

Fiesta Bowl Analysis: What Worked Well, What Didn't Work And Play Of The Game

What Worked Well

Ohio State junior running back J.K. Dobbins persevered through a painful first-half ankle injury and put together an excellent performance in what will likely be his final game as a Buckeye. Dobbins gained 221 yards from scrimmage, surpassing 200 yards for the fourth time in the 2019 campaign.

Dobbins gashed Clemson in the first quarter, scoring on a 68-yard touchdown, where he juke and burst past the Tiger defense. He also set up the Buckeyes at the Clemson 8-yard line with a 64-yard run later in the frame.

On the game, the La Grange, Texas, native gained 174 yards on 18 carries for a 9.7 yards-per-carry average with one score. He also snagged a career-high six receptions for 47 yards in the Buckeyes' loss to Clemson.

Also performing well for Ohio State was junior punter Drue Chrisman. After his first punt traveled just 38 yards, Chrisman responded with punts of 53, 51, 44, 52 and 34 yards respectively. The 44- and 34-yard punts downed Clemson at the 1- and 6-yard lines, respectively.

What Didn't Work

Ohio State struggled to stop Clemson quarterback Trevor Lawrence on the ground, with the sophomore signal caller rushing for a team-high 107 yards and one touchdown on 16 carries.

With the Tigers trailing 16-7, the 6-6, 220-pound quarterback made one of the plays of the game. Lawrence broke through the Buckeye defense to the second level, faked sophomore safety Josh Proctor and outran a slew of Ohio State defenders on his way to a game-changing 67-yard touchdown.

Lawrence completed 18 of 33 passes for 259 yards and two touchdowns with no interceptions, but his performance in the running game brought the Tigers back from behind and kept the Ohio State defense off-balance all game.

Even though he suffered a stinger in the second quarter that took him off the field, Lawrence showed toughness and composure in the Tigers' come-from-behind victory.

Lawrence led Clemson on a four-play, 94-yard drive in just 1:18 late in the fourth quarter to beat the Buckeyes. On the game-winning drive, Lawrence rushed for 11 yards and threw for 83 more, including a 34-yard touchdown pass to talented tailback Travis Etienne.

Play Of The Game

The play of the game is one that will live in infamy in Ohio State history. With Clemson trailing 16-0 and just 4:47 until halftime, Ohio State had all of the momentum on its side.

The Tigers had the ball at the Ohio State 45-yard line facing third-and-5, where a stop would likely force

them to punt. Lawrence dropped back to pass and did not see a blitzing Shaun Wade until the last moment.

The third-year sophomore cornerback drilled Lawrence with a helmet-to-helmet hit, although it appeared the 6-6 quarterback ducked when the 6-1 corner went to deliver the hit, prompting the head-to-head collision. Wade sacked Lawrence for an 8-yard loss, which would have forced Clemson to punt down 16-0, but the play was reviewed for targeting.

The officials called Wade for a targeting penalty, disqualifying him from the remainder of the game and giving the Tigers first-and-10 at the Ohio State 30. Clemson went on to score a TD on the drive and added another score before the half, cutting the deficit to just two points.

After that penalty, Clemson seized all momentum and carried it into a 29-23 victory against the Wade-less Buckeyes.