Five games opened up the Big Ten slate last weekend, while Purdue finished up its non-conference schedule with a win over Marshall. Your humble correspondent missed all of the action, untethered as he was from football, the Internet and the North American land mass on a brief weekend cruise in the Caribbean, but the Recap must go on, and the DVR makes it all possible, if slightly delayed.

There were two feature match-ups on the day's schedule. First, the Ohio State-Michigan State game in East Lansing, a revenge game of sorts for the Buckeyes, and the first ever Big Ten contest as head coach for Urban Meyer. The other was the Nebraska-Wisconsin meeting in Lincoln, with the Huskers trying to avenge last year's 48-17 wipeout at the hands of the Badgers in Madison.

As you probably know by now, the two revenge-minded teams both came out on top, and will meet in a nationally-televised game this Saturday night in Columbus.

We'll begin with those two headliners as we revisit Saturday's games...

Nebraska 30 - Wisconsin 27

The Badgers thought they had this game in hand when Montee Ball scored early in the 3rd

quarter after a Taylor Martinez fumble to give Wisconsin a 27-10 lead. But Martinez bounced back to lead the Huskers to scores on four straight possessions, and the Nebraska defense forced a fumble by Montee Ball on a 4th-and-1 near midfield in the final minute to seal the victory. The win mirrored last year's Husker comeback from a 21-point home deficit against Ohio State. Badger coach Bret Bielema again tried switching quarterbacks...this time from Joel Stave back to the season's opening day starter Danny O'Brien...to no avail. Ball needed 32 carries (2.8 yard avg) to collect his 90 yards, and he had no run longer than 14 yards. Martinez passed for 181 yards on 17 of 29, with 2 TD's, and rushed for another 107 yards on 13 carries. Wisconsin drops to 3-2 and 0-1 in Big Ten play. 21st-ranked Nebraska is 4-1 and 1-0 in conference. Box Score and Stats

Ohio State 17 - Michigan State 16

Michigan State took their first lead of the afternoon at 13-10 with a 3rd quarter touchdown, but the Buckeyes responded on their next possession with a 63-yard TD pass from Braxton Miller to Devin Smith to go back ahead 17-13, and they held on for a 17-16 decision over the Spartans in East Lansing. OSU beat Sparty for the eighth time in the last nine meetings, the only loss last year's 10-7 decision in Columbus. Miller was scintillating as usual, and was the decisive offensive force for the Buckeyes despite turning the ball over three times and having to leave the field twice with minor injuries. MSU punted the ball to the Bucks with just over four minutes remaining, but OSU picked up three first downs to run out the clock and stay undefeated on the season. MSU 's star running back Le'Veon Bell was held to 45 yards rushing and a 2.6 yard average, although he also caught eight passes for 58 yards. OSU (5-0, 1-0) moved to the No. 12 AP ranking with the win, while the Spartans dropped to 3-2, 0-1, and fell out of the AP Top 25. Box Score and Stats

Northwestern 44 - Indiana 29

The Wildcats joined Ohio State as the only two remaining unbeaten teams in the Big Ten as they rolled up 704 total yards of offense in a decisive home win over the Hoosiers. Wildcats quarterback Kain Coulter rushed for 161 yards and four touchdowns, and tailback Venric Mark added another 139 yards on the ground for the 'Cats, who ran out to a 27-0 lead in the 3rd

quarter and then held off a frantic comeback attempt by Indiana. The Hoosiers' Nate Sudfeld relieved starting quarterback Cameron Coffman and drove Indiana to four second half touchdowns, as Indiana drew within eight points in the 4th quarter, but the Wildcats held them off with a score of their own with five minutes to play to end the drama. Northwestern (5-0, 1-0) jumps into the AP poll at No. 24, and Indiana falls to 2-2, 0-1. Box Score and Stats

Iowa 31 - Minnesota 13

The Hawkeyes bounced back from their deflating loss to Central Michigan a week ago by putting together a complete game on offense and defense to rout the previously unbeaten Gophers. Iowa scored three times in a six-minute span in the 2nd quarter, including a 47-yard flea-flicker TD pass from James Vandenberg to Jordan Cotton, and the Hawkeyes grabbed a 24-0 lead at the half. Minnesota's backup quarterback Max Shortell, who had looked good two weeks in a row in relief of the injured Marqueis Gray, had a rough outing in Iowa City, throwing three interceptions, including one that was returned 68 yards for a score by Iowa's Christian Kirksey to end the Hawkeyes' scoring in the 4th quarter. The season opening streak by Minnesota (4-1, 1-0) ends at four wins, and the Hawkeyes move to 3-2, 1-0. Box Score and Stats

Penn State 35 - Illinois 7

The Nittany Lions won their third straight game after an 0-2 start to the 2012 season with a dominating road win in Champaign. Penn State led 21-0 at the half and then answered the lone Illinois touchdown with two more second half scores to win going away. Lions' QB Matt McGloin passed for 211 yards and a touchdown, and added two more TD's on the ground on a pair of 1-yard runs. The PSU defense held the Illini to 74 rushing yards on the day, and although injured Illini QB Nathan Scheelhaase returned to duty and threw for 270 yards, he was intercepted twice by the Lions. Penn State linebacker Michael Mauti picked off Scheelhaase at the goal line just before the half, returning it 99 yards to the Illini 1-yard line with one second to play in the first half. Illinois escaped damage when the ensuing field goal attempt was blocked, but their good fortune didn't last, as Tim Beckman's squad fell to 2-3, 0-1. Penn State moves to 3-2, 1-0. Box Score and Stats

Purdue 51 - Marshall 41
The Boilermakers scored four touchdowns in a five-minute span of the 2nd quarter to turn a 14-14 game into a 42-14 halftime lead. Included in that run were back-to-back interception returns for touchdowns to close out Purdue's scoring burst. Marshall then outscored the Boilermakers 27-9 in the second half to throw a scare into the hosts, drawing within ten points at 45-35 in the 4th quarter. But Purdue's Gary Bush hauled in Caleb TerBush's fourth TD pass of the day with 6:38 to play to secure the victory. Thundering Herd quarterback Rakeem Cato put up some ridiculous numbers, completing 45 of 68 passes for 439 yards and five TD's, but he also threw three picks, including the two scores for the guys in the wrong colored jerseys. Purdue's only loss of the year was by three points to No 9 Notre Dame. The Boilermakers move to 3-1 on the season, and open conference play this week, hosting Michigan. Box Score and Stats

Michigan (2-2) was idle.

Big Ten Statistics

Big Ten Standings - Results

This Weekend's Games (all Saturday 10/6)

Michigan State (3-2, 0-1) at Indiana (2-2, 0-1) - Noon (ET) - TV: Big Ten Network

Northwestern (5-0, 1-0) at Penn State (3-2, 1-0) - Noon (ET) - TV: ESPN

Illinois (2-3, 0-1) at Wisconsin (3-2, 0-1) - 3:30 p.m. (ET) - TV: ESPN2 / ABC Regional

Michigan (2-2, 0-0) at Purdue (3-1, 0-0) - 4:00 p.m. (ET) - TV: Big Ten Network

Nebraska (4-1, 1-0) at Ohio State (5-0, 1-0) - 8:00 p.m. (ET) - TV: ABC

Minnesota and Iowa are idle

Big Ten Player of the Week
(My own selections, not the official conference picks)

Kain Coulter - QB - Northwestern - 161 yds rushing, 4 rushing TD's, 9 receptions, 131 yards receiving.

Honorable Mention

Brett Maher - PK-Punter - Nebraska
Braxton Miller - QB - OSU
Taylor Martinez - QB - Nebraska
Caleb TerBush - QB - Purdue
Michael Mauti - LB - Penn State

Play of the Week

I could easily go with the game-winning Miller to Smith TD pass for the Buckeyes, but we've already featured Braxton twice in the POW this season, so we'll go with PSU's Michael Mauti interception return
for 99 yards vs Illinois. I have nothing authoritative to back up my assumption that this is probably the longest ever interception return that
did not
result in a TD...(or even a field goal, as it turned out)

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Dan's OSU Links and Resources