

Ohio State-Clemson Stat Preview: Comparing Justin Fields And Trevor Lawrence



There are plenty of storylines coming into the second straight College Football Playoff installment of Ohio State against Clemson, but no position matchup is likely to be more important than the quarterback battle between Justin Fields and Trevor Lawrence.

The duo have been matched up against each other since high school, when they were the top two prospects in the 2018 class, each coming from Georgia high schools. They were again paired together this offseason when both Fields and Lawrence led the charge to play this season out, despite both of them likely becoming top five NFL draft picks regardless of their 2020 campaigns.

And of course, Fields and Lawrence have battled it out once as starters in last year's Fiesta Bowl, when Clemson narrowly defeated the Buckeyes 29-23 to move on to the national championship game.

In that matchup, Fields threw for 320 yards and a touchdown, but was picked off twice, including one on Ohio State's final offensive drive to seal the game due to a miscommunication with wide receiver Chris Olave. Lawrence threw for 259 yards and two scores while also rushing for 107 yards and a touchdown in the six-point victory.

But here we are again, back in the semifinal, and back with two of the best quarterback prospects in recruiting history facing off for a chance at a championship. Unsurprisingly, both Fields and Lawrence have had strong seasons once again despite the chaotic twists and turns through the COVID-19 pandemic.

	Passing Yards	Passing TDs	Completion %	Interceptions	Passer Rating	Rushing Yards	Rushing TDs
Justin Fields	253.5	2.5	72.6	0.83	174.55	45.6	0.83
Trevor Lawrence	305.9	2.44	69.2	0.44	172.68	23.4	0.78
	<i>All numbers are on a per game basis</i>						

Lawrence has the advantage in total numbers across the board after playing nine games compared to

just six by Fields, but the per game totals are close throughout each of the key statistics.

The Clemson signal-caller has the advantage in passing yards, doing so with 4.5 more attempts per game (Lawrence 31.8, Fields 27.3). Lawrence also has been much better at avoiding interceptions, throwing just four compared to five by Fields despite playing in three more games.

On the other hand, Fields has found the end zone slightly more while also being more of a factor in the run game. His higher completion percentage also led to a slight advantage in passer efficiency rating, with the pair being No. 10 and No. 11 in the Football Bowl Subdivision in that category, respectively.

Going past the season numbers, Lawrence has been the more consistent quarterback throughout the season, never throwing more than one interception in a game while throwing multiple touchdowns seven times and breaking the 300-yard threshold five times.

Fields has had some very strong performances, including an opening three-game stretch with 11 touchdowns and no interceptions to just 11 incompletions. But he also has had some low points, the major ones being a three-interception effort against Indiana and his last game against Northwestern, where he completed 12 of 27 passes for no touchdowns and two picks.

That inconsistency leads to a matchup of uncertainty at the quarterback position. If Fields can get back on track with a strong performance and avoid turnovers, he may be able to lead Ohio State to an upset win against a good, but not elite Clemson secondary. On the other hand, the Buckeyes secondary has been a weakness for much of the year, and Lawrence may be able to outdo his performance from 2019 and give the Tigers a big advantage.

Either way, the same two quarterbacks are at the center of the discussion in this matchup once again. This time it comes as upperclassmen, and it will likely be the last time Fields and Lawrence battle at the collegiate level.

The stats are close and their battle in 2019 was decided by fine margins, but whichever former Georgia five-star can step up and outplay the other this time around may just lead their team to a date in the national championship.

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