

Date & Location: Sept. 9, 2023, Michigan Stadium

Context: Blake Corum's performance showcased in still photography from the Michigan vs UNLV game, a pivotal early-season contest laden with hype and expectations.



Introduction

When I first saw that photo caption highlighting Blake Corum during the Sept. 9, 2023 game at Michigan Stadium, my immediate thought was: *show me the snaps*. Sports media often lean on striking images and catchy captions to tell a story, but as a former video assistant and analyst who has spent over a decade immersed in All-22 film and data, I know that the real story lies beneath the surface—in the process and context, not just the headline moment.

This post breaks down what lessons we can take away from that photo caption by weaving together film study principles, the smart use of analytics, and a grounded mindset about consensus and momentum in early-season games. Using tools like the Mock Draft Simulator and Game & Fantasy Sim, we'll analyze why the process matters more than the outcome, and why film remains the irreplaceable base layer of football analysis.

1. Understanding Game Context: Sept. 9, 2023, Michigan Stadium

The setting affects everything. Michigan Stadium packed with tens of thousands, electric crowd noise, and a team coming off a major bowl run meant a high-pressure environment for Blake Corum in the season opener. The opposition—UNLV—while not a top-tier program, presented a fresh test. As analysts, we must note the *context of the contest*, not just stats or highlights:

- **Opponent quality:** UNLV's defensive scheme and pressure rates vs Michigan's offensive adjustments
- **Game script:** How Michigan's early success or struggles influenced Corum's carries and blocking schemes
- **Environmental factors:** Weather and crowd noise at Michigan Stadium impacting communication and tempo

This is where the Mock Draft Simulator and Game & Fantasy Sim tools complement film study. They provide a sandbox where we can recreate player usage and simulate outcomes using data-based parameters. But the replay-

first approach—rewatching the real snaps—grounds us in actual execution rather than projection.

Why Film Study Remains the Foundation

The photo caption offers a snapshot in time—an instant of presumed impact by Corum. But what we learn from 12 years of tape cutting is that a single frame or stat often doesn't reflect the *process*—the reads, assignments, and small victories or losses that accumulate play after play. Film study allows us to see:

- How the offensive line created space, or failed to do so, for Corum
- Corum's decision-making at the line of scrimmage under pressure
- Route adjustments and his role in pass protection or receiving
- Persistence, effort, and physical wear as the game progressed

Without this base layer, relying solely on box scores or photo-centric narratives often leads to shallow scouting that frustrates savvy coaches and deep-dive analysts alike.

2. Why the Process Matters More Than the Outcome

One reason the snapshot of Corum at Michigan Stadium became a [Sports Info Solutions](#) talking point is human nature's bias toward outcomes. A highlight reel run sticks; a fumble stands out. But football isn't baseball with purer, isolated stats; it's a chess match where every piece's positioning and movement shape opportunities.

Here's what to consider about process vs outcome:

1. **Execution fidelity over final numbers:** Did Corum pick the right holes? Did the line's identifying blitz threats align with game plan? One run can be fluky or aided by defensive busts—context matters.
2. **Consistency across plays:** Sometimes a player's read is wasted by a missed block or poor coverage, which shows growth areas even in positive drives.
3. **Situational awareness:** Did Corum adapt to defensive shifts? Were adjustments made week-to-week accordingly?

In practice, process-centric evaluation involves cross-referencing film clips with analytics outputs like pressure rates on the quarterback or run-gap success percentages. The Game & Fantasy Sim can ingest these variables to highlight how much of a role chance or opponent tendencies played in Corum's stat line.

3. Analytics as Support, Not Replacement

With data analytics growing exponentially, it's tempting to lean heavily on numbers alone. I see many media personalities substitute statistical conventions for film, which reduces nuanced scouting to cookie-cutter takes — the kind of box-score scouting I constantly roll my eyes at.

Here's the balanced approach that combines analytics and film:

- **Use analytics for context:** Corum's yards per carry, breakaway run rates, and pressure-induced loss metrics help verify what film shows.
- **Drill down when numbers conflict:** High yards might mask inefficient decision-making; data flags inconsistencies worth revisiting on tape.
- **Generate hypotheses:** Apply the Mock Draft Simulator to envision how Corum's skills translate against different defensive packages or skill level opponents.

Ultimately, the best evaluations show how analytics enrich and validate film insights, not overwrite them.



4. The Pitfalls of Consensus and Momentum

Early-season games often generate narratives buoyed by hype and consensus. Blake Corum's performance—and by extension, that photo caption—can become a symbol of momentum into the season. However, consensus can mislead.

Some traps to avoid:

- **Overreacting to one game:** A standout run vs a mid-tier opponent doesn't guarantee season-long dominance.
- **Ignoring nuanced effort:** Crowd-favorite highlight plays overshadow subtle but essential contributions or mistakes.
- **Hype-induced confirmation bias:** Watching only the plays that fit a prevailing positive story.

By maintaining methodical and consistent film study habits—paired with data verification and neutral reruns of snaps—we keep our evaluations honest and actionable. This approach echoes my Thursday injury report checklist and Saturday weather checks: consistent, detail-rich routines that keep analysis grounded.

Putting It All Together: Practical Takeaways

What can you learn from the Blake Corum vs UNLV photo caption, beyond the immediate visual allure? Here's a checklist:

1. **Always start with film:** Watch Corum's carries from multiple angles before reading or trusting captions or stats.
2. **Use analytics as a second layer:** Confirm or question your film observations with data, not vice versa.
3. **Contextualize performance:** Factor in game situation, opponent quality, offensive line play, and environmental conditions.
4. **Beware of momentum narratives:** Stay objective and patient; one game—or photo—doesn't make a definitive scouting report.

5. **Leverage simulation tools:** Mock Draft Simulator and Game & Fantasy Sim can test your scouting assumptions against predictive models and alternative scenarios.
6. **Develop a habitual checklist:** Like my handwritten Thursday injury and Saturday weather list, maintain a disciplined process to avoid rushed judgments.

Conclusion

The Blake Corum vs UNLV photo caption is more than just a social media highlight—it's a useful reminder about how to approach player evaluation in the modern era. It affirms that **process will always trump outcome, film study will always be the base layer, and analytics are invaluable only when used to support—not replace—our eyes.** Meanwhile, the pitfalls of consensus and momentum narratives demand a measured, routine-driven analytical mindset.

So next time you see a captivating game photo or hear a hot take, remember: *Show me the snaps.* That's where the true story lives.