The Ohio State Buckeyes started Jim Tressel's 100th victory celebration early by roaring out to a 31-0 halftime lead, and then coasting home to an easy 38-10 win over the Indiana Hoosiers Saturday in Columbus. Then when Alabama stumbled later in the afternoon, the Buckeyes whole perspective changed...from No. 2 and trying harder...to what will probably be the top spot in the national polls this week.

Ohio State (6-0, 2-0) beat Indiana for the 16th consecutive time to reach the halfway point of the schedule unbeaten, and they put Tressel into the record books for reaching 100 wins faster than all but two Big Ten coaches in league history. Bill Lynch's Hoosiers (3-2, 0-2) were the unwitting victims of what had the feel of a statement game for the Buckeyes, as they dominated in all phases, and stopped the high-functioning IU offense in its tracks.

Tressel's milestone shared top billing with Terrelle Pryor's injured thigh on this afternoon, and the junior quarterback responded with an impressive passing performance in the first half...which earned him lots of time off in the second. After driving the Buckeyes to a touchdown on their first second-half possession to make the score 38-0, Pryor spent the rest of the day watching from the sidelines.

The Ohio State defense was apparently tired of hearing about the 2010 Hoosiers and their 350 yards per game passing, or their 450 total yards per game. The Bucks completely throttled Ben Chappell and the touted IU passing attack, holding the Hoosiers to 141 passing yards and just 210 yards total. They intercepted Chappell twice (and his replacement once more) and allowed no more than one first down in any of the Hoosiers' first six possessions. By that time it was

28-0 late in the second quarter, and the OSU second-teamers were stretching.

So Ohio State will enjoy the No. 1 ranking in the country this week, hoping of course that they can keep it that way beyond next Saturday night in Madison, Wisconsin. How does that national TV night game with the Badgers shape up now? 76,000 slightly sloshed cheeseheads at Camp Randall Stadium...with the top-ranked Buckeyes coming to call? It won't be crazy up there or anything. *(I'm hearing it'll be the GameDay locale)*

Pryor Restraint

Operating on a left quad strain that he said felt like it was at "80 to 90 percent", Pryor did not attempt a running play against the Hoosiers, and took three sacks for -19 rushing yards. Instead, he put on a passing clinic against the overmatched Indiana defenders, shredding the Hoosier defense for a career high 334 yards, on 24 of 30 passing, with three touchdowns. Sooner or later, teams are going to learn to stop daring Pryor to throw the ball.

Pryor credited the job the OSU training staff did getting him ready to play after he dismantled the Indiana defense with a career high in completions, and threw touchdown passes to Dane Sanzenbacher, Brandon Saine and DeVier Posey. Posey led all Buckeye receivers with 8 catches for 103 yards and a 17-yard TD reception. Sanzenbacher and Saine had four catches and a touchdown each.

The message delivered by the Ohio State offense in this game was unmistakable. Terrelle Pryor is a passing quarterback. The defense knew he wasn't really going to be a threat to run, and yet he had his way with the mostly hapless Indiana secondary. The offensive line gave him excellent protection for the most part, and it was pitch and catch for Pryor and his receivers. "I just really wanted to throw the ball and rest my leg as much as possible," Pryor said afterward.

The Indiana pass defense is awful, but this game did allow the Ohio State offense to execute and improve in a game situation without putting any real pressure on their quarterback, and allowing him to sit down after two and a half quarters. It was just what the doctor ordered for Pryor before going on the road for a tough matchup with a very physical team.

[redacted]

[redacted]