

PSU Football at a Glance

By DAN LEWERENZ
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STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — Kyle Orton passed for 275 yards, and Taylor Stubblefield set a Big Ten record for receptions. But this time, it was the defense that kept Purdue undefeated.

The Boilermakers (5-0, 2-0 Big East) have climbed to No. 5 in this week's AP poll thanks in large part to Orton and their potent offense. But a pair of gutsy goal-line stands allowed Purdue to hold on for a 20-13 win over Penn State on Saturday.

"I walked into the defensive side of the locker room after the game and said defense won the game for us, because they really did," Orton said.

Twice in the second half, the Nittany Lions (2-4, 0-3) got inside Purdue's 10-yard line. The first time, after a run by Tony Hunt gave them second-and-1 on the 7, they had to settle for a 27-yard field goal that made it 17-13.

The second time, they didn't even get that. On fourth-and-5 from the 6-yard line, Zack Mills tried to run the ball on a fake field goal — a fake Purdue coach Joe Tiller said caught his defense off guard — and ran straight into Stanford Keglra instead.

"Probably nobody was expecting it, but we're always watching for it because we know in that situation it's going to be a big deal — it's going to be a big change in the game if they get it," Keglra said.

It's not that Purdue's defense hasn't played well this year. The Boilermakers shut out Syracuse in their opening game, then allowed Ball State just seven points.

But they've been inconsistent. Illinois scored 30 points in Purdue's Big Ten opener, and Notre Dame scored 16 last week.

And even when the defense has done well, it's been overshadowed by Orton and the offense. Orton came into Saturday leading the nation with 17 touchdown passes, and Purdue's was second in the country in scoring offense.

The only thing the Boilermakers didn't do Saturday was force turnovers, the first time this year the Nittany Lions didn't lose the ball.

"The young defense flew around and got around the football," Tiller said. "I think the more they play, the turnovers will start coming their way."

It was Orton's 40-yard touchdown pass to Stubblefield that put Purdue up 17-10 in the third quarter, and put the Boilermakers in position to rely on their defense. Stubblefield finished the game with seven catches, giving him 271 for his career. Fellow Boilermaker John Sandeford set the previous record of 266 last year.

With No. 10 Wisconsin up next, Orton said the improvement on defense was a good sign.

"They're young, and they've had some really good games this year, and they've struggled some," Orton said. "They're getting better every week, playing with a lot more confidence, and they'll get there by the end of the year."

Sports

NHL lockout upsets fans, players

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In the sports fan's year, a season ending in one sport usually signifies the beginning of another. Just as football teams hang up the shoulder pads in February, baseball pitchers are starting to report to spring training. In the same way, as the baseball playoffs get underway, the pucks start dropping in N.H.L. arenas across North America. However, this year is different. There are no fans filing into Joe Louis Arena in Hockeytown, U.S.A., and no Penguins reporting to the Igloo in Pittsburgh. As of September 16, hockey has been officially put on hold as the owners locked out the players. The Collective Bargaining Agreement, which has been in place for ten years, has expired and the owners refuse to start another season under the old agreement.

The main sticking point is a salary cap. The Players Union won't sign a new C.B.A., that includes a salary cap, and the owners won't start a new season without a cap. The sides met numerous times over the summer in hopes of coming to an agreement and saving the season. However, the sides were farther apart than ever at their last meeting and it was at that time that N.H.L. Commissioner, Gary Bettman announced the lockout of the players. His announcement happened to be on the same day as the championship game of the World Cup, a hockey tournament between several countries including the U.S. and Canada, and involving many N.H.L. players. Bettman has told the owners, with no meetings scheduled, there is no chance of the season starting on time and for the owners to rent

out the arenas for at least the first month of the season.

The reason Bettman and the owners have held their position without wavering is the claim the majority of the teams in the N.H.L. are losing money. Bettman says the league lost \$273 million last season alone, and without a "cost certain system" some teams may close up shop and threaten the future of the entire league. According to the owners, the reason the current system doesn't work is the rising cost of players' salaries. For instance, in 1994, the last time the N.H.L. had a work stoppage, the average salary was \$733,000. Last year, the average salary was \$1.83 million. Meanwhile, the Players Association and their president, Bob Goodenow, have said that there is nothing wrong with the current system and the players should be free to make as much money as possible in a free market system. What this all means in a nut shell, is that these two parties are as far apart as can be and, in the best case scenario, the N.H.L. won't start up again until January at the earliest.

So with the season in serious doubt, fans have started wondering where they can go to get their fill of hockey this year. The minor leagues' seasons are going on as scheduled. The A.H.L., the top level of minor league hockey, starts their season on October 13, and the lower level, the E.C.H.L., starts a week later. Some of the younger N.H.L. players are still eligible to play in the minors, which should greatly increase the level of play in the A.H.L. Most of veterans in the N.H.L. have started looking for other options to continue playing during the work stoppage. Some have gone back to their native European countries to play for leagues there. Peter Forsberg,

star forward for the Colorado Avalanche, has gone to his native Sweden, and will play there for the entire year, even if the N.H.L. comes back this season.

Another league has started up because of the lockout. The Original Stars Hockey League, O.H.S.L., has constructed a makeshift, six team league, to play a 20 game schedule. The six teams, represent the original six teams that started the N.H.L.. They are Toronto, Montreal, Boston, New York, Chicago and Detroit. Despite the fact that four of the teams have U.S. city names, all games will take place in Canada.

The Commissioner of the O.S.H.L., has said that if after the 20 game season, the N.H.L. is still on the shelf, another O.S.H.L., season will start up. The teams are made up entirely of current N.H.L. players, including Dave Andreychuk, captain of the defending Stanley Cup Champion, Tampa Bay Lightning. A few changes from the N.H.L. rules could make for a much different game in the O.S.H.L.. For example, there will be only four skaters and the goalie on the ice for each team, one less skater than the N.H.L.. Having less skaters on the ice, opens up the game for more scoring. Also, the O.S.H.L., has eliminated the center ice line, which will eliminate some of the two line pass calls, and lead to more scoring chances. The O.S.H.L., promises to be a more wide open, scorer-friendly league, and these rule changes appear to solve problems fans have had with the N.H.L.. Big complaints with the N.H.L. game have been too many whistles and stops in play. Whenever the NHL goes back to work, maybe they will look into using some of the rule changes in the O.S.H.L., to draw back fans they could be



Photo courtesy of www.wtopnews.com

N.H.L. Commissioner, Gary Bettman

losing now.

N.H.L. fans apparently aren't siding with their favorite players. In a recent survey of 4,137 N.H.L. fans, 70% of the fans in the United States, agreed with the owners position. In Canada, where hockey is much more popular, the margin of support was even greater in favor of the owners. The N.H.L., is the least popular of the four major sports in the United States. The last thing the players need, is to lose support of the already shrinking fan base.

Look for continuous coverage of the professional sports arena from our sports guru, Herb Smith. Next issue features an article about recurring teams in the baseball playoffs.

Much-improved Orton leads No. 9 Purdue into Penn State

By Dan Lewerenz
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STATE COLLEGE, Pa. — Somewhere behind Purdue's offensive line, Kyle Orton is lurking, waiting to pick defenses apart. It's not a thought that comforts Penn State coach Joe Paterno.

"The kid is tough to get to because he is so clever," Paterno said of Orton. "He gets rid of the ball when he is in trouble. If you don't stay in good pass rush lanes and he sees a crack and there is nobody open, he will take off. He is a very, very good football player; an outstanding football player."

When the ninth-ranked Boilermakers (4-0, 1-0 Big Ten) visit Penn State (2-3, 0-2) on Saturday, it's going to be a showdown between the nation's top offense and the league's third-best defense.

Orton is the key to that offense. He leads the nation with 17 touchdown passes and is completing almost 70 percent of his passes. Even more impressive, Orton hasn't been intercepted in

137 passes — Purdue joins Hawaii as the only teams that haven't committed a turnover this year — and he's only been sacked three times.

"I just think that he's in command of the offense on the field. He knows exactly what he's got to do," Penn State quarterback Zack Mills said. "You always see him on TV checking, probably changing his protections, maybe changing a couple routes at the line of scrimmage, because he probably knows exactly what the defense is going to do and he just exploits it."

Paterno compared Orton to Heisman Trophy winners Doug Flutie and Ty Detmer, saying there was little anyone could do to minimize Orton's impact on the game.

"I don't think you are going to minimize this guy. They are averaging over 500 yards a ball game. Minimize him is what? I don't know what minimize him is," Paterno said. "You just have to play solid football and hang in there, go to the ball and tackle the receiver when he catches it, try not to let him beat you deep,

keep everything in front of you and pray."

That's a far cry from 2002, when Orton struggled and lost his starting spot midway through the season.

"When I think back to 2002, it seems like a decade ago," Purdue coach Joe Tiller said. "I don't really remember (Kyle) struggling that much. Last season and this season so far, he's been steady, so I don't think about his struggles of three or four years ago. He's really learned the system and he's been doing a good job of managing the game."

But if there's a defense to match up with Orton, it's Penn State's. The Nittany Lions have intercepted six passes this year, while allowing only three touchdown passes.

"Their defense is good, big and physical, and we're going to have our work cut out for us," Orton said. "I think this is probably going to be our toughest game on the road to date. It's going to be extremely loud during the entire game at Penn State, and we're going to have to play smart football."



Photo courtesy of GoPSUsports

Zack Mills passed for 293 yards against Purdue, giving him his 16th career 200-yard game.