

NCAA8 Kicks Off

After a number of 'behind closed doors' warmup games the NCAA8 league finally kicked off with a full round of preseason games last week.

Nebraska hosted Miami and both teams went for a power running game. With very few big plays on display it was all about consistency on third downs to keep drives alive, the Huskers were a respectable 10 of 15 but this was no match for the impressive 12 of 14 managed by the Hurricanes.

In South Bend the Irish were another team to control the ball and the clock, building a big lead in the first quarter and then barely giving Colorado a chance to touch the ball. Under the circumstances the Buffaloes offense did a respectable job, keeping the game close despite limited opportunities.

The Auburn defense didn't look prepared for Pittsburgh offense, who racked up a league high 37 first downs and over 500 yards of total offense. The Tigers were no slouches on offense themselves but lacked the Panthers' balance even if they nearly made up the difference in big play ability.

The Tide rolled into Ohio and racked up five touchdowns before halftime. The Buck-



The Huskies celebrate finally converting an extra point

Welcome to the first issue of the NCAA8 Newsletter. An uninspiring title, I think you'll agree, so if anyone can think of a better one then please let me know. My name is Rob Crowther, coach of the Auburn Tigers, and I can be contacted at this address:

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eyes did their best to keep up but a scoreless third quarter sealed their fate despite having much the better of the second half.

UCLA went with a power running game in Michigan, and the Wolverines couldn't stop them. By contrast the Michigan offense went nowhere

on the ground, carrying the ball 30 times for a league worst 3.3 yards per carry. Their passing game came up with some big plays but they looked to be running out of ideas in the second half.

Penn State hosted Washington in a shootout. Neither side bothered overly with a running game as both teams were happy to move the ball up and down the field with the passing game. Quality kicking was also in short supply, both teams missed extra points - the Huskies missed three, but made up

for it with the game's only field goal. Both teams will be kicking themselves, however, after the game ended in a tie.

NCAA8 Team by Team

Miami Hurricanes

Offense: 18 squad
Defense: 12 squad
Kickers: 1 squad
Seniors: 2 squad

Notes: Followed the league wide trend towards offense and will be hoping a large number of juniors, including QB Jim Kelly, will make up for the lack of senior leadership. Went for the run in preseason but look relatively balanced on offense. Defense did a surprisingly good job against the Nittany Lions but could be vulnerable to the loaded offenses out there.

Notre Dame Fighting Irish

Offense: 19 squad
Defense: 13 squad

Seniors: 4 squad

Notes: An offense geared to running, but sophomore QB Joe Montana was effective in the short passing game in preseason. Will need to keep running the ball to keep the pressure off the young QB. Senior LILB Stonebreaker will have to step up on defense.

Auburn Tigers

Offense: 20 squad
Defense: 12 squad
Seniors: 1 squad

Notes: In a squad severely lacking in veteran leadership, having a freshman QB and NT might be hard to cover up. A lot could hinge on the Tigers' ability to establish a running game and the big hitting secondary coming up with turnovers.

Alabama Crimson Tide

Offense: 19 squad
Defense: 11 squad
Kickers: 1 squad

Seniors: 9 squad

Notes: With almost one third of the talent in their senior year the Tide will be looking to make a serious challenge. The offense is built to run, but senior QB Stabler should be able to take advantage of most of the secondaries in the league. On defense Alabama will be hoping to get to the passer before he gets the ball off, because there's not much back there.

Michigan Wolverines

Offense: 17 squad
Defense: 15 squad
Seniors: 4 squad

Notes: One of the more balanced squads, including the league's best passer in senior Harbaugh. The Wolverines didn't look to have it together in preseason but look to be more of a passing team than the balanced approach we saw then. Defenses features one of the better secondaries, but will

Message Board

Neil Douse to Mark Gamble: From the Bengals to the Buffaloes - I think you've actually gone up a level

Rob Crowther to All: Best of luck in the coming season, except when playing Auburn, of course :)

it be good enough for the high octane passing attacks on show?

Penn State Nittany Lions

Offense: 17 squad
Defense: 14 squad
Seniors: 5 squad

Notes: Passing game looked impressive in preseason, going up against what looked on paper to be the best unit in the league. Veteran leadership on defense could be the key for the Lions, some big plays from their seniors could make all the difference.

Nebraska Cornhuskers

Offense: 15 squad
Defense: 14 squad
Kickers: 1 squad
Seniors: 2 squad

Notes: With the emphasis looking to be on the running game offensively, Nebraska will be hoping to get away with one of the weaker offensive squads and play good defense. They're going to have to run the ball better than they managed in preseason, however.

Colorado Buffaloes

Offense: 15 squad
Defense: 15 squad
Seniors: 0 squad

South Bend Press Conference

Coach Denyer had this to say after his preseason victory:

"Played the Buckeyes in a unscheduled pre season friendly and Gordon's boys passed me to death for an Ohio State victory.

This time round it was coach Gamble and would we see the famed BZ defence? The answer no - not a sausage! either

Mark has left the BZ behind him in his Gameplan career or it will rear it's ugly head in the regular season :)



For the record a closely fought game as the Buffaloes fought back to within a point mid way through the fourth quarter only for the Irish to seal victory with a

Culver TD run on the last play of the game.

So week 1 and a visit from the Panthers - don't think I have ever played Neil, so like the college game for me a new experience. I'm guessing like most new leagues it's going to be offence, offence and some more offence!"

Notes: The only team in the league to be completely even, Colorado looked to have fallen between two stools in preseason: not good enough on defense to stop their opponents high powered offense, not good enough on offense to take advantage of their weak defense. For all that the Buffaloes didn't get blown out and a few gameplan tweaks could see them challenging.

Pittsburgh Panthers

Offense: 16 squad
Defense: 13 squad
Kickers: 2 squad
Seniors: 1 squad

Notes: Ran all over Auburn in preseason and look to have enough in the passing game to worry most secondaries in this league. Run defense may be an issue, but should be able to offer more

Profile - Neil Douse

I'm a 33 year old (who's now been playing Gameplan for 15 years I reckon, without threatening to master it). I seem to remember the first time I wrote a profile I was just starting Medical School; I'm now married, a GP, and have a 21-month old son who WILL grow up as a Dolphins fan (and Luton Town - pity the small child). I'd also like to be coaching the Hurricanes, but have always had a soft spot for the Panthers.



than token resistance to most opponents.

Ohio State Buckeyes

Offense: 23 squad
Defense: 9 squad
Seniors: 10 squad

Notes: In an offense heavy league, OSU are the leaders of the pack. A lot could hinge on the ability of

their defense to offer any sort of resistance, but with 5 points of senior DB they have a chance. If they do make any sort impression defensively the offense should be plenty good enough to see them into the Gold Bowl.

UCLA Bruins

Offense: 16 squad
Defense: 15 squad
Seniors: 6 squad

Notes: An above average number of seniors should make the Bruins difficult to beat. Sophomore QB Paus has senior WR Mcelroy to aim at for the big plays in what looked, in preseason, to be a power running offense. Defense looked solid against the run but will need to make more plays versus the pass.

Washington Huskies

Offense: 16 squad
Defense: 15 squad
Seniors: 7 squad

Notes: A freshman QB is offset by the league's only senior NT/MLB. In spite of Moon's inexperience the Huskies look to be a pass oriented team. Senior FB Rick Fenney will be hoping to distract defenses with the run to give Moon the time to make some plays. Defense features 7 strengths in the backfield, though their relative inexperience was ex-

Coach Williams writes...

Here in Washington we are looking forward to the inaugural NCAA8 College season. At QB we have our youngest player, Freshman Warren Moon, who we are hoping will be able to use his undoubted athletic ability to disguise his lack of experience.

Elsewhere on the roster we have a good mixture of senior and junior players that will help minimise the impact of the mistakes Warren will obviously make. We have a dominating defensive line, NT Ron Holmes will be looking to have a fantastic senior year before he heads off to the NFL and DLE Dennis Brown is one of the leagues most consistent pass rushing specialists. We'll be looking for them to pressure opposing QBs into mistakes that our talented secondary can take advantage of. We also have a solid offensive line and good experience in the backfield with senior FB Rick Fenney, who always keeps opposing defences on their toes and unable to just key on the pass despite our multiple receiver sets. Indeed, the weakest aspect of this Huskies team could be Coach Williams, who has extremely limited knowledge of the college game but is hoping that the experience that has seen him contest three Super Bowls (two defeats and one *very* recent win in BP) will put him and his team in a good position to push for the Gold Bowl in the first full season of NCAA8 football.



Buckeye Prospects from Coach Milnes

I think this year is our best chance for a couple of years. QB Craig Krenzel is one of 4 seniors on the team. All 4 are guys who are big players and will be important to our Football team this year. There are a number of promising Sophomores and Freshmen but we do not have a single Junior so next year will be a downer. Luckily we have 2 guys who are late academic qualifiers and will be able to receive their scholarship. The two guys are Maurice Hall, a Running Back out of Brookhaven High here in Columbus. We are undecided on how Lydell (Ross) and Maurice will fit in on our offense around the other Maurice (Clarett). The other guy is Nick Mangold, an OL from Alter High in Kettering, OH. He, along with Alex (Stepanovich), Adrien (Clarke), Doug (Datish) and Bryce (Bishop), form a group that we are very high on. Adrien provides the leadership and once he graduates at the end of this year the other 4 will be together for at least 2 more seasons so, it may be a couple of years yet, but this line will be something special. (Offensive Coordinator and Offensive



Line Coach) Jim Bollman is a special guy and he will give the kids not only the tools and awareness to the job but also the maturity. You can see the effect he has on those kids by the way they have responded through Spring Training and now preseason. I think we could have a great offense this year with the O-line, Craig, Maurice, sophomore wideouts, Michael Jenkins and Chris Vance and then Big Ben (Hartsock, TE). You listen to that list of names and you realise how special that group is and Jim will get them all pulling in the same direction. On Defence, I know Coordinator Mark Dantonio is very high on Matt Wilhelm, the Freshman LB we pulled out of Elyria Catholic in Lorain, OH. With all the concentration we put in getting those guys on Offense, the D is a bit sketchy but we have the leaders in the 2 seniors in the Secondary - Mike Doss and E.J. Underwood. Also will Smith (Defensive End) has looked good in Spring Training and in Preseason.

This football team has a lot of talent and a lot of players you will see in the Pro's one day. They are lucky that they have such a good coaching staff behind them pushing them on. Everyone from Jim and Mark down to our Equipment Manager Danny Swain is great in their field and everyone of them is pulling in the same direction, wanting the same thing for these kids that they want. That's what gives me so much hope. The raw talent, the experience, the Coaching Staff, this football team is going to go places hopefully this season and hopefully everyone associated with this team, including the fans and the students, can say 'Yeah I was part of that 2001 Gold Bowl winning team, I was part of the 2001 National Champions' because that is what I hope this team becomes, and everyone that fills Ohio Stadium on Saturdays will be part of it, if, and when, we do it.

posed in preseason.

Week One Preview

Miami at Nebraska - A repeat of the preseason game. The Hurricanes were comfortable winners last week, have the Huskers learned enough to turn it around? Miami by 7

Washington at Auburn - These teams met in a preseason scrimmage and the Huskies looked the more balanced outfit. Auburn need to find some way of controlling the run.

Pittsburgh at Notre Dame - Two very impressive looking offenses last week, though the Irish did it against better talent. Notre Dame by 3

Penn State at Colorado - Buffaloes struggled on defense last week, Lions passing game looked impressive. Penn State by 7

UCLA at Alabama - A lot of seniors on display here, teh Bruins will be hoping to run the ball well to keep it out of the hands of a potent looking offense. The Tide may have trouble stopping the run but could offset this by running some more themselves, they have the talent to do it. Alabama by 1

Michigan at Ohio State - The Wolverines struggled to run the ball in preseason, but should have no such difficulties against the OSU defense. The Buckeyes will be looking to score every time they have the ball, they might have to win. The game will probably come down to turnovers or some big plays on special teams, perhaps giving the edge to the home team. Ohio State by 7