

Ohio State 6-1 after 16-3 Win over Purdue

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Columbus, Ohio – Ohio State defeated Purdue, 16-3, Saturday in Ohio Stadium before 105,378 fans and an ABC-TV regional audience. Ohio State did not score an offensive touchdown but its special teams and defense provided just enough points and big plays to secure the victory.

The halftime show by the Ohio State marching band was titled “TV Land.” The set featured nostalgic theme songs from shows like “I Love Lucy” to today’s pop culture favorites “The Simpsons” and “The Family Guy.” How appropriate the choice of set was because Purdue has not won in Ohio Stadium in 20 years and breaking that six-game losing streak proved once again to be a “Mission Impossible.”

Chris “Beanie” Wells played a starring role on offense with 94 rushing yards, increasing his career total to 2,664 yards and into the school’s all-time Top 10. The defense was led by a Malcolm who was in the middle of everything: Malcolm Jenkins. The senior cornerback blocked a punt that was returned for a touchdown and recorded an interception, four solo tackles and a pass break-up.

Ohio State’s defense wasn’t out to make “Friends” today, keeping the Boilermakers out of the end zone and limiting them to 298 yards of total offense, and in the end it created enough “Cheers” from the crowd to help the team improve to 6-1 on the season and 3-0 in the Big Ten Conference.

“It began with special teams,” Jim Tressel, Ohio State coach, said. “The special teams stepped up today. There was a key punt block and early on A.J. Trapasso backed them up to their goal.

“And our defense made Purdue take the long path to the goal line all day, and they didn’t give up a touchdown.”

Purdue, 2-4 overall and 0-2 in the Big

Ten for only the second time under Joe Tiller, played a spirited game on defense, limiting Ohio State to just 222 yards and not letting quarterback Terrelle Pryor hurt them too much through the air (97 passing yards) or on the ground (27 yards).

“Hit and miss was the way I’d describe the offense,” Tressel said. “We’re not consistent and we certainly did not control the line of scrimmage.”

Right about the time people were tuning into the game, trouble found the Boilermakers. Just three minutes in, Jenkins stormed in from the left side to block Chris Summers’ punt and Etienne Sabino recovered and returned it 20 yards for the score. It was the first blocked punt return for Ohio State since the 2005 season when A.J. Hawk scored on an 8-yard return vs. Northwestern.

Then with five minutes to go in the quarter and Purdue at the Ohio State 32, Thaddeus Gibson sacked Purdue quarterback Curtis Painter and forced a fumble that Lawrence Wilson recovered. Behind 16 and 22-yard runs by Wells, the Buckeyes marched 56 yards to take a 10-0 lead on a 24-yard field goal by Ryan Pretorius.

Jenkins intercepted Painter on the first play of the second quarter to give the Buckeyes the ball on the Purdue 29. Ohio State could not punch a score into the end zone and Pretorius’ 38-yard field goal try was wide left.

After holding the Boilermakers on downs after they had reached the Ohio State 45, Ohio State added another field goal – this time a 49-yarder by Aaron Pettrey – to take a 13-0 lead that stood until intermission.

Purdue scored on its first possession of the second half, a school-record 53-yard field goal by Carson Wiggs, to cut the lead to 13-3. Ohio State increased the lead to 16-3 early in the fourth quarter on a 22-yard Pretorius field goal.

That would be all the scoring for this game, although a significant milestone was reached. Purdue’s Painter went over 10,000 career passing yards early in the first quarter, becoming just the fourth Big Ten player to accomplish the feat.

The three-time defending Big Ten champion Buckeyes, a winner in 15 of the last 18 games against Purdue, takes to the road next week for a game against surging Michigan State, also unbeaten in the conference at 3-0.