

D2 • SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2011

SPORTS

WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL

REPLAY	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	FINAL
	7	7	0	3	17
	7	20	14	7	48

HOW THEY SCORED

- N** Tbl: Martinez 1 run (Maher kick), 8:02, 1st.
Drive: 9 plays, 39 yards, 3:14.
Key: Abbrederis fumbles at UW 39 on punt return.
- W** Tbl: Ball 1 run (Welch kick), 1:27, 1st.
Drive: 9 plays, 91 yards, 4:31.
Key: Wilson avoids sack and scrambles for 21 yards.
- N** Tbl: Burkhead 1 run (Maher kick), 12:45, 2nd.
Drive: 12 plays, 74 yards, 3:36.
Key: Martinez finds Cotton for 28 yards to UW 1.
- W** Tbl: Ball 3 run (kick blocked), 9:48, 2nd.
Drive: 6 plays, 77 yards, 2:50.
Key: Pedersen 28-yard catch one play after TD called back.
- W** Tbl: Abbrederis 36 pass from Wilson (Welch kick), 2:01, 2nd.
Drive: 6 plays, 54 yards, 2:49.
Key: Toon 8-yard catch in tight coverage on third and 5.
- W** Tbl: Toon 46 pass from Wilson (Welch kick), 12:32, 2nd.
Drive: 15 plays, 63 yards, 4:46.
Key: Henry sets up drive after intercepting Martinez.
- W** Tbl: Wilson 10 run (Welch kick), 11:21, 3rd.
Drive: 7 plays, 42 yards, 3:25.
Key: Ball gains 2 yards on fourth and 1 to Nebraska 10.
- W** Tbl: Ball 4 run (Welch kick), 2:36, 3rd.
Drive: 14 plays, 81 yards, 7:06.
Key: Wilson catches for 16 yards on third and 15.
- N** FG: Maher 32, 13:35, 4th.
Drive: 11 plays, 52 yards, 5:56.
Key: Martinez sacked on third down after fumbled snap.
- W** Tbl: Ball 15 run (Welch kick), 5:11, 4th.
Drive: 13 plays, 73 yards, 8:15.
Key: Huskers' Osborne fumbled for 15-yard personal foul.

TEAM STATISTICS

Numbers			Badgers		
20	First downs	27			
43-159	Rushes-yards	50-231			
12-22-3	Comp. Att. Int.	14-20-0			
176	Passing yards	255			
203	Return yards	117			
2-7	Sacks allowed-yards lost	2-15			
3-42-3	Punts-yards	2-41.5			
2-0	Fumbles lost	11			
9-80	Penalties-yards	4-39			
24-45	Time of possession	35:15			
Att. - 81,384					

RUSHING No Yds Avg TD Log					RUSHING No Yds Avg TD Log						
Burkhead	18	96	5.3	1	12	Ball	30	151	5.0	4	15
Martinez	20	61	3.0	1	11	Wilson	6	32	5.3	1	21
Abdullah	2	25	0	3	White	11	26	2.4	0	7	7
Legare	1	4	4.0	0	4	Abbrederis	2	23	11.5	0	15
Cotton	1	1	1.0	0	1	Team	1	-1	1.0	0	3
Team	1	-8	0.0	0	8						

PASSING C-A Yds TD					PASSING C-A Yds TD						
Martinez	12-22-3	176	0	Wilson	14-20-0	255	2				

RECEIVING No Yds Avg TD					RECEIVING No Yds Avg TD						
Tanner	5	84	16.8	0	Abbrederis	5	95	19.0	1		
Kinnear	2	17	8.5	0	Toon	4	94	23.5	1		
Frutkina	1	29	29.0	0	Pedersen	3	49	16.3	0		
Cotton	1	28	28.0	0	White	2	17	8.5	0		
Burkhead	1	9	9.0	0							
Bell	1	9	9.0	0							

PUNTING No Yds Avg TD Log					PUNTING No Yds Avg TD Log						
Maher	3	127	42.3	47	Norman	2	81	40.5	42		

INT. RET. No Yds TD Log					INT. RET. No Yds TD Log						
None					Henry	1	11	0	11		
					Fenech	1	10	0	10		
					Taylor	1	1	0	1		

MISSED FG Yds Missed					MISSED FG Yds Missed						
Wilson	50	wide right	none								

DEFENSE Tackles TFL FF					DEFENSE Tackles TFL FF						
Stofford	9	0	0	Yard	14	1	0				
David	7	3	0	Borland	8	1	0				
Smith	6	0	1	Southard	7	0	1				
Crick	5	0	0	Armstrong	6	0	0				
Cassidy	5	0	0	Henry	5	0	0				
Compton	5	1	0	Fenech	5	0	0				
Evans	4	0	0	Allen	5	1	0				
Meredith	4	0	0	Kelly	4	1	1				
Stenmark	4	0	0	Doppel	4	1	0				
Osborne	3	0	0	Angew	3	0	0				
Burkhead	3	0	0	Clanton	3	0	0				
Demand	2	0	0	Mulison	2	0	0				
Williams	2	0	0	Lewis	2	0	0				
Rome	2	0	0	Hemer	2	0	0				
Green	2	0	0	Hampton	2	0	0				

UW FOOTBALL



UW safety Aaron Henry trips up Nebraska quarterback Taylor Martinez, who threw three interceptions Saturday night.

Undermanned, not undone

The Badgers offense stole the show, but the defense was just as impressive.

By JIM POLIN

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Not only was the University of Wisconsin football team's defense facing its stiffest challenge to date this season, it was doing so Saturday night without all hands on deck.

It didn't seem to matter much during the Badgers' 48-17 victory over Nebraska in a Big Ten Conference opener at Camp Randall Stadium.

Russell Wilson, Montee Ball and the high-powered UW offense stole the show — what's new? — but the defense did its share to deliver an eye-opening victory for the Badgers.

After a rocky start, UW's defense forced three turnovers that led to touchdowns and helped the Badgers turn a seven-point, second-quarter deficit into a rout.

"I don't say this often, but I love our defense," UW junior center Peter Kena said. "Those guys are just fantastic competitors."

Nebraska finished with season lows in points, total yards (335) and rushing yards (159) in its first league game as a member of the Big Ten.

Linebacker Mike Taylor, safety Aaron Henry and cornerback Antonio Fenelus had interceptions for the Badgers, who were playing without three

preferred starters: Cornerback Devin Smith (foot), safety Shelton Johnson (bruised calf) and defensive end David Gilbert, who broke his foot in practice Tuesday, had surgery Wednesday and will miss four to six weeks.

"It got worse for the Badgers in the second quarter when Dezmen Southard, Johnson's replacement, left the game briefly with an injury. His expected backup, Adam Hampton, injured a hamstring in practice this week, so UW turned to fourth-stringer Josh Peprah.

But the Badgers didn't flinch. While Wilson, Ball and Co. were putting up points, the defense was either causing turnovers or forcing punts.

"It's huge," UW inside linebacker Chris Borland said of the depth. "And you're going to need it in this league."

The takeaways were huge, but so was the defense's ability to slow Nebraska's vaunted running attack. The Cornhuskers were averaging 272.5 rushing yards per game but had just 106 going into the fourth quarter.

Nebraska's top tailback, Rex Burkhead, finished with 18 carries for 96 yards, but most of that damage was done after the game was already out of reach. Quarterback Taylor Martinez, who had five runs of 37 yards or longer in his first four games and was averaging 6.7 per carry entering the game, had a long run of 11 and finished with 61 yards on 20 carries.

The Cornhuskers were 10-0 when Martinez rushes for at least 50 yards.

Make that 10-1.

"He didn't gash us," Borland said. "There was cause for concern early in the game after UW gave up some big plays in the passing game. Martinez's throwing motion is anything but pretty, but it didn't need to be to take advantage of coverage breakdowns.

Martinez completed five of his first seven passes for 89 yards on Nebraska's first three series, staking the Cornhuskers to a 14-7 lead. UW twice blew coverage, leading to completions of 29 and 28 yards.

"I was really frustrated because some guys had blown some things that we did all week in practice," UW coach Bret Bielema said. "I said, 'Fellas, the only reason they've got points on the board right now is because of us.'"

"From that point forward, it was just calmness and the game slowed down for them."

Nebraska's next six possessions ended as follows: punt, interception, interception, missed field goal, interception and punt.

"We didn't get rattled," Taylor said. "We just came back, made corrections and did what we had to do."

Right up until the clock read 00:00, in fact. Facing a second-and-goal at the UW 1, Nebraska called a time-out with 12 seconds left to try to get in the end zone and make the final score look more respectable. But UW stifled Martinez for no gain.

"We stepped up when we needed to," Henry said.

Big

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from it. Martinez threw three interceptions, and each one led to a UW touchdown.

It was the 28th win for the Badgers in their last 31 night games and 10th straight at home. The 31-point win tied the biggest margin against a top 10 opponent UW beat top-ranked Northwestern 37-6 in 1962.

The Badgers improved to 5-0 overall and 1-0 in the Big Ten Conference. It was a humbling welcome to the Big Ten for the Cornhuskers (4-1, 0-1).

"We didn't make plays," Nebraska coach Bo Pelini said. "I'm embarrassed."

I apologize to the fans of Nebraska."

All the Badgers heard after blowing out four non-conference foes by an average of 40 points were questions about the caliber of their opponents.

"Yeah, you get tired of it," linebacker Chris Borland said. "We can't help who we play; we just have to perform as Wisconsin. We did that today."

UW treated mighty Nebraska just like it did South Dakota, using a combination of balance on offense and big plays on defense.

"For us, it comes down to doing the same thing each week, no matter who we're playing," guard Travis Frederick said. "Like you saw today, it ended up being similar to the other games we've played."

The Badgers' 486 yards was almost evenly split. Tailback Montee Ball rushed for 151 yards and four touchdowns as the running game totaled 231 yards. Wilson finished with 255 yards through the air, completing 14 of 20 passes, with two touchdowns.

"It's definitely huge for our football team, the fact we came out with a win, the fact we played a great game," Wilson said. "The defense stepped up and made some great plays for us, got the offense the ball back. To play a great game like that, against a great team in Nebraska, it's pretty awesome."

When the Huskers came after him with a strong pass rush in the first half, Wilson turned to his legs to constantly get out of jams. He rushed for 12 yards and another score.

Still, the game started with some adversity, as the Badgers twice fell behind by a touchdown in the first 18 minutes. It was the first time all season

"To play a great game like that, against a great team in Nebraska, it's pretty awesome."

— UW quarterback Russell Wilson

that UW trailed in a game, and the first time at home since the first half against Arizona State in the third game of last season.

A fumbled punt return by Jared Abbrederis led to Nebraska's first touchdown. On the Cornhuskers' next drive, UW had a busted coverage on second-and-21 that resulted in a 29-yard completion in the waning seconds of the first quarter.

The play prompted Bielema to gather his players on the sidelines.

"I was really frustrated because some guys had blown some things we did all week in practice," Bielema said. "I called every position group up. I said, 'Fellas, the only reason they've got points on the board is because of us.'"

"From that point forward, for whatever reason, it was calmness. I think they started to panic a little bit, and we had to slow the game down for them."

The Badgers scored 14 straight points after that. Wilson had a 22-yard scramble for a touchdown called back by a holding penalty, then calmly hit tight end Jacob Pedersen for a 28-yard completion on the next play. That set up a 3-yard scoring run by Ball.

Nebraska blocked Philip Welch's extra point attempt to preserve a 14-13 lead, but it would not last.

Interceptions by linebacker Mike Taylor and free safety Aaron Henry on the next two series helped break the game open. Wilson followed both with touchdown passes of 36 yards to Abbrederis and 40 yards to Nick Toon.

Martinez did not throw a touchdown pass to go along with his three picks, and only completed 11 of 22 passes for 176 yards. Pelini insisted his quarterback didn't get rattled, despite the interceptions.

"No, I think he made a couple of bad decisions," Pelini said. "That was in contrast to Wilson, who never wavered, even after the Badgers fell behind."

"I can never tell if he's excited or down to earth or what exactly's going on in his head," Frederick said. "He just does a good job of leading the team and keeping us down to earth, yet hungry."

GAME BALL

RUSSELL WILSON

There were plenty of Heisman Trophy voters among the 532 media for Saturday night's game, and the UW senior quarterback put on a show in his first spotlight game with the Badgers.

THUMBS UP

JARED ABBEREDIS

Instead of sulking after fumbling a punt in the first quarter, the UW sophomore wide receiver redeemed himself with several big plays in the passing game. He finished with five catches for 95 yards and a touchdown.

THUMBS DOWN

NEBRASKA'S DEFENSE

The Blackshirts finally had their best players on the field at the same time, but you never would have known it by the way they were outmaneuvered by UW.

BY THE NUMBERS

2-1 UW coach Bret Bielema's record against top 10 teams; his predecessor, Barry Alvarez, was 1-1.

86-13 The Badgers have outscored their opponents in the second quarter.

8 Consecutive road losses to Top 10 teams for Nebraska since 1997.

UP NEXT

UW gets a bye — two, if you count Indiana, which is 1-4 under first-year coach Kevin Wilson and visits Camp Randall Stadium on Oct. 15. UW hung 63 points on Indiana last season.

THE VIEW

HOW THE TEAM SEES IT

Welcome to the Big Ten, Huskers.

HOW THE FANS SEE IT

A rout and big boost to the local economy. Thanks, Nebraska.

HOW THE POLLSTERS SEE IT

Those that were waiting to see how UW would perform against a quality opponent got an emphatic answer.

— Jim Polin



Nick Toon hauls in a reception in the second quarter.