The Buckeyes got a little scare yesterday, holding just a 3-2 lead at the half against the Akron Zips, before pulling away to a 20-2 victory. The defense was dominant, and the offense looked a bit worrisome ... which Furls expounds on in his wrap of the game. And as always, Furls grades the Buckeyes by positions, and grades his own pregame predictions. Up next? A trip cross country to play a Washington Husky team that has looked pretty darn good in their first two games. Let the season officially begin.

105,000 fans in the Horseshoe jeered their team as they went into the locker room at halftime. These fans were crying because their team had no shoes. They had not seen this year's Michigan team which apparently has no feet.

While it is obvious that Ohio State's performance against the Zips was "pedestrian" (that would be a kind way to describe Todd Boeckman's play), at least they won and showed flashes of a good team. Lost in the bizarre 20-2 final score is the fact that Ohio State turned the ball over five times and still held the Zips offense to 0 points.

That is a clear contrast to this year's edition of the Wolverines, who like the Louisville Cardinals, have absolutely no defense. Louisville won, but only

because Middle Tennessee State is the 5th best team in the Sun Belt Conference. Louisville and Michigan were not the only nationally prominent programs to struggle with non-traditional football powers this week as Wisconsin, WVU, and Hawaii all struggled against “inferior” competition, while Auburn and Boise St. fell victim to underrated South Florida and Washington teams. Could it be that preseason polls are not even fit for toilet paper?

Ohio State’s defense looked terrific, holding Akron to two first downs and 47 yards in the first half before tightening down on the Zips, holding them to 22 yards and one first down in the second half. It was a lights out performance by the defense. My one critique, the tackling on the outside was a bit shaky in the first half.

The offense was a train wreck for the entire first half of the game, improving to a mere 16-car interstate pile up in the second. This week Todd Boeckman made all the mistakes that we were expecting last week, heaving balls down field that made you not only question his accuracy but also his decision making. Rob Schoenhoft looked better in the second half, but he did not look “quarterback controversy” better.

With the exception of Hartline and Robiskie the wide receivers looked more ordinary than they did last week, and if Ray Small does not return soon, the Buckeyes will not have enough speed in their third and fourth options to force teams into the same zones we saw last year.

All in all, it was not an impressive performance on the offensive side of the ball and it was a swift dose of reality to all Buckeyes fans whose expectations got a bit ahead of the team following last week's easy win and Michigan's hilarious loss. The Buckeyes have the potential to be good on the offensive side of the ball, but they are not actually good (yet?) and it will be up to the coaching staff to get them there.

Grading the Positions:

Running Backs: C. Beanie Wells looked much better in the second half, but it is still hard to get over the first half which looked like a continuation of the YSU game. Wells spent the first game in the half indecisively making moves in the backfield and looking for holes instead of flowing with the offensive line. During the second half Wells put his head down and took the three and four yard gains that have been there for the previous six quarters. During the telecast yesterday the announcers were saying that Brandon Saine is up to 223lbs, WOW, no wonder he is running with a lot more power than fans were expecting.

Wide Receivers: B+/D. The B+ is for Robiskie and Hartline, the D is for everyone else. For Ohio State to compete, someone (anyone) is going to have to step up. Sanzenbacher looked good the first week against an overmatched YSU team, this week, he looked overmatched. The Buckeyes need Ray Small to get healthy and get back into the lineup, but even then you would have temper any optimism with his history of durability issues.

Quarterback: F. Inaccuracy and poor decision-making characterized Todd Boeckman's play. He made a lot of Favre-like throws from his back foot into triple coverage and even when he did make the right read the ball seemed to be behind the receiver 3 times out of 4. Boeckman's play was not good this week.

Offensive Line: B. It was better. Fans will see the safety and beg to differ, but the safety was more the result of bad play calling and indecisiveness on Beanie Wells part than it was the Offensive line's fault. It takes a lot of confidence/hubris to run the ball off tackle into a nine man front from your own endzone. Wells has to (and did in the second half) do a better job of picking a hole and getting through it quickly. The push was there, and a lot of that was the result of better play calling in the second half.

Defensive Line: A. The defensive line did not miss a beat after the loss of Lawrence Wilson. Gholston, Heyward, and Rose are going to be a formidable force on the outside all year, and Doug Worthington did a much better job of "staying home" this week, while Larimore, Abdallah, and Denlinger continue to look stout in the middle.

Linebackers: A. Larry Grant looked phenomenal yesterday. His speed is "as advertised" on the outside and since he appears to be much more comfortable in the defense he seems to be more aggressive in his pursuit. Laurinaitis and Freeman continue to meet the fans' high expectations, while Homan and Spitler looked great in limited snaps. Based on what I saw on special teams, Brian Rolle will

push for playing time this season and has to be considered a front-runner (along with Gibson) for Grant's position next year. This unit continues to look solid.

Secondary: B. Jenkins, Washington, Russell, and Coleman continue to look solid, but are going to need to tackle better. Teams are going to continue to try to pick the Buckeyes apart underneath on short routes (see Boilermakers, Purdue) simply because of the zone scheme the Buckeyes run and in order to be successful, the Buckeyes are going to have to ensure that they limit the yards after the catch.

Coaching: C. Apparently the coaches got tired of running into eight and nine man fronts and started forcing Akron to back out of defensive run alignments by throwing on running downs. Thank you for that. It is pretty arrogant to run directly into a run blitz on first and second down and expect to make yardage, even against an overmatched MAC team. I would give them a better grade for the game calling but the improvement that we were supposed to see on the offensive side of the ball from week one to week two was not there.

Grading the Grader:

I said take the Buckeyes and the Under, and it looks like we split the difference. Sorry for anyone who went with my picks and is now out

the vig. Next week should be a lot more interesting.

Props to the Prognosticator of the Week:

No award given this week. We all sucked. Closest margin: 19 points. Gentlemen, that just doesn't cut it. Try harder next week.