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Reporting & Writing / 201-1
Professor Waldron
15 October 2013

Braving the elements is what being a sports fan is all about, and nearly 50,000 Northwestern University and Ohio State University fans did just that for Northwestern's homecoming game on Saturday, Oct. 5.

Upon arrival, whether they walked to Ryan Field or took the University shuttle, many fans were ushered into neighboring Welsh-Ryan Arena to take shelter from the torrential downpour and the threat of a possible hail storm that blew over fairly quickly.

Many people would have taken one look at the weather forecast and strongly debated staying in for the night, but not Wildcat fans.

According to Mike Polisky, 44, the Deputy Director of Athletics, 47,330 tickets were sold for the game, and he reckons that nearly every one of those seats was filled.

"Weather doesn't really have too much of an influence on attendance, it has more of an influence on day-of-game sales. Ohio State is a perfect example of where it was a little bit of a tenuous day from the weather perspective but we didn't have an empty seat in the stadium. There was such a demand for that game and excitement behind it that for the most part, the weather won't deter it," said Polisky.

"I wasn't hesitant; I was more excited that it was the first major home game," said 18-year-old Weinberg freshman Jeanette Pranin, of Las Vegas, Nev.

Other students, however, decided that the supposedly biggest game of the year was not worth the impending weather.

“I was looking at the weather and I saw a weather alert for the area that said there might be severe winds and hail and so I was like, ‘I don’t think I want to do that today,’” said Weinberg freshman Newlin Weatherford, 19, from Marin County, Calif.

“It was raining. I was getting over a cold and I didn’t want to get one back because I had work to do the following days. I’ve been to two football games that I’ve gotten soaking wet at and that was enough,” said 21-year-old McCormick senior Jacob Jozefiak, of Harrison Township, Mich.

There are only three more home football games this season, the next of which is the Family Weekend game against the Minnesota Golden Gophers.

Right now, www.weather.gov is predicting that the weather for Saturday, Oct. 19, should be chilly but sunny, with only a slight chance of rain.

Even if the weather were to take a drastic change for the worse, Polisky anticipates that most people would still show up to the game.

“The hope again is that when you make an investment and you plan, not just a financial investment but you plan a time investment to come and enjoy a great Big Ten football game, you’ve got to be hardy,” he said.

“Weather is one of the few elements you have no control over and we do believe that the families coming in from all across the country with the intention of going to watch a football game with their daughter or son are going to follow through with that and enjoy the experience,” Polisky added.

Jozefiak disagreed with Polisky.

“I’m going to stay and watch them on TV. It’s actually nice watching them on TV because you get to see the game instead of people and stuff way far away,” Jozefiak said.

But rain or shine, you can count on the Northwestern Wildcats taking the field and giving it their all.