It was a difficult weekend for Mid-American Conference football.

Temple, hosting Penn State, let one get away and failed to defeat the Nittany Lions for the first time in 70 years as Penn State scored a late touchdown to snatch away the victory. Akron, looking to become a respected program in the Mid-American Conference, was overwhelmed by Cincinnati in a game that was never close. Kent State fell to Kansas State as the Golden Flashes' offense continues to sputter. Toledo, hosting Boise State in what could have been a signature win for the program, was humbled in front of a sellout crowd.

Bowling Green fell by a point in Wyoming, Northern Illinois was blown out by Wisconsin and Minnesota topped Northern Illinois. The MAC posted a 3-10 won-loss record over the weekend, and two of those wins came in conference games against MAC opponents. Only Ohio, who drilled Marshall 44-7, posted a win in a non-conference game.

If the MAC hopes to gain respect and stature nationwide it has to do better than this.

There are five non-conference games coming up this weekend that the MAC should win. These are bellwether games...the kinds of games that should show a conference where it stands.

Toledo goes on the road to play Syracuse, a winnable game for the Rockets. Syracuse is not what it used to be and Toledo plays well against BCS Conference teams on the road. Temple,

off the heartbreaker against Penn State, will travel to College Park to take on Maryland. Other than horribly ugly uniforms the Terrapins haven't shown much of anything this year. Army invades Muncie to take on Ball State, so we will see how improved the Cardinals' run defense is. Ohio travels to New Jersey to take on Rutgers, and a win over the Scarlet Knights should start getting the Bobcats some votes in the Associated Press rankings. Finally, South Alabama travels to Kent to face a Golden Flashes team desperate for a win.

The MAC should go 4-1 in these games at the very worst.

MID-AMERICAN CONFERENCE...News and Notes...

MAC COACHES SUPPORT 'COACH TO CURE MD' EFFORT...The American Football Coaches Association will hold its fourth annual Coach to Cure MD effort with the games of September 24. MAC coaching staffs and more than 100 FBS schools will be wearing a Coach to Cure MD patch to raise awareness and funding for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy research. Fans are encouraged to donate online at www.Coach to CureMD.org or donate $5 by texting CURE to 90999.

This is the fourth year of the Coach to Cure MD program, which is on track to surpass the million dollar mark for donations this year.

MAC HEAD COACHES IN HIGH DEMAND

Football programs from the Automatic Qualifying conferences are taking notice of MAC head coaches. In the last two seasons alone, five MAC head coaches were hired directly to head coaching positions at AQ programs.

In fact, former MAC head coaches are spread out across the Midwest—Notre Dame's Brian Kelley (Central Michigan to Cincinnati to Notre Dame), Michigan's Brady Hoke (Ball State to San Diego State to Michigan), Cincinnati's Butch Jones (Central Michigan to Cincinnati), Minnesota's Jerry Kill (Northern Illinois to Minnesota), Missouri's Gary Pinkel (Toledo to Missouri) and Kansas' Turner Gill (Buffalo to Kansas).

Former MAC Head Coaches With Head Coaching Positions at AQ FBS programs)

2010-Al Golden (Temple) to Miami of Florida (ACC)

2010-Jerry Kill (Northern Illinois) to Minnesota (Big Ten)

2010-Mike Haywood (Miami) to Pittsburgh (Big East)

2009-Butch Jones (Central Michigan) to Cincinnati (Big East)

2009-Turner Gill (Buffalo) to Kansas (Big 12)

2006-Brian Kelley (Central Michigan) to Cincinnati (Big East)

2004-Terry Hoeppner (Miami) to Indiana (Big Ten)

2000-Gary Pinkel (Toledo) to Missouri (Big 12)

2000- Jim Grobe (Ohio) to Wake Forest (ACC)

1998-Randy Walker (Miami) to Northwestern (Big Ten)

1982-Tom Reed (Miami) to North Carolina State (ACC)

1984-Bill Mallory (Northern Illinois) to Indiana (Big Ten)

1977-Dick Crum (Miami) to North Carolina (ACC)

1974-Bill Mallory (Miami) to Colorado (Big Eight)

1968-Bo Schembechler (Miami) to Michigan (Big Ten)

1956-Ara Parseghian (Miami) to Northwestern (Big Ten)

1950-Woody Hayes (Miami) to Ohio State (Big Ten)

NON-CONFERENCE REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE

MAC programs will face a formidable non-conference slate of opponents from the following Football Bowl Subdivision (formerly I-A) conferences – ACC, Big East, Big Ten, Big 12, and SEC. In addition, the conference will also face independent Army, as well as Boise State from the Mountain West Conference.

A total of 11 of the schools' non-conference games will feature an opponent from the Big Ten (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan (2), Michigan State, Minnesota, Ohio State (2), Penn State (2) and Wisconsin). The MAC will match up with a foe from the SEC (3—Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee), Big 12 (4—Kansas, Kansas State, Missouri, Oklahoma), ACC (2—Maryland, North Carolina State), Big East (9—Cincinnati (2), Connecticut (2), Pittsburgh, Rutgers, South Florida, Syracuse, West Virginia), Mountain West (2—Boise State, Wyoming), WAC (2—Idaho, New Mexico State), Sun Belt (2—Florida International, Louisiana-Lafayette) and Conference USA

(1—Marshall).

This Week's MAC Schedule

Saturday, September 24

Toledo at Syracuse, Noon ET (Big East Network)

Central Michigan at Michigan State, Noon ET (ESPNU)

Eastern Michigan at Penn State, Noon ET (ESPN2)

Temple at Maryland, 12:30 pm ET (ACC Network/ESPN Game Plan/ESPN3)

*Bowling Green at Miami, 1:00 pm ET (ESPN3)

Army at Ball State, 2:00 pm ET (ESPN3)

Ohio at Rutgers, 2:00 pm ET (ESPN3)

Virginia Military Institute at Akron, 2:00 pm ET (mac-sports.com)

Cal Poly at Northern Illinois, 3:30 pm ET (mac-sports.com)

South Alabama at Kent State, 3:30 pm ET (mac-sports.com)

Western Michigan at Illinois, 3:30 pm ET (Big Ten Network)

Connecticut at Buffalo, 6:00 pm ET (ESPN Plus/ESPN Game Plan/ESPN3)

MAC TOP PERFORMERS—WEEK 3

OFFENSE

• Bowling Green QB Matt Schilz threw for a career-high 437 yards in the Falcons 28-27 loss to Wyoming. Schilz led the Falcons offense to 514 yards of total offense, the second consecutive week they have topped the 500-yard mark.

• Toledo RB Adonis Thomas rushed for 64 yards and one touchdown in a 40-15 loss to Boise State.

• Buffalo WR Alex Neutz collected all four of his receptions for 78 yards in the second half as the Bulls mounted a comeback from a 21-7 halftime deficit, only to lose in the final seconds 28-25 at Ball State.

• Miami WR Nick Harwell had a career-high 12 receptions for 162 yards in a 29-23 loss at Minnesota. His 12 receptions tied for fourth-best on the RedHawks' single-game list.

• Ball State RB Jahwan Edwards rushed for a career-high 112 yards and two scores in the Cardinals 28-25 win over Buffalo.

DEFENSE

• Ohio DB Xavier Hughes added three tackles, one forced fumble and one interception as the Bobcats defeated Marshall, 44-7. Hughes anchored a secondary unit that limited Marshall to only 70 first half passing yards.

• Buffalo LB Khalil Mack collected 11 tackles and two tackles for loss in a 28-25 loss at Ball State.

• Western Michigan DB Aaron Winchester totaled eight tackles, one sack and one forced fumble as the Bronco defense held Central Michigan to only one offensive touchdown in a convincing 44-14 win over the Chippewas.

• Toledo DB Desmond Marrow totaled a career-high 12 tackles and two passes defensed in a 40-15 loss to Boise State last Friday night at the Glass Bowl.

SPECIAL TEAMS

• Eastern Michigan P Jay Karutz punted five times for an average of 43.6 yards per kick in a 31-3 setback at Michigan. Karutz had a long punt of 53 yards and three punts were downed inside the 20 yard line.

• Bowling Green P Brian Schmiedebusch had three punts for an average of 58.7 yards per punt in a 28-27 loss to Wyoming. Schmiedebusch added punts of 61 and 60 yards with two punts downed inside the 20 yard line.

• Buffalo LB Jaleel Verser blocked his first career punt in the third quarter igniting 18 straight points by the Bulls to overcome a 21-7 halftime deficit. Verser blocked the punt deep in Ball

State territory which the Bulls turned into their first touchdown of the second half.