The most surprising development in Ohio State's 27-22 victory over Toledo last Saturday afternoon might not have been the closeness of the final score, or anything else that happened between the white lines at the Horseshoe. The most surprising development might have been what didn't happen.

After throwing for 130 yards and a touchdown in a half's work in the opening rout of Akron, heralded freshman Braxton Miller took as many snaps against Toledo as Yours Truly did- zero.

Joe Bauserman started the entire game at quarterback. And Joe Bauserman, well… ineffectual is a nice way of describing his performance. His numbers weren't bad- 16-of-30, 189 yards and a touchdown- but they don't do justice to now overpoweringly mediocre he was. Time and time again Bauserman either missed open receivers by a mile- such as Devin Smith on what would have been a forty-yard touchdown in the first half- or, failing to make anything happen, simply threw the ball far, far out of bounds.

Under the circumstances- Bauserman struggling, the offense limping along without spark or inspiration- one wonders why Miller didn't see the field at all on Saturday, let alone a little bit. The answer to that question likely lay in the number of turnovers Bauserman committed- zero. The senior quarterback took no chances, forced nothing, and although he made precious few plays, he avoided the mistake that likely would have killed the Buckeyes in this tight football game. I don't think Luke Fickell trusted a true freshman in a game like this, a game in which one carelessly thrown pass, one ball held out like a loaf of bread, might have made the difference.

This is not me defending Luke Fickell's decision to keep Joe Bauserman in the game. It's my interpretation of what his thought process was.

So much for what I think Fickell thinks. Here's what I think: I think Joe Bauserman will continue to get the lion's share of the snaps until he fails, abjectly. Until he has a Todd Boeckman-at-USC type of pratfall, he's going to stay in the starting lineup and Braxton Miller will spend most of his time on the sidelines. I don't believe Coach Fickell will start the freshman until he absolutely has to. This puts Ohio State fans in an awkward position. Most want to see Braxton Miller play- but they also want the Buckeyes to succeed. Yet the only way they will see Braxton Miller play is if the Buckeyes fail. That's the situation we're in.

Game of the Week- Michigan/Notre Dame: I'll admit it's with no small amount of reluctance that I anoint this my Game of the Week. Yes, this game was chock-full of drama and excitement, particularly in the wild fourth quarter. Yes, the ending- three lead changes in the final minute-and-a-half - was stunning. Yes, this is the third consecutive Michigan-Notre Dame tilt to be decided inside the last thirty seconds. Yes, it was one hell of a football game.

But it was also one hell of a poorly played football game. The defensive lapses in the final minute- with both teams allowing receivers to get wide-open deep when they should have kept everything in front of them as a matter of course- were shocking, even considering the participants. This wasn't a case of quarterbacks putting together gut-check drives in the face of stout, determined opposition. This was a case of defenses, frankly, shitting the bed. The fantastic finish would never have happened had either Michigan or Notre Dame played fundamentally sound football.

And for a second straight week Notre Dame was absolutely atrocious when it mattered. A week after committing five turnovers against South Florida, the Irish coughed it up four more times, including two more turnovers inside the opponents' red zone. They suffered a complete meltdown defensively down the stretch, allowing a whopping 322 total yards in the last seventeen minutes. After retaking the lead with thirty seconds left they somehow allowed a 64-yard catch-and-run to set up Michigan's game-winning touchdown . It was an awful performance, one typical for what is becoming a nightmare season in South Bend.

Player of the Week- Melvin Ingram, South Carolina: A lot of defensive linemen go their entire careers, high school, college and pro, without scoring a single touchdown. Melvin Ingram scored two in one game last Saturday against Georgia- and they proved the difference in South Carolina's 45-42 win over the Bulldogs. Ingram got his first score in the second quarter when he took a handoff on a fake punt and rumbled 68 yards , breaking a couple of tackles along the way. Two periods later Ingram scooped up an Aaron Murray fumble and raced three yards for the clinching score.

Word of the Week: It's "tragedy" as related to September 11. Newsflash- September 11 was not a "tragedy." A hurricane is a tragedy. A flood is a tragedy. Something terrible for which no one can be blamed- a natural disaster, a disease striking a person down in the prime of life- is a tragedy. Mass murder is not a "tragedy." A tragedy has victims without perpetrators. September 11 had perpetrators. Thank you.

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