

Michigan Wolverines Football: Defense Owns Homecoming, Hawkeyes, 10-3

John Borton • The Wolverine

Anyone learning in advance that Michigan would score 10 against Iowa on Homecoming might have bet the house on the Hawkeyes.

Except for Vincent van Brown, of course.

His real name is Don Brown, Michigan's defensive coordinator. But after U-M's 10-3 win over Iowa, Brown might better be known as Old One Ear.

"That was a defensive masterpiece," Harbaugh praised. "Our defense, Don Brown, the coaching staff, the players ... Don called a great game. They were very well prepared.

"Player-wise, it was just obvious from play one to the last play of the game, everybody was hustling and running and playing with great effort. Great job."

Great, and overwhelming for Iowa quarterback Nate Stanley, who entered the game 4-0 this year, with eight touchdown passes and nary an interception. He left empathizing with Rutgers QB Artur Sitkowski, who contemplated redshirting after the Wolverines got done with him last week.

The Wolverines sacked Stanley eight times, forced him to throw his first three interceptions of the season, secured four turnovers total and limited Iowa to 261 total yards of offense. Precisely one of those occurred on the ground, the Wolverines turning the Hawkeyes rushing attack to corn meal.

"We knew what we had to do," senior captain and linebacker Khaleke Hudson (11 tackles, one TFL, one quarterback hurry) said. "We knew we had to be stout in the run game. That's the first thing we wanted to do — stop the run and force them to throw. The results talked for themselves."

Stanley went 23-of-42 passing, while his counterpart — Michigan senior Shea Patterson — notched a 14-of-26 effort for 147 yards. The biggest difference? Patterson's 51-yard bomb to junior wideout Nico Collins, which set up the game's only touchdown.

That and Stanley's bevy of bruises, of course.

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"Sometimes it's going to be like that," Patterson said. "We were fortunate for the defense to come out and play like they did. They kept us in the game the whole entire time. We just stayed patient and took what they gave us, put a few drives together.

"We left a lot out there. We've got to start finishing in the red zone. Any time the defense plays like that, you try to help them out as much as you can."

U-M's offense could have helped them out plenty with any production in a scoreless second half. But they didn't dent the end zone over the final 51:45 of the contest, and even a short field goal attempt went awry.

But the Wolverines (4-1, 2-1 Big Ten) survived against an Iowa team (4-1, 1-1) determined to send most of the 111, 519 onlookers home miserable.

"Nobody's expectations exceed ours on offense and on defense," Patterson said. "Our motto that's in the locker room is to be 1-0 each week, attack each day with our best effort and be ready to go."

Michigan's defense proved ready to go, from the get-go. It created an early advantage, sophomore defensive lineman Aidan Hutchinson forcing a fumble by Iowa running back Mekhi Sargent. Junior cornerback Ambry Thomas dove on the ball at the Iowa 18.

The Wolverines couldn't move the chains on Iowa's defense, but sophomore kicker Jake Moody's 28-yard field goal gave Michigan a 3-0 lead just 2:41 into the game.

Patterson started off only 3-of-10 passing against the Hawkeyes, but made them pay dearly on one of those. He unloaded the 51-yard bomb to Collins on Michigan's next possession, setting up the Wolverines at the Iowa 19.

Patterson also connected with freshman wideout Mike Sainristil on a clutch, eight-yard sideline throw on third-and-six, setting Michigan up inside Iowa's 10. Freshman running back Zach Charbonnet (13 carries, 42 yards) capped off the six-play, 70-yard drive with a two-yard touchdown plunge.

But just when the happy Homecoming backslaps began, so did a rash of greasy fingers.

Junior wideout Donovan Peoples-Jones fumbled on a punt, but redshirt freshman defensive back Gemon Green was able to dive on it. Redshirt freshman tailback Christian Turner fumbled on the very next play, with U-M senior offensive guard Ben Bredeson recovering the loose ball.

The Wolverines covered those potential giveaways, but three in a row proved poison. Patterson looped a sideline pass that Iowa defensive back Geno Stone picked off.

Michigan's defense — which knocked the silage out of Iowa early — rose up again. Stanley tossed one up for grabs, and senior safety Josh Metellus came down with it, recording Stanley's first interception of the season.

As the first quarter gave way to the second, Stanley began to move the Hawkeyes in the short passing game. They drove 61 yards to the Michigan 4 early in the second, but had to settle for a 22-yard field goal, drawing to within seven, 10-3, with 12:18 left in the half.

Michigan staved off another Iowa march, senior cornerback Lavert Hill picking off a Stanley bomb at the U-M 4.

It wound up 10-3 at intermission, after redshirt junior kicker Quinn Nordin missed a 58-yard field goal as the clock ran out. Michigan's defense held the Hawkeyes to just 13 rushing yards in the first half and those three points — but they needed to do so.

Aside from Patterson's bomb to Collins, the offense hadn't done much. In fact, it controlled the ball for just 12:52 of the opening 30 minutes.

Little did anyone know, it wouldn't score again — and wouldn't need to do so.

The Wolverines managed just 33 yards on 11 plays in the third quarter, looking more and more anemic. But the U-M defense continued to stonewall the Hawkeyes, safeguarding the seven-point lead into the fourth.

Even when the Wolverines' offense momentarily came to life early in the fourth quarter, driving from its own 20 to the Iowa 17, it came away empty. Moody shoved a 34-yard field goal attempt right, keeping it a one-score game.

"It didn't miss by much," Harbaugh said. "We've got great faith in our kickers."

Michigan didn't win by much, and a growing faith in its defense proved well founded. On a day when the Wolverines generated only 267 yards of offense and 10 points themselves, they walked away with a win.

In a fitting end, the Wolverines swamped Stanley on a fourth-and-10 play inside Michigan territory. Stanley fought off three attackers, switched the ball to his left hand and lobbed a short pass to a running back Tyler Goodson, who got swarmed 12 yards short of moving the sticks.

"Everything we've been practicing for during the week came up in the game," Hudson insisted. "We didn't let them determine what plays they were going to do. We determined what plays they were going to do. We put them in situations where they were backed up, third-and-long, and they had to pass the ball.

"That's the type of defense we want to play. That's what we want to do every game."

Report Card: Grading Michigan Wolverines Football In A 10-3 Win Over Iowa

Chris Balas • TheWolverine

Grading all aspects of Michigan football's 10-3 win over Iowa Saturday at The Big House:

Michigan Football Rushing Offense: C-

Once again, Michigan's best success in the running game came early. Freshman Zach Charbonnet's three best runs came on the first two series and he didn't finish with a rush over seven yards en route to 42 net yards and a score on 13 totes.

Senior Tru Wilson had some late success in the fourth quarter with a pair of runs for eight and 11 yards ... and then he never carried again. He finished with 28 yards on four carries, while redshirt freshman Hassan Haskins gained 22 yards on his two tries.

The Wolverines managed only 17 yards on seven first-down rushes in the second half, and finished with 120 net ground yards on 33 totes. Even when taking the two Shea Patterson sacks out, U-M gained only 135 yards on 31 carries (4.4-yard average).

Michigan Football Passing Offense: C-

Patterson only went deep once — and it worked. He connected with junior receiver Nico Collins for a 51-yard reception that set up the Wolverines' only touchdown in the first quarter. Patterson got it working on the first drive of the fourth quarter with completions of 10, 10 and 20 yards, but it resulted in a missed field goal.

Still ... only two explosive plays in the passing game is not good enough.

Michigan Football Rushing Defense: A

Sack yardage skewed the stats, but the Hawkeyes ran for only one yard total and managed only 67 gross yards from the running backs. They had only one carry for two yards by a back in the fourth quarter, having abandoned the running game, and notched only one run over five yards the entire game, a 15-yarder on the first play from scrimmage of the second half.

Michigan Football Passing Defense: B+

This grade would be higher but for a handful of big passing plays on third-down conversions, including a 34-yard gain on third-and-22 and 19 yards on a third-and-10 in the first half. The Hawkeyes also hit U-M for 22 yards on a third-and-15 screen pass.

Iowa threw for 260 yards with a few explosives, but the Wolverines picked quarterback Nate Stanley — who entered the game with eight touchdowns against no interceptions — off three times and racked up eight sacks.

Michigan Football Special Teams: C

Iowa notched a 37-yard kick return and four punt returns for 54 yards in U-M's worst coverage game of the year.

Redshirt junior punter Will Hart averaged 45.6 yards per punt but put two in the end zone for touchbacks when he had a chance to pin the Hawkeyes deep.

Michigan's kickers missed two field goals, including a 34-yarder from sophomore Jake Moody that would have all but clinched a win.

Offense Notes: Shea Patterson, U-M's Offense Sluggish In 10-3 Victory

Austin Fox • The Wolverine

The Michigan Wolverines' football offense struggled mightily in Saturday's 10-3 victory over Iowa, finishing the day with just 267 total yards.

All of the club's 10 points came in the first quarter, when sophomore kicker Jake Moody connected on a 28-yard field goal at the 12:19 mark, and then when freshman running back Zach Charbonnet found the end zone from two yards out at the 8:33 juncture.

The Maize and Blue racked up 159 yards on eight possessions in the first half, but saw four of those eight drives end in punts, one concluded with a turnover (an interception thrown by senior quarterback Shea Patterson) and the half's final possession ended with a missed 57-yard field goal by redshirt junior kicker Quinn Nordin.

The game's second 30 minutes resulted in much of the same, with Michigan accumulating just 108 yards on six possessions, punting four times.

The other two resulted in a missed 34-yard field goal by Moody in the fourth quarter, and the final series of the game ended when Patterson took a knee to ice the victory.

The senior quarterback's inconsistent play was a large reason for the offensive struggles on Saturday. He connected on just 14 of his 26 attempts (53.8 percent) for 147 yards.

Michigan's running game didn't provide much relief, either, compiling just 120 yards and averaging 3.6 yards per rush.

Despite the subpar offensive performance, head coach Jim Harbaugh had plenty of praise for both Patterson and his offense moving forward afterward.

"I thought they took what was there," he explained. "This was like every Iowa-Michigan game I've ever been associated with — 12-10, 10-3, 13-10, something like that. I thought Shea, in particular, took what was there, and sometimes there wasn't anything there. He managed the game extremely well and did the job on the turnovers — we won that battle.

"I thought our offensive line played really physical and went up against some really good players too."

Michigan's Rushing Attack Still Not Able To Find Its Stride

U-M's 3.6 yards per tote actually marked the club's second-highest rushing average this season, trailing only the 5.2 the team posted in the season opener against Middle Tennessee State.

There was once again a lack of explosive runs, with redshirt freshman running back Hasan Haskins' 18-yard scamper marking the longest rush of the day for the Wolverines.

Michigan had two runs of 15 yards or more against Iowa (Haskins' 18-yarder and a 15-yard rush by Patterson), after having only recorded only three all year long. Two of the previous three occurred in the 40-21 victory over Middle Tennessee State — a 41-yard scamper by Charbonnet and 15-yard dash by Patterson — while the third happened last week against Rutgers when Haskins logged a 15-yard rush.

Entering the weekend, U-M's one run of 20-plus yards was tied for 124th (out of 130 teams) in the nation.

Charbonnet, meanwhile, led the way on Saturday with 13 carries for 42 yards, after registering a combined seven attempts for 28 yards over the team's last two games (two carries for six yards Sept. 21 at Wisconsin, and five attempts for 22 yards last Saturday against Rutgers).

"On our first couple drives, we were moving the ball pretty well and running the ball with success," redshirt freshman right tackle Jalen Mayfield said in the postgame. "That's what we pride ourselves on — we moved the ball like that on the first couple drives and then late in the game too.

"I think that really helped us and gives us hope for the rest of the season."

MISCELLANEOUS MICHIGAN FOOTBALL OFFENSE NOTES

- Patterson's 53.8 completion percentage (14-of-26 passing) was his second lowest in a Michigan uniform. The only game where he had a lower percentage was earlier this season at Wisconsin, when he only connected on 14 of his 32 throws (43.8 percent).

- Freshman wideout Mike Sainristil's eight-yard reception in the first quarter was the first catch of his Wolverine career.

- Sophomore wideout Ronnie Bell failed to record a reception for the first time since last season's 41-15 Peach Bowl loss to Florida, snapping his stretch of four straight games with at least one catch.

- The win was U-M's 11th consecutive in Ann Arbor, with the last home loss occurring in a 31-20 setback to Ohio State on Nov. 25, 2017.

- Redshirt sophomore quarterback Dylan McCaffrey (concussion) and senior tight end Sean McKeon (unspecified injury) each missed their second consecutive outings.

"Seems like they are on the verge of being better, but we'll wait and see," Harbaugh revealed after the game.

- The last time Michigan won a game while scoring 10 or fewer points was on Nov. 8, 2014, when it picked up a 10-9 triumph at Northwestern.

- The Wolverines' 267 yards of offense were its fewest in a tilt since they recorded 234 in a 24-10 loss at Wisconsin on Nov. 18, 2017. Saturday's 267 yards also marked the club's lowest total in a victory since registering 256 in the 2014 triumph at Northwestern.

- The win improved Michigan's all-time record to 42-15-4 against Iowa. Five of the Hawkeyes' 15 victories in the series have come since 2009.

- Junior receiver Nico Collins' 51-yard reception in the first quarter gave him at least one catch of 30 yards or longer in five of the team's last seven outings dating back to last season. The junior also has 11 such games over the past two years, with a grab of at least 40 yards in eight of those 11.

Collins' three receptions for 63 yards on Saturday extended his catch streak to 19 games, dating back to the Jan. 1, 2018, Outback Bowl loss to South Carolina.

He now leads the team with 269 receiving yards, six yards ahead of Bell, who paces the squad with 17 catches. Collins' 20.7 yards per reception leads all Wolverines with multiple grabs.

Defense/Special Teams Notes: U-M's Defense Puts On A 'Masterpiece' Vs. Iowa

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

The Michigan Wolverines' football defense absolutely shut down Iowa's offensive attack in every phase on Saturday, en route to a crucial 10-3 victory.

U-M held the Hawkeyes to just 261 yards, including a net of only one on the ground, recorded 13 tackles for loss with eight sacks and forced four turnovers.

The dominating effort comes just two games after the Maize and Blue defense was gashed for 35 points and 487 total yards in a Sept. 21 loss at Wisconsin.

Michigan set the tone on Iowa's first offensive play of the day, with sophomore defensive end Aidan Hutchinson forcing a fumble of redshirt junior running back Mekhi Sargent and junior cornerback Ambry Thomas recovering it at the Hawkeye 18-yard line.

Iowa possessed the ball seven times in the first half and turned it over on three of those drives (interceptions by senior safety Josh Metellus and senior cornerback Lavert Hill, and the Thomas fumble recovery), punted on three others, and converted a 22-yard field goal on the other.

Though the Hawkeyes cut down on the turnovers after the break (an interception by Thomas was the only one they committed), its rushing attack went backward.

U-M held Iowa to minus-12 yards on the ground over the game's final two quarters, while also accumulating five sacks and seven tackles for loss.

On Iowa's six possessions after halftime, Michigan forced it to punt four times, recorded the interception by Thomas and then sealed the victory with a fourth-down stop

on the Hawkeyes' final drive of the game.

Head coach Jim Harbaugh rightfully called it a "defensive masterpiece" and complimented coordinator Don Brown after the game.

"Player-wise, it was just obvious from play one to the last play of the game, that everybody was hustling, running and playing with great effort," he said. "It was a great plan defensively. Don during the week said he might jump off a tall building if some of those isolation plays worked, because they really thought they had them.

"I felt the players had a great week of practice, knew exactly what to do and how to do it. They did it with great intensity and great effort. To hold a team to one yard rushing ... that's a masterpiece."

Jake Moody Misses Rare Field Goal Attempt In Michigan's Win

Entering Saturday, sophomore kicker Jake Moody had been 14 of 15 on field goal attempts in his young career.

He increased that total to 15-of-16 with a 28-yard conversion at the 12:19 mark of the first quarter to give Michigan a 3-0 lead at the time.

The sophomore then missed a 34-yarder at 11:01 of the fourth quarter, keeping the score at 10-3 and failing to give the Wolverines the breathing room they were looking for.

Harbaugh didn't have much to say when asked afterward about the unsuccessful kick, noting "it didn't miss by much" and that he has "great faith in [the team's] kickers."

Redshirt junior kicker Quinn Nordin missed an attempt as well, failing to connect on a 57-yarder as the first half expired. The miss brought Nordin's career stat line to 30 of 42 (71.4 percent).

Junior wideout Donovan Peoples-Jones, meanwhile, only returned one punt on the afternoon, but brought it back 36 yards in the first quarter to give the Wolverines their longest punt runback of the season.

MISCELLANEOUS MICHIGAN FOOTBALL NOTES ON DEFENSE AND SPECIAL TEAMS

- Saturday marked the fewest points Iowa had been held to in a game since Florida defeated it 30-3 on Jan. 2, 2017. That was also the last time the Hawkeyes did not score a touchdown.

- Junior defensive end Kwity Paye's 2.5-sack, 2.5-tackle for loss afternoon increased his team lead in both categories on the year, giving him 4.5 of the former and 7.5 of the latter.

- Iowa had been averaging 217.5 rushing yards per outing entering the weekend, which ranked 29th nationally, but was held to just one on Saturday.

- The last time the Maize and Blue held an opponent to one rushing yard or fewer was when it limited Northwestern to minus-nine in a 10-9 victory on Nov. 8, 2014. It was also the first time the Wolverines kept a foe to zero yards per carry or less since it held the Wildcats to minus-0.3 in that same game.

- The Hawkeyes had also only allowed six sacks all season, but yielded eight to the Wolverines — 2.5 by Paye, two by fifth-year senior linebacker Jordan Glasgow, 1.5 by redshirt freshman linebacker Cam McGrone and one each from Hutchinson and fifth-year senior defensive end Mike Danna. The quarterback takedowns by McGrone and Danna were the first of their Michigan tenures.

- The four turnovers U-M forced were its most in a game since it also registered four in a 24-21 loss at Iowa on Nov. 23, 2013. Its three interceptions, meanwhile, were its most since it also recorded three in a 14-7 victory over Wisconsin on Oct. 1, 2016.

Iowa had not given up four turnovers in a game since its 2017 season opener, a 24-3 win over Wyoming. It had not been picked off three times in a game since the 30-3 loss to Florida in the Outback Bowl that ended the 2016 campaign.

- Metellus' interception of Stanley in the first quarter marked the first pick the senior quarterback had thrown all season. It also stood as the first pick for Metellus on the year, and the fourth of his career.

In addition, Saturday was just the second multi-interception game Stanley had ever had in 38 career appearances.

- Redshirt sophomore defensive tackle Donovan Jeter did not see game action on Saturday.

- Senior cornerback Lavert Hill's second-quarter interception was his second of the season and the fifth of his career. It was also his 20th pass breakup, which put him one ahead of NFL Hall of Famer and former Wolverine Ty Law for 16th place on the all-time school list.

- Freshman safety Daxton Hill's pass breakup in the third quarter that led to Thomas' interception was the first of his career. The pick, meanwhile, was the third of Thomas' collegiate tenure.

- Thomas' first-quarter fumble recovery was the fifth of his career, which ties him with six other Wolverines for 12th for that category in Michigan history.

- The Michigan defense has not allowed a touchdown in nine straight quarters dating back to the fourth quarter of the Sept. 21 Wisconsin showdown, and it has only surrendered three points over its last nine quarters.

- The victory improved U-M's record to 21-4 in its last 25 homecoming showdowns, 92-27 all-time and 5-0 under Harbaugh in such affairs.

- The announced attendance of 111,519 marked the 290th straight game at The Big House with at least 10,000 people.

Michigan Wolverines Football: Five Best Players Of The Game

John Borton • TheWolverine

Michigan football's 10-3 win over Iowa featured Pentagon-level defense. Appropriately, that side of the ball gets the five guys spotlight:

1. Junior defensive end Kwity Paye: Paye cashed in over and over in the Iowa backfield, setting the tone for a dominant defensive day. Even on an afternoon when he left the game via injury, Paye notched 2.5 sacks among his four stops, with a pair of additional quarterback hurries. He had Iowa QB Nate Stanley on the run all day.

2. Fifth-year senior linebacker Jordan Glasgow: Glasgow racked up a pair of sacks among his nine tackles, along with a quarterback hurry. He was another Wolverine who roamed the Hawkeyes' backfield with impunity, and usually got in on the action. His overall tackle total ranked second on the squad.

3. Senior linebacker Khaleke Hudson: Hudson led the way with 11 tackles on the defensive side, with one tackle for loss and a quarterback hurry. On an afternoon when the defense didn't get much help from Michigan's offense — spending 33:57 on the field and defending a seven-point lead over the game's final two-and-a-half quarters — Hudson helped seal the win.

4. Sophomore defensive end Aidan Hutchinson: Hutchinson delivered a sack and 2.5 tackles for loss among his six stops. He also forced a fumble U-M recovered and broke up a pass, moving around on the defensive line with considerable effectiveness.

5. Junior cornerback Ambry Thomas: Thomas notched the Daily Double for the second time this season. He recovered a fumble and picked off a pass, accounting for two of the four turnovers the Wolverines secured.

Wolverine Watch: A Day For The Don And His D

John Borton • TheWolverine

Michigan needed a gem from its defense like mountain climbers in Iowa need an airplane ticket to somewhere else. The Wolverines got it, summited with a 10-3 Homecoming win and dodged Big Ten disaster.

Defensive coordinator Don Brown's crew took a team that scored 134 points in its first four games and stingily slipped it a field goal. The Wolverines took a senior quarterback in Nate Stanley and pulverized his pristine numbers.

Eight touchdown passes? A grand total of zero interceptions through four games? Stanley went for eight sacks and zero TDs in this one, besieged on all sides and aban-

done by a rushing attack that entered ranked 29th nationally (217.5 yards per game) but netted just one yard in 60 minutes.

The Wolverines picked him off three times, rising to and exceeding a challenge tossed at them by The Don.

“We were just being aggressive today, doing everything we were preparing for in practice,” senior viper Khaleke Hudson assured. “Coach Brown challenged us early in the week. He told us the quarterback had eight touchdowns and zero interceptions.

“He challenged us to get two interceptions. ... We got three.”

Hudson smiled over that accomplishment, an expression nowhere to be seen on the Hawkeyes all afternoon. They covered ground like a harvester with its wheels removed.

“They’re a high-blitz team,” Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz offered afterward. “Any time you get some momentum doing anything, you’re probably going to stick with it. That’s not a big surprise.

“Our protection was not good enough, obviously. That made it really tough. ... They’re an aggressive group. It’s more about the guys doing it. ... My guess is, that’s the best defensive game they’ve played. They were really coming hard.”

They were coming, and the Hawkeyes were going — nowhere.

This space proffered a midweek guess that the beating the Wolverines took in Wisconsin might well be the difference in this game. Michigan players backed that notion afterwards.

They dissected every isolation block and power play Wisconsin used to run over them. They guessed — not incorrectly — that the Hawkeyes would try to Badger up against them all afternoon.

They stopped those hopes cold.

“We knew that they were going to try to cram the ball down our throat,” Hudson said. “They’re a similar type of offense to Wisconsin, so we knew they were going to try to do the same plays they did.

“After preparing for it in practice and working our tails off in practice and in the game, we got the results we wanted.”

“They had a few dives that they tried to take from Wisconsin,” junior cornerback Ambry Thomas added. “We knew we had to step up and stop the run and make them pass the ball. With the great pass rush we’ve got, the ball’s going to get thrown up there for grabs at that point.”

They also knew they were prepped like Navy Seals for any attempt at a Wisconsin repeat.

“It was a great plan defensively,” Harbaugh said. “Don, during the week, said he might jump off a tall building if some of those isolation plays worked, because they really thought they had them. I really felt the players had a great week of practice, knew

exactly what to do and how to do it. They did it with great intensity and great effort. To hold a team to one yard rushing ... that’s a masterpiece.”

The Wolverines desperately needed that masterpiece, their offense cracking the end zone just once themselves. They also missed a chip-shot field goal that would have made it a two-score game in the fourth quarter, a cavernous gap the way the defense stood up.

Harbaugh played a little defense himself, rebuffing multiple attempts to get him to discuss his offense’s struggles at this point.

In fact, he said Michigan’s offense is “hitting its stride,” and when pressed for how, Harbaugh defiantly added, “in every way.”

Now, if you think the head coach is going to stride into the offensive team room at Schembechler Hall on Sunday and say, “Awesome job, guys! We’re hitting our stride!” we’ve got some oceanfront property in Iowa to sell you.

Harbaugh knows that if the Wolverines put up 10 points at Penn State, or at home versus Notre Dame and Ohio State, he’ll be 0-3 — likely in lopsided fashion. His team will be headed to a second-tier bowl game, and the torches and pitchforks will be out.

But it’s pretty simple. He’s coaching for his team at the moment. Not for the media. Not for the public. He could have engaged and gone over the laundry list of issues his crew faces on offense.

He chose not to. He justifiably hailed his defense after a desperately needed Homecoming win. He’ll save his commentary about the points producers for behind closed doors.

Charitably, they’re in process. So is Michigan. As Harbaugh himself loves to say, onward.

What They’re Saying: Michigan Wolverines Football 10, Iowa 3

Ryan Tice • TheWolverine

The Michigan Wolverines got a much-needed win Saturday afternoon, when the offense scored 10 first-quarter points and the defense was good enough to make that enough.

We take a look around the web at what they’re saying about the U-M victory:

Chris Balas, *TheWolverine.com: Notes, Quotes & Observations From Michigan's 10-3 Win*

On offense, though, it was more of the same — just what are they trying to accomplish when it comes to a game plan?

Take away the tired fan clichés (“they need to pass to set up the run!”) and it’s still fair to wonder what offensive coordinator Josh Gattis’ identity is for this offense, or if he’s got the right pieces to fit what he’s trying to do. It got so unnerving that at one point the crowd was buzzing simply when senior quarterback Shea Patterson finally kept on a read option for a 15-yard gain.

As has been the case much of the season, the good was followed by something silly. Fifth-year senior Jon Runyan Jr.’s false start helped end the drive after only three more plays. Later, Patterson scrambled for 10 yards on third-and-six, and the Wolverines followed up with a nine-yard loss on a reverse to Donovan Peoples-Jones on which he was looking to throw.

Drive over.

Credit Iowa, of course, for a stout defensive effort. At the same time, U-M’s offensive line opened some holes early, scored 10 quick points ... and sputtered to the finish line.

Paul Myerberg, *USA Today: Winners and losers from Week 6 in college football are led by Michigan*

We should take the game tape from Michigan’s 10-3 win against Iowa and bury it deep underground, not for the purposes of creating a time capsule for the future but for the opposite: so that no one person anywhere, at any time, will be able to watch it again.

Iowa ran the ball 30 times and gained a yard. Quarterback Nate Stanley was credited with minus-65 rushing yards. (Allowing eight sacks will hurt the per-carry average.) The Hawkeyes turned it over four times, three via interceptions.

Michigan gained 267 yards of offense. About a fifth of that total came on a single play in the first quarter, in quarterback Shea Patterson’s 51-yard completion to wide receiver Nico Collins that preceded the game’s only touchdown. Patterson ended with 14 completions in 26 attempts for 147 yards and an interception, marking his third Big Ten game in as many tries with a turnover and the second time in three weeks the Michigan passing game has looked merely average, if not far worse.

In all, the two teams combined for 528 yards of offense across 131 plays, which is about 100 yards fewer than Oklahoma has averaged per game on half as many snaps. Purists — otherwise known as Michigan fans, in this case — will point to defensive excellence and expound on the beauty of an October contest where the Wolverines have more takeaways than third-down conversions. That’s a stretch.

Rainer Sabin, *Detroit Free Press: Michigan football's defense allows Jim Harbaugh to escape to fantasyland*

In the alternate precinct where Jim Harbaugh resides, Michigan’s offense is doing just fine.

It’s meeting expectations, producing satisfactory results and not handicapping his team.

In this strange realm that Harbaugh entered Saturday, the Wolverines are, in his words, “hitting their stride.”

“In every way,” he said. “That’s what I see.”

It was easy to question what exactly Harbaugh saw in the hours before he made those comments, when his 18th-ranked Wolverines slogged their way to a 10-3 victory over No. 14 Iowa.

Back in the real world, where 111,519 packed into Michigan Stadium, it was clear U-M did little when it had the ball. The last 10 of its possessions produced nothing and five of those drives lasted three plays or fewer. The momentum accrued during a 52-0 victory over Rutgers had dwindled halfway through the first quarter Saturday.

By then, the Wolverines had scored all that they would and elected to be “patient,” as quarterback Shea Patterson later explained.

Along with the offense, the fans waited and waited and waited before some started booing early in the second half — frustrated that yet another possession ended with nothing to show for it.

Sam Cooper, *Yahoo Sports: No. 19 Michigan still has plenty of concerns even after 10-3 win over No. 14 Iowa*

Two weeks after getting completely dominated at the line of scrimmage in a blowout loss at Wisconsin, Michigan was on the other side of that equation this week. Iowa’s usually stalwart offensive line was overwhelmed all afternoon with UM getting pressure in Stanley’s face and ultimately forcing four turnovers. That’s an impressive turnaround for Don Brown’s defense after getting manhandled by the Badgers in Madison three weeks ago.

But the offense, on the other hand, still has a lot of question marks. Shea Patterson was only 14-of-26 for 147 yards and an interception. Patterson’s best throw was a 51-yarder to Nico Collins to set up the game’s only touchdown, but he continues to underwhelm on a weekly basis.

The running game wasn’t much better. The Wolverines mustered only 119 yards on 33 attempts, an average of just 3.6 yards per rush. In all, Michigan was limited to just 267 yards and was forced to punt eight times. Some of that is the product of a stout Iowa defense, but it does not look like the Michigan offense has taken any steps forward as the season has progressed. The struggles that existed early in the year are still present, even if Harbaugh doesn’t think they are.

If Michigan wants to realistically compete in the Big Ten East, it’s going to take a pretty miraculous turnaround on offense. The Wolverines have a trip to Illinois next weekend in what should be a pretty easy win. But the following two weeks — a trip to No. 12 Penn State and home game against No. 9 Notre Dame — will likely set the tone for the rest of the season. And maybe even Harbaugh’s future with the program.

Bob Wojnowski, *The Detroit News*: Michigan outslugs Iowa, despite sluggish performance from its offense

Unleashing and unloading on a less-mobile quarterback like Stanley is one thing. Doing it against Penn State, Notre Dame, Michigan State and Ohio State might prove to be another. That's why Harbaugh can't escape questions about his offense, not until we see it play error-free against a quality opponent.

"I thought (the offense) took what was there," Harbaugh said. "I thought Shea in particular took what was there, and sometimes there wasn't anything there. He managed the game extremely well and did the job on the turnovers (one interception, no fumbles). ... I really do think they're hitting their stride. I've got great faith in our players and in our coaches."

I'm not sure how Harbaugh defines hitting a stride, because the offense didn't hit much, finishing with 267 yards, three-for-13 on third downs. Charbonnet rushed for 42, mostly on plows up the middle. Patterson wasn't overly accurate – 14-for-26 for 147 yards – and rarely took shots downfield. He only got things going on one drive in the fourth quarter, with consecutive completions to Collins, Donovan Peoples-Jones and Tarik Black. That preceded a rare field goal miss by Jake Moody and led to a sweaty finish.

Regular backup quarterback Dylan McCaffrey was out with a concussion, but going forward, a changeup is something Harbaugh and Gattis might consider. Michigan visits Illinois next, and can't get stuck in another grinder.

Andrew Kahn, *MLive*: Iowa football team goes into detail on why Michigan's defense was so effective

Iowa quarterback Nate Stanley spent a good portion of Saturday afternoon looking at the clouds above Michigan Stadium.

Iowa entered the game against Michigan having allowed just six sacks in four games, all victories. Stanley was sacked eight times on Saturday in Michigan's 10-3 win.

"We knew that they were going to do a lot of different things, change up their fronts, bring different blitzes," Stanley said. "We knew they were going to be aggressive."

Several Hawkeyes said Michigan didn't do too much defensively they hadn't seen before. It didn't make stopping it any easier.

Removing sacks from the equation -- boy, does Iowa wish that was reality -- the visitors managed just 66 rushing yards. Stanley had some success when he had ample time (260 passing yards), but the senior threw three interceptions and was under duress much of the game.

"Schematically they did a lot of things that were very tough on us today," Stanley said. "I think they had a great plan as far as their blitzes were concerned. They did a lot of things that were very hard on us, pickup-wise. Probably the hardest that we've seen all year and possibly the hardest we'll see all year."

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