

THE B1G+A PLAYBOOK

VOL. II

2026 COLLEGE FOOTBALL • WEEK 8

LIVE CFB ANALYTICS. PLAY BY PLAY.



Prologue

The Week That Was

College football keeps its own ledger. Every Saturday adds a line to a story that started more than 150 years ago, and Week 7 wrote three lines worth keeping. Old powers met on old ground, and the margins were small enough to remember for a long time.

Ohio State 19, Indiana 15. In Bloomington, a top-five meeting turned on the fourth quarter. Ohio State's J. Sayin found J. Smith for a 38-yard touchdown at 12:46 to make it 19-7. Indiana answered at 10:30 with a Hoover-to-Marsh touchdown and a successful two-point try, but never scored again. B1G+A Model 2.2 had Indiana by a point at 51%; history went the other way.

Oregon 17, Nebraska 14. At Autzen Stadium, Nebraska led 14-9 late. With 28 seconds left, D. Raiola hit J. Johnson for a 4-yard touchdown, and H. Lewis converted the two-point try to make it 17-14. Nebraska had one last drive, completing a 27-yard pass to the Oregon 48, but the clock ran out at the Oregon 40.

Michigan 21, Penn State 18. At Michigan Stadium, the old rivals traded blows all fourth quarter. Penn State pulled within 14-11 on a touchdown and two-point conversion at 11:40. Michigan's T. Carr scored from 12 yards at 2:58 to go up 21-11. Penn State answered on a 24-yard touchdown pass from R. Becht to C. Sowell at 1:11, but Michigan then knelt out the clock.

Three games, a combined margin of 10 points. The past keeps teaching the same lesson: in this conference, October is decided late.

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Ohio State at Indiana (Oct 17)

OSU 19, IU 15

J.Sayin 38-yd TD pass to J.Smith Q4 12:46 (19-7, 2-pt failed); J.Hoover 19-yd TD to N.Marsh + 2-pt good Q4 10:30 (19-15). B1G+A pick IU 51% (miss).

Ranks OSU #4, IU #5

wp/data/play_by_play_2026.parquet game_id 401858488; projections/osu-iu-result.json



Nebraska at Oregon (Oct 17)

ORE 17, NEB 14

NEB led 14-9; D.Raiola 4-yd TD pass to J.Johnson Q4 0:28 + H.Lewis 2-pt pass good (17-14). B1G+A pick ORE 63% (hit)

wp/data/play_by_play_2026.parquet game_id 401858492; projections/neb-ore-result.json



Penn State at Michigan (Oct 17)

MICH 21, PSU 18

C.Hansen 2-yd TD + 2-pt Q4 11:40 (14-11); T.Carr 12-yd TD run Q4 2:58 (21-11); R.Becht 24-yd TD to C.Sowell Q4 1:11 (21-18); MICH kneel-down. B1G+A pick MICH 55% (hit)

wp/data/play_by_play_2026.parquet game_id 401858490; projections/psu-mich-result.json

Finals and plays: public play-by-play feeds, as stored in the B1G+A play-by-play repository (file updated Oct 21, 12:20 PM CT). Model lean: B1G+A pregame projection cards.

PLAY 01



WEEK 8 AT A GLANCE

Four Road Favorites and One Close Call

Six Big Ten games on Saturday, Oct 24. B1G+A Model 2.2 projects a favorite in every one; the tightest is USC at Wisconsin, where B1G+A projects USC at 55%.

6

BIG TEN GAMES ON
SATURDAY, OCT 24

55%

USC AT WISCONSIN

Ψ Indiana #6 at M Michigan

Sat Oct 24, 11:00 AM CT · Fox

B1G+A WIN % (AWAY/HOME)

IU 78%

22% MICH

78% / 22%

B1G+A PROJECTED
SCORE

IU 28-16

LINE / TOTAL

IU -7 / 41.5

Indiana Brings the No. 1 Defense to Michigan

B1G+A rates Indiana's defense No. 1 in FBS, and Model 2.2 projects Indiana at 78% with a 28-16 score, coming off the 19-15 loss to Ohio State. Michigan (4-2) counters with the No. 18 defense but an offense ranked No. 71, and its CFP chance stands at 0.4%.

R Rutgers at N Northwestern #24

Sat Oct 24, 11:00 AM CT · Peacock

B1G+A WIN % (AWAY/HOME)

12%

88% NU

12% / 88%

B1G+A PROJECTED
SCORE

NU 38-19

LINE / TOTAL

NU -16.5 / 58.5

Northwestern Owns the Week's Widest Projected Margin

At 88%, Northwestern is the strongest B1G+A favorite on the slate, and the projected 38-19 score is the widest margin of the six games. Rutgers' defense ranks No. 125 in the B1G+A ratings. The line, NU -16.5, comes with the week's highest total at 58.5.

SC USC #16 at W Wisconsin

Sat Oct 24, 6:30 PM CT · NBC

B1G+A WIN % (AWAY/HOME)

USC 55%

45% WIS

55% / 45%

B1G+A PROJECTED
SCORE

USC 27-25

LINE / TOTAL

USC -3 / 49.5

USC at Wisconsin: The Closest Call on the Board

The tightest projection of Week 8: USC 55%, with a projected 27-25 score and the line at USC -3. USC's No. 11 offense meets Wisconsin's No. 19 defense. USC (6-1) carries a 14.4% CFP chance into the night game; Wisconsin (4-2) sits at 2.5%.

MSU Michigan State at UCLA UCLA #9

Sat Oct 24, 2:30 PM CT · CBS

B1G+A WIN % (AWAY/HOME)

MSU 24%

76% UCLA

24% / 76%

B1G+A PROJECTED
SCORE

UCLA 30-19

LINE / TOTAL

UCLA -14 / 44.5

Unbeaten UCLA Puts 6-0 on the Line

UCLA is the Big Ten's only unbeaten team, and its 39.7% CFP chance ranks third in the league behind Ohio State and Indiana. B1G+A projects UCLA at 76% and 30-19. Michigan State (2-5) arrives with an offense ranked No. 95.

Iowa #15 at M Minnesota

Sat Oct 24, 2:30 PM CT · FS1

B1G+A WIN % (AWAY/HOME)

IOWA 74%

26% MINN

74% / 26%

B1G+A PROJECTED
SCORE

IOWA 27-17

LINE / TOTAL

IOWA -7 / 40.5

Iowa's Defense Meets a Struggling Offense

B1G+A projects Iowa at 74% with a 27-17 score. Iowa's No. 14 defense faces a Minnesota offense ranked No. 85. Iowa (5-1) holds a 20.8% CFP chance, and the 40.5 total is the lowest of the week.

O Oregon at I Illinois

Sat Oct 24, 2:00 PM CT · BTN

B1G+A WIN % (AWAY/HOME)

ORE 75%

25% ILL

75% / 25%

B1G+A PROJECTED
SCORE

ORE 33-23

LINE / TOTAL

ORE -8.5 / 50.5

Oregon Follows a Last-Minute Escape

One week after beating Nebraska 17-14 on a touchdown with 28 seconds left, Oregon is a 75% B1G+A favorite with a projected 33-23 score. Oregon's No. 23 offense faces an Illinois defense ranked No. 79. Oregon (4-2) holds an 11.6% CFP chance.

Win % and projected score: B1G+A Model 2.2 (frozen Week 8 pregame run, data/frozen/week8_preview_pregame.json, Oct 21, 12:08 PM CT) on ratings built Oct 18, 9:39 AM CT. Schedule pulled Oct 21, 12:14 PM CT. Lines: DraftKings, pulled Oct 20, 9:42 AM CT.

PLAY 02



B1G POWER RATINGS AND PLAYOFF CHANCE

Two Teams Above 80%, and a Crowded Chase Behind Them

Ohio State (+23.8) and Indiana (+21.8) sit alone at the top of the B1G+A ratings, and their playoff chances, 88.9% and 84.7%, show it. No other Big Ten team is above 39.7%. That figure belongs to unbeaten UCLA, followed by Iowa at 20.8%, USC at 14.4% and Northwestern at 12.2%. Saturday tests that chase: Indiana, USC and Iowa all play on the road, where Big Ten road teams have won 19 of 32 conference games.

FBS RK	TEAM	REC	POWER RTG	OFF RK	DEF RK	CFP %
1	Ohio State	6-1	+23.8	5	2	88.9%
4	Indiana	6-1	+21.8	13	1	84.7%
13	Oregon	4-2	+13.0	23	16	11.6%
19	USC	6-1	+10.3	11	58	14.4%
20	Nebraska	5-2	+11.1	29	24	8.5%
21	Iowa	5-1	+10.5	46	14	20.8%
22	UCLA	6-0	+13.7	21	13	39.7%
26	Northwestern	5-1	+9.6	34	33	12.2%
27	Michigan	4-2	+6.5	71	18	0.4%
36	Wisconsin	4-2	+7.8	59	19	2.5%
50	Penn State	3-4	+6.5	53	32	0.0%
55	Washington	4-3	+3.2	62	49	0.0%
57	Purdue	3-4	+0.0	39	109	0.0%
58	Illinois	3-3	+3.3	35	79	0.0%
63	Minnesota	4-2	-2.0	85	66	0.0%
79	Michigan State	2-5	-1.0	95	50	0.0%
93	Rutgers	2-4	-6.0	58	125	0.0%
94	Maryland	2-5	-2.8	61	106	0.0%

Power Rating: B1G+A, built Oct 18, 9:39 AM CT. CFP %: B1G+A start-of-day playoff chance, 40,000-run sim, built Oct 18, 10:10 AM CT.

PLAY 03



TRENDS WORTH WATCHING

Home Field Hasn't Helped: Road Teams Are 19-13

"

Road teams own the league.

13-19

HOME TEAMS

17 of 32

DECIDED BY 8 POINTS OR FEWER

43.4

TOTAL POINTS IN WEEK 7

4 of 6

B1G+A PROJECTS THE ROAD TEAM

Road teams own the league. In 32 Big Ten conference games in the B1G+A play-by-play repository, home teams are 13-19.

Close is the norm. 17 of those 32 games were decided by 8 points or fewer. In Week 7 it was 5 of 7.

Defense came back in Week 7. Big Ten conference games averaged 43.4 total points in Week 7, versus 53.6 across Weeks 3-6.

Week 8 test: B1G+A projects the road team in 4 of 6 games (Indiana, USC, Iowa, Oregon).

DEFENSE CAME BACK IN WEEK 7.

Week 7

43.4

Weeks 3-6

53.6

PLAY 04



HOW THE PROJECTIONS DID

The Report Card: 8-6, and a Near Coin Flip Missed

B1G+A Model 2.2 is 8-6 straight up on 14 graded finals since Week 6, with an average margin error of 8.1 points. Week 7's marquee games: Indiana pick missed (Ohio State won 19-15); Oregon (63%) and Michigan (55%) hit. The miss came on a game B1G+A had at 51%, about as close to even as a projection gets.

8-6

STRAIGHT UP

8.1

AVERAGE MARGIN ERROR

Trends computed from public play-by-play feeds (B1G+A repository, file updated Oct 21, 12:20 PM CT); finals = highest score recorded for each side. Record: projections/record.json (file updated Oct 19, 9:03 PM CT).

PLAY 05



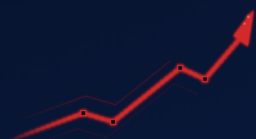
SOURCES AND AS-OF TIMES

Every Number Has a Source and a Timestamp

We're telling the story behind the data, so the data should be checkable. Every figure in this issue traces to a file and an as-of time below. Win chances and projected scores come from the frozen Week 8 pregame run of B1G+A Model 2.2; finals and trends come from public play-by-play feeds.

FILE	FIELDS	AS OF
wp/data/play_by_play_2026.parquet	Week 7 finals, scoring plays	Oct 21, 12:20 PM CT
scoreboard/week.json (scratch re-pull)	Week 8 schedule, kickoff, TV, rank	Oct 21, 12:14 PM CT
scoreboard/lines.json	DraftKings spread/total	Oct 20, 9:42 AM CT
power/ratings.json	blended ratings used by b1ga_project.py	Oct 18, 9:39 AM CT
data/frozen/week8_preview_pregame.json	B1G+A win %, projected score (frozen Week 8 pregame source)	Oct 21, 12:08 PM CT
power/ratings.json	rank, record, rating, off/def rank	Oct 18, 9:39 AM CT
cfp/odds.json	teams[].prior (CFP %)	Oct 18, 10:10 AM CT
wp/data/play_by_play_2026.parquet	trend counts (scratch calc, data/trends.json)	Oct 21, 12:20 PM CT
projections/record.json	w, l, n, mae	Oct 19, 9:03 PM CT

B1G+A projects outcomes from history. Data: public play-by-play feeds.



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