It took a full quarter to get the gears to mesh on that new Ohio State offensive machine, but after a sluggish start, the Buckeyes erupted for eight touchdowns to rout the Miami Redhawks 56-10 in Urban Meyer's first game as OSU's head coach. Braxton Miller set an OSU record for rushing yards in a game by a quarterback, with 161 yards on the ground...and he did it in three quarters.

Miller, who sat out the 4th quarter tending to leg cramps, also passed for two touchdowns and rolled up 368 yards in total offense on the day. After an opening period in which he was 1 of 7 passing, for 5 yards, Miller started the 2nd quarter by hitting his next 11 of 14 for 185 yards, including touchdown throws to Devin Smith and Philly Brown. The sophomore quarterback capped his day with a 65-yard touchdown run early in the 3rd quarter to give OSU a 28-3 lead, and the outcome was never in doubt after that.

Meyer said all he wanted was for this to be "a good day for Ohio State football." The end result was satisfying for the program, but Coach Meyer didn't like what he saw for the first 15 minutes, as Miami made all the big plays and led 3-0 after the period. Afterwards, Meyer expressed his frustrations..."That darned first quarter... I don't want to say I was embarrassed with the way we were playing. We worked so hard and we didn't play very well, in all phases. Defense let a couple of passes go that we shouldn't have."

The defensive lapses were as troubling as the early offensive troubles. Coverage mixups in the OSU secondary led to long completions by Redhawk quarterback Zac Dysert of 42 and 58 yards, the last one setting up the first three points of the game.

2nd Quarter Explosion

But Miller and running back Carlos Hyde (84 yds, 2 TD's) got going in the 2nd quarter, and a 38-yard completion to Philly Brown put the Buckeyes in position for Devin Smith to make the play of the day. From the Miami 23, Miller fired a laser into the end zone, where Smith went up for a one-handed TD catch that you'll be seeing on highlight reels all season. The Buckeyes were on their way.

The next possession would take just seven plays and 2:22, with Miller hitting Philly Brown for a 5-yard TD to end it, and put the Buckeyes up 14-3. Only a last-second goal line stop on a Carlos Hyde run on the last play of the half prevented Ohio State from scoring TD's on all four of their 2nd quarter possessions, and at halftime it was 21-3.

Two more quick OSU scores in the 3rd put the game out of reach at 35-3, and backup quarterback Kenny Guiton finished things off, as reserve running backs Bri'onte Dunn (7 att, 31 yds) and Rod Smith (3 att, 16 yds) and fullback Zach Boren (2 att, 10 yds, 1 TD) mopped up on the ground.

Receivers Arrive

Devin Smith's spectacular catch got the team going, but OSU receivers as a unit did a commendable job all afternoon. *(Credit Dan Harker of The-Ozone.net for the great shot at right)* Philly Brown led the team with 7 receptions for 87 yards and a touchdown, getting halfway to his team-leading total of 14 catches
all last season
. Evan Spencer had 3 catches for 54 yards, and four other receivers had two grabs apiece.

Senior fullback Zach Boren got his first career rushing touchdown when he carried the ball on consecutive plays to take it in from ten yards out. Coming in, Boren had one career carry from scrimmage in his four years as the starting fullback.

Braxton Carries the Load

Miller ran the ball a bit more than his coach would like to see, carrying it 17 times for his 165

yards. Meyer said later that 10-12 carries a game would be ideal for his quarterback, but several of Miller's carries were scrambles or otherwise not designed for the quarterback to run as the first option. The coaching staff made some adjustments and changed some formations at halftime, and it paid off early in the 3rd quarter when Miller optioned left, cut it up inside and dashed 65 yards for the score.

Of Miller's 207 yards passing, all but 23 of them came in that 2nd quarter explosion on four straight possessions. When his team got the big lead they turned to a grinding ground attack with Hyde, Dunn and Smith, while Guiton finished up at QB in the 4th quarter with 14 yards rushing and 37 more through the air on 5 of 9 passing.

Miami's Dysert was as advertised...big, strong and accurate, finishing the game with 303 yards, on 31 of 53 passing, with one TD and two interceptions. His Redhawks offensive line did a pretty good job neutralizing the OSU rush, which began to get better pressure in the second half, but wasn't able to stop Dysert from completing 19 of 34 in the first half alone.

Defensively, the starting OSU corners played well despite Dysert's big day. Travis Howard had two interceptions of Dysert, and Bradley Roby defended and tackled well, and added a special teams touchdown when he recovered a muffed punt snap in the end zone in the 3rd quarter. Ryan Shazier led the Buckeye defenders with 8 total tackles, including six solos.

Meyer Reflects

Of his first game day experience at the Horseshoe, Meyer said he stopped at the end of the third quarter to take in the "Hang on Sloopy" routine..."I stared at that for a while...watched it. Told a couple people I've never seen that before. Checked that out." But the feel-good stuff aside, the afternoon left Meyer with plenty of things to work on despite the large margin of victory.

Asked about Braxton Miller's early struggles throwing the ball, Meyer said he appreciated the fact that his quarterback stayed calm and kept a positive attitude about him even when things weren't going well. "Yeah, he didn't throw as well as he's been throwing in practice. So I anticipate he will. He's 14 out of 24, that's not good enough for what we expect out of him. I saw

a couple of the curveballs he threw down the field, because he had a couple times, having a hard time gripping it. But he'll get better. I think you saw a couple of glimpses of how accurate a passer he could be once we give him time and he settles in a little bit."

A much tougher opponent awaits Meyer and the Buckeyes in Week Two as Central Florida comes to Columbus fresh off a 56-14 shellacking of Akron. For now though, Meyer has taken advantage of his one chance to make a good first impression...even though it took him a quarter to get warmed up.

ESPN Box Score and Stats

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