

Michigan Wolverines Football: U-M Aerial Attack, Defense, Ice The Hoosiers

John Borton • TheWolverine

The Michigan Wolverines and Indiana Hoosiers rolled out their version of Frozen Too amid the snow at Memorial Stadium. Only the Hoosiers sank after hitting the iceberg.

Jim Harbaugh's red-hot football team rolled up a 39-14 win, blazing by IU in a firestorm of touchdown passes and abundant heat on Indiana's quarterback.

Indiana signal-caller Peyton Ramsey (17-of-29 passing for 217 yards) did some damage early, but wound up torched by U-M's relentless pressure. Meanwhile, his counterpart charged into the final week of the regular season hotter than Arizona asphalt in August.

Senior quarterback Shea Patterson threw 32 times for 366 yards and five touchdowns in the Wolverines' runaway win. Seven days away from a climactic showdown against Ohio State, Michigan showed precisely zero interest in taking its foot off the gas.

"We're riding him," Harbaugh said of Patterson. "His play has just been outstanding. He's really seeing the field well, and he's taking care of the football at all times. It's rare that it's even close to a turnover.

"He's doing a great job in that regard and really playing good, disciplined football. He's doing a great job going through his reads. He's getting great protection from our offensive line."

With that protection, and a dug-in defense, Patterson rallied the Wolverines from 7-0 and 14-7 early deficits. U-M came with an avalanche of 32 straight points, the aerial attack paced by junior wideout Nico Collins, who pulled in six passes for 165 yards and three touchdowns, including a 76-yarder.

"That's Nico being Nico," Patterson said. "He's a big body. That last one, he went up and got it, just like he did last week. He's a playmaker. He finds the open space. It's cool to see him take off and show his speed."

Michigan's passing attack once again took center stage, accounting for all but 87 of U-M's 453 total yards. Patterson bumped his total to 750 yards and nine touchdowns over the past two games alone.

Meanwhile, a Michigan defense that appeared vulnerable early on settled in and pressured Ramsey relentlessly, shutting out the Hoosiers over the final 44:51.

"We knew after those first two touchdowns — and they started slowing down a bit — the game was ours," sophomore defensive end Aidan Hutchinson insisted. "All the momentum

 	11/23/2019 • ATTENDANCE 43,671				
	MEMORIAL STADIUM BLOOMINGTON, IN				
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Indiana	7	7	0	0	14

stayed our way the rest of the game. When you hear the crowd simmer down for the rest of the game, you know what team is in control."

Ramsey wasted no time on the opening possession, carving up Michigan on a 10-play, 75-yard touchdown drive. He went 4-of-4 throwing, scrambled for crucial yardage when he pulled it down and handed off to running back Stevie Scott III (13 carries for 54 yards) for the one-yard touchdown leap at 10:07 of the first quarter.

Patterson immediately struck back, gunning a 50-yard sideline throw to freshman wideout Giles Jackson to highlight an eight-play, 80-yard TD drive. The senior QB hit sophomore wideout Ronnie Bell on a six-yard fade for his first touchdown catch of the year.

At 7-7 with 5:45 remaining in the first quarter, the two teams combined had faced two third-down situations. Both teams scrambled to order up defensive adjustments.

U-M opted for the hit-'em-high, hit-'em-low plan. Hutchinson and senior defensive tackle Carlo Kemp did those honors, respectively, on Ramsey. They forced a wounded wobbler over the middle that freshman safety Daxton Hill — starting for injured junior Brad Hawkins — barely plucked off the turf for an interception.

The turnover didn't slow the Hoosiers down long. They went 51 yards for a touchdown the next time they touched the football, a 23-yard Ramsey looper to wideout David Ellis highlighting the drive. Ramsey finished it on a one-yard plunge, putting the home team back in control, 14-7 just 51 seconds into the second quarter.

They didn't know it, but their scoring day was done.

"We just had to settle down and be the defense that we are," Hutchinson said. "We shut them down the rest of the game."

The Wolverines immediately answered, going 62 yards in eight plays to tie it again. A 22-yard run by freshman tailback Zach Charbonnet (eight carries for 46 yards) put the Wolverines in the red zone, and junior wideout Donovan Peoples-Jones (five catches for 73 yards) secured a leaping, 11-yard grab on a fade for the touchdown.

Patterson then unveiled the Nico Show, three tosses to the wideout accounting for 61 yards of a four-play, 80-yard touchdown drive (plus 15 via a facemask call). The senior QB gunned a 24-yarder to a wide-open Collins over the middle, setting up the scoring play.

Patterson then unleashed a perfectly thrown 29-yard bomb down the left sideline. Collins leaped high over Indiana defensive back Raheem Layne for the go-ahead score at the 5:37 mark, ushering the Wolverines into halftime up, 21-14.

"I just gave him the ball where he could catch it," Patterson said. "All those guys out there tonight — Nico, [redshirt sophomore wideout] Tarik [Black], Ronnie, Donovan —

just give them a chance, because they're playmakers."

U-M kept firing out of intermission, Patterson connecting with Peoples-Jones on a 41-yard bomb. That set up redshirt junior Quinn Nordin's 27-yard field goal, boosting Michigan's edge to 24-14 just 4:46 into the second half.

Collins struck again, putting the big chill on the Hoosiers in the third quarter. He gathered in a slant throw over the middle and then sprinted away 76 yards for the TD to ice IU. Redshirt sophomore quarterback Dylan McCaffrey ran in the two-point conversion to make it 32-14 with 5:10 remaining in the third quarter.

"Shea believes in me, and I believe in him," Collins said.

Moments later, senior linebacker/defensive end Josh Uche enhanced the building terror raid against Ramsey, belting him from behind and forcing a fumble. Uche himself covered it, and one play later, Patterson gunned a 19-yard TD toss over the middle to — who else — Collins.

Patterson's fifth touchdown pass of the day snowed under the Hoosiers, 39-14.

"It was a good momentum-changer," Uche said. "I finally was able to get one. I got the ball out. When the offense went out there, my man Nico was able to capitalize on that. It was just a great momentum-killer for them."

With all the preliminary bouts over, the Wolverines quickly turned their eyes to the final one. Harbaugh noted he's going to savor this win, while the players agreed they're full speed toward a furious finish.

Report Card: Grading Michigan Wolverines Football In A 39-14 Win At Indiana

Chris Balas • TheWolverine

Grading all areas of the Michigan Wolverines' 39-14 win at Indiana:

Michigan Football Rushing Offense: C

Michigan didn't need to run the ball against the Hoosiers and didn't really try, handing to the backs only five times in the first quarter and 24 times total.

Freshman Zach Charbonnet gained 22 of his team-best 46 yards on one carry and managed only 24 yards on his seven other carries. Redshirt freshman Hassan Haskins carried 13 times for 44 (3.4 per rush) with a long of only seven, and frosh receiver Giles Jackson managed only seven yards on two end arounds.

The Wolverines did have good success on first down, however, running 10 times for 54 yards through three quarters before the game got out of hand. That helped keep Indiana guessing and opened up success for the passing game.

Take out the two sacks of Shea Patterson, and the Wolverines gained 104 yards on 27 totes (3.9 yards per attempt).

Michigan Football Passing Offense: A

For the second weekend in a row, Patterson enjoyed a career game, throwing for 366 yards and five touchdowns while only being sacked twice. He would have eclipsed 400 if not for a couple of overthrows and dropped passes (one by sophomore Ronnie Bell that he should have hauled in for about 40). He was 20-of-32 passing, and his one interception came after the game was no longer in doubt.

Nine different Wolverines caught passes, led by junior Nico Collins' six grabs for 165 yards and three scores, including a 76-yard touchdown. U-M threw on 10 of 17 first downs in the first half and four out of seven in the third quarter when the game was still in doubt, including completions of 18, 29, 24 and 19 yards, two of them touchdowns to Collins.

U-M averaged 11.4 yards per attempt and 18.3 yards per completion. The latter would be higher than the average of any team that throws the ball regularly (Louisville is No. 1 nationally at 17.2 yards per reception).

Michigan Football Rushing Defense: A-

The Hoosiers ran the ball well in the first half, 17 times for 60 yards (3.5-yard average), and a 17-yard Stevie Scott run set up IU's second touchdown. U-M clamped down in the second half and held the Indiana rushing attack to 37 yards on 20 carries, including three carries for just six yards on first downs in the third quarter when the Wolverines asserted their dominance.

Indiana was forced to throw while playing from behind and totaled minus-4 yards rushing in the third quarter on seven carries.

Scott finished with 54 yards, but 29 yards of the Hoosiers' 97 came on two carries, and they managed only 2.6 yards per rush. Forty-one of their rushing yards came in the fourth quarter when the game was out of reach, and U-M was substituting.

Michigan Football Passing Defense: C+

Last year's Indiana game was billed as a look at how Michigan's defense might fare against mighty Ohio State. The Hoosiers beat U-M on some crossing routes underneath, OSU took it to another level the following week, and the rest is history.

IU started strong without receiver Whop Philyor, one of the Big Ten's best. Quarterback Peyton Ramsey was on the money with his throws, completing 8 of 10 for 84 yards alone in the first half and leading IU to a 14-7 lead early second-quarter, but a big hit on him and a pick by freshman safety Daxton Hill changed the game. A tipped ball prevented a potential big play on that one to receiver Ty Fryfogle, who was banged up later in the game after a few big hits and never the same.

The Hoosiers hit on a few big plays and had a handful of receptions of 20-plus yards

and drew two or three pass interference penalties on deep balls, but this is an explosive offense. All in all, it was a solid effort.

Michigan Football Special Teams: A-

Freshman return man Giles Jackson continues to look more and more comfortable in the kick return game. He notched a 38-yarder among his three returns for 81 yards (27-yard average). Redshirt junior Quinn Nordin made his only field goal, sophomore kicker Jake Moody didn't have a single kickoff returned — his hang time forced a number of fair catches — and U-M's gunners downed a punt inside the five.

Redshirt junior punter Will Hart needs to be better next week. He averaged only 31.2 yards per kick on four punts and set up Indiana in good field position twice with short kicks.

Offense Notes: Patterson Etches His Name Into The Record Books Once Again

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

Michigan Wolverines football senior quarterback Shea Patterson enjoyed a career game last weekend when he shredded MSU for 384 yards and four touchdowns, and he posted similar statistics in the 39-14 blowout of Indiana on Saturday.

Patterson torched the Hoosiers for 366 yards and five touchdowns, while completing 20 of his 32 passes (62.5 percent).

Prior to the contest with the Spartans, the senior had never thrown for more than 282 yards in a game during his Michigan career. He has proceeded to average 375 yards over his last two contests.

Patterson had never eclipsed three scores in a U-M tilt before last weekend either, but has accumulated nine over his last two outings and became the first in school history to ever throw four or more touchdown passes in back-to-back games. He is just the fifth U-M signal-caller to ever do so multiple times in his college career; only John Navarre, Chad Henne and Elvis Grbac have done so three times.

Patterson's five touchdown strikes are the second most in a single game ever at Michigan (Jake Rudock's six against Indiana in 2015 top the list), while his 366 yards were the 10th most in a single game in school history. He became the first U-M quarterback to compile consecutive 300-yard outings since Rudock in 2015 (337 yards against Rutgers and 440 versus Indiana that year).

The veteran quarterback connected with nine different pass catchers on Saturday,

with junior wideout Nico Collins hauling in three of his scores, while sophomore receiver Ronnie Bell and junior wideout Donovan Peoples-Jones each reeled in one.

Several long pass plays helped Patterson reach 366 yards, with a 76-yard scoring strike to Collins in the third quarter standing as the longest of the day.

"It's good to get Nico on some crossing routes and slant routes, and deep ins," head coach Jim Harbaugh noted afterward. "He's very good at it and is a big target with a big catch radius.

"His assortment of routes has gone up quite a bit, and he's coming through. They were grabbing him pretty early, but he's high pointing the ball as well as you can. Nico is doing a tremendous job on the post high pointing those balls and getting separation."

Freshman wideout Giles Jackson also caught a 50-yarder in the first quarter, while Peoples-Jones reeled in a 41-yarder in the game's third frame.

"Shea is playing on time with everything he does," Harbaugh said. "His rhythm and getting the ball out are all on time.

"Everything has become very precise with Shea and his receivers, tight ends and backs. The passing game has been operating on time extremely well."

Nico Collins Enjoys A Career Afternoon

Collins enjoyed the best game of his collegiate tenure on Saturday, with his 165 yards and three scores each setting new career highs.

His six receptions, meanwhile, tied the most he had ever recorded in a clash (he also had six at Northwestern last year and at Penn State this season).

Collins' 19.3 yards per catch stood as the fourth-best mark in the Big Ten coming into the weekend, and the junior added to that total by averaging 27.5 yards per reception against the Hoosiers.

The 6-4, 222-pounder's 165 yards were also the most any U-M wideout had compiled in three seasons, going back to when Amara Darboh reeled in an identical number on Oct. 29, 2016, in a 32-23 win at Michigan State.

The Pinson, Ala., native's previous career high in yardage had been 91, set last season at Ohio State.

"Credit to the offensive linemen," Collins noted in the postgame. "They're giving Shea time for him to go through his reads, and we know when Shea can do with the ball when he has time like that.

"We were just out there having fun today, and I feel like we've been having fun as an offensive unit since the second half of that Penn State game. I think we're finally clicking, but we have one more game left and it's time to finish strong."

Miscellaneous Michigan Football Notes

- Michigan's 453 yards of offense marked the sixth time in the last eight games it eclipsed the 400-yard mark, and the seventh time in 11 tilts this year.

- Following his five-TD, one-pick afternoon, Patterson's touchdown-to-interception ratio now sits at 21-5 on the year.
- The senior quarterback became the third signal-caller under Harbaugh to toss three first half touchdowns in a game (Rudock threw three against IU in 2015, and Wilton Speight tossed three against UCF in 2016).
- Patterson's fourth-quarter interception was his first since the Oct. 19 loss at Penn State. He also hit three pass plays of 40 yards or more, after having only six such plays all season.
- Patterson started the afternoon by connecting on his first seven throws.
- Peoples-Jones' 73 receiving yards were a season-high.
- U-M converted a two-point conversion in the third quarter following its fourth touchdown, with redshirt sophomore quarterback Dylan McCaffrey taking the snap and easily running the ball into the end zone.
- Jackson's 50-yard reception in the first quarter was the longest of his career and stood as the fifth-longest pass play by the Maize and Blue in 2019.
- Bell's six-yard TD reception in the first quarter was his first of the season, making him the 10th different Wolverine to haul in a touchdown grab this season. The Maize and Blue had 10 different players reel at least one in, in all of 2018.
- Michigan rushed for 87 yards on Saturday, with freshman running back Zach Charbonnet's 46 standing as a team best. Redshirt freshman Hassan Haskins was close behind with 44.
- Collins' 76-yard TD reception in the third quarter was the longest catch of his career and Michigan's longest offensive play of the season. It was also the second-longest touchdown pass for Patterson at U-M, with the 79-yarder to Peoples-Jones last year at MSU marking the only one that was longer.

Defense/Special Teams Notes: U-M's Defense Starts Slow, Clamps Down On IU

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

The Michigan Wolverines' football defense gave up scoring drives to Indiana on two of its first three possessions (of 75 and 52 yards, respectively), allowing the Hoosiers to grab a 14-7 lead at 14:09 of the second quarter.

Defensive coordinator Don Brown's crew buckled down after that, though, not giv-

ing up a single point for the rest of the game.

"We just did what we're supposed to do [after IU's scoring drives]," senior linebacker Josh Uche explained after the win. "We just stayed on the little things, the details and executed.

"Coach Brown called an excellent game, and we did whatever he told us to do. He makes the calls, and I know what my responsibility is and that I'm going to do that job.

"It's up to Coach Brown to make those adjustments. We communicate with him on what we feel is working and what their tendencies are, and what they're leaning toward."

Two crucial turnovers contributed to Michigan's defensive success in Bloomington, with freshman safety Daxton Hill picking off a pass from redshirt junior quarterback Peyton Ramsey on the Hoosiers' second possession of the afternoon.

Senior linebacker Josh Uche caused and recovered U-M's second turnover, when he forced Ramsey to fumble on a sack late in the third quarter, giving U-M's offense outstanding field position by picking it up at the Indiana 19-yard line (senior quarterback Shea Patterson found junior receiver Nico Collins in the end zone on the ensuing play).

"The sack fumble was big," head coach Jim Harbaugh recapped. "Josh Uche was having a heck of a game with the pressure he was applying. He takes speed and turns it into power and made a big sack fumble.

"He also stopped their fly sweep off the edge, and it was big getting their inside running game stopped."

After yielding 127 yards on IU's first two scoring series, Michigan's defense only gave up 194 yards the rest of the day, and forced punts on five of Indiana's final nine possessions.

The four drives that didn't end in punts concluded with (in chronological order) the end of the first half, the fumble Uche forced and recovered, a failed fourth down attempt and the end of the game.

Quinn Nordin Continues To Excel As Michigan's Kicker

Redshirt junior kicker Quinn Nordin and sophomore Jake Moody had primarily alternated on U-M's extra points and field goals throughout the first two months of the season, but the former was given the nod on all three of Michigan's field goals and all five of its extra points last week against MSU (converted all eight).

Nordin once again was the man for both jobs on Saturday against the Hoosiers, connecting on his lone field goal attempt (from 27 yards out) and all four of the club's extra points.

Redshirt junior punter Will Hart, meanwhile, endured the worst outing of his career, averaging just 31.2 yards on four punts (his previous low had been 35 yards, which he had done three times).

A bit of an odd sequence occurred at 14:09 of the second quarter when freshman wideout Giles Jackson fielded a kick at his own goal line, and advanced all the way to his own 37-yard line before appearing to be tackled.

The whistle never blew, however, and Jackson proceeded to take the kick all the way to the house. Replay showed the freshman was clearly down though, and the touch-down came off the board.

Jackson as a whole averaged 27 yards on three kick return attempts throughout the afternoon.

More Miscellaneous Michigan Football Notes

- IU's longest run on Saturday was 17 yards, meaning Michigan has not given up a run of 20 or more yards in its last 32 quarters.
 - The Hoosiers' 321 yards of offense were the most U-M had surrendered since the Sept. 21 loss at Wisconsin (487). It also stood as just the second time an opponent had surpassed 293 yards this season against the Maize and Blue defense.
 - IU averaged 2.6 yards per rush, marking the seventh time this season U-M has held an opponent to 2.6 yards per carry or fewer.
 - The Wolverines' 25-point margin of victory was their biggest against the Hoosiers since 2006, when Lloyd Carr's Maize and Blue squad won in Bloomington, 34-3.
 - Indiana sophomore running back Stevie Scott had been averaging 79.1 yards per game entering the weekend (fourth most in the Big Ten), but Michigan held him to just 54.
 - Daxton Hill made his first career start on Saturday, filling in for injured junior safety Brad Hawkins. Hill also recorded his first career interception in the first quarter and became the first freshman to start a game on defense under Harbaugh. The freshman led the defense with eight tackles.
- "We'll see [if Hawkins is able to play next week]," Harbaugh revealed. "Brad had an injury during the week of practice. Daxton knew he'd be starting right around Wednesday."
- U-M's average margin of victory over its last four games (45-14 over Notre Dame, 38-7 at Maryland, 44-10 over Michigan State and 39-14 at Indiana) has been 30.2 points.
 - Sophomore defensive end Aidan Hutchinson registered his sixth pass breakup of the year in the first quarter and is tied with junior cornerback Ambry Thomas for the second most on the team. Senior cornerback Lavert Hill leads the way with 10.
 - Indiana's 224 passing yards were the third most Michigan had allowed this season.
 - In its last eight games, U-M has surrendered 13 touchdowns and forced 14 turnovers.
 - Uche recorded two of the team's four tackles for loss.
 - The Wolverines forced IU to go three-and-out on three of its 12 possessions.

- Michigan improved its all-time record against Indiana to 59-9, and has won 24 straight in the series and its last 11 in Bloomington. IU's last triumph against U-M came in 1987.

- Uche's strip sack in the third quarter brought his sack total to a team-best 10.5 on the year (he led the club with seven last season).

Michigan Wolverines Football: Five Top Players Of The Game

John Borton • TheWolverine

Michigan rampaged to another lopsided win, even against a bowl-bound Indiana team in Bloomington. Here are the game's top-five performers, all in the road whites:

- 1. Senior quarterback Shea Patterson** — Jim Harbaugh says Michigan is riding Patterson, and the senior quarterback looks like a Triple Crown winner. He fired five touchdown passes and threw for 366 more yards this week, making it a combined nine and 750, respectively, over the last two games.
- 2. Junior wide receiver Nico Collins** — Somebody heard the fan mantra of "Throw it to Nico" in recent weeks. A half-dozen catches for 165 yards and three touchdowns showed off plenty of his skills, and gave Ohio State's defense something to think about.
- 3. Senior linebacker/defensive end Josh Uche** — Uche's strip sack of IU quarterback Peyton Ramsey and subsequent recovery set up a one-play Michigan TD drive. Uche also registered five solo stops, two tackles for loss and a pair of quarterback hurries, part of a defense that made Peyton's place — more often than not — the Memorial Stadium turf.
- 4. Junior wide receiver Donovan Peoples-Jones** — While overshadowed in this game by his classmate, Peoples-Jones enjoyed a big outing of his own. He made five catches — including one exceptional leaping grab — for 73 yards and a touchdown.
- 5. Sophomore defensive end Aidan Hutchinson** — Hutchinson put the hammer down on several occasions, posting a sack among seven tackles with a pass breakup. He bolstered a defense that bent early and then broke Indiana's spirit in nearly three quarters of shutout football, and finished second on the Wolverines in tackles.

Wolverine Watch: Busting To Make The Bucks Stop Here

John Borton • TheWolverine

Jim Harbaugh didn't want to talk about Ohio State — guaranteed.

The Michigan head coach's desire to publicly ponder his team's biggest game of the year moments after it knocked off Indiana ranked right up there with his urge to swear off whole milk, Cracker Barrel and ... well, football itself.

Harbaugh blocked talk about The Game like his offensive line blocked for five touchdown passes against the Hoosiers.

"I'm going to enjoy this win," Harbaugh assured after the 39-14 rout. "It was a big win for our team. I'm proud of the way they played today. I'll keep enjoying it and have a happy flight home, and we'll quickly turn our attention to the next game."

His players turned their focus a bit quicker.

"No one was even talking about this game," sophomore defensive end Aidan Hutchinson insisted. "We're all ready for next week."

That's understandable. The Wolverines started Big Ten play in devastating, confidence-shaking fashion. They could end it with their biggest win in Harbaugh's five years at Michigan.

Can they capture a Big Ten title? No. A horrible start at Penn State — including an officiating crew wearing its tighty-whities for a whiteout — ensured that.

Can they make the College Football Playoff? Almost certainly not. Two losses just doesn't get the job done these days, especially when there's another two-loss team in your own conference holding a head-to-head win.

What the Wolverines CAN do involves kicking down a wall — a wall most believe can't be dented this season.

The Buckeyes look invincible. They're 11-0, flirting with the No. 1 ranking in all of college football. Many believe they're the best the sport has to offer this year.

Nobody's saying they should be taking on the New England Patriots. That's one difference from Woody Hayes' 1969 "unbeatable" squad, who some said should play the NFL's best at the time, the Minnesota Vikings.

But head coach Ryan Day's crew looks better than Urban Meyer's from a year ago — the one that obliterated the Wolverines, 62-39.

Visions of '69, dancing in their heads? Not likely. Former Michigan All-American Chris Hutchinson wasn't born until 25 days after that game, much less his current-era son. That was then, this is now.

But the Wolverines' response to the heartbreaker in Happy Valley shows they're serious about busting through against the Buckeyes. They've won four in a row, in convincing fashion, against rivals and on the road.

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They've featured a senior quarterback throwing for 750 yards and nine touchdowns over the past two games. They've trotted out a defense giving up just over 10 points a game since Penn State.

Hitting their stride? Harbaugh called his shot on that one, a while ago.

"The team has been an improving football team," Harbaugh said. "I give the coaches and players a lot of credit. They've been working extremely hard, and they played hard — they're very focused. It means a lot to them.

"They've aggressively improved each and every week, and it's a very good sign of a dedicated group of guys on this ball team. I really like being around them — whether it's in practice sessions or meetings. Everywhere we go, I enjoy this team and couldn't be more excited for our guys and the way they're playing."

Senior linebacker/defensive end Josh Uche embraces the closeness, and insisted the Wolverines are far from finished.

"Those are my brothers out there," Uche said. "We love each other. We know we have to depend on each other to go out there and make things happen. If one person doesn't do their job, the whole thing collapses. We just have that trust and that love and that faith in each other to make things happen — I feel like that's how it's evolved as it's gone on."

Has it evolved enough to take down the Goliath of the gridiron? Most say no. The Buckeyes are unbeatable, remember?

The younger Hutchinson doesn't remember any such thing.

"We don't see them as unbeatable," he said. "Every team can be beat. We're going to go out there and just do our job."

Fifth-year senior offensive tackle Jon Runyan Jr. won't get another chance. He heard the "Beat Ohio!" chants rumbling through a traveling Michigan contingent all-too-ready to fast forward and reverse years of frustration.

"It's something that's really cool to listen to and watch," Runyan acknowledged. "Wins in college football aren't easy to come by, so I'm going to try to enjoy this one, at least until midnight, and then we'll get on to next week. We know what we have ahead of us."

They also know nobody's unbeatable. Now they have to find a way to prove it.

What They're Saying: Michigan Wolverines Football 39, Indiana 14

Ryan Tice • TheWolverine

It wasn't close this time around when the Michigan Wolverines football team hit the road for Indiana.

Here's a look around at what they're saying about the 39-14 victory:

Chris Balas, TheWolverine.com: Notes, Quotes & Observations

Indiana head coach Tom Allen expressed great confidence before the game — maybe even a hint of cockiness — that his team felt "different" and might be ready to compete with the likes of U-M.

By the end, they'd carted or helped off a handful of Indiana starters, the students that took to social media to plan the rushing the field (and yes, that was a thing) had left, and Michigan fans took over Memorial Stadium once again with chants of 'Let's Go Blue!'

In the locker room, some (like sophomore end Aidan Hutchinson) turned their attention immediately to the next one ... The Game with Ohio State.

A few, though, took a moment to remind the Hoosiers of their place in the Big Ten East.

"We heard this week that their coach was saying that they're one of the toughest teams in the Big Ten. We kind of took that as disrespect," fifth-year senior left tackle Jon Runyan Jr. said. "We came up here and we showed them how we play football. We're happy with the results.

"We're going to enjoy this one, especially because of all the trash they were talking before the game ... especially coming from the head coach."

Manufactured disrespect? Maybe. But it's been working for Harbaugh and Co.

None of that is necessary for next week, of course. The Wolverines have lost 14 of the last 15 to the Buckeyes, something that would have seemed unfathomable at the turn of the millennium but is all too real. And let's be clear — it would be a monumental upset for Michigan to stop the streak next week; yes, similar to the one 50 years ago in 1969, Bo Schembechler's first year.

And that's the only time we'll bring it up this week, because being the huge home underdog is the only parallel.

Orion Sang, Detroit Free Press: Michigan football receiver Nico Collins shows just how 'magical' he can be

Josh Uche says everyone associated with Michigan football knows, and has known, what Nico Collins is capable of.

The Wolverines have seen the junior receiver make plenty of plays, both during practices and games. He was the team's leading receiver last season, and he has been the biggest play-maker this season, leading the team in yards per catch and receiving touchdowns.

And that talent — coupled with plenty of opportunities — led to a career-best game in Saturday's 39-14 win at Indiana.

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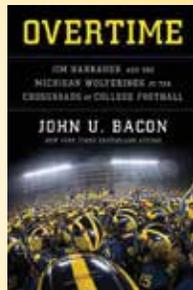
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“Man’s a beast,” Uche said. “Everyone in the organization, we knew that. Anyone can be a practice All-American. But to see it come to fruition on game days is magical. Knowing what somebody’s capable of doing and seeing them execute, it’s just great to see.”

The Hoosiers were allowing an average of 176 passing yards per game. Collins nearly eclipsed that number, catching six passes for a career-best 165 yards and three touchdowns.

Of the seven targets he received, only one didn’t lead to a reception — and that was an overthrown pass on which Collins cleanly beat his defender for what would’ve been a long touchdown. He even drew another pass interference penalty — his ninth of the season, the most in the nation, according to Pro Football Focus.

Nick Baumgardner, The Athletic: Michigan’s best players are playing their best football. Is it enough for Ohio State?

This time, Michigan’s going to enter Ohio State week as a home underdog against a club that’s barely been tested all year. A talent-rich monster that appears capable of winning a national championship, led by Ryan Day, a first-year coach who is 14-0. The Wolverines are going to see Justin Fields, a quarterback who has thrown 31 touchdowns against one interception and a defense that hasn’t given up more than 285 yards all season.

If you’ve convinced yourself this is an impossible task, I’m not going to fight you on it. But before you put a final stamp on your thoughts heading into this one, consider one final note.

Michigan’s going to enter Michigan Stadium on Saturday for the 115th installment of this storied rivalry. And it’s going to do it with its best players — those same guys who pumped their fists in the cold Saturday night — playing the best football of their respective careers.

And, folks: That’s got to be worth something.

“There were some growing pains early on (this year),” said Patterson, who became the first quarterback in program history to register back-to-back games with at least four touchdown passes in a 39-14 thrashing of the host Hoosiers. “But we’ve made our adjustments.”

Michigan’s entering the biggest game of the year playing its best football of the year, with its most talented players leading the way. In terms of a one-game scenario against a juggernaut, Michigan really can’t ask for a better situation. The Wolverines will be at home. Their senior quarterback is playing like a senior quarterback. Their monster wide receiver is playing like a monster. Their speedy defense is playing fast. And the coaching staff is pushing every button.

Rainer Sabin, Detroit Free Press: How Shea Patterson has surged at end of Michigan football career

The statistics justify Harbaugh’s praise. In the past two games, Patterson has completed 44 of 65 pass attempts for 750 yards, nine touchdowns and one interception. In the process, he has emerged as the confident, able leader of offensive coordinator Josh Gattis’ newly installed system, helping bring speed in space into living color.

He’s hitting his receivers in stride, as he did in the third quarter when he delivered a skinny post to Nico Collins for a 76-yard touchdown that sealed the victory. He’s making

quick decisions, sending the ball out to the edges and allowing the wideouts to defeat the defenders guarding them in single coverage.

“He’s playing on time with everything that we’ve done,” Harbaugh said. “It’s become very precise with Shea, the receivers, the tight ends, backs.”

And, left tackle Jon Runyan Jr. said, “He’s not hanging on to (the ball) too long.”

That might be the biggest difference.

Patterson has sped up his release. Through the first three games, when Michigan was 2-1, he was averaging 2.64 seconds in the pocket before unleashing a pass, according to ProFootballFocus.com. In the three games that preceded the Wolverines’ victory over Indiana, the ball was coming out almost two-tenths of a second quicker.

That might not seem like a big difference. But it is.

As Harbaugh said, “It’s all on time.”

And for Patterson, it’s happening at the climax of the season, when the stakes become greater. Ohio State is coming to Ann Arbor on Saturday, and Patterson explained that everything the Wolverines have done to this point has been building toward that date with its rival.

Ben Kercheval, CBSsports.com: This is Michigan’s best chance to knock off the Buckeyes

I buy it, but with a caveat: Both Michigan and Ohio State are playing their best football now -- with the Buckeyes doing so at a historic level. Jim Harbaugh’s team has played well since the second half of its loss to Penn State earlier in the year. The Wolverines’ four-game winning streak includes statement victories over Notre Dame and now Indiana, 39-14. Those are two pretty good teams and Michigan beat them by a combined average of 28 points. Next week’s game against Ohio State is in Ann Arbor, Michigan. There is a “if not now, then when?” vibe to this game for Harbaugh, though there have been instances like that in the past, too. What I keep coming back to is if Ohio State is historically good right now, is there enough room for Michigan to be dominant too? Unlikely, but you have to think at some point it’s going to get one against its fiercest rival.

Ashley Bastock, The Toledo Blade: Michigan’s focus now 100% on Ohio State

Even earlier this year, at Big Ten media days, while Ohio State was talking about how they practice for Michigan everyday with something called “The Team Up North Drill,” Michigan players didn’t want to get into specifics about what may or may not be a part of their yearlong prep for the Buckeyes.

“We’ve always handled things more internally,” offensive guard Ben Bredeson said at the time.

But much like in July, Ohio State coach Ryan Day wasn’t shying away from the rivalry after Ohio State’s 28-17 win over Penn State on Saturday.

“We live it every day, the Team Up North is something that we talk about every single day,” Day said. “And the best way to respect a rivalry is to work it every day. And we do.”

Michigan may be coming together at just the right time for this matchup. They’ve seemed like a different team since the second half against Penn State, and their offense is firing on all cylinders.

Over the last 18 quarters, Michigan has outscored its opponents 180-52, and has put up 1,918 yards of offense. Shea Patterson and Nico Collins both had career games against the Hoosiers on Saturday, and the defense self-corrected this week after giving up two early touchdowns.

But while Michigan may be good, Ohio State may be historically great. With the Big Ten East locked up, the Buckeyes seem to be a lock for both a Big Ten championship and a trip to the College Football Playoff.

Steve Kornacki, MGoBlue.com: Patterson Delivering Passes Through Rain, Sleet, Snow and Gloom of Night

The weather elements created a true late-season atmosphere that Michigan fans in attendance reveled in during another dominating win. The Wolverines have won four straight by at least 25 points heading into Saturday’s (Nov. 30) regular-season finale at the Big House with No. 2-ranked Ohio State.

While No. 12 Michigan (9-2, 6-2 Big Ten) was scoring at will and playing dominating defense, fans chanted, “LET’S GO BLUE!”

With the game put away, the chant turned to: “BEAT OHIO!”

The undefeated Buckeyes (11-0, 9-0) are coming to town just as hot and dominating over the last month.

Patterson moved up to No. 9 in Michigan career passing yards with 5,123, surging ahead of Steve Smith (4,860, 1980-83) and closing in on No. 8 Tom Brady (5,351, 1996-99) and his coach, Harbaugh (5,449, 1983-86), at No. 7.

However, he knows the greatest legacy he could have would be becoming the quarterback who helped the Wolverines break a seven-game losing streak to their arch-rivals.

When asked about turning their focus to Ohio State, defensive lineman Aidan Hutchinson noted that talk of that game began quickly upon reaching the locker room after beating the Hoosiers.

Patterson was asked about that.

“We understand the level of intensity this game brings,” said Patterson. “Everything we do leading up to this game is already planned throughout the season.

“Just the word ‘Ohio State’ in itself is enough for us.”