

# The Michigan Daily

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FOOTBALL

## Michigan wins 1000th game in program history, survives Maryland scare in 31-24 win

by John Tondora  
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COLLEGE PARK — In 1879, when Irving Kane Pond crossed the goal line for the first touchdown in Michigan history, none could have imagined what was to come.

After 144 years, 11 national championships and 44 Big Ten Championships, the No. 3 Michigan football team are the first to reach a once-unfathomable number.

1000 wins.

Achieving their first back-to-back 11-0 start since 1901-1902, the Wolverines made history in more ways than one on Saturday. Powered by clutch defensive moments, Michigan (11-0 overall, 8-0 Big Ten) survived a 31-24 blowout-turned-shootout against a quick hitting Maryland (6-5, 3-5) offense that refused to fold. The Wolverines indeed notched their 1000th win, but not in expected fashion.

After surrendering the first score of the game to go down 3-0, the Wolverines defense stepped up early. Returning a fumble for a touchdown and a blocked punt for a safety, Michigan had the Terrapins reeling early. The Wolverines notched 23 straight unanswered points, ballooning the score to 23-3.

Maryland would not go quietly into the night though.

After a rocky start, the Terrapins rallied, notching a touchdown on their final drive before the half. On the ensuing drive coming out of the break, Maryland scored again. Leading 23-17, the Wolverines' defense surrendered their first points in any third quarter game this season and found themselves in the tightest game of the season thus far.

Struggling without the steady hand of coach Jim Harbaugh, it took another veteran to bail out the Wolverines.

Jumping a mistimed ball, graduate defensive back Mike Sainristil temporarily revived a previously dormant defense. Snagging an interception that set up a Michigan touchdown, the Wolverines could momentarily breathe with a 29-17 lead.

And then the Terrapins sucked the air out of the room once more.

Tagovailoa came right back, delivering two explosive passing strikes as Maryland pulled within five on its third tush-push touchdown of the day. A once dominant Michigan defense had seemingly lost its swagger. A Terrapins group that trudged in with four losses in its last five games resembled the one that had given No. 2 Ohio State palpitations in Columbus earlier in the season.

But when called upon, the Wolverines' defense stepped up.

And who else, then Sainristil again. As Tagovailoa heaved a third-and-18 try from his own two-yard line, the graduate defensive back sat under the ball and plucked it out of the air. With another clutch play, Michigan's defense had set up an opportunity for its offense to pull away. And yet, it could not.

After another offensive three and out, the Wolverines called upon their defense for one final lifeline — and again, they came through. Pinned at their one-yard line courtesy of an exceptional punt by junior Tommy Doman, the Terrapins had one more shot.

If the Michigan offense couldn't close the door though, its defense had to. Forcing an intentional grounding in the endzone for a safety, the Wolverines' defense scored its ninth and 10th point of the day, sealing the 1000th win in Michigan history.

It was an ugly day in College Park for the Wolverines. Seemingly stuck in a trap, it required clutch defensive moments for Michigan to escape with a win.

But a win it was. And 144 years and 60 minutes later, the Wolverines achieved their 1000th win program history.