THE WOLVERINE NOW
COVERING UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN SPORTS

NOV. 2, 2019 ✦ MICHIGAN AT MARYLAND

Game Info

Site: at Maryland Stadium (51,802)

Kickoff: 12:00 p.m.

Television: ABC

Radio: Michigan/IMG Radio Network (950 AM in the Detroit Area; SiriusXM channel 81) with Dan Dierdorf, Jim Brandstatter and sideline reporter Doug Karsch, a regular contributor to TheWolverine.com.

Series Facts: The Wolverines hold a 7-1 all-time advantage over the Terrapins, including a 4-1 mark as Big Ten foes … U-M is 2-0 and has outscored Maryland 63-10 in games in College Park, Md. … Michigan enters the contest ranked No. 14 by the Associated Press and No. 15 per the coaches; the team has been ranked in the top 25 for every game since the start of the 2018 campaign.

Previewing Maryland With A Terrapin Insider

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

Scott Greene of Terrapin Sports Report was kind enough to swing by this week and analyze Maryland's team prior to its football showdown with the Michigan Wolverines this Saturday in College Park.

Greene revealed what the Terrapins' strengths and weaknesses are, while also providing his final score prediction at the end.

MARYLAND'S PROJECTED STARTERS ON OFFENSE

• **Redshirt junior QB Tyrrell Pigrome —** He has started Maryland's last three games, after redshirt junior Josh Jackson started the first five for the club. Pigrome is completing 59.8 percent of his passes with three touchdowns and five picks, and has also added 173 yards and two scores on the ground. Head coach Mike Locksley will likely play both quarterbacks during Saturday's game.

• **Junior RB Javon Leake** — Even though redshirt sophomore running back Anthony McFarland leads the Terrapins in carries with 76, Leake's 543 yards are 165 more than his teammate's total. The junior has compiled seven touchdowns on the ground and has eclipsed the 100-yard mark twice this year.

• **Sophomore WR Dontay Demus** — He leads Maryland in receptions (31), receiving yards (487) and TD catches (four), after hauling in 13 grabs for 278 yards last season as a freshman. The 6-3, 200-pounder has reeled in at least 82 yards in four of the Terrapins' eight games.

• **Redshirt sophomore WR Carlos Carriere** — He has only caught nine passes for 106 yards, and earned his first start of the season in last weekend's 52-10 blowout loss at Minnesota. At 6-5, 196 pounds, Carriere is Maryland's tallest wide receiver on the roster.

• **Fifth-year senior TE Tyler Mabry** — The Ypsilanti, Mich., native transferred in from Buffalo after compiling 27 catches for 230 yards and earning first-team All-MAC honors last season as a redshirt junior with the Bulls. Mabry's 142 receiving yards this year rank fifth on the team, though his three touchdown grabs check in second behind Demus' four.

• **Sophomore TE Chigoziem Okonkwo** — His 16 receptions are the second most of the Maryland pass catchers, and his 164 yards rank third. Okonkwo did not catch a pass last week at Minnesota, but racked up a career-best five receptions for 43 yards the previous week in a 34-28 loss to Indiana.

• **Redshirt freshman LT Jaelyn Duncan** — He has started the last seven games for the Terrapins after coming off the bench in the opener. Duncan has struggled mightily according to Pro Football Focus (PFF), checking in last out of the 47 Maryland offensive players who have seen the field this season, with a 40.8 overall grade (64 is considered average).

• **Sixth-year senior LG Sean Christie** — He has started 32 consecutive games dating back to the 2017 opener, and was awarded a sixth season in 2019 after missing both the 2014 and 2015 campaigns with injury. Christie has a subpar 59.9 PFF grade on the year, which checks in third among Maryland's projected starting offensive linemen.

• **Fifth-year senior C Ellis McKennie** — He only had three starts under his belt heading into 2019, but earned the starting nod in six of Maryland's eight games this season. PFF has tabbed McKennie as the club's best pass blocker, tagging him with an 80.5 mark in that area.

• **Senior RG Terrance Davis** — Injuries have limited the 6-3, 310-pounder to just four outings after he was named a preseason second-team All-Big Ten performer by Phil Steele this summer. Davis' 71.8 mark from PFF is the best among the Terrapins' projected starting offensive linemen, and the second best of the offensive starters behind Leake's 85.9.

• **Redshirt sophomore RT Marcus Minor** — His 44.3 PFF mark is 45th out of the 47 Maryland offensive athletes who have seen the field this year. Minor has also committed four penalties in 2019, which are the second most on offense behind Duncan's seven.

MARYLAND'S PROJECTED STARTERS ON DEFENSE

• **Sixth-year senior DE Brett Kulka** — Like Christie, he is one of two Terrapin sixth-year senior starters after missing 2014 and all but four games in 2018 with injuries. Kulka has compiled four tackles for loss on the year and checks in with an above-average 67.2 grade from PFF.

• **Redshirt junior DT Oluwaseun Oluwatimi** — His 4.5 stops behind the line of scrimmage are tied for the third most on the team's defense, and his 385 snaps are the most of any Terp D-lineman. Oluwatimi is at his best as a run defender according to PFF, clocking in with a 72.3 tally in that department.

• **Redshirt junior LB Shaq Smith** — He signed with Clemson after being rated as a five-star recruit and the No. 6 player in the country out of high school in the 2016 class, but transferred out of head coach Dabo Swinney's program following the 2018 campaign. Though his 65 PFF grade is above average, Smith has only accumulated 20 tackles, 2.5 tackles for loss and one sack on the year.

• **Sophomore LB Chance Campbell** — His 42 tackles are the third most on the defense in his first season as a starter, while his 4.5 stops behind the line of scrimmage are deadlocked with Oluwatimi for third most. Campbell's lofty PFF mark of 80 is the second best of any Terrapin defensive player who has seen at least 14 snaps.

• **Senior LB Keandre Jones** — Like Smith, Jones was also a five-star out of high school when he signed with Ohio State in the 2016 class, but transferred out of Columbus after spending three seasons there. He has stepped in to lead the Maryland defense in both tackles for loss (10) and sacks (six) so far, while ranking fourth with 39 tackles.

• **Fifth-year senior LB Isaiah Davis** — Though he was by far the most experienced returning Terrapin linebacker following the 2018 campaign (started 12 games last year and nine in 2017), Davis has struggled mightily in his final go-round in College Park. He has yet to record a tackle for loss or sack, and his 48.2 PFF grade is dead last out of the 48 Terp defenders who have seen the field in 2019.

• **Freshman CB Deonte Banks** — After coming off the bench in the first three games he appeared in, Banks has earned the starting nod in Maryland's last four. PFF has rated him with a 68 overall mark on the year and a 69 grade in pass coverage.

• **Senior CB Antoine Brooks** — He is the most experienced player in Maryland's secondary, having started 23 contests over the past two seasons and earning 2018 second-team All-Big Ten honors from the coaches following a 68-tackle, 9.5-tackle-for-loss campaign. Brooks' 52 stops this year are the second most on the Terps' defense, while his 81.4 tally as a run defender is the highest mark on the team.

• **Fifth-year senior CB Marcus Lewis** — He is the third Maryland defensive starter who transferred into College Park (Smith and Jones are the other two), having begun his career at Florida State after being rated as a top-80 prospect out of high school in 2015. Lewis has struggled in pass coverage, however, with PFF slapping him with a 61.2 mark in that area.

• **Redshirt sophomore S Deon Jones** — He has fared better against the run than the pass in 2019, sliding in with an impressive 76.4 grade as a run defender and a 64.6 mark in pass coverage. Jones has registered 28 tackles in 2019, but only one pass breakup and no picks.

• **Freshman S Nick Cross** — He was a major coup for Locksley on the recruiting trail, signing with the Terrapins as the No. 52 overall player in the country last February. Cross has been a freshman sensation according to PFF, grading out with marks of 80.8 or better as a run defender (80.8), tackler (85.3) and in pass coverage (81.4).

MARYLAND'S PROJECTED STARTERS ON SPECIAL TEAMS

• **Sophomore K Joseph Petrino** — He has only attempted three field goals on the year, and has converted one of them (from 31 yards). Petrino's two misses, meanwhile, came from 29 yards out (blocked in the 48-7 win over Rutgers) and 42 yards (against Temple).

• **Freshman P Anthony Pecorella** — Maryland has employed a two-punter system this season, with Pecorella booting 27 balls for a 42.3-yard average, while fellow freshman Colton Spangler has kicked 24 times for a 39.8-yard average. The former has downed eight of his tries inside the opponent's 20-yard line, while the latter has done it seven times.

MARYLAND'S BIGGEST STRENGTH ON OFFENSE

"Maryland's biggest strength on offense is pretty simply the running back group," Greene explained. "The Terps have two future NFL backs in Anthony McFarland and Javon Leake. Both are capable of making defenders miss, have good vision and once they hit the hole they can quickly get to top speed. McFarland is a former track star, and Leake has equal speed to pull away from defenders once in the open field.

"McFarland has been fighting a high ankle sprain for much of the season, missing the Indiana game, but seemed healthy last week, recording a team-high 10 carries. Opponents also need to be mindful of [junior running back] Tayon Fleet-Davis, who's excellent at catching the ball out of the backfield and has turned some simple wheel routes into big scoring plays for the Terps this year.

"However, Leake has been the bell cow thus far, with a team-high 543 yards on the ground with an 8.2 yards-per-cary average and seven rushing touchdowns."

Leake's 8.2 yards-per-carry average is the best in the Big Ten and the sixth-best mark in college football. He has averaged at least 6.3 yards per carry in seven of Maryland's eight outings, and has tallied at least one 30-yard run in six of the eight.

MARYLAND'S BIGGEST WEAKNESS ON OFFENSE

"Maryland's biggest weakness on offense has been the O-line play and lack of consistency at the quarterback position," the analyst revealed. "The offensive line has suffered some key injuries this season and lacks real depth at the moment.

"Senior right guard Terrance Davis missed most of the first half of the season. Right tackle Marcus Minor has been nicked up and missed time, and guys like center [junior] Johnny Jordan have been in and out of the lineup. [Fifth-year] senior lineman Ellis McKennie has been like a sixth starter, but after that the depth gets extremely thin, with the next man up a redshirt freshman [Austin Fontaine] who was just recently switched over from the defensive line.

"To compound things, the quarterback play has simply not been good following Josh Jackson's two starts to open the season. Jackson threw some critical early interceptions versus Temple and Penn State which seemed to instantly zap Maryland's energy throughout the rest of the game.

"He was injured just before the half of the Rutgers game and replaced by backup Tyrrell Pigrome, but he hasn't fared much better. Pigrome has thrown five interceptions in his three starts, one coming during a potential game-winning drive versus Indiana.

"Maryland needs to find some consistency at both O-line and quarterback to sustain any success going forward."

As a whole, the Terrapin signal-callers are completing 53.1 percent of their passes in 2019, which is 115th in the country and the second-worst mark in the Big Ten (Northwestern's 48.4 connection rate is the worst).

After Maryland averaged 301 passing yards through its first two games, it has since tallied just 182.6 over the six contests.

MARYLAND'S BIGGEST STRENGTH ON DEFENSE

"As for strengths defensively, one of the more positive developments over the course of the season has been the play of sophomore linebacker Chance Campbell," the insider noted. "Playing inside, Campbell has shown a real nose for the ball. He recorded his first career interception at Temple earlier in the year and had a career-high 10 tackles, all solo, versus Indiana. He is currently third on the team in total tackles (42) and tied for first in pass deflections (three)."

It's difficult to find other strengths defensively for the Terrapins, especially when considering their unit as a whole ranks 94th nationally with an average of 424.1 yards allowed per game.

Maryland has, however, consistently produced turnovers this season, grabbing at least one in every contest. Its seven interceptions rank 45th nationally, while its five fumble recoveries check in 56th.

MARYLAND'S BIGGEST WEAKNESS ON DEFENSE

"The defense has been bad of late, really bad," Greene admitted. "Since winning at Rutgers, the Terps have given up an average of 522 yards per game in their last three versus Purdue, Indiana and Minnesota. And while the Hoosiers are known for having a high-powered offense, the Golden Gophers and Boilermakers are middle and bottom of the pack, statistically speaking.

"One of the biggest issues has been having to start a freshman at corner [Banks] with the team playing press man and cover 0 exclusively. This has been an even more glaring issue due to the fact that the Terps' defense has been unable to generate any sort of pass rush up front.

"Clemson transfer Shaq Smith has struggled at outside linebacker. [Fifth-year] senior cornerback Marcus Lewis has also struggled as he's dealt with some injuries. And while he started the season on special teams, freshman Nick Cross is now starting at safety, and while he's looked good at times he's still a freshman and has his struggles."

Perhaps what's most disturbing about the Terps' defensive miscues as of late is how easily success has come for opponents, with Purdue (7.0), Indiana (7.4) and Minnesota (6.6) all having averaged at least 6.6 yards per play over Maryland's last three tilts.

Prior to the three-game skid, Penn State had been the only foe to post higher than a 5.7-yard average on the Terrapins, racking up 7.8 in its 59-0 beatdown on Sept. 27.

GREENE'S FINAL SCORE PREDICTION

"Given how the Maryland defense has looked the past three weeks and the fact that Michigan's offense finally appears to have found some rhythm the past few weeks, I think this game has the potential to get out of hand quickly," Greene said. "Maryland's biggest issues defensively are up front in the trenches and deep down the field when defensive backs are left on an island.

"This plays right into the hands of Michigan's strengths. Michigan's defense is similar to Minnesota's with more overall depth and talent, which is going to make things extremely difficult for Maryland's offense no matter the game plan.

"Luckily, it is Homecoming and folks will be able to enjoy the tailgating."

Michigan 42, Maryland 10

Keys To The Game: Michigan Wolverines Football At Maryland

Chris Balas • TheWolverine

Maryland turned heads earlier this year by beating the mess out of Howard before taking Syracuse to the woodshed, leading many to believe the Terrapins might actually have a team. The offense put up 142 points in the first two games with Virginia Tech quarterback transfer Josh Jackson leading the charge.

And then the Terrapins came crashing back down to earth.

The win over Syracuse was minimized when the Orange were further exposed as a fraud (they have yet to beat an ACC team this year, and while they posted 52 points in a win over Western Michigan — well, even Michigan State, which scored 17 points in the entire month of October, put up 51 on the Broncos).

Maryland has one Big Ten win this year, and that came against Rutgers in a 48-7 victory over a team that fired its coach after a blowout loss to Michigan.

Still, nothing (other than Rutgers losses) is guaranteed in this league, evidenced by Wisconsin's loss at Illinois a few weeks back. Let a team hang around long enough and they might give you a game.

The Wolverines' offense seems to have finally found itself, and the team is playing its best football of the year. While the Terps aren't good, this is an opportunity to make another Maize and Blue statement on the road.

Here's what Michigan has to do to come away with a win at Maryland:

Continue the recent success on the ground: Nobody saw Michigan's 303-yard rushing outburst against Notre Dame coming. The Fighting Irish aren't great up front, but U-M bullied them from the first drive and never let up — and that was in a driving rainstorm with the Irish aware senior quarterback Shea Patterson wouldn't be flinging the ball all over the yard.

Maryland is coming off a defensive performance in which it gave up 321 yards on the

ground at Minnesota in a 52-10 loss. They surrendered 186 yards and 5.8 per rush in a home loss to Indiana a week earlier, so it's now a trend.

The Wolverines have a chance to prove their new 1-2 punch of freshman Zach Charbonnet and redshirt freshman Hassan Haskins is legit with another good performance on the ground, having implemented more of the old school traps, etc., that head coach Jim Harbaugh and Co. ran when they first arrived in Ann Arbor.

Win the battle on the ground and they'll have a great chance to leave College Park with a victory.

Make Maryland quarterback Josh Jackson uncomfortable early: With quarterback Tyrrell Pigrome limited with a knee injury, redshirt junior Josh Jackson — son of former Michigan running backs coach Fred Jackson and a graduate transfer from Virginia Tech — has been taking first-team reps again.

He's coming back from his own injury after starting the season strong, leading the Terps to a pair of early season blowouts before struggling mightily in a loss to Temple. Jackson completed only 15 of 38 passes in that game and was pressured mercilessly, leading to three sacks. The Owls finished with 10 tackles for loss and Jackson, a pocket passer, lost 20 yards on the ground.

Jackson, a Saline, Mich., native, didn't get a look from the Wolverines coming out of high school, and he'll have something to prove. He's got some weapons, including 31-catch wide receiver Dontay Demus and a few capable running backs, but the U-M defense should be able to get to him. Maryland is tied for 74th nationally in sacks allowed with 2.13 given up per contest.

Exploit Maryland's suspect pass defense with some big plays: Maryland ranks 116th nationally out of 130 teams in passing yards allowed per game (273.6). The Terps are tied for 107th in passing plays of 10-plus yards or more (81) allowed, tied for 98th in 30-plus yard passing plays (14) given up and tied for 108th in 50-plus passing plays (five) surrendered.

In short, they can't defend the intermediate or long ball. They're middle of the pack in sacks, having notched 18 in eight games. There should be plays there to be made for Patterson and Michigan offense.

THE BREAKDOWN: MICHIGAN WOLVERINES FOOTBALL AT MARYLAND

Somewhere underneath the surface of the College Park tire fire is a capable team, Michigan cornerbacks coach Mike Zordich said this week. He watched film of the Terrapins from early in the season when the offense was humming, and while the competition wasn't great, they still made plays.

Like most teams, Michigan plays its best football when it gets off to a good start. The Wolverines have been fragile when they don't, especially on the road — they rebounded at Penn State to make a game of it after falling behind 21-0, but it took some time.

Protect the ball, avoid big plays against and come to play, and they Wolverines should leave College Park with their fourth Big Ten win in six tries.

Michigan Wolverines Football News & Views: Harbaugh On NFL Rumors, Dax Hill, More

Chris Balas • TheWolverine

Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh had to shoot down more rumors this week about his interest in returning to the NFL, and he wasn't happy about it. He made it clear again he's not going anywhere.

Harbaugh also talked about freshman safety Daxton Hill, quarterback Shea Patterson and more. We tackle his comments in News & Views format:

NEWS: Jim Harbaugh sent a letter to parents last week after FootballScoop.com reported he was planning an "exit strategy" from Michigan to get back to the NFL.

HARBAUGH: "It was to our parents, so we can keep the lines of communication open with our parents. We always have had a policy of that. It wasn't really [supposed to be for public consumption]."

VIEWS: In the letter, Harbaugh called it "total crap" and "an annual strategy driven by our enemies to cause disruption to our program and to negatively recruit." He was questioned about his used of the word "enemies."

"Okay, let me put it this way … use that term, or maybe the term 'people that choose not to tell the truth,'" he explained. "That would have been as appropriate or more appropriate."

They're one and the same, and this is nothing new. Analyst Cris Carter, an Ohio State alum, said last year on television he'd heard Harbaugh was flirting with the Cleveland Browns, and other "media" outlets have been spreading this gossip for four years.

Harbaugh Calls ND win a 'wow Performance in Every Aspect of Football'

Without question, Harbaugh's had it harder than most when it comes to the media since his arrival at U-M. Some would say he's brought it upon himself with his approach when he first arrived — his "in your face" style — and he's been the target of national media like ESPN's Paul Finebaum and others who love to see him fail. He's undergone more scrutiny than most deserve, the victim of high expectations that come with his track record.

Under his watch, U-M has won 73.3 percent of its games, been part of the only football/basketball combo to post a 990 or higher in APR (Academic Progress Rate, 2017) and avoided major controversy that's plagued rival head coaches in recent years. No, he hasn't been perfect, and he's yet to win a title, but he's going to have plenty more chances. We'd still bet on him getting there.

NEWS: Freshman safety Daxton Hill is starting to emerge as a major player in the secondary. He played 17 snaps against Notre Dame (third most of his career) and was the highest-graded U-M defender per Pro Football Focus, with an 83.6 mark.

HARBAUGH: "His mind for the game … he is a really smart player. He understands beyond his years.

"A couple plays stood out [versus Notre Dame]: the two fumble recoveries. You just know, even when he's 15 to 20 yards away, he could see the play developing in front of him. Most of times the ball is on the ground, three or four people around it, you don't think you can get there. But he just knew to accelerate, went in like an arrow through snow to get the football and come up with that recovery. I thought that was really impressive."

VIEWS: There was another play on the boundary on which he just looked natural in coverage, almost like a corner, Harbaugh said, sensing the sideline, saw the pass was high, calculated it all and let the throw go incomplete.

"There are so many examples like that were he's got a real intuition for the game," the coach said.

He's emerging at the right time. The Wolverines are going to need his speed and athleticism on the field to have a shot when Ohio State's juggernaut comes to town.

NEWS: Michigan ran for 303 yards in the win over Notre Dame, dominating up front.

HARBAUGH: "The line blocking, the tight end blocking, also the receiver blocking has elevated the last couple weeks as well and been better. Also, the backs … Hassan [Haskins], Zach [Charbonnet], Tru Wilson … it was good to see Tru get some carries, as well."

VIEWS: Not a whole lot of insight there, but we'll try to add some. The Wolverines have gotten back to the basics in the running game, including some of the plays Harbaugh likes best — traps, pin and pulls, etc. Junior center Cesar Ruiz was pulling and getting to the edge against the Irish, and most of the time it led to success. The holes were bigger than they'd been all year.

"You'd like your opponent to think all possibilities are possible when it comes to schematics," Harbaugh noted — and they're certainly putting plenty on film for others to scout.

The line is playing its best football, and redshirt freshman back Haskins has been the team's most pleasant surprise on offense. We still want to see more, but his physicality, footwork and stiff-arms have opened some eyes. He's more athletic than we thought, as well.

As for tight end blocking … it was great to see senior Sean McKeon get a few more snaps Saturday, after going down against Illinois (a game in which he was limited to four plays) two weeks ago. They're going to need him down the stretch.

NEWS: Senior quarterback Shea Patterson had most of his rushing yardage negated by sack yardage, but he kept more on the read option and even ripped off a 22-yard gain.

HARBAUGH: "I think it was especially important in this game, and something we had talked about and Shea embraced. When you're running the ball and both sides know that you're running, having that QB as a potential threat or runner is key.

"I thought Shea was really fast, too. I thought it was his fastest game that he's played as a runner, just moving around, scrambles. One time he was that you could really tell was when he got the block or at least was a distraction on Tru's touchdown because he was really moving. He was really quick and fast. It helped a lot."

VIEWS: He's still struggling at times when it comes to knowing when to run and when to give, but this is an area in which the running game can really give future opponents fits, especially now that the backs are starting to come around. Patterson is healthier than he's been since suffering an oblique injury in the opener, and they'll need him to continue to be a dual threat to win the remaining games on the schedule.

He might not be redshirt sophomore Dylan McCaffrey in that capacity, for example, but he's capable.

Wolverine Watch: Crushing Notre Dame Feeds Big Dreams

John Borton • TheWolverine

"Something just wasn't right. Whatever was not right got fixed."

— Urban Meyer, on Michigan's win over Notre Dame

Whatever you think of the former Ohio State coach (and future molder of scofflaws elsewhere), he knows football. The Buckeye boss turned TV commentator looked at Michigan football and shook his head all season.

That stopped when the Wolverines ran over the Irish, 45-14, in a fashion some expected and many hoped before the campaign ever began. THIS, they insisted, is what Michigan could and should look like.

"We didn't match them," Notre Dame head coach Brian Kelly said. "Michigan was all over the field. We got what we deserved. Michigan out-played us, they out-hustled us, they were more physical, they out-coached us."

There were more outs along the way. The Wolverines out-rushed Notre Dame, 303-47, delivering the downhill ground attack offensive coordinator Josh Gattis has been preaching for months. Michigan has now averaged 246.3 yards rushing per game over its last three contests.

They've done it behind an offensive line that's stayed intact and grown while paving the way for a pair of freshman backs who have carried the load.

Perhaps most importantly — on a night soggier than a submarine sandwich taken outside the submarine — Michigan out-protected Notre Dame when it came to ball security, 2-0. That's no small breakthrough for a crew giving away footballs earlier in the year like politicians offering up promises.

"Probably the thing that stood out to me the most from Saturday night was how much unconditional belief our players had in each other and themselves," Jim Harbaugh said. "It was as high as I've ever seen it … 100 percent. They knew they would get their jobs done. They knew that the player next to them would get their job done. It's just what they knew."

The question now becomes, what does it mean? How will it affect the remainder of the season? What effect, if any, will it have long term?

Well, it has some dreaming.

Our own Tom Crawford, regular podcast guest on TheWolverine.com, has visions of 1969 running through his head.

Exactly 50 years ago, Bo Schembechler's first Michigan squad got blown out at home by Missouri, 40-17, suffered a disappointing loss at Michigan State, then went on to knock off "invincible" Ohio State in the regular-season finale, 24-12.

If Michigan fans sipped the post-ND Kool-Aid, Crawford gulped it.

"This offense is finally clicking," he said. "Urban Meyer has been saying, one of these games, they're going to start clicking, and they're not going to be looking back. That offense is clicking right now.

"That, compounded by the defense … yes, Ohio State looks great, but it's going to happen on Nov. 30. Michigan is going to beat Ohio State, they're going to win their bowl game, they're going to end up 11-2, and they're going to be a top-five team in the country.

"No Big Ten championship, no College Football Playoff … but that's going to be one helluva season."

The Buckeyes look unbeatable these days, averaging just under 50 points a game and destroying anyone in their way. Crawford concedes that, but …

"They're not flawless," he said. "In 1969, the Ohio State Buckeyes were one of the greatest team ever. Going into that game, no one could touch them. It was the greatest team in the history of college football.

"Sports Illustrated had this article that said they should play the Minnesota Vikings to see who was the best team in the land. Michigan went out and beat them. It's the same situation this year. All the dynamics are right there."

Michigan Wolverines football redshirt freshman tailback Hassan Haskins has improved to become a factor in the backfield.

Redshirt freshman tailback Hassan Haskins and the Wolverines are starting to leap over previous issues.

Another podcast regular — former Michigan defensive lineman Ryan Van Bergen — isn't as effusive, but he's intrigued.

"If anybody's got a chance to slow their offense down — and they've had dominant offensive performances against just about anybody they've seen — Michigan has the tools to do it," Van Bergen said. "I dare say that, even considering what happened last year.

"We weren't able to adjust to some of the crossing routes they were running. If you want to go ahead and take that out of the equation, and assume that we're going to learn from mistakes made in the past, I would give us the best shot at slowing Ohio State down and keeping them to a low-scoring total, especially at home."

Of course, there's plenty to take care of first. First there's Maryland (3-5 overall, 1-4 Big Ten), whose season plunged into darkness shortly after their head coach threw shade at Gattis. Next up, Michigan State (4-4, 2-3), which went 0-for-October, edged out by a combined score of 100-17.

Indiana (6-2, 3-2) on the road poses a threat, but by then, Michigan should be running at peak efficiency. And if the Wolverines go into the regular-season finale at 9-2, all bets are off.

That's the hope for U-M fans, emboldened and perhaps intoxicated by the Wolverines' reign in the rain.

By The Numbers: ND Win Was U-M's Fourth-Largest Ever Over A Top-10 Foe

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

The Michigan Wolverines' 45-14 football blowout of No. 8 Notre Dame last Saturday was the second win over a team ranked inside the Associated Press top 10 during the Jim Harbaugh era (since 2015).

The lone other occurred on Oct. 1, 2016, in The Big House when the Wolverines took down No. 8 Wisconsin in a 14-7 nail biter, with quarterback Wilton Speight's 46-yard touchdown pass to wideout Amara Darboh with 7:58 remaining marking the game-winning score.

The majority of Michigan's top-10 victories throughout its history have occurred in close fashion like the 2016 affair with the Badgers, and not in beatdown form like what the fans witnessed last Saturday against the Irish.

Prior to the triumph over Notre Dame, U-M's last 10 wins over AP top-10 squads came by an average of 10.1 points per game. Seven of those 10 occurred by seven points or fewer, with a 47-21 blowout of No. 2 Notre Dame in 2006 and a 31-3 destruction of No. 10 Purdue in 2003 skewing the final margin a bit.

Michigan's Last 11 Victories Against AP top-10 Teams		
Year	**Opponent**	**Result**
2019	No. 8 Notre Dame	W, 45-14
2016	No. 8 Wisconsin	W, 14-7
2008	No. 9 Wisconsin	W, 27-25
2008	vs. No. 9 Florida*	W, 41-35
2007	No. 10 Penn State	W, 14-9
2006	at No. 2 Notre Dame	W, 47-21
2005	No. 8 Penn State	W, 27-25
2003	No. 4 Ohio State	W, 35-21
2003	at No. 9 Michigan State	W, 27-20
2003	No. 10 Purdue	W, 31-3
1999	at No. 6 Penn State	W, 31-27

* — neutral location

To further exemplify how rare Michigan's 31-point obliteration of the Irish truly was, we've taken a look back at all of the Wolverines' blowout wins over top-10 clubs in school history.

What constitutes a blowout can be debated, but we've categorized it as a victory that came by 20 or more points.

The Maize and Blue had recorded 16 such wins against top-10 foes in its history entering the weekend (Saturday was the 17th), but only four of the 17 have occurred by 30 or more.

Last Saturday's triumph over Notre Dame was Michigan's fourth-largest margin of victory ever over an AP top-10 squad (the AP poll was introduced in 1936), trailing the 49-0 beatdown of No. 8 USC in the 1948 Rose Bowl, the 41-3 annihilation of No. 5 Texas A&M in 1977 and the 34-0 blanking of No. 8 Minnesota in 1954.

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Each Of U-M's 17 Victories Against AP Top-10 Teams That Occurred By 20 Or More Points		
Year	**Opponent**	**Result**
2019	No. 8 Notre Dame	W, 45-14
2006	at No. 2 Notre Dame	W, 47-21
2003	No. 10 Purdue	W, 31-3
1998	No. 9 Penn State	W, 27-0
1997	at No. 2 Penn State	W, 34-8
1997	No. 8 Colorado	W, 27-3
1993	No. 5 Ohio State	W, 28-0
1977	No. 5 Texas A&M	W, 41-3
1976	at No. 8 Ohio State	W, 22-0
1975	No. 5 Missouri	W, 31-7
1964	No. 6 Navy	W, 21-0
1965	vs. No. 8 Oregon State*	W, 34-7
1961	No. 9 UCLA	W, 29-6
1955	No. 6 Army	W, 26-2
1954	No. 8 Minnesota	W, 34-0
1948	No. 3 Northwestern	W, 28-0
1948	vs. No. 8 USC*	W, 49-0

* — neutral location

Head coach Lloyd Carr (1995-2007) owns the most blowout victories over top-10 opponents on the list above with five, including two in the Wolverines' national championship season of 1997 (27-3 over No. 8 Colorado and 34-8 over No. 2 Penn State).

Three other U-M coaches, meanwhile, possess three triumphs apiece on the table, including Bo Schembechler (1969-89), Bump Elliott (1959-68) and Bennie Oosterbaan (1948-58).

Harbaugh (2015-present), Fritz Crisler (1938-47) and Gary Moeller (1990-94) each grabbed one such win, with Crisler's perhaps being the most notable. His 1947 team's (often dubbed as the "Mad Magicians") 49-0 shutout of No. 8 USC in the Jan. 1, 1948, Rose Bowl capped off a perfect 10-0 campaign and allowed the Maize and Blue to take home the national crown.

Crisler — who was also serving as U-M's athletic director at the time — then stepped down as head coach following the season and named Oosterbaan his successor.

BY THE NUMBERS: MICHIGAN AT MARYLAND

8.2 Yards per carry for Maryland junior running back Javon Leake, which is the highest average in the Big Ten and the sixth-best mark nationally. Leake has averaged at least 6.3 yards per carry in seven of the Terrapins' eight games this season (with the exception of the Penn State loss, when he tallied 1.7).

9 Rushing touchdowns for freshman running back Zach Charbonnet, which are tied with Ohio State junior running back J.K. Dobbins and OSU sophomore quarterback Justin Fields for the second most in the Big Ten. Wisconsin junior running back Jonathan Taylor leads the way with 15. Charbonnet's nine scores are also tied with Mike Hart and Tyrone Wheatley for the most among U-M freshman rushers in school history.

53.1 Completion percentage for Maryland's passing attack, which is the second-worst mark in the Big Ten (Northwestern's 48.4 tally is the worst) and 115th nationally. The Terrapins' top two quarterbacks, redshirt juniors Josh Jackson and Tyrrell Pigrome, are connecting on just 50.4 and 59.8 percent of their passes, respectively. Michigan's secondary, on the other hand, held Notre Dame to a 37.9 completion percentage (11 of 29) last weekend.

56 Degrees for a projected high on Saturday in College Park, with nothing but sunny skies. Wind gusts are also only expected to hit three miles-per-hour, which should make for an unusually warm November day.

71 Points Maryland averaged in its first two games, defeating Howard, 79-0, and Syracuse, 63-20. The Terrapins have averaged just 19.5 points in the six outings since, and have been held to 17 or fewer in four of those six.

100.6 Rushing yards per contest for redshirt freshman running back Hassan Haskins over Michigan's last three clashes, following his career-best 149-yard showing against Notre Dame. The Missouri native is now tallying 6.2 yards per carry on the year, which is tied with Illinois fifth-year senior running back Dre Brown for the fifth-best average in the Big Ten.

164-34 Is what Michigan has outscored Maryland by in the four meetings under Harbaugh. The closest game of the four was U-M's 42-21 triumph last season.

Updates On Every Former Michigan Wolverine In The NFL: Week Eight

Ryan Tice • TheWolverine

During his first nine years with the Philadelphia Eagles, former Michigan football defensive end Brandon Graham built a reputation for being a disruptive defender whose value didn't always show on the stat sheet.

He had a single-season high of 9.5 sacks, set in 2017 — the only year of his career with more than 6.5 — and though he stepped back to just 4.0 last year, Pro Football Focus (PFF) still deemed him the 50th-best player in the league. It was his fifth time the outlet ranked him among the league's top 101 at the end of a season.

The Eagles agreed with that evaluation enough to ink him to a three-year contract reportedly worth up to $40 million in March. According to Spotrac.com, Graham's average salary of $13.33 million per year ranks 15th in the league among defensive ends.

Philadelphia Eagles defensive end Brandon Graham made some of the biggest plays in his team's 31-13 win over the Bills; no Philly defender had more than Graham's six tackles. (USA Today Sports Images)

Graham has proved to be worth every penny through the first eight weeks of the season. Not only is he on pace to set a career high in sacks (10), he has come up big several times for the Eagles.

Three weeks ago, he piled up a career-high three sacks in a 31-6 beatdown of the Jets for his first multi-sack game since 2017.

On Sunday, he tortured another AFC East team and, like he did in week five, tied for the team lead in tackles (six) during a 31-13 win over the Bills. Graham posted a sack and also forced and recovered a fumble on an additional tackle for loss in the game. His other four stops ended plays that gained a total of six yards (average of 1.5 yards per play).

The forced and recovered fumble was a big one. It came right after the two-minute warning, when the Bills were leading 7-3 and deep in their own territory, looking to run the clock out to keep that margin going into halftime.

Graham's play swung momentum on the road and five plays later the visiting team cashed in with a touchdown to take an 11-7 lead, which they would quickly build to double digits after the break.

"Graham was a wrecking ball all game, destroying the Bills' offensive line," NFL.com's Kevin Patra wrote. "In most states, Graham would be required to pay rent for how much he lived in Buffalo's backfield. … His game-changing forced fumble woke an Eagles squad who, to that point, looked limp. For a defense that had been burned all season, Philly needed the gargantuan game Graham provided."

He was also named to Pro Football Focus' Team of the Week for his effort, in which he posted the outlet's top overall grade (92.6) among defensive linemen who were in for at least 25 snaps, as well as the top run-defense mark (95.5) with those same parameters.

A full breakdown of how former Wolverines did in the NFL's week eight is below:

OG Ben Braden, Green Bay Packers

Spent the first week with the New York Jets on their practice squad, but was released and quickly picked up by the 7-1 Packers for their practice squad, where he still resides.

QB Tom Brady, New England Patriots

Kept the 8-0 Patriots unbeaten — one of just two teams in the league without a loss — with a 27-13 win over the Browns … Completed 20 of 36 passes (55.6 percent) for 259 yards with two scores for a passer rating of 96.9 … On the season, he has completed 200 of 309 attempts (64.7 percent) for 2,251 yards with 13 touchdowns and four picks … Holds a passer rating of 95.0 and has run for three scores … Ranks fifth in the league in passing yards, is tied for 10th in touchdown throws and leads the way with 36 completions of 20 or more yards … Also stands 11th in completion percentage and 12th in quarterback rating among passers with at least 200 attempts.

TE Ian Bunting, Indianapolis Colts

After being released by the Jets, he was signed to the 5-2 Colts' practice squad, where he still resides.

LB Devin Bush Jr., Pittsburgh Steelers

Ranked second on his team with seven tackles (six solo) in the 3-4 Steelers' 27-14 win over the Dolphins Monday night … On the year, he has started six of seven appearances and logged 59 tackles (38 solo) with one sack, three passes broken up, two interceptions and four fumble recoveries, one of which he returned for a score … Is tied for 21st in the league in total tackles and is tied for first with four fumble recoveries … Leads all rookies in tackles by four … Last week, NFL.com's Judy Battista penned a good read on Bush and the man he replaced, former Pro Bowler Ryan Shazier.

TE Jake Butt, Denver Broncos

On injured reserve (IR) with the 2-6 Broncos after what he called on Twitter a "minor scope" to his knee early in the year … According to a CBSSports.com report last week, he's expected to return to practice this week … If that happens, the team has 21 days to move him to the active roster (they can do so with two players) or revert him back to IR for the rest of the season

DE Taco Charlton, Miami Dolphins

Came off the bench to tally a sack and force a fumble in the 0-7 Dolphins' 27-14 loss to the Steelers Monday night … Has started three times and appeared in five games with Miami, and has totaled 17 tackles (10 solo) with 4.0 sacks and a forced fumble … Is tied for 37th in the NFL in sacks.

WR Jehu Chesson, Washington Redskins

Is on the reserve/injured list for 1-7 Washington.

DE Frank Clark, Kansas City Chiefs

Was not active due to a neck injury in the 5-3 Chiefs' 31-24 loss to the Packers … Has started all seven games and notched 17 tackles (12 solo) with 3.0 sacks, an interception, two forced fumbles and a fumble recovery.

C/G Mason Cole, Arizona Cardinals

Played on special teams in the 3-4-1 Cardinals' 31-9 loss to the Saints … Has appeared as a reserve in all eight contests.

WR Devin Funchess, Indianapolis Colts

Started for the 5-2 Colts and broke his collarbone in week one, after hauling in three passes for 32 yards, and is now on injured reserve (IR) … According to Colts.com, he will likely return to practice this week … The team will have 21 days to move him back to the active roster or revert him to IR for the rest of the season … The earliest he can return is week 11.

LB Rashan Gary, Green Bay Packers

Played 14 defensive snaps (24 percent of the unit's time on the field) and also on special teams in the 7-1 Packers' 31-24 win over the Chiefs … Posted a quarterback hit, but no official tackles … Has seen action in every game off the bench and logged 10 tackles with one sack and a fumble recovery.

LB Ben Gedeon, Minnesota Vikings

Returned from a concussion and started, recording three tackles in the 6-2 Vikings' 19-9 win over Washington … Played 17 defensive snaps (40 percent) and 10 (50 percent) on special teams … Has made 11 tackles while starting three times and appearing in five games.

TE Zach Gentry, Pittsburgh Steelers

Was inactive for the 3-4 Steelers' 27-14 win over the Dolphins Monday night … Has appeared in three games, but has not recorded any statistics outside of a fumble recovery.

OL Graham Glasgow, Detroit Lions

Started at his customary right guard spot in the 3-3-1 Lions' 31-26 win over the Giants … Was in for 41 of his team's 63 offensive snaps (65 percent) and also appeared on special teams … Has opened all seven games so far this year.

DT Ryan Glasgow, Cincinnati Bengals

Came off the bench in the 0-8 Bengals' 24-10 loss to the Rams … Was in for 13 defensive snaps (21 percent) and three on special teams, but did not record any statistics … Has appeared in five games with two starts and totaled eight tackles.

DE Brandon Graham, Philadelphia Eagles

Started and notched six tackles (five solo), including a sack and a huge forced and recovered fumble, in the 4-4 Eagles' 31-13 win over the Bills … The six tackles tied for the team

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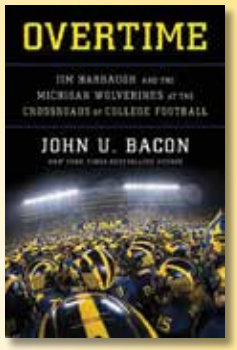

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lead, and he also had an additional tackle for loss … Was named to Pro Football Focus' Team of the Week … Has started each outing for Philadelphia and racked up 29 tackles (21 solo) with 5.0 sacks, one forced fumble and a fumble recovery … Is tied for 22nd in the league in sacks.

RB Karan Higdon, Houston Texans

Is on the 5-3 Texans' practice squad.

S Lano Hill, Seattle Seahawks

Inactive for the second straight week due to an elbow injury … Has played in six of eight games with two starts for the 6-2 Seahawks and has made eight tackles (five solo).

DT Maurice Hurst, Oakland Raiders

Played in the 3-4 Raiders' 27-24 loss to the Texans, but for the second straight week did not record any statistics … Was in for 31 defensive snaps (37 percent) and five on special teams … Has started twice and played in all seven games, while making 10 stops with two sacks and one pass broken up.

FB Joe Kerridge, Cleveland Browns

On injured reserve with the 2-5 Browns.

OT Taylor Lewan, Tennessee Titans

Was injured twice and missed two snaps, but the starting left tackle was in for 61 of 63 offensive plays (97 percent) in the 4-4 Titans' 27-23 win over the Buccaneers … Those are the only snaps he's missed since coming back from a four-game suspension … Has started all four games since returning.

CB Jourdan Lewis, Dallas Cowboys

The 4-3 Cowboys had a bye … Has recorded 13 tackles (11 solo), one sack and an interception, which he returned 20 yards, in seven games as a reserve this year.

CB David Long, Los Angeles Rams

Played 14 special teams snaps for the 5-3 Rams in their 24-10 win over the Bengals … Has been active for two games this year and boasts a tackle.

OL Erik Magnuson, Buffalo Bills

Currently resides on the 5-2 Bills' practice squad.

DT Bryan Mone, Free Agent

Was released from the 6-2 Seahawks' practice squad in the middle of last week … Played in the first three games for the team and notched a trio of tackles.

OL Patrick Omameh, New Orleans Saints

Came off the bench to play in the 7-1 Saints' 31-9 win over the Cardinals … Was in for five offensive plays (seven percent) and six on special teams … Has appeared in six contests this year as a reserve.

S Jabrill Peppers, New York Giants

Started at strong safety and notched five solo tackles with a forced fumble in the 2-6 Giants' 31-26 loss to the Lions … Played all 63 defensive snaps and also on special teams, posting a two-yard punt return … On the year, he has posted 53 tackles (38 solo) and three passes broken up with one interception (a pick-six) and two forced fumbles in eight starts for New York.

QB Jake Rudock, Miami Dolphins

Is on the 0-7 Dolphins' practice squad.

LB Jake Ryan, Jacksonville Jaguars

On the reserve/non-football injury list for the 4-4 Jaguars after suffering an offseason setback during his rehab from a torn ACL.

OL Michael Schofield, Los Angeles Chargers

Started at right guard and played every offensive snap in the 3-5 Chargers' 17-16 win over the Bears … Has not missed a snap yet this year while starting all eight contests.

CB Brandon Watson, Jacksonville Jaguars

The undrafted rookie is on the 4-4 Jaguars' practice squad.

S Jarrod Wilson, Jacksonville Jaguars

Started at free safety and played all 61 defensive snaps in the 4-4 Jaguars' 29-15 win over the Jets … Notched four tackles (all solo) … Has started each game this year and racked up 38 tackles (27 solo) with one pass broken up.

DE Chase Winovich, New England Patriots

Played 18 of 68 defensive snaps (26 percent) and also 19 on special teams (59 percent) and made half a sack in the 8-0 Patriots' 27-13 win over the Browns … Through eight games, he has logged 10 tackles with 4.5 sacks, plus a touchdown after a blocked punt … Is tied for 27th in the league for sacks and is tied for third among rookies, trailing the leader by 2.5.

DE Chris Wormley, Baltimore Ravens

The 5-2 Ravens had a bye … Has seen action in every contest so far and made three starts with six tackles and one pass broken up.

Ed Warinner Pleased With O-Line, Likes How Offense Is 'Starting To Click'

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

The Michigan Wolverines' football offensive line finally blocked against Notre Dame the way many thought it would entering the year, paving the way for 303 yards on the ground.

Expectations were high entering the 2019 season for a U-M front five that featured four returning starters in fifth-year senior left tackle Jon Runyan, senior left guard Ben Bredeson, junior center Cesar Ruiz and senior right guard Mike Onwenu, but the unit got off to a rough start, with the rushing attack compiling 141 yards or fewer in four of the club's first five outings.

Michigan has averaged 246.3 rushing yards in the three games since, however, culminating in Saturday's big production against Notre Dame.

"I'm happy with the overall effort of our team," offensive line coach Ed Warinner said Wednesday afternoon. "We ran the ball well, even though the conditions mandated that'd be the way to move the football.

"The offensive line, tight ends and receivers all blocked well. It was a good group effort of keeping the football on the ground and controlling the clock. We showed the physicality you like to see, especially in the first half in the weather conditions."

The Maize and Blue seem to have made running the ball more of a priority over the last few weeks, and that strategy has paid off.

Michigan averaged 36.4 rushing attempts over its first five games of the season, but has seen that number increase to 48 in its last three.

"You figure out who you are and what your strengths are,, and you cater to them," Warinner explained. "[Our offensive approach] has changed some, but not drastically. We've run some of the same plays we ran last year, so it's not like we're inventing new ones — sometimes we just disguise or decorate them.

"We're finding our groove and are growing as we go. I also think we've hit our stride running the ball, with [redshirt freshman running back] Hassan [Haskins] having had some good games and [freshman running back] Zach [Charbonnet] being consistent.

"We grow and learn with the personnel we have and with whoever is healthy. We've had a lot of injuries we don't talk about much, though the line is pretty healthy now. We're hitting our stride and have been productive the last few games. There's a lot of confidence on offense right now."

The players also seem to be grasping first-year offensive coordinator Josh Gattis' system more and more as the season goes along, averaging 36 points over the team's last three contests.

This comes after the Wolverines tallied just 28.0 points per outing through their first five tilts.

"Josh knows the system he wants to run and does a great job of staying the course and grinding through," Warinner noted. "He does a great job communicating to the team and helping organize our plans, and then implementing it. We all feel a little different after winning that game [on Saturday], and how things have started to click. It has given us a little juice and energy.

"Internally, Josh hasn't changed a bit — we're all learning and growing in a new system with different players and different obstacles. Like Coach [Jim] Harbaugh said, we're starting to hit our stride, and you can see and feel it."

Other Michigan Football Notes

• Ruiz is the commander of the offensive line as the unit's center, and was a catalyst in the Wolverines' 303-yard rushing output against the Irish.

"Cesar had a really good game," Warinner exclaimed. "He's played consistent for a couple years now since I've been here. He's also good in space, and we tease him and call him, 'Cees in Space.'

"We were able to pull him and get him on the perimeter against Notre Dame's defense, an he likes doing that because he's very athletic for a big guy. Cesar made some nice plays at the second level and graded out the highest of a group who all graded out high."

• Redshirt sophomore right tackle Andrew Stueber was in a tight battle with redshirt freshman Jalen Mayfield for the starting job heading into the year, but a torn ACL in fall camp ended the former's season and allowed the latter to take over the starting gig.

"He's ahead of schedule," Warinner said of Stueber. "He sits in my meetings every day. Andrew was doing rehab full time the first few months, but now sits in the meetings and is staying engaged in the football part.

"He should be able to get back into football activities in January or February, and will hopefully be rolling by spring."

• Only one player in Michigan's five-man freshman offensive line class has seen the field this season — left tackle Karsen Barnhart — with the four others all likely to take redshirts.

Barnhart has only seen the field twice though, meaning he would have to make three more appearances for his redshirt to get burned.

"Those guys all want to play in some games, so we'll see if it works out," the offensive line coach noted. "That class is really good, and all of them are going to be successful here.

"They each have different timelines, but some could be real impactful next season. Linemen are at their best in their fourth or fifth years, because it takes a long time to develop the strength and skills at this level.

"Barnhart and [offensive tackle Trevor] Keegan are really doing well, and so is [center Zach] Carpenter. The others are doing well too, but those are the three who are the most ahead."

Notebook: Michael Locksley Talks Terrapins' QB Situation, Michigan

Clayton Sayfie • TheWolverine

Maryland Terrapins (3-5, 1-4 Big Ten) head coach Michael Locksley met with the media Tuesday afternoon to preview the homecoming game against Michigan (6-2, 3-2) on Saturday (12 p.m., ABC).

The Wolverines are fresh off of a 45-14 win over Notre Dame last week, while the Terrapins are looking to recover from three straight losses, the latest being a 52-10 blowout loss at Minnesota.

Locksley talked about his quarterback situation, the challenges U-M will pose and more.

Maryland's Quarterback Situation

It's been a revolving door under center this year for Maryland. Redshirt junior Josh Jackson, an Ann Arbor native and the son of former longtime U-M running backs coach Fred Jackson, was the starter to begin the year, but sustained an injury against Rutgers Oct. 5. Jackson returned last week against Minnesota in spot duty.

Redshirt sophomore Tyrrell Pigrome took over the starting duties following Jackson's injury before being hurt himself in the Minnesota game. He is questionable to play against U-M this week.

Pigrome has thrown for 642 yards on the season and completed 61 of 102 attempts (59.8 percent) for three touchdowns and five interceptions. Jackson is 70 of 139 through the air (50.4 percent) for 968 yards with 10 scores and four interceptions.

"'Piggy' is on a limited schedule for us today. He's what we would call limited," Locksley said of Pigrome's status. "So, obviously, Josh will take the reps with the first-team guys and [redshirt freshman] Tyler DeSue will serve kind of as the second-team guy until we can get more information.

"It's my expectation that 'Piggy' will get better as the week goes along. There was nothing structurally wrong, other than a hyperextension there.

"[Tuesday] and Wednesday are really big work days for us, so we'll see how much we can get out of 'Piggy' when he comes out to practice today, but we expect him to be available. But going into today's practice, Josh will take the first-team reps and Tyler DeSue will get the second-team reps."

Jackson was in for three snaps against Minnesota and finished 0-of-2 passing.

"With the time off and only having played limited reps Saturday, I feel like he's better," Locksley said. "Based off of yesterday, he feels a lot better.

"This week will be about building the confidence, getting back out there and seeing him operate the system and see if he'll be able to operate it with his full ability. We'll get a chance to see today."

On The Challenges The Wolverines Present The Terrapins

U-M has improved on both sides of the ball in recent weeks, while Maryland had a hot start to the season, winning its first two games before losing five out the last six.

"Michigan poses another tremendous challenge for us," Locksley said. "They're a team that's obviously coming in ranked. They have a top-10 defense. They've been running the ball effectively, especially the last three games.

"For us, the challenge will be to find a way to contain their run game and manage to attack a very aggressive defense. They're well-coached with Coach [Jim] Harbaugh and his coaching staff. We expect to get their best."

The struggling Maryland offense will have to face an aggressive U-M defense that seems to be playing with a growing confidence.

"Again, Michigan is a top-10 defense," Locksley said. "[Defensive coordinator] Don Brown does a tremendous job on that side of the ball with the way they coach, they pressure.

"You know what you're going to get — they play man coverage, they're going to have more numbers in the box than you can block, they try to create the one-on-one matchups up front with their front seven, between their inside linebackers, No. 7 [Khaleke Hudson], the two defensive ends are both really active players, No. 97 [Aidan Hutchinson] and No. 19 [Kwity Paye] are really active, and No. 2 [Carlo Kemp] is a twitchy interior player.

"They pose a great challenge, but our guys come to play at Maryland because of these opportunities to play against the best, and we'll definitely see one of the better fronts this weekend. It's a great challenge, but I think our guys will be up to the task."

Stopping the run will not be an easy task for Locksley's group. U-M ran for 303 yards against Notre Dame, 141 the week prior against Penn State and 295 the week before that against Illinois. Maryland allowed a staggering 321 yards on the ground to the Golden Gophers last week.

"Michigan comes in as a team that, the last three weeks, has run the ball really well," Locksley noted. "We put it on film that we struggled last week maintaining our gaps because we had enough guys in the gaps, but we weren't in the gaps we needed to be in, so we got to get that corrected."