

WEEK SEVEN
MICHIGAN STATE AT PENN STATE

Lewerke rallies Michigan State over No. 8 Penn State, 21-17

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. -- Each Michigan State player brought a poker chip to Happy Valley and coach Mark Dantonio encouraged the Spartans to push them all to the center of the table Saturday.

As the evening wore on against No. 8 Penn State, it was clear the Spartans were all-in.

They converted a fake punt early, tried a fake field goal instead of kick for the tying points late in the fourth quarter and opted to throw to the end zone instead of run it to preserve another shot at an equalizing kick. That go-for-broke mentality paid off in Michigan State's 21-17 win.

Brian Lewerke threw a 25-yard touchdown pass to Felton Davis with 19 seconds left to lift the Spartans over the Nittany Lions, making it two consecutive seasons Michigan State used a late score to hand Penn State a second straight loss.

It was a needed win for the Spartans after a week filled with players publicly demanding more from each other following a tough loss at home to Northwestern.

"We didn't want to play to try and tie it," Dantonio said "And quite honestly, I felt like Penn State was too explosive with (QB Trace) McSorley creating too many plays, that eventually they would find their way back down the field."

But despite having a week off to prepare for the Spartans, the Nittany Lions (5-2, 1-2) couldn't get it done and were outplayed again in the final quarter, two weeks after they let a fourth-quarter lead get away against Ohio State.

Penn State lost to Ohio State and Michigan State in consecutive weeks last season, too, with the Spartans kicking a last-second field goal.

"We had a chance to put them away several times on offense, on defense and on special teams and we didn't do it," Penn State coach James Franklin said. "We let them stay in the game."

Davis stayed in despite hurting his hip on Michigan State's penultimate drive and finished with eight catches for 100 yards. He knew he would get his shot late.

"In the huddle, I told Brian to just throw it up and give me a chance and he did," Davis said.

Miles Sanders ran for 162 yards and a touchdown for the Nittany Lions and McSorley completed 19 of 32 passes for 192 yards with a touchdown to become the program's all-time passing yardage leader.

It looked like the Spartans would regret an attempt at late trickery.

After a 10-play drive deep into Penn State territory, Michigan State lined up for what could've been a tying 40-yard field goal with 5:19 left, but faked the kick. The ploy failed when safety Garrett Taylor swatted Lewerke's pass away from defensive tackle Raequan Williams.

But Penn State ran just seven plays on its next two possessions and gave Lewerke the ball back with 1:19 to play. He put together an eight-play, 76-yard drive that ended with Davis turning and catching a back-shoulder throw and juking past corner Amani Oruwariye for the winning score.

THE TAKEAWAY

Michigan State: The banged up Spartans, still without running back LJ Scott and wideout Cody White, were able to control time of possession and keep Penn State's offense well below its scoring average. That possession time advantage paid off as Penn State's defense looked gassed again in the fourth quarter.

Penn State: Coach James Franklin said his team needed to evolve from a great team to an elite one after its one-point loss to Ohio State. The Nittany Lions still have plenty of work to do to get there. They looked sluggish on offense late, committed six penalties for 41 yards, turned the ball over twice and had no answer for Lewerke's arm in the fourth quarter.

SO CLOSE

The Nittany Lions had two chances to seal the game as the Spartans mounted their final drive. Both Taylor and Oruwariye stepped in front of Lewerke passes but both times the ball eluded their grasp.

NELSON STEPS UP

Dantonio said he planned on redshirting freshman wideout Laress Nelson, but admitted that will be hard to do after his performance. Nelson caught five passes for 60 yards including two for 32 yards on the final drive.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
MSU	0	7	7	7	21
PSU	7	7	0	3	17

Scoring Summary -----

first Quarter	MSU	PSU
PSU TD 5:03 KJ Hamler 5 Yd pass from Trace McSorley (Jake Pinegar Kick)4 plays, 94 yards, 1:32	0	7
second Quarter	MSU	PSU
MSU TD 13:25 La'Darius Jefferson 1 Yd Run (Matt Coghlin Kick)	7	7
11 plays, 81 yards, 4:03		
PSU TD 4:33 Miles Sanders 48 Yd Run (Jake Pinegar Kick)	7	14
5 plays, 64 yards, 2:18		
third Quarter	MSU	PSU
MSU TD 6:10 Felton Davis III 20 Yd pass from Brian Lewerke (Matt Coghlin Kick) 5 plays, 64 yards, 2:16	14	14
fourth Quarter	MSU	PSU
PSU FG 9:21 Jake Pinegar 20 Yd Field Goal		
11 plays, 55 yards, 5:15	14	17
MSU TD 0:19 Felton Davis III 25 Yd pass from Brian Lewerke (Matt Coghlin Kick)8 plays, 76 yards, 1:00	21	17

Team Stats	MSU	PSU
First Downs	25	14
Total Yards	418	397
Total Plays	89	64
Avg Gain Per Play	4.7	6.2
Net Yards Rushing	123	205
Rushes	36	32
Yards Per Rush	3.4	6.4
Net Yards Passing	295	192
Comp-Att	25-53	19-32
Yards Per Pass	5.6	6.0
Times Sacked	3	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-14	-7
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	10	8
Punt Average	40.4	45.5
Penalties	3	6
Penalty Yards	20	41
Fumbles	4	1
Fumbles Lost	0	1
Possession	34:12	25:48

Individual Stats

RUSHING

MSU	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
La'Darius Jefferson	15	60	4.0	27	1
11 Connor Heyward	8	44	5.5	26	0
14 Brian Lewerke	12	20	1.7	12	0
27 Weston Bridges	1	-1	-1.0	0	0
PSU	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
24 Miles Sanders	17	162	9.5	78	1
9 Trace McSorley	13	37	2.8	10	0
4 Ricky Slade	1	8	8.0	8	0

PASSING

MSU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
14 Brian Lewerke	24	52	259	5.0	2	1	96.8
11 Connor Heyward	1	1	36	36.0	0	0	402.4
PSU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
9 Trace McSorley	19	32	192	6.0	1	0	120.1

RECEIVING

MSU	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
18 Felton Davis III	8	100	12.5	25	2
13 Laress Nelson	5	60	12.0	21	0
21 Cam Chambers	3	55	18.3	36	0
81 Matt Sokol	1	25	25.0	25	0
89 Matt Dotson	2	23	11.5	18	0
11 Connor Heyward	4	20	5.0	11	0
La'Darius Jefferson	1	7	7.0	7	0
16 Brandon Sowards	1	5	5.0	5	0
PSU	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
1 KJ Hamler	5	66	13.2	23	1
87 Pat Freiermuth	3	32	10.7	25	0
12 Mac Hippenhammer	3	27	9.0	21	0
10 Brandon Polk	2	23	11.5	13	0
84 Juwan Johnson	2	19	9.5	15	0
83 Nick Bowers	3	18	6.0	9	0
Cam Sullivan-Brown	1	7	7.0	7	0