio State was a 44-point favorite it is difficult to understand how a team can give up 73 points in 60 minutes of football. It's hard to figure out how an offense led by the likes of Joe Bauserman and Kenny Guyton, the Buckeyes' second and third-string quarterbacks, can put up 21 points in the fourth quarter.

Yes, Eastern Michigan has not won a game in a long time. However, head coach Ron English appeared to have the program on somewhat of a rebound. The Eagles lost their first two games by a combined 10 points, falling to Army by three and Miami (Ohio) by seven. But Eagles fans should have expected more than this.

Bowling Green's performance against Michigan in The Big House was another debacle. Bowling Green pulled within a touchdown at 21-14 early in the second quarter and, when Wolverines' super-sophomore quarterback Denard Robinson soon to be lost for the rest of the game with an injury, things were setting up for the Falcons to keep it respectable. Well, Michigan out-scored the Falcons 44-7 the rest of the way with Robinson on the bench. The Wolverines rushed for 446 yards and threw for 255. Michigan reserve quarterback Tate Forcier, who has exhibited all the maturity of a toddler in training pants in the past, lit the Falcons defense up. He went 12-for-12 throwing the ball for 110 yards and a touchdown. Michigan was not forced to punt the entire game. It was an avalanche.

The big thing about this is that Michigan, despite its 4-0 start, is not a good football team. Yes the Wolverines are in the top 20, but they got out of the gate quickly last season and were ranked before the wheels came off the wagon. Write this down for future reference…the Wolverines will finish the season in the middle of the Big Ten pack. Wins over UConn, a squeaker over Massachusetts and a close one against a bad Notre Dame game in a state of flux do not a national champion contender make. Ohio State, Iowa, Wisconsin, Penn State and Northwestern are better football teams than the Wolverines, and the Falcons should have had a

better showing.

Quite a few units, good and bad, are notable on the national scene. Kent State, for instance, leads the nation in rushing defense allowing just 61.2 yards per game. Eastern Michigan leads the nation in fewest penalties per game at 2.5. Western Michigan is fourth in the NCAA in passing offense, averaging 332.0 yards per game while Toledo is third in the country in turnovers forced with 14 in four games.

Northern Illinois, led by senior tailback Chad Spann, is 12th in the nation in rushing offense by averaging 245.0 rushing yards per contest while Toledo (17th at 96.0) and Central Michigan (18th at 97.0) are in the top 20 nationally in rushing defense.

On the flip side, Kent is dead last in the nation in tackles for a loss allowed per game, giving up 30 in three games. Miami (115th), Bowling Green (114th) and Buffalo (113th) are right behind the Golden Flashes. Ohio is tied for last in the country with 12 turnovers while Buffalo, Western Michigan and Bowling Green are tied for 105th with 10 turnovers given up.

BG is near the bottom of the sacks allowed standings, standing 113th by giving up 14 in four games while Western Michigan (111th), Akron (108th) and Miami (102nd) are also near the bottom of the pack.

A number of MAC players are on the national radar in some of the individual categories.

In rushing Chad Spann of Northern Illinois is 13th in the country with 458 yards on 66 carries.

Temple sophomore Bernard Pierce is 44th with 343 yards and Paris Cotton from Central Michigan 45th with 342 yards.

Central Michigan sophomore quarterback Ryan Radcliffe is having a solid year at the helm of the Chippewas offense, sitting 10th in the country in passing yards with 1,142. Alex Carder, also a sophomore, from Western Michigan is 29th with 921 yards through the air.

Bowling Green senior receiver Kamar Jorden is following in Freddie Barnes' shoes. Barnes led the nation in receptions per game last season and this year Jorden is second with 10 receptions per game. A pair of Western Michigan receivers are also in the top 10 in this category, Jordan White (fourth at 9.0 receptions per game) and Juan Nunez (fifth at 8.3 catches per contest). Miami senior receiver Armand Robinson sits seventh in the country with 8.0 receptions per game.

Jorden is also in the top 10 in receiving yards as his 413 yards are 85 behind the leader.

Sophomore linebacker Dwayne Woods Jr., from BG, and EMU senior linebacker Neal Howey are tied for 13th in the country in tackles per game with 11 per contest. Toledo's Archie Donald (10.7) and Kent's Cobrani Mixon (10.2) are also high in the national standings at 17th and 20th respectively.

Golden Flash defensive lineman Quinton Rainey leads the country with three fumble recoveries while his DL running mate, Rosevelt Nix, a freshman, is tied for the national lead with three forced fumbles. Kent has a few more defensive players near the top of national lists…junior defensive back Nathan Wolfe is tied for second in the nation with three interceptions and senior safety Brian Lainhart sits 10th with 19 solo tackles. It is no wonder the Kent defense ranks 22nd in the country in total defense.

Now we see where things stand and most of the out-of-conference action is done. From this point on these statistics will mean just a little bit more as two division titles, and a trip to the MAC Championship Game in Detroit, will be determined in the coming weeks.