

Welcome to another issue of the NCAA8 newsletter, hopefully I've managed to get this one to Danny on time to post it out to those of you who don't receive reports by email. Apologies for not managing a newsletter last turn, but I'm really struggling to find time to put the newsletter together and I think that maybe a newsletter every two turns is a more realistic target, so that will be the schedule from now on. If anyone wants to produce something for the in-between weeks then please feel free. Anyway, on with the show...

Week Six Summary

Another week of big scoring began in Florida where the Hurricanes were hosting the Wolverines. Miami got off to a fast start and were two scores up before Michigan even got on the board. Although they fought back the Wolverines never overcame that initial deficit, they had trouble all day stopping the Miami ground game and, when they chose to pass, the

Irish Back on Track? (After week six)

After consecutive defeats to two teams ranked in the top five of NCAA8 I was well pleased to get back on the winning track with a close hard fought win over the Tigers. After a couple of dodgy performances from Montana I made the decision to put the main bulk of plays on Green and Culver and they responded well and have put in some hard yards, Culver 191 and 29 carries and Green 57 on 9 carries and 3 touchdowns last week. Montana now has the luxury of picking his times to pick through a secondary and only 6 passes went to ground last week from 22 completions. The defence which had suffered at the hands of Washington and Ohio came up with two turnovers in the final 2 minutes to deny Auburn and chance to tie the game at



42, Mike Golic recovered a fumble, then Gregg Davis got an interception to seal the win. So onto Penn State and Will Smith who are riding high at 5-1 - but maybe a weakness. Their only loss came against Colorado and that is the only top six team they have played till us this week. Apart from the Buffaloes the combined record of teams the Lions have played is 7-22-1, maybe I'm grasping at straws but I hope form goes our way and will is 0-2 against top six teams after week 7!

Hurricanes were deadly.

Alabama look to be finally getting their offense

together, unfortunately their defense was no where near together for the visit of the high octane Colorado offense. The Buffaloes' passing attack was relentless, completing the long ball with impunity all day, there was no way the Crimson Tide could keep up.

Penn State were dominant in the big Pennsylvania rivalry game, they basically had their way with the Panthers for three quarters and only let up in the fourth. Pittsburgh nabbed a couple of consolation TDs but never looked in the game.

OSU are not a team to be easily outdone in a shootout, and held their



The Colorado offense on song

Comments from Ohio State

I am very happy with our performance against Nebraska. I didn't want to give another basement dweller their only win of the season (ala Pittsburgh) although no offence to either team. To be fair to Nebraska they did try something different in order to beat us just thankfully we were on top of it. I guess it's something everyone has thought of - trying to keep our Offense off the field (hence their rushing the ball 78 times) but they only ended up a minute split in the 60 and that was enough time for our O to rack up the points again. I am pleased with Claretts explosion - 253 all purpose yards and 5 TDs and also with Krenzel who now has developed a more accurate arm on the short ball. It's a pity we have to lose him at the end of the year. Looking ahead to next week I fully expect Alabama to be a blip on the Huskies screen. Unfortunately we don't have the hex that John Coleman does over Coach Williams. And with Penn State, Auburn and Alabama still to play we don't have the easiest run it. I think teams are going to need 7 wins for the Gold Bowl so hopefully we can achieve .500 over these final weeks.



nerve in a frantic fourth quarter in California. The Bruins were in the game right up to the final whistle but they couldn't quite get ahead at any point as the Buckeyes' deep ball passing attack kept their noses in front throughout.

Auburn travelled to South Bend with high hopes on the back of a minor winning streak. At halftime they had every reason to believe that streak would continue as they led by 10. In the second half the Irish defense stepped up and shut down the Tigers' young offense, keeping them out of the endzone on solid play and timely turnovers. The Auburn defense doesn't have the talent to hold out opponents forever and, in the fourth quarter, the floodgates finally opened and Notre Dame cruised to a comfortable victory.

The number one ranked Huskies continued their

dominance of A8 with another emphatic victory. Nebraska tried to keep the Washington offense off the field with a power running attack but the Huskies defense was prepared with a bend but don't break philosophy, controlling the run and avoiding giving up the big passing play. The Huskers' defense, on the other hand, did nothing but break, especially in a rather demoralising fourth period where Washington ran in four rather meaningless touchdowns.

Offensive performance of the week goes to Colorado for a rather scary 600 yard passing day as part of an all round offensive effort that was good for nearly 750 yards and 38 first downs. Defensive performance of the week goes to Penn State who, but for a couple of meaningless scores in garbage time, were dominant and the key to victory. Special teams performance of the week goes to Auburn, who

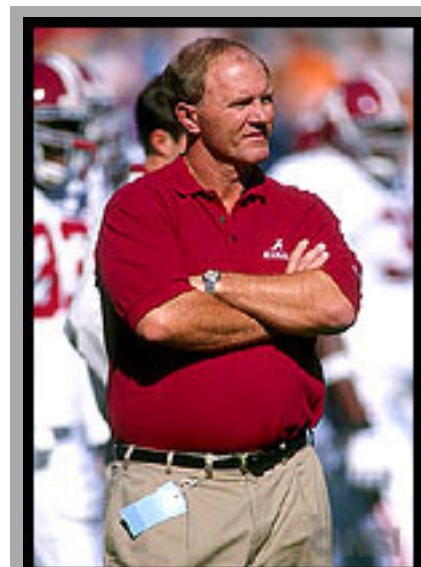
had a week high in kickoff return yardage (which, considering the number of kickoffs this week, is quite surprising) and also managed not to miss any place kicks (a rare event this week).

Week Seven Summary

Miami got off to a good start in Colorado but blew there advantage in the second quarter. The Buffaloes kept their noses in front through the second half and ended up with a one point victory that could be priceless when it comes to allocating bowl places.

Pittsburgh demonstrated ball control offense on there trip to UCLA, managing to run 83 plays from scrimmage. They didn't manage any big plays, however, unlike the Bruins defense who picked off a pass and ran it all the way back for a touchdown. The Panthers came up with no big plays of their own in reply and UCLA were able to win going away in the fourth.

Washington marched into Alabama ranked number one and with an unbeaten record. They left with their record



Coach Coleman masterminds another defeat of Coach Williams

in tatters and their tails between their legs. The Crimson Tide got an early lead and spent the entire game ramming the ball down the throats of the Huskies' defense. The Washington offense was reasonably effective when they did finally get the ball but never got in the free flowing rhythm we've all grown used to.

The Ohio State offense shows no sign of slowing down. This week's victims were winless Nebraska who went with the power running game in an effort to keep the OSU offense off the field, but couldn't find the endzone with it. This left the Buckeye's with a little further to go to rack up the points than they would have liked, but didn't slow them down any.

Auburn got off to a bad start in Michigan and never really recovered. The Wolverines got seventeen first quarter points and their defense was able to hold the Tigers in check for most of the game.

Penn State went into their game with the Irish knowing that victory would see them ranked number one. Nerves seemed to get the better of them in the first quarter, but three second quarter touchdowns blew the game open and from then on the top spot was in the bag. Notre Dame fought gamely

News from Penn State

We came off the field delighted with another good result over a very good opponent. That delight was multiplied when we discovered that the Huskies had suffered their first defeat of the season and that Penn State were now ranked no.1.

Still a long way to go though, with three of our last four games against three of the four teams behind us. Plenty could change at the top over the last four weeks with each week seeing a game involving two of the current top four.

Another low points total given up this week by the defence despite giving up plenty of yards, just 22 points is the most its given up since week 2. The performance of the unit has been such a surprise for me this season as I was expected the offence rather than the defence to be the strength of the team; the D was actually ranked no.1 in both points and yards going into the Irish game (now 1 and 2 afterwards).

The defensive performance caused me to do more thinking over my coaching; was originally going to bring in a DB but with the O looking like it needed more help was unsure what to do. Stuck with the original plan though and brought in a 2 value DB (the fact we've got a few pass happy teams still to come played a part in this) to give us four star players in the backfield.



but were unable to turn the significant chunks of yardage they were building into points.

Offensive performance of the week goes to OSU, who didn't have to punt once this week. Defensive performance of the week goes to Alabama who shut down a previously free

scoring Huskies offense, and knocking off the number one team deserves some sort of award. Special teams performance of the week goes to Penn State who had an excellent day on returns.

Week Eight Preview

Penn State at Miami - The Nittany Lions are now ranked number one, and have looked very impressive in recent weeks. Miami have had some tough losses to good teams but need to turn that around if they want to stay in Gold Bowl contention. They're on home turf, but I don't think that'll be enough of an advantage. Penn State by 3

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Huskies Finally Run Out of Steam

It couldn't last of course, certainly not in college ball. The Huskies unbeaten start to the season finally ended in Alabama, as the Crimson Tide won only their second game of the season. A shock result for many people I'd expect, but not for Coach Williams. "I've locked horns with Coach Coleman many times before in NFLBP (sorry John if you're not the same Mr Coleman!), where my Rams failed to beat his Panthers in 5 attempts before he retired at the top, having won the Super Bowl. It was the opportunity to finally avenge those defeats that made my mind up about accepting the coaching job here in Washington, and with the way the season has started for both teams, I accept that my Huskies were favourites. But I was concerned, and maybe tried too hard to put the perfect gameplan in place. A slightly increased emphasis on running at the expense of one of my favoured pass plays (which I was certain the Tide would key on) backfired,



and with my D line failing miserably to get to grips with the Tide's running game, my offence simply ran out of time and my defence ran out of steam, giving up the game winning TD only 1 ½ minutes from the end. But congratulations to Coach Coleman, he is a coach I respect greatly and I hope that result will kick start

the rest of the Tide's season. It sure as hell means I'll be trying even harder for the win next time we meet!" So next up for the Huskies is the high-octane offence of the Buckeyes. Given the Bucks defensive frailties this promises to be a real barnstormer, and could easily set a new total points record for an NCAA8 encounter. Coach Williams stated that "we'll be looking to bounce straight back from the Alabama result with a strong performance and a good win - we have many tough games coming up now for the rest of the season, and we need to get straight back into the winning frame of mind"

ishing the visit of a team on a roll as they again try to grab that first win. Michigan by 7

UCLA at Auburn - The Bruins are in the thick of the fight for Gold Bowl berths, while the Tigers are slowly sinking away. A 1st chance for Auburn to turn their season round at home? Possibly, but not likely.

Colorado at Pittsburgh - The Buffaloes offense is just plain scary, the Panthers don't look capable of stopping them, or even keeping up. Colorado by 14

Alabama at Notre Dame - The Crimson Tide pulled off a major upset last week but they're going to continue to be underdogs for a while yet. The Irish still have a good chance at Gold Bowl action, while Alabama need to win every game and hope other results go their way. Notre Dame will be ready for the power running we saw from Alabama last week, so it'll be up to the Crimson Tide to surprise them. Notre Dame by 3

a shootout, and not just because all of OSU's games are shootouts. The Huskies will be smarting after losing their unbeaten record and the offense will be out to prove a point. The Buckeyes are always good on offense, but they'll need to come up with at least a couple of big plays on defense to win in Washington. Washington by 3

Ohio State at Washington - This one's going to be

Michigan at Nebraska - The Wolverines have been getting some momentum going recently and the Cornhuskers will not be rel-