

No. 8 Ohio State Overwhelms Northwestern, 58-7

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COLUMBUS, Ohio – [Todd Boeckman](#) connected with [Brian Robiskie](#) on three touchdown plays in the first 16 minutes of the game, the Ohio State defense was fierce and unrelenting and the end result was a dominant, 58-7 win over Northwestern in the 500th game in Ohio Stadium.

[Chris Wells](#) rushed for 100 yards for the third-consecutive game, including a 36-yard touchdown carry, and [Vernon Gholston](#) led another imposing defensive effort with two sacks and a 25-yard fumble recovery that he returned for a touchdown.

The win improved Ohio State's record to 4-0 overall and 1-0 in the Big Ten. It was the 27th win in the last 28 games against Northwestern, dating to 1971, and it also represented a school-record 22nd-consecutive regular season victory. Northwestern drops to 2-2 and 0-1 in the Big Ten.

Ohio State led 45-0 at halftime and had out-gained Northwestern, 262-20, in total yards, but this game was over well before that point because Ohio State was dominant in all phases from the start. Not even four minutes into the game Ohio State already led 14-0, and halfway through the first quarter it was 21-0 with the Buckeyes holding a 131-6 advantage in total yards.

Boeckman and Robiskie, reading each other perfectly, hooked up on a 42-yard touchdown play to cap a three-play, 64-yard drive on Ohio State's first possession, using just 1:10 to score.

"We got off to a great start, obviously," [Jim Tressel](#), Ohio State head coach, said. "That first TD was something that Darrell [Hazell], [Joe Daniels](#) and [Jim Bollman](#) came up with this week. We thought we could give them a nice play action. Then the defense took over and created unbelievable field position. It was a decisive win that hopefully we can go back and learn a great deal from."

[James Laurinaitis](#) sacked C.J. Bacher on third down on Northwestern's first series and Ohio State started its second drive at the NU 36. Three plays later Boeckman found Robiskie flying solo down the left sideline for a 28-yard touchdown and a 14-0 lead.

OSU started its third possession, thanks to another three-and-out effort by the defense, at the Northwestern 31. After a 16-yard

Boeckman to [Brian Hartline](#) play, [Maurice Wells](#) took a pitch left, read his blocking beautifully and picked up 11 yards down to the 3. Wells flew over the line on the next play for his first touchdown of the season and a 21-0 lead.

The Buckeye defense then made it 28-0. Safety [Anderson Russell](#) streaked in from the left side on a 2nd-and-8 play and nailed Bacher from behind. The ball popped loose and Gholston scooped it up at the 25 and ran down the right sideline untouched for the touchdown.

That made the score 28-0 at the end of the first quarter and all signs were pointing toward a long day for Northwestern, especially with the Buckeye defenders belting the Wildcats at every opportunity. Russell's big hit on Bacher was the first of many. True freshman [Brian Rolle](#) followed that sack with a big hit on kickoff coverage. Laurinaitis crashed into Bacher on a pass attempt that was intercepted by [Chimdi Chekwa](#). Gholston chased Bacher down for another sack and then Rolle had yet another huge hit on a punt return. Rolle was into the game at linebacker a short while later.

Early in the second quarter Boeckman and Robiskie hooked up again, this time from 19-yards out, to make it 35-0. [Chris Wells](#) went 36-yards untouched into the end zone on OSU's next possession to increase the lead to 42-0. A 40-yard [Ryan Pretorius](#) field goal capped the first-half scoring.

Northwestern's Stephen Simmons opened the second half by returning a kickoff 99 yards for a touchdown. OSU came right back on its next possession with Boeckman finding [Ray Small](#) for a 48-yard scoring play that made the score 52-7.

The defense set OSU up for its next TD. [Larry Grant](#) blocked a Northwestern punt from the end zone giving OSU the ball on the 3. From there, [Maurice Wells](#) went airborne once again for a touchdown – his first two-touchdown game as a Buckeye – and a 58-7 lead.

Benches were emptied as much as possible from that point. The final statistics were impressive:

- * OSU's defense held NU's offense without a touchdown, the third time in four games this season it has accomplished that feat.
- * Northwestern was held to zero yards rushing and to 120 total yards. The Wildcats were averaging 451 yards per game coming into the contest.
- * 12 different defensive players combined for 13 tackles-for-losses.
- * [Chris Wells](#) averaged more than 8.0 yards per carry with 100 yards off 12 carries.

* Boeckman, in less than three quarters, threw a career-best four touchdowns and was 11-of-14 for 179 yards with one interception.

* [Maurice Wells](#) gained 44 yards and scored twice.

* Eight different receivers caught passes, led by Robiskie with three receptions for 89 yards and three touchdowns.

All in all, the 500th game in Ohio Stadium was an all-around impressive day for the men of the Scarlet and Gray.