

Buckeye Leaves: Kyle McCord, Marvin Harrison Jr., Denzel Burke Dominate In 35-7 Win Over Youngstown State



Ohio State bounced back from a shaky Week 1 performance against Indiana for a dominant 35-7 win over Youngstown State on Saturday to move to 2-0 on the season.

Here are our picks for players deserving of Buckeye Leaves following the win:

Patrick Engels: I'm handing my Buckeye Leaf to quarterback Kyle McCord, who put forth his best overall performance to date. McCord has faced a plethora of scrutiny since being named Week 1 starter in August, mainly for his inability to get on the same page with top wideouts Marvin Harrison Jr. and Emeka Egbuka, but that was a completely different story on Saturday.

McCord, who completed an efficient 14 of his 20 passes for 258 yards and three touchdowns, found his two favorite targets a combined 11 times for 254 yards and three touchdowns, a stark contrast from the ineffectiveness seen in Bloomington, Ind. last weekend. He also spread the ball around to eight different receivers.

If McCord can continue this production into the rest of the month, he can begin to further separate himself from the redshirt freshman Devin Brown, which can bode well for his confidence moving forward.

Braden Moles: Cornerback Denzel Burke did what has not been done by an Ohio State cornerback since 2021 against Youngstown State - intercepting a pass.

Yes, somehow that is the first interception by an Ohio State cornerback in nearly two years, but Burke was happy to finally break that streak after Ohio State emphasized its cornerbacks getting more hands on balls this season.

In addition to the pick, Burke finished with one tackle, but he didn't need to make many as the ball rarely came his way against the Penguins.

Greg Wilson: The offense looked the part for most of the game against the Penguins, and Harrison was at the center of it.

After a season opener with only two catches for 18 yards, the Buckeyes made a point to target Harrison early and often. The first drive of the game finished with a 71-yard touchdown down the sideline, a career-long reception. He would also add on another touchdown that was 39 yards, both from McCord.

He finished with seven receptions for 160 yards and two touchdowns, showing that his name still belongs in the conversation for best receiver in the country. It was to be expected against an FCS team, but it's also a good thing to see for Harrison after the dud against Indiana.