Only one team in the Big Ten has a winning record against Jim Tressel. That would be today's opponent, the Wisconsin Badgers. Wisconsin has been a mild disappointment after returning 18 starters from a football team that went 12-1 last year, but are playing better as of late as they march into The Shoe for todays contest. Does this, as well as their recent success against the Buckeyes have Furls worried? He shares his thoughts with us in this excellent preview of today's game.

"History is the Present. That's why every generation writes it anew. But what most people think of as history is its end product, myth."

- E.L. Doctorow

Mentally, I picture history as a giant bludgeoning weapon, a maul of some sort, because I often feel as though I am being beaten about the head with it. Buckeyes fans have heard more than enough recent history in the past week to know exactly what I am talking about, but in case you missed it, I will briefly convey the highlights:

-Ohio State has lost four of the last six against Wisconsin.

-The Badgers have won their last three games in the shoe.

-Only one team in the Big Ten has a winning record against Jim Tressel, Wisconsin (3-1).

OK,I think that's it. That is all there is too it, and it is pretty clear, that Ohio State has not had a lot of recent success against Wisconsin, but I guess that depends on how you define recent.

"*History is merely a list of surprises. It can only prepare us to be surprised again."*

- Kurt Vonneguat

History lends itself to faulty deduction like no other form of education. Even the educated will often attempt to deduce a specific future outcome based on the general trends laid out by the past, paying little attention to the important differences that cause the outcome to deviate from the rule. In short, most of the time historical analysis in sport more closely resembles superstition that sound reasoning.

Here are a couple reasons to rethink all that historical gibberish that you have heard in the last week, filing it away appropriately as bunk (paraphrasing Henry Ford)

-In the ever-changing landscape of college football, Ohio State and Wisconsin have not played recently. The last time these two teams met was in 2004. Think about that for a second, A.J. Hawk would go on to play 19 more games for the Buckeyes following that game. None of the players that will meet in Ohio Stadium today played a significant role in that game, hell, Antonio Pittman, then just a red-shirt freshman, only had four carries in that game.

-The coach that led Wisconsin to a 3-1 record vs. Jim Tressel is now the AD. He is not coaching. Will he help, Brett Bielema game plan for Jim Tressel's team? Sure, but that would imply that Jim Tressel has not evolved at all since 2004.

-The 2007 Buckeyes are much better than the 2004 Buckeyes. Would you trade Lydell Ross for Chris Wells? Would you trade Justin Zwick for Todd Boeckman? Yep.

-The 2007 Wisconsin Badgers are not good.

"History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again."

- Maya Angelou

Introducing the 2007 Wisconsin Badgers.

Aren't badgers a member of the weasel family?

From the Big Ten Preview:

There has been much ado about Ohio State's quarterback controversy, but has anyone else noticed that John Stocco is no longer playing at Wisconsin? Don't get me wrong, I think Tyler Donovan will be a pretty serviceable replacement, but he is still an untested commodity. Donovan does not have Stocco's arm, but he is a big accurate passer and should step in and do a capable job.

Wisconsin has ridden an impressive record from 2006 into a terrific preseason 2007 ranking but in the end, it rings a bit hollow. Wisconsin really did not play anyone last year except Michigan and Arkansas. They were soundly beaten by the Wolverines and were beaten by the Razorbacks in every category except the one that counts, score.

The Razorbacks held P.J. Hill and the highly touted Wisconsin running attack to -5 yards on 28 carries. Michigan held them to 12 yards on 27 carries. Wisconsin averaged 3.9 yards per carry last year, but they did most of their damage against horrid teams (Minnesota, Northwestern, and San Diego St.). I am unimpressed, and I am not sold.

Damn, sometimes it hurts being this good. Had you told most analysts in the national media that Ohio State was going to be undefeated going into its match up with Wisconsin, they would have certainly assured you that it was going to be one of the biggest games of the year. How disappointing is Wisconsin? Well you can see them play the #1 Buckeyes in this blockbuster on the Big Ten Network.

Wisconsin was a straw dog last year. They put up nice a nice record while not winning a single game against a ranked opponent all season. Although thoroughly outplayed by Arkansas, the Badgers were able to run out of the Capital One Bowl with a win.

This year's version of the Badgers is not faring as well. The offense has struggled in all phases of the game, and the "unstoppable" running game from 2006 looks very... stoppable. PJ Hill is averaging 5.0 ypc, but the only games where he has actually exceeded his average were against the Citadel and Northern Illinois. Against better competition Hill has struggled, rushing for just 75 and 83 yards against Penn State and Illinois respectively.

As PJ Hill goes, so go the Badgers. Tyler Donovan has been exactly what I predicted, serviceable. He currently ranks sixth out of eleven in

passing efficiency and boasts a paltry 12 TD to 9 int ratio. If you want to look at it positively, you can say that Donavan averages just one interception per game, if you wish to be more pragmatic, you could say that he is only averaging one TD per game.

Without Joe Thomas, Wisconsin is not only struggling to open running lanes, but they are also struggling to protect Donavan. So far, Donavan has taken 19 sacks this season and Wisconsin still has still only faced one good defense this year.

The Badgers also lack a serious deep threat in the receiving game; their best match up against the Buckeyes will be TE Travis Beckum who currently ranks 7th in the Big Ten with 625 receiving yards on 53 catches, against an outside linebacker. Luke Swan, who was off to a great start with 25 catches for 450 yards, is out for the season with a torn hamstring leaving Glenville graduate, freshman Kyle Jefferson, as their sole threat downfield.

Defensively, Wisconsin (141 ypg) ranks near the middle of the pack in the nation at stopping the run, giving up nearly twice as many yards on the ground per game as the Buckeyes (75.4 ypg). In short the Wisconsin run defense, or pass defense for that matter, is nowhere near as good as the Penn State defense that Ohio State just shredded on the road at night.

So while others will continue to examine the past to find clues to

the future, I will continue to examine the present, for in college football it is a much better indicator of future results. In the PAST Wisconsin has played well against the Buckeyes in the Horseshoe. In the PRESENT Wisconsin has not played well against anyone, struggling to win against the Citadel, Iowa, Michigan State, and UNLV, and failing to win against Penn State and Illinois.

The Matchups:

Ohio State Offense vs. Wisconsin's defense: In case you missed it, I pretty much said in the above that Wisconsin will not be able to stop Ohio State, Penn State couldn't and they are much better defensively than the Badgers. Ohio State will run and throw at will.

Ohio State Defense vs. Wisconsin's Offense: Does Wisconsin have an offense?

Don't Be Surprised if...

-The talk Saturday night is, "What happened to the Badgers?" And how the Buckeyes still haven't

proven anything.

-Oregon steals the headlines by beating an overrated ASU team.

-Beanie Wells goes for 175 and two TDs.

-Robo goes for 100+ and two more TDs.

-Big day for the defense, recording five sacks and three turnovers (two picks).

If I were a betting man:

I would take Ohio State and the Under. Right now the Buckeyes are giving 16 and the over/under is 45. I don't think that Wisconsin breaks double digits

and I doubt the Buckeyes put up 45 on their own. I am beginning to feel a bit like a superfan, but I like Da Bucks to win by a pair of baker's dozens 33-7. Da Bucks.

This is your last shot to earn Props as the Prognosticator of the Week. If you are the best you will get your props in my wrap. Enter here. There is no prize except knowing that you are smarter than everyone else, isn't that enough?